

Plumeria Cuttings: Making and Rooting

Growing Plumeria from cuttings is the only way to reproduce cultivars and retain all characteristics of the desired plant. Plumeria are easy to root from cuttings and will grow with a minimum of care. In fact, growing Plumeria from cuttings is an easy and rewarding way to increase your collection and have extra plants to share or trade with friends.

When

Cuttings may be taken at any time of the year, however, root establishment appears to be most successful in the spring and early summer. Plumeria cuttings may be stored in a warm and dry location for many months. There are cases where Plumeria cuttings have been found on a shelf after 2 years of storage that have grown when planted. This is not recommended however. The best results are when the cuttings are allowed to root and grow within a few weeks of their liberation from the donor plant.

Last summer, some fellow members told me that they make cuttings in November, lay the cuttings out on newspaper in a protected area until the leaves fall off. When the leaves have fallen off, they dip the cut end into water then RooTone® and pot them up into 1 gallon containers. The potted cuttings are watered in well then stored for the winter. No more water is given until spring. When spring arrives, the cuttings have rooted and are well on their way much sooner than cuttings taken even in very early spring.

Source

When you have a Plumeria that you would like to propagate, carefully study the limb tips. For cuttings, choose healthy, robust limb tips. The tips with 2 or more growing points may make more compact plants for container growth, but branches with only one tip will also do fine. Plumeria cuttings are likely to be best if made 12 to 18 inches in length and include a bit of gray barked wood. Shorter cuttings often have more difficulty in striking root and will generally take longer to reach blooming size. Larger cuttings will root very well but are occasionally difficult to stabilize during the rooting process. Cuttings can be taken from any Plumeria plant having limb(s) meeting the above length criteria. Cuts should be made at an oblique angle to the limb being cut. This serves two purposes, one it gives the cutting more root callus formation area and the other, having an angled surface on the donor plant limb avoids water collection on this surface. Use a very sharp knife, pruners, or a saw to make the cuts. Sterilize the cutting instrument with rubbing alcohol between cuts to reduce the possibility of introducing pathogens. The process of making cuttings is essentially pruning the donor plant.

Planting or Rooting cuttings

Once the cutting is removed from the donor plant, remove all but the apical leaves if any, to reduce moisture loss. Set the cutting aside in a warm and dry location to allow the cut surface to dry and seal itself for a minimum of three days (one week is better). It has been found that if the cutting is placed directly in dry sand, the cut seals more quickly. Similar results are found if the cut end is dipped into RooTone® immediately after being set free of the mother plant. When you are ready to plant the cutting, dip the cut end in RooTone® or other root hormone with fungicide. Plant it shallow in sand or perlite (potting soil, etc.) excellent drainage is necessary. Stake the cutting for support or allow it to rest against side of container. Water very sparingly but keep the soil moist. Place the newly planted cutting in strong or full sunlight. Bottom heat helps promote root formation and growth and can be accomplished by placing the container on sun-baked concrete. Watch for new leaf growth as your sign that roots have formed (usually 6-8 weeks). Tip cuttings may bloom the first year but these are usually flowers from latent buds already in the tip on the mother plant, Cuttings generally take one or more years to produce their own blooms.

Published over the years in the *Plumeria Potpourri* newsletter, the Plumeria Care Bulletins were primarily authored by **Milt Pierson** and the **PSA Research Committee**