

Low-Light Houseplants Compared

Eight common plants, what the sources say about their light and water, and what the ASPCA lists for cats and dogs

Low light is not no light. NC State's plant pages say several of these plants *tolerate* very low light, and the same pages usually say they do better with brighter, indirect light. Read the light column as what the plant survives, and the light note as what it prefers.

Plant	Light listing	What the source says	Watering	Cats / Dogs
Snake plant <i>Sansevieria trifasciata</i>	Partial shade (direct sun 2 to 6 hours a day)	Tolerates very low light.	Let the soil dry between waterings from spring to autumn; do not overwater.	Toxic Toxic
ZZ plant <i>Zamioculcas zamiifolia</i>	Deep shade to partial shade	Grows in very low light, even under fluorescent light, but does best in bright indirect light.	Water routinely but let it dry out between waterings; wet roots are not tolerated.	Not listed Not listed
Pothos <i>Epipremnum aureum</i>	Bright, indirect light preferred	Survives long periods in low light; low light can cause loss of variegation.	Let the potting mix dry out between waterings.	Toxic Toxic
Peace lily <i>Spathiphyllum</i>	Deep shade to partial shade	NC State lists deep and partial shade and gives no further light advice.	Keep the soil moist, not soggy; allow it to dry between waterings.	Toxic Toxic
Spider plant <i>Chlorophytum comosum</i>	Dappled sun to deep shade	Prefers medium light but tolerates deep shade.	Grows best in moist soil; tolerant of drought and dry soil.	Non-toxic Non-toxic
Cast iron plant <i>Aspidistra elatior</i>	Dappled sun to deep shade	Called a good choice for low-light areas and indoor pots.	Water regularly from spring to autumn, sparingly in winter.	Non-toxic Non-toxic
Chinese evergreen <i>Aglaonema</i>	Deep shade to partial shade	Does well in diffuse sun or good indirect light; may not flower if light is low.	Keep the mix moist from spring to fall; over-watering can cause root rot.	Toxic Toxic
Corn plant <i>Dracaena fragrans</i>	Bright to moderate, filtered light	Too little light narrows the leaves; direct sun can burn them.	Keep the soil moist while growing; cut back in winter.	Toxic Toxic

What this sheet leaves out

No watering intervals in days: the sources give a rule (let the soil dry, keep it moist) and not a number. No distances from the window: the sources used here don't give them. The ZZ plant has no ASPCA entry, so its pet-safety line is unknown, not safe.

Pet-safety column

Verdicts are what the ASPCA lists for each plant. Three of the eight are non-toxic or unlisted; the rest are listed as toxic to both cats and dogs. Search any other plant in the [Low Light Leaf toxicity checker](#).

Full care guides for these plants: <https://lowlightleaf.com/>. Not veterinary advice.