

## Why I think everyone should own a house plant

Life right now is very odd. Not many teenagers have endured a national lockdown before they are even old enough to vote. I personally found it really difficult to stay motivated in lockdown. There is no guide on how to spend such a prolonged amount of time indoors, especially for someone like me, who enjoys being busy and likes to spend lots of time outside. Being cooped up in my bedroom for hours on end, I deemed it only fitting to redecorate the environment around me. In a final attempt to salvage any sort of work ethic, I focused on the idea that I would be more inclined to work in a space that was inviting and somewhat peaceful. So, I decided to invest more energy into the few houseplants I already owned, in the hope that I could almost replicate the same feelings I associated with nature onto a smaller scale in my bedroom.

Once a week, I would water the plants I owned. If I noticed a particular plant was struggling, I would act accordingly and change its location or change the amount of water I gave it. This forced me to be disciplined in myself because if I forgot to water it, the plant would quite literally die. Without realising, this added a significant structure and a much needed routine to my week, while also creating responsibilities that I had to be present for.

Putting in minimal, but regular care, I started to see the growth in my plants reminding me that quite literally that you reap the seeds you sow. Inspired by my success and armed with a basic understanding of plant growth learnt entirely from YouTube, I started taking cutting and propagating my existing plants. This meant that I could turn one plant into several new ones and could give the new plants to my friends - encouraging them to also learn to care for something other than themselves.

However, indoor plants are not a new concept. For centuries, Japanese culture has been dwarfing trees for ornamental purposes, while the Victorians would keep tropical plants, brought to England on voyages, indoors to replicate the climate of the plants native county. This was initially seen as a symbol of wealth, however scientists now know that keeping plants indoors have many benefits. Specific plants like philodendrons or a pothos, have been proved to purify air, resulting in a significantly better night's sleep. One study even found that fatigue and headaches were reduced by 20% when the patient shared a space with indoor plants. This is not all, the calming sensations associated with nature can be replicated, resulting in lower blood pressure and a dramatic fall in the anxiety levels felt in the patients of the sample.

Plants have numerous health benefits, alongside their ability to help you organise your life and stay motivated. They demonstrate the power of intentional growth, and the qualities that are involved in keeping a plant alive can easily be implemented into your daily life, hence why I think everyone should have a house plant.

Thank you.