

Light is food for plants

Plants use light to nourish themselves. They can harness the energy contained in light to create their food from water and carbon dioxide (CO₂). Chlorophyll acts as a catalyst in this process. This process is called photosynthesis.

First, carbohydrates are formed, which are later converted into proteins and fats. Other plant products like fibers and wood ultimately come from this "light production." Plants, animals, and humans rely on the products of photosynthesis from plants. Therefore, it is crucial for plants to always have enough light and green leaf mass to carry out photosynthesis.

The human eye cannot accurately assess light intensity. What we perceive as "bright" can mean starvation for plants. This is especially important for houseplants. Behind a double or even triple-glazed window, most plants suffer from a lack of light. Only a few, which grow in the underbrush of rainforests, can thrive with the amount of light behind a window.

Houseplants like African violets (*Saintpaulia*), azaleas (*Rhododendron simsii*), and cyclamen (*Cyclamen*) also suffer from insufficient light. They are always grateful for an additional light source, such as a special plant light. Fortunately, plant lights are now available with LEDs that consume little electricity. If you want to know how much less light is behind your living room window, a lux meter or smartphone app can provide clarity.

Unfortunately, fertilizers and minerals are referred to as "plant nutrients." However, they do not actually nourish the plant but serve a supplementary function similar to vitamins and minerals in humans.