



Pots, Pots and More Pots!

WHICH POTS SHOULD YOU USE TO
GROW AFRICAN VIOLETS?

So many choices!

There are a lot of different pots out there designed to grow African violets.

How do you use them? Where do you get them?

This program is going to explain your options and help you decide what is right for you and your growing conditions.

Types of pots:

Plastic pots

Self-watering pots

Ceramic pots

Clay pots

Resources





Plastic Pots and deli containers

Plastic pots and deli containers are used by many growers.

What are the pros and cons of this option?

How can you be successful with this choice?

Deli containers? Are there other options?

Alternative reservoirs will be described.



Advantages:

Constant water methods (wicking or capillary matting) work best with plastic pots. A self-watering wick pot can be improvised using a plastic tub with a lid.

Available in small and squat sizes.

Lightweight and virtually unbreakable.

Minimal evaporation, not prone to the accumulation of fertilizer salts or algae

Easy to clean and inexpensive

Disadvantages:

Does not have aesthetic appeal. Personal preference.

Not porous; plastic pots contribute less to the air moisture around the plants and aeration of the soil is reduced.

The biggest problem with plastic pots is also one of its attributes. Light weight makes them easy to use and to tip over!



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- You can compensate for the decreased humidity around the plants by misting and grouping your plants together or using a self-watering system.
 - Aeration of the soil, in plastic pots, can be increased by using a recommended potting mix which is comprised of light, porous materials.
 - The aesthetic appeal of plastic pots can be enhanced with a decorative outer container.



Many types of reservoirs can be used for wick watering with plastic pots. Experiment! Improvise!

2 1/2"

Oyama Planters

Measure very well size 2 1/2" height - 1" Single Plug to Close Healthy Growing Plants

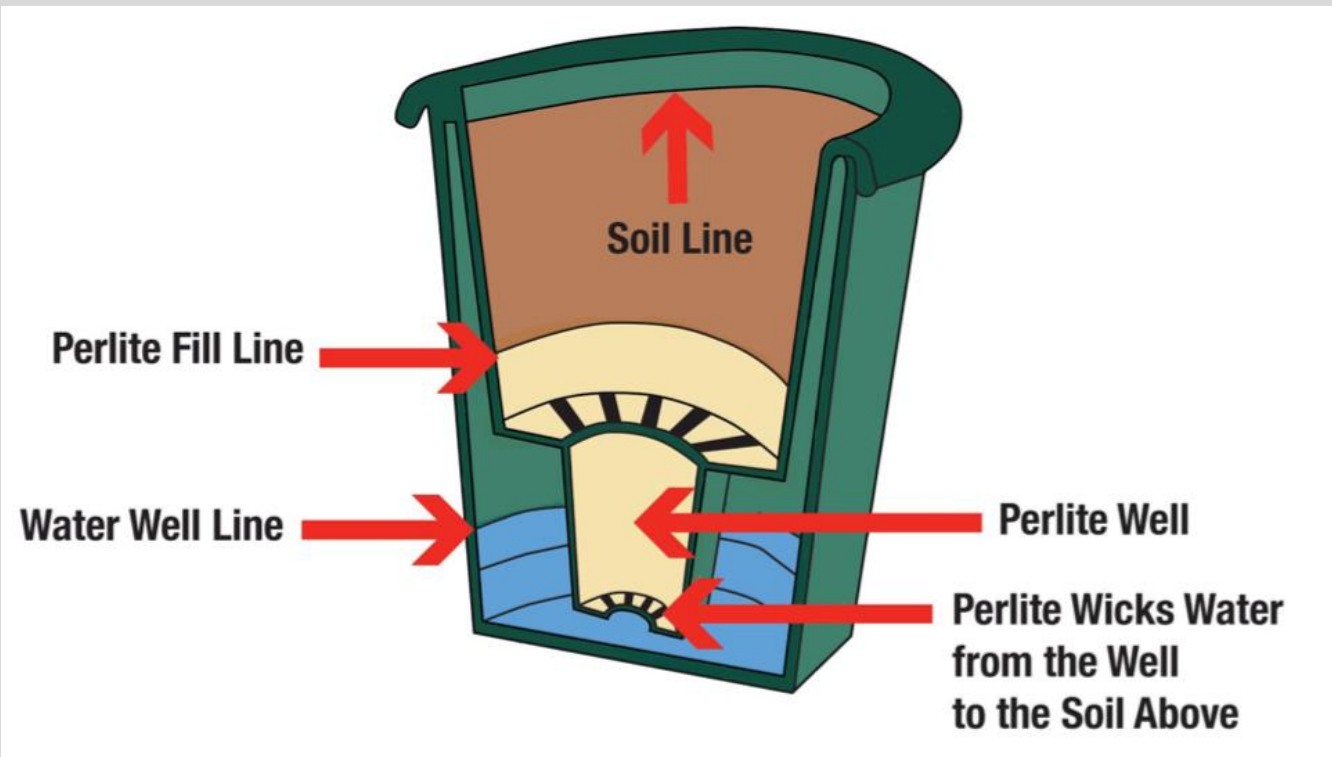
The Oyama Planter is a self-watering planter. It is designed to provide the proper amount of water to your plants. It is made of plastic and is easy to use. It is perfect for indoor plants and is a great gift for anyone who loves to garden.

