

Ferns

Ferns are the oldest plants on earth and among the most diverse. Leaves are called “fronds” and are generated from rhizomes rather than stems. Seeds or “spores” are generally found on the underside of the frond, appearing as tiny spots. Ferns can be green or “painted, tiny or tall. They add interest and texture to your woodland garden.

Growing Requirements

Ferns are generally shade-lovers. They are fairly maintenance free but do need moisture in the soil and air; diffused light, and protection from wind and cold.

Planting

Plant in loose, well drained soil in a shady spot. Amend the soil with organic matter or compost. Add a slow release fertilizer. Place in the hole so that top of the clump is level with the ground. Water thoroughly. Space 2 to 4 feet apart, allowing room for growth. Leave undisturbed for several years.

Care

Dry atmosphere and dry heat cause delicate fronds wither and die. Ferns like to be moist not wet. Over watering will limit your success in growing ferns. If planted in rich soil, little fertilizer will be needed. Fertilize during the growing season once a month with a high nitrogen fertilizer, with a very dilute fertilizer solution each time you water, or use a time-release fertilizer.

Pests

Aphids and scale are the insects most likely to attack your ferns; these can be controlled with systemics. Slug and Snail Bait applied to the area will help deter these pests. Ants are active insect farmers, "milking" the insects for their high energy secretions. Ants actually carry many pests to your plants.

Dividing /Propagating

Ferns spread through underground rhizomes which can be divided. Select a section with several growing points (easily seen in the Spring as the “Fiddleheads” emerge. Plant the division; no need to do anything special.

**Want more information?
We're Here to Help!**



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