

Ecoscope Nursery
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Thanks for your business and interest in Aloe polyphylla. Here is a brief set of instructions and caveats to start your journey of wonderment growing the Spiral Aloe. There are two articles attached to the website with more detailed information.

1. **Soil Mix: Potting Soil : Perlite : Red lava(5/16") or Pumice 1:1:1 by volume**
This can be changed to a 1:2 ratio Potting soil: 3/8" Red Lava also. I have struggled for years to craft the best soil mix only to discover that the oxygen demands of the roots are greater than any soil mix ever created for plants you now cultivate. The best soil mix for A.p. is close to being a hydroponic type which is alternately flooded and drained. It has low water holding capacity and No cation exchange capacity (CEC) to speak of. The macropore air spaces are large and ensure good drainage and air circulation. The principal reason for plant problems is improper soil mix which suffocates the roots. The formulae quoted above remains a good approach . Think **1:2 potting soil: lava .rock/perlite**
2. Prevent the soil temp. above 80F by using a large container, ceramic ,wood or terra cotta. Overpotting is the rule for good growth .The leaf tolerance of high air temperatures is much higher than the roots' tolerance for high soil temperatures
3. Plant must have some outdoor light quality with UVA,UVB radiation to achieve good spiral form. Remember that it is Infrared radiation which heats up the container.
4. Use only water you would drink and enjoy; No chlorine, No salt , Not alkaline. No graywater .
5. Adult plants with 150+ leaf have the rated hardiness of 10 F if Winter sun is ~6 hours. Juvenile plants have less hardiness and should be protected.
6. Organic materials fertilizers are safe . No osmocote, No salty granular formulations. I use Miracle Gro at 50% strength and Dr. Earth .
7. Be watchful of ant activity and use chemical warfare to kill and deter them and aphids and mealy bugs by using 1% soap with some pyrethroid additive.
8. Never pull off leaf with tip necrosis mid spiral. The only grooming is to pull off the lowermost leaf when paper thin. The plant will release its hold on it when the goo is resorbed. At maximum size of ~175 leaf the ratio of new leaf creation to old leaf retirement is 1.
9. Healthy roots are yellow, dead roots are brown. If the plant collapses pull it up ,clean off the dead roots, and replant on moist soil in shade. In 2-3 weeks new roots form. I call this plant rehabilitation and is a normal and expected event in the life of A.p.. Adult container specimens require this every 5 years. Do not water the plant until a "tug test" proves that new roots are forming.

Healthy roots require much oxygen to inflate each leaf. High soil temperatures and/or very high soil moisture will suffocate the roots and the rosette collapses. Turgid leaf is a sign of good root physiology.

10. The above recommendations are written referenced to container plants, in the landscape a mound of sandy loam free of root competition from other plants will be a good start for 65-75 leaf plants and diminish concerns of high soil temps. The soil mix to accompany landscape planting can be higher bulk density. A sandy loam will suffice. The roots spread laterally at a depth which has sufficient oxygen to sustain them .
11. The use of the biological fungicide Actinovate SP has greatly decreased plant death by Fusarium, an ubiquitous primitive pathogen which plagues many plants. Your plant comes with Actinovate SP in the bark .