

What do I need?

A suitable plant*

Potting compost

Sphagnum moss

Cotton thread

Scissors

Plate or tray

Water

*Such as ferns, orchids, succulents, ivy or spider plant.



Japanese kokedama

What do I do?

Look at page 2 to learn about the Japanese art of kokedama (moss ball planting).

Remove your plant from its pot. Use your fingers to gently brush the compost away from the roots, taking care not to break or damage them.

Pour some compost onto your plate or tray. Begin adding small amounts of water to it, mixing both together to form a wet cake-like consistency.

Use your hands to knead the mixture into a ball big enough to encase the root ball of your plant. Squeeze any excess moisture from the compost so it holds together well.

Divide your compost ball into two halves by gently twisting it in the middle with your hands. Place the plant roots between the two halves and remould the compost ball around them. You can fill in gaps with any leftover compost mix.

Lay your sphagnum moss out on the tray and wrap it around your compost ball until it is completely covered. Wind cotton thread round and around your moss ball to hold it all in place. Leave a long length so you can hang it up on display away from direct sunlight.

You'll need to water your kokedama around twice a week in winter and every other day in Summer. To do this, submerge your moss ball in a bucket of water for a few minutes and hang it up to allow excess water to drain away. Mist the moss ball with water from a spray bottle in between soakings to keep the root ball moist.

Japanese kokedama

Kokedama or 'moss ball' is a Japanese planting method using moss to wrap plant roots to enable plants to be hung up like a piece of sculpture or artwork.

Like bonsai, kokedama originates from the Japanese philosophy of wabi-sabi, the belief that beauty is found in every imperfection in nature. Kokedama is a craft which appreciates the simplicity of nature and seeks to bring a natural influence and calming atmosphere to any environment, including indoor spaces.

'Moss ball planting' arose from the old bonsai method of Nearai - a practice in which a plant roots are grown very tightly in a pot that so that when they are removed form a compact ball that can be put on display. The art of Kokedama developed as gardeners began to use moss and thread to encase the root ball so they did not have to wait for the roots to grow into a tight ball within a pot.

