

# Information and Care Instructions

## Rosemary

### Quick Reference

- Botanical Name - *Rosmarinus officinalis*
- Exposure - Very bright, indirect
- Indoor Placement - Bright location but not in direct afternoon sun
- USDA Hardiness - Zone 7a to 10b
- Inside Temperature - 40 - 70°F
- Min Outside Temperature - 0°F
- Plant Type - Evergreen
- Watering - Allow soil to dry out slightly before watering
- Water Amount Used -  
3" Pot = 1/3 cup of water  
Clay Washpot = 2/3 cup of water  
5" Pot = 3/4 cup of water
- Fertilizing - Fertilize monthly

### Detailed Care

Your Rosemary was grown in a plastic pot. Depending on the item, it may then have been transplanted into a decorative pot before sale or simply “dropped” into a container while still in the plastic pot. To create a Topiary shape, a plant that has reached the appropriate size is selected and hand-trimmed to achieve the desired shape. It is then left to grow some more and once again hand-trimmed to refine the shape once there is enough new growth. This process may occur several times before a plant is ready for sale.

Rosemary is Mediterranean in origin. As such it is genetically adapted to warm, bright, dry (not humid) and windy conditions where it must often struggle to survive. It is good to keep this in mind while choosing a placement and taking care of your plant.

#### WATERING

1. Water once the soil in the pot of your Rosemary is dry to the touch under the surface; check frequently, especially if kept in a hot, dry spot. It does not like to be kept wet all the time.

2. When watering, use the recommended amount of water for your pot size (See Quick Reference Guide) poured directly on the soil. In order not to damage your furniture, countertop or floor, place your Rosemary in a saucer, bowl or sink when watering. Allow the water to drain for 5 minutes. Do not allow the soil to sit in water for any more than 5 minutes or damage to the roots may occur. Avoid continuous use of softened water as the sodium in it can build up to damaging levels in the soil.

3. Sprinkling or misting the leaves with water once per week is also beneficial to keeping your plant looking good and preventing insect pests.

4. Fertilize lightly with a complete, quality fertilizer once a month if your plant is actively growing. Avoid over-fertilizing...a little is good but a lot is not!

#### PLACEMENT OF YOUR TOPIARY

If you wish to keep your plant indoors, choose a spot with lots of natural light like near a north, south or east facing window. West facing windows tend to have too much direct afternoon sun so avoid placing your plant directly next to one. Artificial lights (e.g. lamps) do not provide enough light to keep Rosemary alive. A location that is near a window or door that is frequently open is beneficial to keeping your plant healthy also. For best results, after 1 or 2 weeks of being inside your Rosemary would like a 1 to 2 week “vacation” outside on a covered porch or patio (please read the outdoor placement section in the next paragraph), especially during the non-winter months. This will help it to resume active growing and rebuild reserves used up while indoors.

If you wish to keep your Rosemary outdoors, any spot that does not receive direct afternoon sun should suffice. A sheltered porch or patio are good places. Rosemary prefers full sun; however, your plant was grown in a slightly shaded greenhouse and is not acclimated to full sun. If you wish to place your plant in full afternoon sun it must be slowly acclimated by keeping it in full sun for brief but lengthening periods each day until it is fully acclimated. Keep in mind that if kept in full sun and in its pot you will need to check to see if it needs to be watered every day. Also, if kept in a pot your plant must be protected from freezing temperatures as they will damage its root system. For Rosemary, if you live in USDA Zone 7a to 10b you can safely plant your plant in the ground without damage.

For best results, if you have a good outdoor spot to keep your Rosemary as described above, keep it mostly outdoors and move it inside for periodic needs such as decorating for a party or holiday or just because you want to liven up a certain room!



**Rosemary Detail Care Instructions Continued:****PEST PROTECTION**

Rosemary is susceptible to certain insects such as whitefly, aphids and mealybugs. The best way to treat them is to prevent them and the best way to prevent them is to sprinkle the leaves and stems with clean water once a week. During the summer when the insects are most active it is a good idea to give it a good rinsing under the faucet or hose every other week.

Care should be taken, however, avoid getting water into the soil as this may cause overwatering. Only water the soil when the plant needs to be watered!

