

Cycas revoluta - Care Guide

Caring For Cycas Revoluta

Japanese sago palm

Cycas are primitive seed plants with short trunks. *Cycas revoluta*, with its slow growth rate and elegant appearance, makes an ideal greenhouse or house plant if there is enough light. While it does need a frost free environment it does not need heat in the winter to survive and will enjoy being moved outside onto the patio in the summer months in its pot or container.

C. revoluta has a robust, single and erect trunk. In greenhouse or conservatory conditions the trunk may grow up to around 3ft. It is only in maturity that this palm will begin to produce side shoots or offsets which can be separated and potted on as new young plants.

This is primarily a foliage plant with arching leaves which slowly increase in size with age until they are each 2-4ft long. The leaves are pinnate with up to 125 sickle-shaped glossy dark green leaflets. Very rigid and very graceful too.

C. revoluta should be grown in a mixture of loam, compost, coarse bark and grit. Slow release fertiliser in the compost is beneficial and thereafter a seasonal top dressing of fertiliser will speed the growth and development of the plant. Full light is needed but, also, shade from direct sunlight. In the winter months reduce watering and humidity levels. Repotting into larger pots every couple of years is advisable.

Do not expect your *C. revoluta* to flower in a container and it certainly will not flower until maturity. If your greenhouse has a soil bed or raised bed then this would certainly be a candidate for the centre of it. When you do get inflorescences the male ones are pineapple scented and the female ones form rounded yellow fruits.

In Cornwall you do sometimes see these palms grown outside in hot seaside locations where they are fully sheltered from cold winds. However if temperatures drop below zero for any length of time the plants will not survive.



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