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Schlumbergera sp. "Holiday Cactus"

Light: During the late fall and all winter long, Schlumbergera like full, direct sunlight. Any other time of the year, the plants should be grown in partial sun conditions. Too much light during non-flowering times will cause the plant to turn yellow and fail to produce buds in the coming year.

Water: Although considered a cactus, this is a tropical plant. The soil should be kept a bit more moist, just allowing the top third to half of the soil to dry between waterings. Soil should be loose and airy. Using a mix that is at least partially arid succulent soil is ideal. Never allow the soil to become water-logged, or allow water to stand in the saucer.

Environment: Christmas cactus and those related will appreciate higher humidity, but will tolerate dry air. Temperature should be kept between 60-70 degrees fahrenheit. This holiday cactus will drop its flower buds when it's stressed from dry soil, low light, blasts of cold air from doorways or repotting while it's in bloom. Once buds set, don't move your plant around. Changes in light and temperature (besides nightly fluctuations) may cause blooms to fall off.

Toxicity: Reported to be non-toxic for cats and dogs

Of Note:

- Christmas cactus require a resting period to bloom again, from Feb-March. During this time keep temperatures at approximately 55°F and water less. Pre-flowering period from Oct-Nov requires the soil to be kept fairly dry until flowers bud, and then resume normal watering and temperatures.
- A high dose of magnesium in the soil is helpful for proper growth, which is achieved through a mixture of 1 teaspoon epsom salts to 1 gallon of water. Apply on a monthly basis from early spring through early fall, and should be given two weeks after a regular fertilizer treatment for best results.
- Repotting Christmas cactus is usually only necessary every 2 to 3 years. Christmas cactus prefers to be slightly pot-bound and blooms best this way. Wait till spring or early summer to repot -- never while it's budding and blooming, which can cause them to drop.

*When planting in a pot without a drainage hole, avoid over watering by estimating 25% of the container's overall volume, with appropriate drainage materials incorporated when planting.