

TO ROOT HOLLY CUTTINGS

(This method is good also for azaleas, yew and many other shrubs.)

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YOU NEED:

A wooden box with bottom; (No drainage necessary)
A glass pane to cover it;
Peat;
Sand;
Oakleaf mold.

(The top of the box should be sloped to shed the rain)

1st Layer: Mix thoroughly a small quantity of peat moss and oakleaf mold. The proportion is 3 parts of peat moss to 1 of leaf mold. Put 2 inches of this in the box and press down firmly.

2nd Layer: Blend peat moss and sand, half and half and put 1 inch of the mixture on top of the first layer, a handful at a time, so as not to depress the first layer.

3rd Layer: 1 inch of sand, very carefully spread.

Water carefully with a fine spray, so that you will not disturb the level surface of the sand. Water until the water stands on the top. After another similar watering the following day, the box is ready for the cuttings.

The middle of September is a good time to take holly cuttings. The growth at that time is neither too soft, nor too brittle. Use terminals 4 or 5 inches long; cut, (do not tear), off the lower leaves. Place cuttings in box almost horizontally; with the tip lying on the soil and the lower part under the earth. They can be placed as close as 2 inches. Now water again. THIS IS THE ONLY FIRING THE CUTTINGS RECEIVE. Pressing the soil about them only injures the bark, while the watering insures solid soil about the stems, with no air spaces.

Sink box in the ground almost to its full depth; perhaps 2 inches showing at top. It should be placed so that it receives no direct sunlight, but plenty of light from the northern sky. The north side of a building is an ideal place. Put glass cover on. Never ventilate and water only when moisture seems necessary. Sometimes no water will be needed for many weeks.

Cuttings made in the Autumn are left in the rooting box for a year; when they are transplanted to a cold frame for their second winter. October is the best time to do this. The following April, they are planted outdoors.

In preparing cuttings, make a cut straight across the stem, a little below a node.

If the above seems fussy, it is merely because I have put down every tiny step in my effort to make the method clear. And, after all, if care is used in preparing the cuttings, there is literally no more to do. The plants take care of themselves.

(Note: The above method of plant propagation is an adaptation of that used by Mr. G. G. Nearing.)