

How to Pot A Hardy Water Lily

Prepare the water lily rhizome for potting:

To repot a water lily from your own mother plant, use a sharp knife to trim away excess roots and cut the furled leaves' stems close to the rhizome. (If you will immediately return the plant to the pond, you need not remove so many of the leaves; do your repotting in a shady place and keep the plant covered with wet newspapers until it can be returned to the pond.) Trim the rhizome to no more than 2 or 3 inches long. Discard the oldest portion of the rhizome that appears hollow and dead. Any growing points on the rhizome can be separated in this manner. You may find several sections capable of producing a blooming plant on a single mother plant. Even rooted growing eyes can be potted in small pots to grow until they are large enough for moving into larger pots.

To Pot odorata and tuberosa type rhizomes, nuphar, and water hawthorne (Aponogoton):

1. Use as large a pot as you can manage, at least 5-gallon. Space one aquatic plant tab per gallon of soil evenly around the bottom of the container.
2. Fill the pot three-quarters full with dampened potting mix, mounding the soil slightly for the rhizome so that it can be placed at a 45° angle with the cut edge against the side wall of the pot and the growing tip pointing into the center of the pot. This will give the rhizome maximum growing room across the pot.
3. If the rhizome still has viable roots attached to it, spread them across the soil.
4. Fill the remaining space in the container with soil, tamping it to ensure root contact and minimal air spaces. Leave the growing tip free of soil.
5. Top with an inch of river stone kept free of the growing tip.
6. Gently lower the potted plant into the pond water to the desired depth. Usually a freshly potted plant is placed with shallow water over the pot until leaf production indicates roots have established. The plant can then be moved to its normal depth. If, however, you have retained long-stemmed leaves and roots on the plant, it can be set in its normal depth.

An alternate method of planting a well-trimmed rhizome is to fill the pot full of soil and have it submerged in water. Simply wiggle in the trimmed rhizome at the edge of the pot until the soil covers all but the growing tip.