



How to Move Plants

On the Moving Van

Moving houseplants on the moving van with your furniture is usually not a good idea. The inside of the trailer is subject to extremes in temperature both in the winter and the summer. Plants do not fare well in this environment, especially if they are on board for several days without fresh air and extra care.

Your Atlas representative will accept houseplants as part of your shipment on an "owner's risk basis". No liability will be assumed for damage.

Shipping by Air

Most airlines will accept plants for transport but you should remember they are placed in the cargo hold which is generally quite hot or cold and not an ideal environment. On the upside, the length of time your plants are in transit is usually relatively short. If properly packed, they should survive the trip. Your Atlas representative can assist you by making arrangements to have your plants properly packed by a nursery or greenhouse. This will greatly increase the odds that they will make it safely to their destination.

Most airlines offer a limited liability for live plants. Be sure to discuss this matter with the air cargo representative before making your reservation.

Climate Controlled Trucks

Limited service is available throughout North America. In some instances, minimum charges apply since these firms generally provide service for growers and flower shops and do not like to handle small, private shipments. Door to door service is not available. Plants must be delivered to and picked up from specified terminals.

Liability coverage is not usually available for a small shipment of plants.

General Preparation Tips

Here are some tips for making sure your plants survive the trip to their new home:

3 WEEKS BEFORE MOVING DAY

Re-pot any plants in clay pots into unbreakable, plastic containers. The new pot should be big enough to hold the plant, without being too big. Jumping pot sizes can cause plants to respond poorly.

2 WEEKS BEFORE MOVING DAY

Prune larger plants. Pruning will make packing easier and produce healthy, bushy, compact, attractive houseplants. You can prune by simply pinching back newer growth with your thumb and forefinger.

Succulents (e.g., cacti, jade plants) and ferns do not respond well to pruning.

1 WEEK BEFORE MOVING

Eliminate any insects or plant parasites. Pesticides may contain harmful chemicals so use them with care and always follow local regulations and label directions.

Another way to kill pests is to put the entire plant in a black, plastic utility bag for about six hours with a bug/pest strip or an animal flea collar. Keep the bag in a cool, shady area. This method is environmentally safer for your home and your plant.

2 DAYS BEFORE MOVING

Make sure your plants are getting their normal dose of water. Keep in mind that during the winter months, roots saturated with moisture may freeze. In warmer weather, overwatered plants are subject to fungus growth during transit.

MOVING DAY

Pack your plants in the morning, or the night before. Conventional packing cartons are good for moving plants. You may need to add some cardboard dividers.

Securely anchor each plant to prevent slipping when the box is lifted or jostled during transit. To do this, place the pot in a box, making sure it fits snugly in the bottom. Use paper around the base of the pot to hold it in place. Next, cushion branches and leaves of the plant with soft paper. Moistened paper can be used for short periods; however, plants allowed to remain wet are more susceptible to disease.

Finally, punch air holes in the sides of the box and loosely fasten the lid. Set the boxes upright and clearly mark the lids. Your plants will be ready to travel for up to four days.

RULES & REGULATIONS REGARDING PLANTS

Houseplants can be moved from province to province without any special inspections. You should be aware that there are some U.S. regulations in place that vary by state. Some states even require a "Gypsy Moth Inspection Certificate." Traditionally, California, Arizona, and Florida have the most rigid restrictions. Check with your State Department of Agriculture or Department of Natural Resources to find out the rules and regulations of your destination state.

If you find out that you can't take your plants, take cuttings instead. Place them in a sterile mix, or in a plastic bag with damp cotton or paper towel. The cuttings should survive several days' travel and be ready to take root in your new home.

