



# cyclamen



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Photo courtesy of The John Henry Company

*Cyclamen persicum*  
Florist's Cyclamen

### BOTANICAL NAME

*Cyclamen persicum*  
(SIK-la-men PER-si-kum)

### COMMON NAME

Florist's *Cyclamen*  
(SY-kla-men, as a common name)

### DESCRIPTION

*Cyclamen* plants bear distinctive five-petaled blooms atop smooth, slender, leafless stems. The blooms are downward pointing but strongly reflexed, resembling butterflies; waxy; and sometimes ruffled or edged with a contrasting color. They rise above a dense base of fleshy, heart-shaped or kidney-shaped leaves, which often are

marbled light and dark green with silver bands. Some varieties feature silver leaves with green highlights.

### COLORS

*Cyclamens* are available in red, pink, salmon, purple, lavender, white and bicolors.

### DECORATIVE LIFE

*Cyclamens* can flower for two to four months, with individual blooms lasting up to three weeks. Once flowering stops, the plants can survive for several more months.

### AVAILABILITY

*Cyclamens* are available year-round, but peak availability is approximately from October through March.

## in-store and consumer care

**LIGHT** Place *Cyclamens* in a bright environment but *out of direct sunlight*.

**WATER** Keep plants *moderately moist* at all times. Water thoroughly when the soil surface is dry to the touch. *Cyclamens* are extremely sensitive to both underwatering and overwatering, so never allow plants to dry out and wilt, and, conversely, never allow the pots to sit in water for prolonged periods.

Ideally, place pots in a shallow container of tepid water for 15 to 30 minutes (the soil will absorb water from the holes in the bottom of the pots), then allow them to drain. If you water from the top, drip water just inside the edges of the pot to avoid getting water in the plants' crown, on the tuber or on the leaves.

**TEMPERATURE** These plants prefer *cool* environments—preferably 60 F to 65 F during the daytime and 50 F to 60 F at night. Placing *Cyclamens* in a warm room or near heat sources will shorten their life dramatically.

**HUMIDITY** When flowering, *Cyclamens* require *high humidity*. Place pots on a pebble tray, making sure the bottoms of the pots are out of the water. Also occasionally mist the air around the plants.

**FERTILIZER** Feed *Cyclamens* every two weeks

while in bloom with a high-phosphorous plant food mixed at half strength. Do not feed dormant plants.

**GROOMING** Remove blooms and leaves as they fade, carefully cutting, twisting or pinching the stems off at the crown.

## challenges

**YELLOWING/SHRIVELING LEAVES** Underwatering, too-high temperature, too-low humidity, exposure to direct sunlight

**PALE/LIMP/DEFORMED LEAVES, BLOOMS** Spider mites and/or *Cyclamen* mites

**SHRIVELING/DRYING FLOWER BUDS** Underwatering, not enough light, too-low humidity, too-high temperature, exposure to ethylene

**SHORT BLOOM LIFE** Too-high temperature, too-low humidity, underwatering, overwatering, not enough or wrong kind of fertilizer, exposure to ethylene

**PLANT COLLAPSE, ROTTING CROWN** Overwatering, water on the crown and/or tuber, too-high temperature

**DISEASE/MOLD** Overwatering, water on the crown and/or tuber, too-high temperature, poor air circulation

**PESTS/MITES** Too-high temperature, too-low humidity. Discard plants, or remove affected leaves and treat with a neem-based insecticide.

## fun facts

**WHAT'S IN A NAME** The genus name *Cyclamen* is presumably from the Greek word "kylos," meaning "circle," in reference to the rounded tubers. The specific epithet "*persicum*" means "of Persia," referring to the nativity of this species of *Cyclamen*.

**FAMILY** *Cyclamen* is a member of the *Primulaceae* (primrose) family. Besides primroses, relatives include loosestrife (*Lysimachia*).

**HOME SWEET HOME** These plants are native to the eastern Mediterranean region, including the countries of Greece, Turkey, Cypress, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, and the northern African countries of Egypt and Libya. **sfr**

Some information provided by:  
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