

No Soil Needed to Grow Air Plants at Home

今回は、土なしで育つ「エアプランツ」の話題をご紹介します。土がなくても育つ植物があるなんて驚きですよね。正式名称は「Tillandsia」と言い、世界には500種類以上も存在するようです。本文では、植物やガーデニングの話題で使えるような便利な単語がたくさん登場します。houseplant（観葉植物）fertilizer（肥料）offshoot（新芽）などは覚えておきたいですね。気軽に身の回りを彩るエアプランツ、みなさんのお家にはどんな観葉植物がありますか？レッスンで講師と話してみましょう。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

If you are looking for houseplants that do not take up a lot of space and are easy to grow, air plants might be the right choice.

There are more than 500 different [species](#) of air plants. Officially they are known as Tillandsia. These plants are native to places in North and South America that support year-round plant growth. Air plants belong to the same family as the pineapple.

Instead of soil, these plants attach themselves to things like trees, rocks and buildings. They do not cause problems for the objects they grow on. Air plants do not have [roots](#). They depend on specialized cells – called trichomes – to permit their leaves to take in water and nutrients.

Associated Press gardening writer Jessica Damiano has experimented with air plants and offers these guidelines for people wanting to grow them.

Sunlight

Air plants require bright, indirect light. So, they should be placed near an east- or west-facing window, but not directly in front of it. Direct sunlight can burn the plant's leaves.

Watering

In homes with average [humidity](#) levels, put air plants in a bowl of room-temperature water once a week for 30 to 60 minutes. In homes with drier air, this process can be repeated when needed.

Lightly shake the plants to remove extra water. Then, place them upside-down on a cloth to dry for several hours. This step is necessary to prevent water from collecting on the plant's leaves, which can cause damage.

If using [chlorinated](#) water, it is best to let the liquid sit for 12 to 24 hours to permit the chemical to dissipate before watering plants. Air plants are especially sensitive to chlorine.

Feeding the plants

Growers should feed their air plants with any all-purpose houseplant, bromeliad or orchid fertilizer. The substance should be added to the soaking water monthly to provide added nutrients. Use about half the amount suggested by the fertilizer manufacturer.

Life cycle

Air plants bloom only once. The resulting pink, coral, purple or white flowers are a signal that the plants are nearing death. However, air plants produce [offshoots](#), known as "pups." These can be separated into new plants once they grow to about one-third the size of the parent.

So many choices

Notable air plants include Spanish moss which can be found hanging from large trees in tropical or subtropical areas. In the home, Spanish moss is grown in a humid environment, such as a bathroom.

Another kind is *Tillandsia ionantha*, which is also known as the sky plant. It is a shaggy-looking plant with green bracts. Bracts are leaf-like structures that grow from the area just beneath a flower. The tops of bracts can turn pink or purple before flowering.

Tillandsia caput-medusae is named for its similarity to the snake-haired head of Medusa, from Greek mythology. The plant is popular because of its long, wavy leaves that grow upward from a fat, round base.

Perhaps the most unusual species of *Tillandsia* is the Xerographic air plant. This kind is known as the King of Air Plants. It can grow up to about one-half meter. The plant's long, thin silver leaves curl downward to produce a round shape that sets it apart from other air plants.

How to show your Tillandsia

You can place air plants in just about any spot that provides the required sunlight and good air flow.

Glass containers or terrariums are popular choices. But growers can also put air plants inside seashells or on rocks. One could even create a floating Tillandsia garden by hanging several plants from fishing line.

The plants can also be attached to natural wood pieces with wire or glue. Some choose to grow them inside hanging frames. When choosing placement possibilities, the main thing to keep in mind is to make sure you are fully meeting all the plant's needs.

I'm Bryan Lynn.

The Associated Press reported this story. Bryan Lynn adapted the report for VOA Learning English.

Source: No Soil Needed to Grow Air Plants at Home

[VOA](#)

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. species (n.) a variety of living thing; the smallest main classification in biology

There are over 250 species of butterflies in Japan.

2. root (n.) the part of a plant below the ground that takes in nutrients

The root of a plant needs water, nutrients, and air to stay healthy.

3. humidity (n.) the amount of water in air

The humidity is often high in the summertime in this part of the country.

4. chlorinated (adj.) with the element chlorine (Cl) mixed in

Our water is chlorinated to kill off harmful bacteria.

5. offshoot (n.) a part of a plant that comes out of the main stem

Our plum tree puts out many offshoots in the spring.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

- 1. Why can Tillandsia, or “air plants,” live almost anywhere? What is special about them?**
- 2. Step-by-step, explain the process for watering the plants.**
- 3. What suggestions does the writer give for displaying Tillandsia?**
- 4. Do you have any houseplants or a garden? If not, would you like to?**
- 5. What kinds of plants grow well in the area where you live?**