

Cultural Information – Gardenia
(gar-DEEN-yah)

<u>Light:</u>	Full or partial sun, a southern, eastern or western exposure.
<u>Temperature:</u>	Although they are hardy in subfreezing temperatures as far north as Zone 8, as a potted plant, maintain temperatures above 60°, preferably 65°.
<u>Humidity:</u>	Preferably 50% or higher; however, lower levels will do no harm for short periods.
<u>Watering:</u>	Bring soil to a state of visual dryness between watering. When watering, thoroughly saturate the soil until a little water trickles out of the bottom of the pot. Growing in a clay pot will help maintain a healthy root system.
<u>Fertilizer:</u>	They are moderate feeders so ¼ tsp of fertilizer per gallon of water once a week under warm temperatures and high light. High fertilizer concentration in the soil can aggravate root disease. Use a balanced fertilizer such as a 15-15-15 or a blooming fertilizer like 7-9-5. Reduce feeding during the winter.
<u>Pruning:</u>	Prune after flowering. They can take a hard pruning. Generally pruning in late summer or fall can reduce flowering in spring.
<u>Insects and Disease:</u>	Gardenias are susceptible to spider mite, mealy bug, scale and sometimes whitefly. Their root systems are highly susceptible to disease, especially under cool, damp conditions.
<u>Comments</u>	The greatest challenge to growing gardenias is root disease. Excessive fertilizer, long periods of wet soil along with cool temperatures and low light all contribute to the problem. Grow them in clay pots. Don't over pot them and water them thoroughly when dry. Another problem is bud blast, or the dropping of flower buds before they open. This may be caused by a lack of temperature differential from day to night, which is common in the home. Try to give them 10 to 15 degrees between night and day.