



# A ROOT AWAKENING

PLANT PROPAGATION  
PROGRAM KIT





# ABOUT

This program is designed to introduce new & casual plant parents to propagation from a plant cutting.

Patrons learn what propagation is, how to identify a plant node & take a cutting, as well as how to create their own Propagation Box. Patrons will learn how to care for their plant cutting until it develops enough roots to be transferred to soil. This method can be applied to a number of common houseplants.

Audience: Multigenerational

Length of Program: 1 - 1.5 hours



**What is a propagation box?**

A propagation box is an enclosed container that helps retain moisture and humidity to encourage plant cuttings to develop roots & seeds to germinate. The increased humidity from enclosing the container prevents excessive drying while still allowing adequate airflow to prevent fungal issues.



# SUPPLIES

- 1-2 Medium sized Pothos (*Epipremnum aureum*) plants
  - Pothos plants are extremely hardy so they are difficult to kill, require very minimal care once in soil, and will put out tons of new growth. The perfect beginner plant!
- Recycled plastic containers with lids (these can be donated)
  - Can be recycled plastic cups with lids, reused takeout containers, etc. Lids should be clear.
- Sphagnum moss
  - Scale this to how many propagation boxes will be made, containers should be half full of moistened sphagnum moss.
- Plastic storage container with lid
  - For storing moistened sphagnum moss before/during the program
- 2-3 Pairs of plant shears
- Mini spray bottles filled with water
- Seran Wrap
- A pair of tongs
- Plastic tablecloths
- Paper towels
- Sharpies
- Rooting Hormone (optional)
  - Rooting hormone stimulates root growth and increases the chances for successfully establishing a root system to transfer the plant to soil
- Stickers (optional)
  - To cover any branding on recycled containers
- For Instruction (you'll find these at the end of this kit)
  - Propagation presentation "A Root Awakening"
  - Plant Propagation Take Home Care Guides



# ADVANCED PLANNING

## **1-2 months in advance**

Start collecting recycled clear containers with lids. For this program we used 16 oz clear plastic cups recycled from our iced coffees and teas. Once all supplies are collected, create 2 example propagation boxes. Do this in advance so they can be used as established examples during the program. This will help give a good visual to patrons of the final product and what a good root system should look like.

## **1-2 days before the program**

Hydrate your sphagnum moss and store in a container with a lid to keep moist until the program. Print copies of the After Care guide for patrons to take home.

# MARKETING

This program was advertised the library's seasonal event catalogue..

I also created a small book display that featured details of the program. This display was put up 3 weeks before the program. I filled this display with books about plant care, mainly focusing on titles relating to houseplants and aimed at beginners.



# DAY OF PROGRAM

I prepared our program room by setting up an assembly line with 3 different stations/tables so that when it was time to create the propagation boxes, patrons could go down the line, visit each station in order, and put their propagation box together the same way.

## **Station 1**

Set up this table with the recycled containers, their lids, and sharpies.

## **Station 2**

Cover with a tablecloth and set up your lidded container of moistened sphagnum moss here with the pair of tongs for handling the moss. Put paper towels here to quickly clean up any mess/water.

## **Station 3**

Cover with a tablecloth and set up this table with the 2 pothos plants, 2-3 sets of plant shears, and the rooting hormone. When the propagation boxes are assembled, staff will be at this station to make sure patrons are taking cuttings correctly and assist with dipping their cuttings into the rooting hormone.



# DAY OF PROGRAM CONT.

At each seat, patrons were provided with their own copy of the Plant Propagation Take Home Care Guide, a mini spray bottle with water, a pencil, and a program survey.

Patrons were led through slides 1-5 of the presentation, at which point we paused and patrons assembled their propagation box. Once their boxes were made, the presentation was completed and patron questions were answered.



# OBSERVATIONS

Initially, this program was scheduled to take place over an hour and a half but ultimately, that much time was not needed and the program was completed within 75 minutes.

In term of supply, I underestimated how much the sphagnum moss would expand when hydrated and had lot leftover that I had to let dry out. I would recommend calculating how much sphagnum moss would be needed and then hydrating about half of it, leaving the other half on hand to hydrate in case it is needed.

I received a lot of great feedback from my attendees and the most popular request was to expand the content to include a larger variety of houseplants, outdoor plants native to our area like cacti, as well as common indoor veggies like spring onions.

Lastly, I would consider changing the name of the program to hopefully attract more attendees. There were 7 attendees out of the anticipated 15. Next time I might use “Learn how to clone your houseplants” as this is a popular phrase I see used with this type of content online and might be more appealing to the beginner plant parent who may not know what propagation is.

# Prop Box Take Home Guide

## Caring for your Propagation Box

Your cuttings can take anywhere from 3 weeks to several months to establish a root system and be ready to plant. Don't give up! The use of rooting hormone should cut this time down.

- Place your prop box in a warm spot in your house, out of direct sunlight but not totally in the shade either. Experiment and try different spots to see what works best.
- Keep your prop box covered and check it once weekly. If it's too dry, spritz with water and consider adding a layer of Seran wrap over the top to keep in moisture. If you find your prop box stays too wet, try airing it out once a week to let some of that moisture escape.
- Conditions inside your prop box should be moist/humid but not drenched. Over watering can lead to root rot and will kill your cutting.

## Establishing a good root system and transferring your cutting to soil

Your cutting is ready to be transferred to soil when a good network of roots has been established.

- What does a good root system look like?
  - Mini network of white/light brown or green roots
  - Roughly 4-6 inches long
- If roots look black, are mushy, or start to smell badly, they have begun to rot and are not suitable to be planted.

You will need:

- A plant pot roughly 2-3 inches larger in diameter than the root system with a drainage hole
- All purpose soil

Gently remove as much sphagnum moss from the root system as possible without damaging them. (Have a good amount of sphagnum moss left? Try reusing it!)

## Caring for your new plant

Once in soil, keep your potted pothos indoors in indirect sunlight. Water every 1-2 weeks or when you see the plant's leaves start to droop. Pothos are hardy plants that can bounce back so don't be afraid to persevere if your pothos gets a little neglected and starts to drop leaves.