

TROPICAL HIBISCUS



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Hibiscus flowers rarely last more than one day, but flower buds generally are produced in large quantities over a long period of time.

Tropical hibiscus are not winter hardy in Minnesota and must be brought indoors if you intend to overwinter them. Plants can be outside in full sun during the summer. Hibiscus prefer 50-60% humidity and should be misted frequently. Plants kept outdoors will probably need daily watering. For plants kept indoors, the soil should be kept slightly moist. Fertilize with a potassium rich fertilizer every two weeks from April to September and once every month through fall and winter.

Hibiscus should be inspected periodically for aphids, spider mites, and scale. Spray Orthene if it is necessary. Yellow leaves are usually caused by abrupt changes in soil moisture and/or air temperature. It is normal for older leaves to yellow and drop in early spring and at the end of summer.

If you decide to bring your tropical plant indoors for the winter, treat it with a systemic insecticide 3-4 weeks before bringing it inside. You will eliminate or reduce the chance of bringing pests inside with the plant this way. Bring your plant in when nighttime temperatures approach the 50 degree range. Hibiscus require a minimum indoor temperature of 60 degrees in order to avoid leaf loss. Water sparingly and do not fertilize. Fertilizing can be resumed when temperatures start to warm up. Prune back and repot (if needed) in March in preparation for bringing them outdoors again. Make sure nighttime temperatures are above 50 degrees before leaving your plant outside overnight.

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