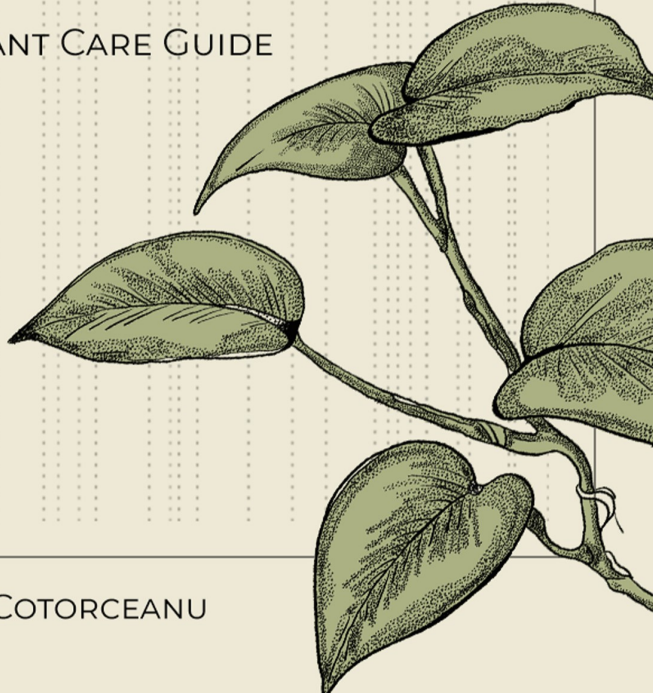




DIRTY ROOTS BERLIN

LEAVE IT THE FUCK ALONE

A PLANT CARE GUIDE



ADAM COTORCEANU

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by Adam Cotorceanu

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LEAVE IT THE FUCK ALONE

Unnecessary Intro

If you're like me and you fucking hate reading intros and just want the good bits skip to CHAPTER 1: LIGHT on page 4

This is a guide to the Leave it the Fuck Alone (LITFA for short) method of growing plants. To be clear, 'leave it the fuck alone' does not mean we never interact with our plants, quite the contrary. It does, however, mean you get to spend far less time interfering and fussing with them and more time enjoying them or, even better, doing whatever the hell else you feel like doing.*

The LITFA method was developed over nearly a quarter of a century of growing plants. I've distilled this knowledge down into the basic concepts that are easy to understand and apply.

The ideas were birthed from my torment experienced when most queries to plant quandaries produced an exacerbating

overabundance of unnecessary and an oft hurtful tedium of tasks.

Like the previous sentence, **most plant advice is often overcomplicated and unnecessary.**

So, fuck that shit. This LITFA Plant Care booklet is meant to save you time and money, A lot of TIME and MONEY. It's just enough information to help you be an outstanding plant person and that's it. No fluff. Just practical knowledge you can apply today to any plant. This guide is short enough that it can literally help you become an overnight success.

Whether you have been growing plants for years and are tired of the endless amount of plant chores or you've never even owned a single plant before, this guide will help you know when to step in, and what to do. But more importantly, when to just chill and leave them the fuck alone. (Spoiler: It's MOST of the time)

I've broken this book down into several sections. I did this so that once you've mastered the basic concepts, you'll realize you can easily apply them to any plant. It also makes it way easier for quick reference when you just want a refresher.

So, let's quit dicking around and get down to business.

*If what you WANT to do is fuss and mess with your plants then do it! I mean fuccckkkk I do it ALL the time... but only when *I* want to. Not because somebody on social media told me I *had* to wipe my plants down every day for a week to get rid of whatever pest I had. That sounds like torture, and I refuse to do it. And you don't have too either.

Necessary Mind Check

The LIFTA method is as much a series of things to keep in mind as it is a state of mind. If you are the kind of person who can't help but worry about every browning leaf tip, each little bug in your house, or dirt under your fingernails for a few minutes then save yourself some time and give this book to someone who can't be bothered to give a fuck. Or, better yet, keep reading and maybe you'll learn how to stop worrying so much.

If want to be a bad-ass motherfucker at growing plants, then read on. Just be warned, where most plant advice will tell you what to do, this will tell you what to know so you can figure out for yourself what to do. I am not there with you and even if I do tell you what to do, you'd rather come up with it on your own. So, I'm going to point you in a direction I like. One that encourages less intervention, fewer sprays, and tonics, and none of the bullshit that usually comes with plant advice. In other words, i.e. the ideas expressed in this book are not a simple list of plant tasks but rather serve as a framework for how we think about and interact with our plants.

So, now we know where we're headed. But before we can get to where we are going, we must first know where we are.

Section 1:

Environment

CHAPTER 1: LIGHT

More than any other factor, LIGHT, or rather the lack there of, is what is holding *ALL* houseplants back. There is no grow light good enough to replace the quality of sunlight. And all windows filter the sun. Even if your houseplant can get too much light indoors it will never get the same quality of light as it would just outside our homes.

If the rest of your environment, i.e. temperature, moisture, space, etc. (more on those later) allows you to bring houseplants outdoors for part of the year, doing so can greatly increase the health of your plants. Even if it's just in a window box. All without changing anything else.

But we don't have to bring plants outdoors to increase the amount and quality of light. Later in the book, I'll teach you a few things you can do inside and outside your home, but for now it is important to start thinking about how much light your plants actually receive and where that light comes from.

It is difficult even for long time growers to know how much light a spot receives without tools such as a light meter. Our pupils grow and shrink to adjust to changing light levels and thus cannot be used with any degree of certainty. Though really, it's not that necessary. Yes, it is possible to give your plants too much light but this is rarely going to happen unless you get professional grade grow lights or simply stick a standard light directly touching or almost touching your plant.

Light from grow lights decreases in strength over very short distances so even a few inches can make the difference between too much light, the perfect amount, and not enough. If you end up using grow lights play around and see what works best. But more on that later.

Why is light so important? Plants are not people, but we often anthropomorphize them to help understand basic concepts. So, plants don't 'eat' but to make an imperfect analogy if they were to, they would eat sunlight.

To make it simple, plants use light as a source of energy to fuel the many different processes that take place inside them. The sunlight is needed to rip apart the carbon dioxide they take in from the atmosphere. They release the left-over oxygen and use the carbon for various purposes. This is why we say they breathe in carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen. Again, plants don't breathe in the technical sense, but it does help us better comprehend plant processes.

CHAPTER 2: WATER

One of the hardest plant chores to get right. Easily the biggest killer of house plants. And once mastered will save you endless amounts of time, energy, and sanity.

Why is watering so hard for so many plant parents and what can we do to fix this?

Most plant parents, even those that have been growing for decades often fall into one of two obvious categories, Over-waterers, and Under-waterers. I don't have actual data to back this up, but I think it's safe to assume the Over-waterers significantly outnumber the Under-waterers. I assume this is the case because most people with a passion for plants often want to DO something to help our plants grow big and strong.

But regardless of whether you give too much or too little, this short chapter will demystify the ins and outs of water and its relationship to our plants.

One of the major reasons people struggle with watering comes from the language we use. I am just as guilty of this as the next person. I described two camps of plant parents as Over-waterers and Under-waterers. But in reality, this is only half correct.

You certainly can underwater a plant. But almost all house plants, cacti include, can be grown directly in water. No soil needed. The plants don't get 'overwatered' despite growing with root systems submerged in water. How can that be?