

KOKEDAMA INSTRUCTIONS

Supplies:

- 2 cups organic peat moss
- 2 cups organic potting soil
- 2 cups of muck soil (purchased from Bonsai Learning Center: <https://bonsailearningcenter.com/product/super-muck-for-bonsai-2/>)
- Sheet moss (Home Depot or Amazon)
- 4 inch plant
- 12 yards waxed thread (Amazon: Mandala Crafts Brown Flat Waxed Thread - 273 yds, 0.8mm polyester Leather Thread – 11.99)
- Clothespin
- Plastic gloves
- Paper plate
- Tray or pan for mixing soil
- 9 ounce cup for measuring soil and/or water
- Scissors
- Spray bottle
- Paper towels
- Plastic for floor and tables

Instructions:

1. Wrap string around clothespin and secure end in clip. Set aside.
2. Spread some pieces of the sheet moss on a paper plate with the green side down. Clean the moss by gently removing any sticks or bark pieces from the back side of the moss being careful not to tear it. Use pieces of moss to fill in any empty spots. Spritz both sides of the moss. Set this plate of moss aside.
3. Remove the plant from the pot and gently remove as much soil as possible from the roots. Set the plant aside.
4. Wearing plastic gloves and working on a protected work surface, measure soil into tray or pan and mix thoroughly breaking up any clumps. Add water, beginning with 1 cup, and mix thoroughly. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water and continue to mix. The soil mixture needs to be very damp. Add water in small amounts until the soil is completely damp – almost wet. Begin creating a ball by pressing the soil so that it begins to stick together. As you are pressing, small amounts of water will be released. Continue pressing the soil into a ball, rotating the ball and squeezing. This may take 10-15 minutes.

5. Once the soil is in the shape of a ball, take the soil ball and gently break it in half! Put the roots of the plant between each half of the soil ball ensuring that the top of the soil ball aligns with the top of the soil in which the plant was planted in its pot. Squeeze the soil ball together enclosing the roots in the sphere. This is an exercise in patience as the soil ball may fall apart! Keep working on incorporating the soil pieces back into the ball. Gently place the ball on the plate of dampened moss.
6. Fold the moss up and around the soil ball making certain that the soil is completely covered with moss. Spritz the moss with water to keep it soft and flexible.
7. Unravel a foot or so of the thread from the clothespin and slip it under the soil ball. Pull up both sides firmly and tie a knot at the top just under the leaves of the plant leaving a tail of 4-5 inches. Place the tail of the thread in the plant to keep it away from the moss ball. Holding the clothespin loosely, begin wrapping the string around the moss to secure the moss to the soil ball. Wrap it in different directions and over any bulging areas of moss so the it flattens and has a uniform look. Continue wrapping until the end of the string is reached. Tie the loose end of the string to the string on the top of the plant with a knot just under the leaves of the plant. Trim extra string. Voila! The Kokedama is finished!

Caring for the Kokedama:

Water your Kokedama by submerging it in water up to the top of the moss ball and leave it submerged for 5 minutes. Set a timer so that it is not overwatered. After 5 minutes, remove it gently from the water and squeeze out any excess water. Place on a small glass or plastic dish to protect the surface of the table or counter from water damage. In general, the Kokedama will need to be watered once every 5-7 days. The best way to tell if the Kokedama needs water is by lifting it. If it seems very light and dry, it needs to be watered.

Prepared originally by Katrina Peebles, Tarrant County Master Gardeners Association, and modified by Ginger Jones.