

GROW A PLANT INDOORS

A pot plant with pretty flowers can brighten an entire room – but indoor plants are good for animals and humans in other ways too

THROUGH the process of photosynthesis plants transform sunlight into the energy they need to grow.

The elements needed for photosynthesis are water, sunlight and the gas carbon dioxide, which is present in the air.

One of the byproducts of the process is oxygen – which humans and animals need to breathe in order to stay alive. And the air humans and animals breathe out contains car-

bon dioxide, which plants need! So one of the many benefits of plants is that they're nature's air purifiers – they remove the carbon dioxide we breathe out as well as other harmful gases in the atmosphere, and release oxygen we can breathe in.

Some people spend up to 90% of their day inside sealed buildings where they breathe air-conditioned air – so it makes sense to have indoor pot plants to increase the amount of oxygen available.

OTHER BENEFITS

Through their natural processes, plants add humidity to the air and improve general air quality.

Green plants can help to make a home or workplace look more natural – which helps to relieve stress.

The presence of plants has a calming effect and seems to make people feel happier.

Plants are good for our brain, making us more creative and productive.

Plants absorb noise, thereby contributing to a quieter environment.

Plants in the workplace help to boost positivity among colleagues.

THREE AMAZINGLY EFFICIENT AIR PURIFIERS

Next time you want to give someone a gift, consider a plant. The plants below are especially good at purifying air. A gift like this will show people you care about them as it will provide cleaner air for them to breathe.

MOTHER-IN-LAW'S TONGUE

This plant is able to remove the chemicals **benzene**, **formaldehyde** and **xylene** from the air. Unlike the processes of the two plants below, those of mother-in-law's tongue (*Sansevieria trifasciata*) work best at night.

SPIDER PLANT

The spider plant (*Chlorophytum comosum*) is a fast grower and is easy to care for. It filters **formaldehyde** and **xylene** from the air.

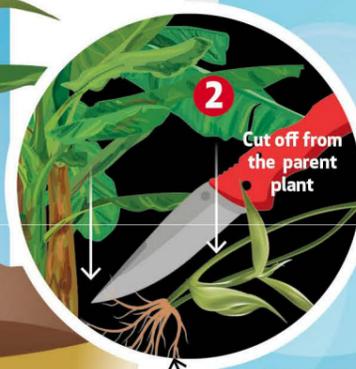
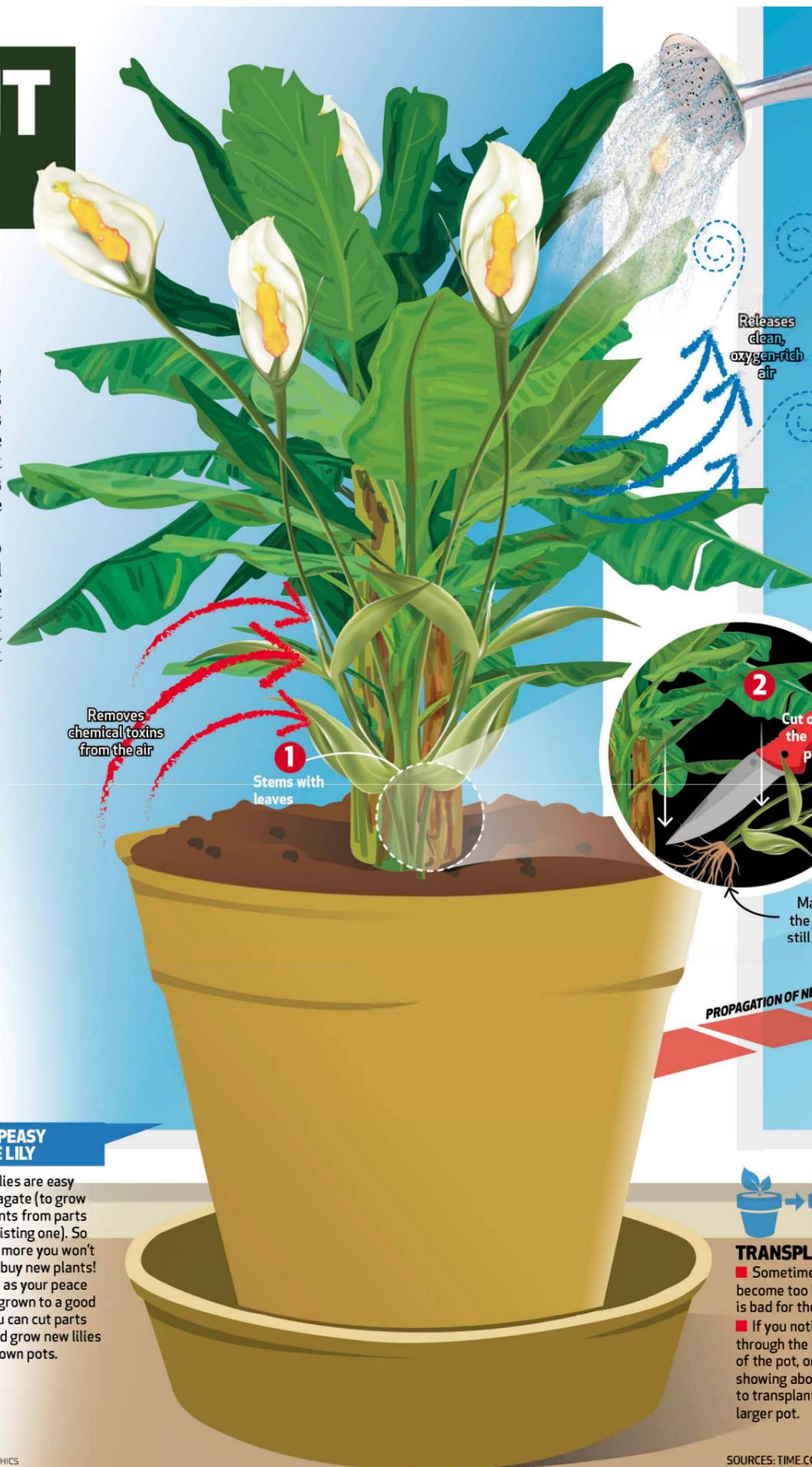
PEACE LILY

