

Rooting Azalea Cuttings

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I encourage you to propagate your favorite plants and share them with others. Azaleas are very easy to root, and this approach uses a technique that relies on “mini-greenhouses” that will require minimal care for months at a time. Once cuttings are rooted and you have some spare time, they can be transplanted into individual pots and grown on. You will need to protect cuttings the first winter in a cold frame since they will be more susceptible to winter kill.

Cutting Selection



Choose healthy growth that is beginning to harden off. Twiggy growth and long shoots can root but average size is best.



Select only the new shoots. Pinch out soft tips and carefully remove some lower leaves where the roots will form.



Azaleas are shallow rooted and only the bottom inch of the cutting will go in the soil. Long shoots can be cut in sections.

Preparation



Optional: Soak cuttings in a dilute Clorox solution (5%) for 3 to 5 minutes. It will kill bugs and fungus spores.



Rinse cuttings very well to remove all traces of the Clorox solution since it will burn the leaves, too.



Dip the bottom half inch of each cutting in rooting hormone. Dip 'N Grow (5%) or Rootone are popular choices.

Rooting



Insert the bottom inch of the cutting into damp potting medium (equal parts peat and perlite). Medium should not be wet!



Enclose each pot in a clear plastic bag. This keeps humidity high during rooting but too much moisture causes rotting.



Place cuttings in a bright north window or under fluorescent lights for at least 8 to 10 weeks. No watering is necessary.