

Cyclamen

Cyclamen persicum

A Mediterranean woodland plant that flowers all through winter and rests through summer — swept-back petals above silver-marbled leaves, at its best when the room is cool.



Don't panic Yellow leaves in spring mean it is resting, not dying

INDIRECT LIGHT **COOL ROOM** **REBLOOMS** **LONG LASTING**

DAY TO DAY

Light	Bright indirect light. An east window is ideal; a south window is fine in a Canadian winter. Not hot direct summer sun.
Water	Watering is the one thing worth getting right with a cyclamen. Water when the surface feels dry and never into the crown — the crowded centre where the stems emerge — because it rots immediately. The safe method is bottom watering: stand the pot in a few centimetres of water for 15 minutes, then lift and drain fully.
Food	A low-nitrogen or bloom-type food every two weeks while growing and flowering. Too much nitrogen gives soft floppy disease-prone leaves and fewer flowers.
Temperature	Cool is everything: 15–18°C / 60–65°F by day, close to 10°C / 50°F at night. The cooler you keep it the longer every flower lasts. In a warm room it yellows off and quits within weeks.
Humidity	It wants high humidity. Stand the pot on wet gravel with the base above the water line. Do not mist the flowers or crown.

WHEN THE FLOWERS FINISH

Yellowing leaves in late spring are nothing to worry about — that is simply its summer rest. Taper off water as the leaves fade, then rest the pot dry on its side somewhere cool, or store the tuber in dry vermiculite at 10°C / 50°F for 6–12 weeks. Repot with the top half of the tuber above the soil, water when new leaves appear, and it flowers again next winter.

IF SOMETHING LOOKS WRONG

Yellowing leaves	The classic complaint, and it means one of three things: the room is too warm and dry, you are overwatering, or it is entering normal summer dormancy.
Soft collapsed centre with a bad smell	Crown or tuber rot from water poured into the middle.
Distorted stunted curled new leaves	Cyclamen mite — essentially impossible to control at home. Discard the plant.
Buds dry up before opening	Air too warm and too dry.

GROWER REFERENCE

Production and finishing figures. If you are keeping this plant on a windowsill, everything you need is on page one — this page is for the trade.

Media pH	5.8–6.2 for both young plant and finishing stages.
Media EC	Young plant 0.5–0.75 mS/cm SME. Finish 0.9–1.3 SME, equivalent to 1.4–2.0 PourThru.
Substrate	Free-draining, disease-free peat-based substrate that rewets evenly and will not stay saturated around the tuber. Exact composition not published in the culture sheets.
Fertilizer	Young plant 75–125 ppm N. Finish 125–175 ppm N. Start calcium-nitrate based to soil EC 0.8–1.0, then 15-3-30, 15-3-16 or 17-5-17 with adequate Mg. N:K 1:1 standard, 1:3 in hot weather, easing to 1:2 as it cools. Over-fertilizing produces plants larger than the pot size.
Light	Germination requires total darkness. Finish 400–800 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{m}^2/\text{s}$ instantaneous, DLI 10–12. Shade during hot bright periods, with air circulation at the same time.
Temperature	17–18°C / 62–64°F day and night through both stages, ADT 17°C / 63°F. A cool crop — heat is the primary quality limiter.
Relative humidity	~90% during germination and early stages under fleece with overhead misting, reduced progressively with strong air circulation to manage Botrytis.
Irrigation	Drip, capillary mat or ebb-and-flood. Overhead is avoided because water in the crown causes rot. Even medium moisture, slight drying permitted, no wilting.

DISORDERS & PESTS

Crown and tuber rot from over-saturation and overhead water. Botrytis is the main finishing loss. Fusarium wilt, Alternaria, Anthracnose, Rhizoctonia, Thielaviopsis, Phytophthora, Pythium, Erwinia soft rot. Tospovirus (INSV/TSWV). Oversized soft plants from excess N. Cyclamen mite, aphids, thrips, fungus gnats. Crop time: germination 20–24 days, transplant to finish 13–18 weeks.

GROWN BY

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Cyclamen's frustrating habits make sense once you know it is a Mediterranean woodland plant that evolved to flower through the cool wet winter and sleep through the hot dry summer — which is why a warm living room in February reads to the plant as high summer.

Sources

- Syngenta Flowers, Cyclamen persicum culture
- University of Wisconsin Extension — Cyclamen