

## Money Tree Care from BonsaiOutlet.com

### General Background:

Native to Central and South America, Money Trees are an excellent plant for both indoor and outdoor growth. This plant can range from a few inches in height to over seven feet tall. It originated in Japan and consists of several trunks wound together with green leaves sprouting from the top. A story associated with the money tree is about a man whose prayers for money were answered because of this unique plant. When he took the plant to his home, the man discovered he could grow several more from the seeds and became rich from selling the plants. It is from this story that the plant was given its nickname: the "money tree".

Braided Money Trees are usually given as a gift; they are reputed to bring good luck and prosperity. Generally, the more leaves the Money Tree has, the better! While it is common to find money trees with five to six leaves on each stem, it is quite rare to find one with seven leaves. Like a four-leaf clover, a Money Tree with a seven-leaf stem is considered to bring incredibly good fortune to its owner.

Money Trees are also very popular plants with Feng shui practitioners who believe that the braided bonsai creates positive energy for any room that it placed in. According to this belief, you will want to place your money tree in the "financial" part of your home or office. Each new leaf of the tree will then bring added financial blessing and success. Easy to grow and beautiful to behold, this bonsai is happy wherever you are.

### Trees Features:

The jade green leaves of the Money Tree grow in tufts of five in a pattern often compared with the human hand. These five leaves are said to symbolize the five elements of balance in creation: metal, wood, water, fire and earth. With its shiny green foliage and blooms on tall green trunks, it has become a popular indoor plant but is also cultivated for its edible nuts. The Money Tree, also known as *Pachira aquatica*, is a miniature tree characterized by multiple intertwining trunks. Each tree is actually four to five separate trees with their trunks braided together

**Temperature:**

Money Trees can't tolerate temperatures lower than 50 degrees and should be kept inside during cold weather.

**Lighting:**

Place in an area of moderate sunlight. These plants can survive with varying degrees of sunlight, but do best with a few hours of sunlight and a few hours of shade. If your plant experiences too much full sunlight, the leaves may begin to burn. If weather permits, your Money Tree will enjoy being placed in a sunny to partial-shade exposure outdoors daily. In very warm climates or during the heat of summer, light shade is a better option to prevent leaf burn. Avoid direct sunlight for prolonged periods of time as this will cause the leaves to burn and turn slightly yellow. For indoor plants, provide bright indirect light and turn the plant regularly toward the light source to keep it growing straight and leafing evenly. In darker areas, leaves grow smaller but Money Trees can survive for a long time in very poor light.

**Watering:**

Money trees need only moderately moist soil. Money trees can withstand infrequent watering; watering once a month or when the soil is completely dry or the tree looks "tired". Keep the soil loose all the time -- even after watering. The Development of soggy brown leaves indicate that the soil is too wet. The amount of water you give your plant is critical and one common mistake that many beginning plant owners make is over watering. This can actually kill your plant so you want to ensure that the soil is moist but you don't want to water so frequently or heavily creating an environment for your plant similar to a swamp in which its roots will be sure to rot.

**Fertilizing:**

Fertilize lightly three to four times a year with a good-quality water-soluble organic fertilizer.

**Pruning / Training:**

Prune the leaves to encourage growth. If you want new leaves to sprout, or have a wilting plant, prune off the browning leaves. Leaves can be trimmed at any time of the year, and you will notice that they grow back quickly. This Bonsai is usually presented in a braided or knotted form which is achieved when the stalks are young and supple. The money tree can be pruned by cutting off the stem, and new growth will appear at

the cut over time. With careful maintenance, you can direct the growth of your plant in a style that is most pleasing to you.

### **Insects / Pests:**

Money Trees are very hardy and are not susceptible to bugs in general, however, if whitefly or aphids invade, combat them with a solution of dish soap and warm water. Spray the leaves until the solution runs off and then rinse the leaves with clean water. Repeat as needed. Be sure to resist over watering as this is a major source of Money tree death due to root rot.

### **Propagation:**

Propagation is best had from cuttings/side shoots and seeds. Often you will notice new shoots coming out of the trunks. You can simply place these shoots in moist, not wet, soil and they will grow well.

### **Repotting:**

You can Repot your Money Tree every two-three years during the spring season, or if you notice that your plant seems overly thirsty. Be sure to prune the roots gently and provide a quality soil cut with river sand to ensure proper drainage.

### **Additional Comments:**

Money Trees are very hardy plants. Any problems are likely due to over watering or too much full sunlight. If you are a bonsai beginner, this braided bonsai will be ideal for you. (And the added luck and prosperity never hurt anyone!)

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