HOW IT WORKS: This self-watering planter is designed to provide the proper amount of water to your plants. It is made of plastic and is easy to use. It is perfect for indoor plants and is a great gift for anyone who loves to garden.

WHAT YOU NEED: Oyama Planter, Soil, Water, Perlite, Wick, and a small amount of perlite.

WHAT YOU DO: Fill the planter with soil and water. Add a layer of perlite to the bottom. Insert the wick into the soil. The planter will automatically water your plants as they grow.

WATER: The planter will automatically water your plants as they grow. It is perfect for indoor plants and is a great gift for anyone who loves to garden.



Oyama Self-watering Planters

These 2-part self-watering planters are a violet's best friend. They make watering and growing easy.!

Features:

- The inner pot serves as your plant container
- The outer pot is the water reservoir
- Ventilation slits are for increased oxygenation
- Slits in the bottom pot create the self-watering absorption action

Advantages:

- Provides proper amounts of consistent moisture
- Roots can absorb moisture, nutrients, and oxygen through the perlite layer
- Opaque plastic inhibits growth of algae

Disadvantages:

- You can't see when the reservoir is empty
- If you let the plant dry out, you may need to restart the wicking action by watering from the top.
- Larger plants could use a bigger reservoir than the pot provides.

Tips for Success:

- Before refilling the reservoir, do the "lift" test. If the pot feels light, add to the reservoir. If it feels heavy, don't!
- A layer of dust free perlite in the stem is important for adequate wicking.

Instructions for Oyama pot

Inner Pot:

- Fill the stem with coarse, dust free perlite to the perlite line. Pour water through the stem to ensure the perlite is wet.
- Place a layer of soil mixture directly on top of the perlite.
- Place plant in inner planter and add soil mixture loosely.
- Gently press down on the soil mixture, but do not pack.

Outer Pot:

- Fill with water to the uppermost line of the outer pot.
- Rest the inner pot inside the outer pot.
- Wait a few hours and check the water level. Once all the water has been absorbed, add more only up to the most bottom line of the outer pot.

Important tips:

- Check the water level regularly. Only add water once the water in the outer pot has been completely absorbed and the soil feels a little dry.
- Clogged slits in the stem can prevent the pots from working well. Be sure to clean these out when reusing old pots.
- Use less fertilizer in all self watering pots. Every six weeks or so take the violets to the sink and run plain water through them until it runs clear. This washes out the fertilizer salts.



the WICK does the WATERING for WEEKS

Dandy Pots

Pretty and colorful even when your violet isn't blooming!

Are Dandy Pots the
right choice for
you?

DESIGNED FOR
AFRICAN VIOLETS

MAXIMIZES THE
PRECISION OF WICK
WATERING

A COLORFUL,
ATTRACTIVE POT
THAT BOOSTS THE
BLOOMS OF
FLOWERS.