If, despite your best efforts, one of these insects does manage to become established, you may spray your Rosemary with most any store-bought insecticide that is labeled to control your insect.

Rosemary may also suffer from the fungal diseases Powdery Mildew and Botrytis or a fungal root rot. Powdery Mildew and Botrytis are most prevalent in high humidity, especially when there is a lack of air movement around the plant. When sprinkling/misting your plant always do it in the morning or during the heat of the day while there is still time for the water to evaporate from the leaves. The root rot is caused by over watering or over-fertilizing or a combination of the two. Both of these cause the plant to become weakened and thus susceptible to attack by the fungus. Rosemary prefers to be kept on the dry side...but not too dry!

**KEEPING YOUR TOPIARY LOOKING GOOD**

Over time the stems on your Rosemary are likely to grow. It is entirely a personal choice of what to do with this growth. Some people prefer to keep the plant looking as it did upon arrival by trimming off unwanted growth. Others would prefer to further fill in or enlarge their plant by trimming this growth further out. If a stem happens to die-off, simply cut it off where it has begun to die and wait for the plant to grow into the empty area.

**REPOTTING**

Your Rosemary can remain in its original pot or you may re-pot it to a larger or more decorative pot if you like. Natural terra cotta pots are a good choice as they promote healthy roots, although you must check the moisture level of the soil more frequently since they dry out faster. No matter which pot you choose to use, it **MUST** have at least one good sized hole on the bottom to allow the excess irrigation water to drain out! Use the highest quality soil mix you can find that has good drainage properties (a coarse mix with large particle sizes rather than a fine/compact mix). When transplanting do not compress the soil, keep it loose and fluffy for best rooting results and do not disturb the original root ball too much if possible. After transplanting, check the moisture level very carefully as it is very easy to over- or under-water a newly transplanted plant. You must check the moisture level of the original root ball and water only when it is slightly dry to the touch. Only transplant a healthy, growing plant...weak plants tends to die upon transplanting!

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- Why are some of the leaves or stems turning brown or black? This is usually caused by the disease Botrytis. Botrytis spores are airborne and exist everywhere. If a plant is weakened by over watering or over fertilizing or if it is in a humid location with a lack of air movement (such as during shipment in a box) Botrytis can attack the plant. Cut off affected parts and make sure the plant is in an "airy" spot with lots of light (like in a protected spot outdoors).
- What is the white powdery substance on the leaves or stems? This is the disease Powdery Mildew. Control it by spraying the plant with a fungicide labeled for this disease (there are natural ones available). Make sure to keep the plant in a bright location with lots of air movement. Powdery Mildew will usually not occur on plants kept outdoors (unless you live where it is very humid).
- How do I water my Topiary? Use clean water poured directly and carefully onto the soil in the pot. Be sure to remove your Topiary from any furniture etc. when watering if you do not have it placed in a saucer as the water that drains may damage your furniture.
- How often do I need to fertilize my Topiary? If your Topiary is growing, lightly fertilize it once a month. Often in the winter you may not need to give it any fertilizer until it starts to grow again in the spring.
- Can I place my Rosemary in full sunlight? No. Your topiary was grown in a shaded greenhouse and can't tolerate direct afternoon sun. Affected leaves will turn brown and crispy very quickly. Direct morning sun is ok however. See section on placement of your Rosemary for more information.
- What do I do if the stems on my Rosemary grow too long? You may either trim off unwanted growth near its original size or make your plant larger by trimming further out. You can make your plant look how you would like it!
- Can I add accessories to my Rosemary? Of course you can! You can leave it plain or you can dress it up with whatever you like to create a more festive look. Ribbon can be tied to it, bows or other accessories can be pinned on however you like. Cut flowers with individual water tubes can be attached to it or jabbed into the soil.
- Where should I put my Rosemary? Your plant can be placed indoors or outdoors. In either case it needs lots of indirect sunlight. Outdoors it should be in a protected location such as a slightly shaded porch or patio. Indoors it needs to be in a spot with lots of natural light and air movement.
- Can I use the Rosemary in my cooking? Yes. Your plant has been grown using only pest control agents labeled for use on food crops. Most of these products are naturally derived and degrade extremely quickly. Moreover, we only use them when we need to!