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# 7 Pleasantly Surprising Reasons to Decorate With Houseplants

Houseplants offer surprising physical and mental benefits.

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Healthy, beautiful houseplants have been proven to impact your mood. New Africa/Shutterstock

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There's something warm and inviting about a well-placed, thriving houseplant. Experts call this "interior landscaping," and it's becoming increasingly popular, not only in homes but also in offices and other commercial settings. I would have assumed that's because

houseplants can be quite inexpensive. But now, we're learning that houseplants offer surprising physical and mental benefits as well.

## **Clean Indoor Air**

A number of studies reported by NASA give conclusive evidence that plants are excellent at removing toxins from the air—more than 80 percent of volatile organic compounds every 24 hours. VOCs are chemical compounds often found in common household items such as carpets, toys, paint, and more. These VOCs can evaporate and compromise air quality, posing health risks to inhabitants. One large plant—or two smaller plants—per 100 square feet is recommended for noticeably improved air quality.

## **Regulate Temperature and Humidity**

It's pretty well known that planting shade trees and tall plants around our homes is a great way to control the temperature inside during hot months. But that can take years.

Who knew that decorating with indoor houseplants can actually help regulate the temperature and humidity in much the same way? Plants release moisture into the air, which can help to both cool and warm a room, depending on the temperature.

## **Mood Enhancement**

Healthy, beautiful houseplants have been proven to impact your mood. Research shows a definite link between the presence of plants and improved mood. One study points to tiny microbes nicknamed “outdoorphins” that act as natural antidepressants that are present in plants (indoor and outdoor) and their soil.

## **Increase Productivity**

I find this totally amazing, if not completely understandable. Research has shown that houseplants help to boost productivity by as much as 40 percent, which has made interior landscaping extremely popular in workplace settings. You can be sure I'm taking this one seriously—I'd do just about anything to boost my productivity by that much!

## **Reduce Noise**

If you live in a noisy apartment or near a busy street, houseplants can help with noise reduction. Plants reduce background noise through the sound absorption quality of their leaf surface area. That means you want to select plants with large, dense foliage to get the maximum amount of noise-reducing surface.

## Inexpensive

Beautiful houseplants don't have to cost a lot. In fact, careful shoppers can find all kinds of ways to keep the cost down. I love to wander around that big table at Home Depot with "last chance" kinds of bargains—plants that need some tender loving care priced so low they're nearly giveaways!

If you have a friend or relative with a remarkably beautiful specimen, ask for a cutting. With a little research on how to propagate that particular type of plant, you just might come up with a beauty that costs you only time and no money.

## Joy and Beauty

Well-cared-for, healthy, strategically placed houseplants do a lot of amazing things for our homes and those who live therein. But perhaps none more lovely than the joy and beauty they bring to our lives. That's what I love about a tiny succulent gifted to me three years ago by my daughter-in-law, Wendy. I adore this gem. Its unique beauty always greets me with a special tiny spark of joy.

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