

# Ti Plant (Kū) Care Card

Cordyline fruticosa · kū · 🌿🌿🌿

*Ka'ala Lush Nursery*

Grown with aloha · Wai'anae, O'ahu

**Quick answer:** Ti plants (Cordyline fruticosa, Hawaiian kū) grow best in bright, filtered light with consistently moist, well-draining soil. Green-leaf varieties handle more sun than red or variegated ones. Brown leaf tips usually mean fluoride or salt in the water — rainwater fixes it. Propagate by cutting a cane into sections and rooting them in water or moist soil.

<b>Light</b>	Bright filtered light; green types take more sun than red/variegated	<b>Size</b>	3–10 ft canes, easily kept smaller
<b>Water</b>	Keep soil consistently moist, never swampy	<b>Pets</b>	Toxic to cats and dogs if chewed (saponins)
<b>Soil</b>	Rich, slightly acidic, well-draining	<b>Cultural note</b>	A Polynesian canoe plant — lei, hula, lau lau, and good luck
<b>Feeding</b>	Balanced fertilizer lightly, spring–fall	<b>Best spot in Hawaii</b>	Morning sun / afternoon shade, sheltered from wind

## Care essentials

**How much light does a ti plant need?** Ti plants color up best in bright, filtered light. The tough green-leaf kū that Hawaiians have grown for centuries handles nearly full sun once established, while the flashy red, pink, and variegated varieties scorch in hot afternoon sun and want morning sun or bright shade.

**How often should I water a ti plant?** Keep ti soil consistently moist — water when the top inch dries, which in warm weather means two or three times a week for pots. Ti plants are thirsty but hate sitting in swampy soil, so drainage matters as much as frequency.

**How do you grow a ti plant from a cutting or 'log'?** Ti is one of the easiest plants in the world to propagate — the old plantation trick is the ti 'log.' Cut a mature cane into 4–6 inch sections, remember which end was up, and either stand them upright in a glass with an inch of water or lay them sideways half-buried in moist potting mix. In a...

**Why are my ti plant's leaf tips turning brown?** Brown tips on ti plants come from three main causes. First and most common: fluoride and dissolved salts in tap water — ti are among the most fluoride-sensitive plants grown, and the damage shows up as dry brown tips and margins.

**What does the ti plant mean in Hawaiian culture?** Kū is a canoe plant — carried to Hawai'i by Polynesian voyagers — and few plants work harder in island life. The leaves (🌿🌿🌿) wrap lau lau and other food for the imu, are twisted into lei 🌿🌿🌿, layered into hula skirts, and used in blessings; planting ti around the home is traditional...

## Quick FAQ

- **Are ti plants toxic to pets?** Yes — ti plants contain saponins that are toxic to cats and dogs if chewed, causing vomiting and drooling. Keep them out of reach of pets that like to chew leaves.
- **How fast do ti plants grow?** In Hawaii's climate ti grow quickly — a rooted log can become a 3-foot plant in about a year. Growth is slower indoors or in cooler climates.
- **Can I plant ti outside on the mainland?** Ti are hardy outdoors only in frost-free zones (roughly USDA 10–12). Anywhere that freezes, grow ti in a pot and bring it inside for winter.

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Plants by appointment in Wai'anae, O'ahu — email [kaalalush@gmail.com](mailto:kaalalush@gmail.com) to arrange a pickup

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