

Bonsai Winter Care Preparation

1. Clear all leaves and other debris off the top.
2. Remove excess moss. Too much moss prevents the soil from drying out and thus, encourages root rot. Rather than throwing away the moss, you can place it on a tray of sand for reuse in the spring.
3. Deciduous trees: Remove all leaves that have changed color but not dropped. This allows light to penetrate deeper into the plant.
4. Watch out for pest and get rid of them now. Don't let them winter over.
5. When bringing plants inside for winter protection, do not do it too soon; plants need a gradual cooling off prior to dormancy. Wait until after some serious frost or until the temperature gets around 25-30 degrees.
6. Do not bring outdoor trees inside for more than three days. This might cause a new growth spurt which can die back and be harmed when taken back outside. Rather than a warm house, keep the plants in an unheated garage.
7. Protect trees from winter wind which can burn and dry out foliage.
8. Shelter plants from freezing soil. Frozen soil can crack pots and lock up the soil's moisture.
9. If plants need to be watered, do so in the morning. This will allow excess moisture to drain before the temperature drops.
10. For unprotected plants still in nursery pots, consider burying the pot over winter. The soil will provide a modicum of insulation for the roots.
11. To prevent root rot, wrap the bonsai in a "raincoat"
To make a pot raincoat, cut out roughly 16"x16" squares of 6 mil plastic sheeting. Next, cut a slot half way through the sheet.
Wrap the sheet around the tree creating a teepee like diverter.
Use a safety pin or two to hold the raincoat in place.