Advantages:

Dandy pots are a combination of pot and wicking reservoir.

The potting mix must be porous to avoid over-saturated soil

These can be watered from the top on occasion to leach out salts.

The wide lip, or top edge, makes a good support for the leaves.

Easy to clean, the polished plastic washes well. Lots of colors and three sizes; 2 in, 4 in, 6 in

Disadvantages:

They can take up a lot of room on your stand.

The two-piece reservoir separates easily. Sometimes too easily!

If you intend to enter your plant in an AVSA show, these pots are not allowed.

Expensive, a single pot costs \$12.99!

Two-piece ceramic pots



The most decorative pots!

But...there's a catch!

Double ceramic pots that have an inside pot with an unglazed bottom to absorb water.

These pots work by allowing water to seep through the unglazed part of the inside pot.

The bottom of the inside pot must be in contact with the water for moisture to move through the clay into the potting mix.

The rate of seepage varies, and some plants get too wet while others are too dry.

Algae builds up on the unglazed surface and prevents wicking.

These pots lack drainage holes, which means that salts cannot be leached out of the potting mix and you must repot more frequently to replace the mix.

Expensive! Cost ranges from \$11.00 to +\$30.00

Clay Pots



YOU CAN USE CLAY
POTS, BUT THESE ARE
THE LEAST
RECOMMENDED FOR
AFRICAN VIOLETS.

YOU WOULD HAVE TO
CONTINUOUSLY
MONITOR THE
WATERING IN CLAY
POTS, AS THEY DRY OUT
QUICKLY.

THE CYCLE OF
WET/DRY SOIL CAN
STRESS OUT THE
AFRICAN VIOLET PLANT
ROOTS.

THEY CAN DEVELOP
MOLD IN AND AROUND
THE POTS.

Why not Clay pots?

What are the benefits and drawbacks of clay pots?

1. An unglazed, clay pot is porous which allows air and water to get to the plant's root system. It provides a greater amount of aeration to the soil and increases the amount of humidity around your plant as water soaks through the clay and evaporates into the air.

2. Great for giving plants a good soak, letting water through the pot into the soil or potting mixture.

3. Terra cotta sheds excess water for quick evaporation. The evaporation that occurs with clay pots keeps the potting mix cooler in hot climates.

1. You will need to water more frequently because of too quick evaporation. The porosity of the clay also makes the potting mix dry out quicker requiring more frequent watering.

2. Porosity encourages the growth of algae and the accumulation of fertilizer salts and increases the rate of water loss.

3. Pores in terra cotta pots are good hiding places for mites, bacteria and other pathogens.

4. Heavy and difficult to clean and sterilize.

Swift Moist Rite Planter

This one-piece, self-watering, square plastic pot can help you grow luxuriant African Violets.

Or can it?



