

# Information and Care Instructions

## Mossed Ivy Topiary with no Pot

### Quick Reference

- Botanical Name - Hedera helix
- Exposure - Bright, Indirect
- Indoor Placement - Bright location but not in direct sun light
- USDA Hardiness - Zone 5a-9b
- Inside Temperature - 40 - 80° F
- Min Outside Temperature - -20° F
- Plant Type - Evergreen
- Watering - Allow soil to dry out slightly before watering
- Fertilizing - Fertilize monthly

### Detailed Care

Your Mossed Ivy Topiary has been carefully hand made. A sturdy wire frame is stuffed with moss, wrapped with fishing line to define its shape and then a pot of ivy with long runners (without its plastic pot) is planted in the broadest part of the body/frame. The ivy vines are then pinned to the mossy shape or twined around the exposed wire frame.

#### WATERING

1. Water once the area of the Topiary from whence the ivy vines originate seems slightly dry to the touch under the surface; check frequently, especially if kept in a hot, dry spot.
2. When watering, use sufficient clean water poured slowly and directly on the area where the vines originate to thoroughly wet that portion of the Topiary. In order not to damage your furniture, countertop or floor, place your Mossed Ivy Topiary in a saucer, bowl or sink when watering. Do not allow the Topiary to sit in water for any more than 5 minutes or damage to the roots may occur. Avoid continuous use of softened water as the sodium in it can build up to damaging levels in the soil.
3. Sprinkling or misting the vines and leaves with water several times per week is also beneficial to keeping your plant looking good and preventing insect pests.
4. Fertilize lightly with a complete, quality fertilizer once a month if your plant is actively growing. Avoid over-fertilizing...a little is good but a lot is not!
5. Occasionally, during the warmest months, your Topiary may be watered by thoroughly wetting its entire body using a hose or sink or even placing it on your lawn under the sprinklers while it is being irrigated. This will encourage the vines that are pinned to the body to make roots into the moss. Only do this while it is very warm or the body will stay wet too long which causes the moss to deteriorate and fungal diseases to take hold.

#### PLACEMENT OF YOUR TOPIARY

If you wish to keep your Topiary indoors, choose a spot with lots of natural light like near a north, south or east facing window. West facing windows tend to have too much direct afternoon sun so avoid placing your Topiary directly next to one. Artificial lights (e.g. lamps) do not provide enough light to keep Ivy alive unless the Topiary is placed within 2 feet of the bulb and it is illuminated for at least 10 hours per day every day. A location that is near a window or door that is frequently open is beneficial to keeping your Topiary healthy also. For best results, after 2 or 3 weeks of being inside, your Topiary would like a 1 to 2 week "vacation" outside on a covered porch or patio (please read the outdoor placement section in the next paragraph), especially during the non-winter months. This will help it to resume active growing and rebuild reserves used up while indoors. If you wish to keep your Topiary outdoors, any spot that does not receive direct afternoon sun should suffice. A sheltered porch or patio or under trees with dappled sunlight are perfect places for Ivy to thrive. If kept outdoors your Mossed Ivy Topiary must be protected from freezing temperatures as they will damage its root system. Think of moving it indoors to a bright spot during the freezing months.

For best results, if you have a good outdoor spot to keep your Topiary as described above, keep it mostly outdoors and move it inside for periodic needs such as decorating for a party or holiday or just because you want to liven up a certain room!



### Mossed Ivy Topiary with no Pot Detail Care Instructions Continued:



#### PEST PROTECTION

Ivy is susceptible to certain insects such as spider mites, aphids and mealybugs. The best way to treat them is to prevent them and the best way to prevent them is to frequently and regularly sprinkle the leaves and vines with clean water. During the summer when the insects are most active it is a good idea to sprinkle your Topiary once a day and once a week give it a good rinsing under the faucet or hose. Care should be taken, however, avoid wetting the moss too much, as this will cause overwatering. Only water the "body" of the Topiary when the plant needs to be watered!

If, despite your best efforts, one of these insects does manage to become established, you may spray your Topiary with most any store-bought insecticide that is labeled to control your insect.

Ivy may also suffer from fungal leaf spots or fungal root rot. The leaf spots are caused by too much moisture on the leaves for too long. When sprinkling/misting your Topiary always do it in the morning or during the heat of the day while there is still time for the water to evaporate from the leaves. The root rot is caused by over watering or over-fertilizing or a combination of the two. Both of them cause the plant to become weakened and thus susceptible to attack by the fungus. Ivy prefers to be kept on the dry side...but not too dry!

#### KEEPING YOUR TOPIARY LOOKING GOOD

Over time the vines on your Topiary are likely to grow. It is entirely a personal choice of what to do with these vines. Some people prefer to keep the Topiary looking as it did upon arrival by trimming off unwanted growth. Others would prefer to completely fill their Topiary by twining this growth around the wire frame or pinning it to the mossed body (use any type of U-shaped pin that is strong enough to penetrate the packed moss taking care not to crush the ivy vine). If a vine happens to die-off, simply cut it off where it has begun to die, remove the pins that hold it to the body and then re-pin a new vine in that area. Ivy leaves have a tendency to become larger if kept in low light; if your Topiary develops some leaves that become too large for your liking, simply clip them off right next to where their petiole (leaf stem) emerges from the vine, taking care not to cut the vine itself.

#### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Is the moss stuffing alive and how do I take care of it?**

The moss that is stuffed into the frame may or may not still be alive. If it is greenish in color it is most likely still alive. If it is brown it is likely dead. In either case there is nothing to worry about. If the moss is alive it will likely be kept alive by the water that you sprinkle onto the body regularly. If the moss is dead or dies it will keep its qualities and shape for a very long time.

**How do I water my Topiary?**

Use sufficient clean water poured slowly and directly on the area where the ivy vines originate to thoroughly wet that portion of the Topiary. Be sure to remove your Topiary from any furniture etc. when watering as the water that drains may damage your furniture etc.

**How often do I need to fertilize my Topiary?**

If your Topiary is growing, lightly fertilize it once a month. Often in the winter you may not need to give it any fertilizer until it starts to grow again in the spring.

**Can I place my Topiary in full sunlight?**

No. Your topiary was grown in a shaded greenhouse and can't tolerate direct afternoon sun. Affected leaves will turn brown and crispy very quickly. Direct morning sun is ok however. Also, Ivy grows under trees in its native habitat, not in direct sunlight.

**What do I do if the Ivy on my Topiary grows too long?**

You may either trim off unwanted growth or pin it to the mossy body of your Topiary. You can make your Topiary look how you would like it!

**What can I do if after many years I need to add moss to the Topiary body?**

If your Topiary has mostly been kept indoors, it is likely that you will never need to add more moss. If your Topiary has mostly been kept outdoors you can add more moss if the original moss has decomposed. Simply purchase the moss at a local garden center or craft store or at an online retailer, buy a little bit of fine fishing line and have some fun. Add the moss in small bits at a time and tightly wrap the fishing line around it to hold it on and shape it. Note: it takes practice to accurately make a desired shape!

**Can I add accessories to my Topiary?**

Of course you can! You can leave it plain or you can dress it up with whatever you like to create a more festive look. Ribbon can be tied to it, bows or other accessories can be pinned on however you like. Cut flowers with individual water tubes can be attached to it or jabbed into the soil.

**Where should I put my Topiary?**

Your Topiary can be placed indoors or outdoors. In either case it needs lots of indirect sunlight. Outdoors it should be in a protected location such as a shaded porch or patio. Indoors it needs to be in a spot with lots of natural light.