

MOVING WITH PLANTS

Thanks to our sunny skies and beautiful climate, South Africans are lovers of the great outdoors. On most weekends avid gardeners can be spotted tending to their precious piece of soil- from the rolling lawns of old historic homes to lush, tropical jungles or even perfectly manicured postage stamps of greenery and blossoms. We lovingly tend to them, watering them when it's dry, feeding them the best plant food... And just as your garden is flourishing into a gorgeous sanctuary...you decide to move to a new home.



What will happen to your beautiful garden once you leave? Do you have to say goodbye to all those hours of hard work and leave it for the new owners to enjoy? Whilst we advise clients of the **risks and possible down side of moving plants** (some are delicate and don't travel well in the back of a moving vehicle) there are times when we are asked to assist with moving plants from one location to another. If the client has their heart set on trying to re-locate some of their plants, our green-fingered gurus make the following suggestions:

- If you are **moving to a new province**, check that the plants you intend on moving are welcome in their new home and not prohibited in the area. If in doubt, consult your local nursery for more information.
- Assess the plants you want to move a few of weeks before the actual moving day. **Prune and feed them** and administer any pest control treatments to get them into peak condition.
- If you're worried about transporting plants in breakable pots, **repot them into plastic ones**. *Whilst all care is taken when moving fragile ceramic and clay pots, there is always a risk that they may crack in transit.*
- Check that ceramic/stone pots are not cracked before you decide to move them. A **cracked pot stands more chance of breaking** in transit and thus damaging the contents.
- Protect fragile flower pots from accidental breaks by **wrapping bubble wrap** around them on moving day.
- Make sure that the pots aren't too big for the actual plant - this can cause them to move about and damage themselves.
- For short moves, do not water plants before packing them. The **waterlogged soil makes them heavier and harder to transport**.
- Ensure that the plants with long stems, or any potted **trees are supported so as to avoid breaking** their stem.
- Uproot *smaller* ground plants, and place the root ball in a large bin liner to prevent any mess, and water loss. When transplanting the smaller plants, prune the branches that are not shooting to ensure that water and nutrients go to the growing shoots.
- Instead of trying to transport an entire plant or tree, **take cuttings** of larger plants and keep the cut end in water until roots appear. Then transplant into a pot or the ground.
- **Seeds** should be taken from trees and any other plants if possible, to ensure that you will still have plants from your old home, even if your living plants don't survive the move.
- If you choose to **carry plants in your car, remember to park in cool**, shady spots during your trip. Car interiors get hot quickly and can easily damage your plants



- When re-planting blooms in your new home make sure that you **place plants in areas with similar amounts of light** to where you took them from. This will help improve the chances of the plant setting into the new surroundings.
- After a plant is planted in its permanent location and watered-in for the first time, **DO NOT** then ignore it. Keep an eye on it and make sure it does not suffer unduly on hot days.

A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust.

Gertrude Jekyll

Once you arrive at your new home, your plants should be one of the first things you should unpack. The stress of the move may set your plants back for a short while, but with a little TLC they'll soon be in full bloom and filling the air with their perfume.

If this all sounds like a lot of hard work, that's because, truth be told, it is. Instead of trying to re-locate your beloved plants to your home, why not leave them where they are flourishing and invite friends and family to a **Garden Growing Party** at your new home? Ask everyone to bring their gardening tools, hats and sunscreen, along with a cutting or seeds from a plant in their garden which they'll plant in your new home.

This will give you a great excuse to spend time outdoors with loved ones, quickly establish a new garden and have everyone round to admire your new pad- blooming good idea, don't you think?