Swift "Moist-Rite" Planter Kit
Great for African Violets

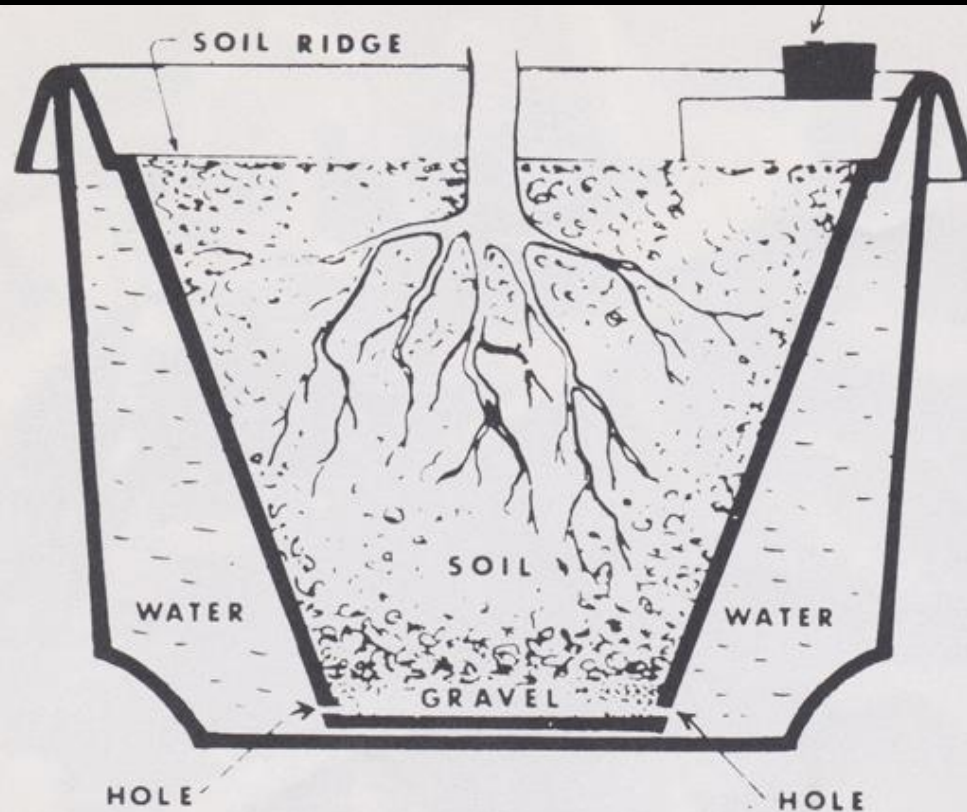
They aren't
pretty...
How do they
work?

One-piece, self-watering, square plastic pot which holds 15 oz of solution.

The outer water reservoir has a small hole and a rubber stopper where water is replaced.

There are tiny outlet holes at the base of the inner pot that allow the water to slowly seep from the reservoir walls into the soil chamber watering the plant from the bottom.

Sand or grit is placed in the very bottom of the soil chamber before adding the soil and the plant.



The large water storage allows long intervals between refills. Sometimes several weeks—depending on the plant.

Small outlet holes near the inside bottom edge allow the plant to draw moisture as required.

Swift Moist Rite Planter

Advantages:

Large sealed reservoir so evaporation is slow

Stable pot

Durable hard plastic

The shape of the inner chamber is supposed to promote good growth.

Many colors

Disadvantages:

Hard to clean inner reservoir

Hard to tell when the reservoir is empty

Leach watering is impossible

Unattractive

Expensive (\$9 to \$10 per pot)

Something new to try...

4 IN Terracotta Clay Pot w/
Qwick Cover dual plastic pot
insert

These are new self-watering
containers OPTIMARA
designed for shipping their
violets to stores.

Only available through
SelectiveGardener.



It's complicated and it's expensive!

3 pots for 1 plant!



The grow pot rests on top of a cone in the second pot

A circular water well surrounds the cone shaped bump

The cone keeps soil above water-level, preventing waterlogging

A triangular wick rests on the cone, touching the drain-holes of the grow pot

The shape of the wick ensures two sides will always contact water, providing consistent moisture

Snug interior sizing ensures minimal water loss through evaporation

Optional outer clay out pot hides the Qwik pot

Cost is \$6 for clay and \$1.50 for Qwik cover pot

Only one size 4 inch

Resources:

- Plastic round pots, square pots, Oyama Pots, Wick Water Reservoirs
Enchanted Gardens
<https://www.enchantedgardensplantsupplies.com/>
- Self-watering Ceramic Pots:
Violet Supply <https://www.violetsupply.com>
Etsy <https://www.etsy.com>
- Clay pots:
Local garden centers sell most sizes of clay pots.
- Deli containers:
Grocery stores, dollar stores, Amazon.
Enchanted Gardens offers a large variety of sizes with predrilled holes in the lids.
- Dandy Pots:
The Peacock Cottage
<http://dandypot.com/>
- Swift Moist Rite planters
<http://swiftmoistriteplanters.com>
- Qwick Cover Pots and clay pots
<http://www.selectivegardener.com/>