Formaldehyde, **xylene**, **benzene** and **ammonia** are some of the toxins this plant removes from the air. Peace lilies (*Spathiphyllum wallisii*) are also known for replenishing moisture in the air.



EASY PEASY PEACE LILY

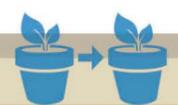
Peace lilies are easy to propagate (to grow new plants from parts of an existing one). So to grow more you won't have to buy new plants! As soon as your peace lily has grown to a good size, you can cut parts off it and grow new lilies in their own pots.



PROPAGATION/TRANSPANTING

Propagation or transplanting is the process of using seeds, buds or other parts of the original plant to grow a new plant. Peace lilies are easily propagated by grouping a few of the long stems of the original plant together. These plants naturally group stems together, making them easy to transplant.

- 1 Choose a group of stems with two or more leaves and separate from the original plant using a sharp knife.
- 2 Try to preserve as many of the original roots as possible when cutting off the stems for transplanting.
- 3 Plant the new group of stems in the same kind of soil as the original pot plant and water immediately.
- 4 Don't add any fertiliser to the new plant's pot for the first two months of growth.



TRANSPANT

- Sometimes a potted plant can become too big for its pot – which is bad for the plant.
- If you notice roots growing through the holes in the bottom of the pot, or if roots start showing above the soil, it's time to transplant the plant into a larger pot.

YOU PRIMARY SCHOOL



WATER
Peace lilies don't need a lot of water – watering once a week is enough. Although this plant needs moist soil to grow in, it will die if you overwater it.

LIGHT
Peace lilies are happiest without lots of direct sunlight – another reason why they're a good choice to have indoors. If your plant is getting too much sunlight, the leaves will turn yellow. If you start to notice brown spots or stripes, it means the plant has been scorched by too much direct sunlight.

SOIL
The soil you use for your potted plants plays a crucial role in plant growth. And a study has shown that the micro-organisms that are naturally present in soil can also help to purify the air indoors.

What is perlite?
Because peace lilies shouldn't be overwatered, you need to ensure the soil you use doesn't absorb too much water. If it does, add a little coarse sand or perlite – small, white volcanic globules that help absorb excess water from moist soil. You can get it from a nursery.

Be careful!
Peace lilies can be poisonous to pets if they eat them, so don't put your pot plant on the floor – it's best to keep it on a table or counter.

