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## YOU CAN BE A BONSAIIST

A bonsai is much more than just a 'Potted Tree.' It must be trained and changed into a refined living sculpture. Bonsai is a visual art form that should evoke an aesthetic response by the viewer.

### **BASIC PROCEDURE FOR THE CARE OF YOUR BONSAI**

Make sure you keep your Bonsai outdoors unless it is an indoor variety. Many plants will not survive indoors. They need to be given a dormant period.

- Fertilizing:** Use a well balanced, water soluble fertilizer. Apply at half strength every two weeks during the growing season. Time release fertilizers (such as Osmocote) work well too.  
**CAUTION: DO NOT OVER FERTILIZE!!!**
- Light:** Avoid direct sunlight. Shade cloth or a lath house will give you a proper growing environment.
- Pruning:** 1/3 to 1/2 of the new growth should be cut, pinched or pruned to the desired shape. Timing of pruning is important to develop a desired shape. Root pruning is done at the time of repotting.
- Repotting:** "Rule of Thumb" - Broad leaf plants should be repotted every three years. Conifers and needle leaved plants should be repotted every five years. January to early March is the time to repot your bonsai.
- Temperature:** Do not let your bonsai freeze hard. Do not keep and outdoor bonsai in the house for more than 2 days. They do best at 65 to 80 degrees. During dormancy they will do best at 30 to 50 degrees. Keep the soil moist but not wet while they are dormant. 60 to 90 days at these temperatures in the fall will be fine for a dormant period.
- Moisture:** Do not drown your bonsai!!!! Keep your bonsai moist but not wet. Some bonsai do better when they are on the dry side. when watering your bonsai, water the foliage as well as the plant. It is best not to use a garden hose. Use a sprinkler can or a misting nozzle.

