



How to Transplant a Pot-Bound Ivy

If your English ivy (*Hedera helix*) looks yellow and droopy instead of dark, shiny green, it might need to be transplanted. Ivy grows in U.S. Department of Agriculture plant hardiness zones 5 to 11, and although this enthusiastic climber does very well in containers, it grows quickly and can easily become root-bound or pot-bound. Transplanting root-bound ivy into a container at least one size larger than its present home will keep it healthy and green.

- 1 Water the plant to loosen the soil so the plant will come out more easily.



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- 2 Place your hand over the top of the pot and turn it upside down to remove the plant from the container. The plant will probably come out but, If not, gently tap the sides of the pot against a table or other sturdy surface. If the plant is in a plastic pot, you may be able to squeeze the container's sides to loosen the plant. Do not yank the plant out by the stem.

- 3 Use a knife or pruning shears to trim the roots. Remove about one-third of the bottom roots and trim three or four times around the sides.

- 4 Fill the new container one-third full with potting mix.

- 5 Gently spread the roots out and place the plant in the pot. The top of the plant should be 1 inch below the rim of the pot.

- 6 Add potting mix around the plant, leaving about 1 inch between the mix and the top of the pot.

- 7 Water the ivy until moisture seeps out of the bottom of the pot.

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- Potting soil
- Gloves (optional)

Tip

- It is difficult to tell if a plant is root-bound without removing it from the container, but a few clues exist: water drains very quickly or stands on the surface because there are more roots than soil in the pot, the roots are growing out of the drainage holes in the bottom of the pot or the plant has an overall top heavy appearance. Plants handle repotting best when they are growing vigorously, but it is better to repot a root-bound plant when necessary than to wait for spring or summer. Overgrown roots prevent a plant from taking up nutrients, and it could die if not moved to a larger container.

Warning

- English ivy can cause skin irritation in some people and is poisonous if eaten in large amounts. It is also considered invasive.

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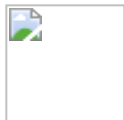
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- [Wildflower.org: Helping Plants Handle Summer Heat](#)

About the Author



Maggie Fry began her writing career in 1986. She has written for publications including "Seattle Weekly" and the Rodale Institute's New Farm online magazine.

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