

Begonias 101- An Introduction to Begonias

What makes a plant a begonia?

- leaves alternate on the stem
- leaves are asymmetrical
- male and female flowers appear on the same plant
- leaves have stipules
- flowers have bracts

Species vs. Hybrid

Species - a plant as it grows in nature, a "wild" begonia

Propagation by seed (self-cross) produces the same type plant as the parent.

Hybrid - a variety created by crossing two different types of plants.

Propagation by seed produces a different type plant than the parent(s)

BEGONIA CLASSIFICATIONS

Cane-like

- "angel wing" type
- stems erect or semi-erect with bamboo-like nodes
- does not branch easily, sends new shoots up from the base
- usually needs some sun to bloom
- propagation technique: stem cuttings
- prune in winter or early spring to control size

Shrub-like

- bushy, branches easily
- sends up shoots from the base
- usually seasonal bloomers
- propagation technique: stem cuttings

Rhizomatous

- has rhizomes, which store food and water
- sensitive to over watering or over-potting
- need bright, indirect light

-blooms winter to early spring

-propagation techniques: leaf cuttings, leaf wedges/squares or rhizome tips

Rex Cultorum

Thick-stem

Trailing/scandent

Tuberous/semi-tuberous

Source: American Begonia Society, Astros Branch, Houston, Texas <http://begoniahouston.org/>

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