

Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria excelsa*)



This is a pine tree and it does come from Norfolk Island in the South Pacific, off the coast of Australia. Imagine—a pine tree that you can keep indoors.

They grow naturally to 60 metres or taller. The size of pot you grow it in will determine how tall yours may grow, but never replot to a pot more than 2" larger at a time. Use STANDARD POTTING SOIL (see "Potting Soil" on page 25 of *Keeping Them Alive*).

I have seen them in PHILODENDRON SOIL and they didn't seem to mind it.

This is not the easiest plant to keep indoors. It is very important to keep the soil moist at all times. Just before it dries completely, water enough to moisten the soil without soaking it. They definitely do not like to be dry. As soon as a Norfolk Pine dries, the branches will start to brown and dry. As with any pine, these branches are irreplaceable. Branches will fall off from the bottom off and there is not way to have the plant grow more to replace them.

Humidity should be kept above 30%. Norfolk Pines enjoy being misted.

Bright light is best—neither full sun nor too dark, although partial shade is OK. They prefer a cool spot.

New plants can be had from seed or from a tip that has been rooted (use the main stem tip. Side shoots do not produce well-shaped plants).

Paling foliage is an indication of mites, which are very hard to find and treat on a pine tree. You may find mealybugs more easily, although they aren't much easier to treat because of the many small needles and crevices.