

Self-Watering Pot Buying Checklist

Two pots can look the same outside-and give your roots very different growing conditions.

1. SELF-WATERING POT BUYER WORKSHEET (RECORD BEFORE ORDERING)

1. Plant type & moisture need:	Species: _____ [] Evenly moist [] Moderate dry-down [] Needs thorough drying
2. Current root-ball dimensions:	Current nursery pot diameter: _____ in./cm Root-ball height / depth: _____ in./cm
3. Usable planting space:	Inner liner diameter: _____ in./cm Planting depth: _____ in./cm Planting vol: _____ L (not outer size!)
4. Reservoir access & leak seal:	Refill port / lift liner: _____ Level indicator? [] Yes [] No Indoor drain plug sealed? [] Yes
5. Substrate requirements:	Required mix / mineral layer: _____ Top-watering establishment needed? [] Yes [] No
6. Replacement parts & cleaning:	Removable liner handles? [] Yes Replacement wicks / gauge / plug available? _____

2. CHECK BEFORE BUYING: FEATURE, WHAT TO CHECK & WHY IT MATTERS

Feature	What to check	Why it matters
Sub-irrigation design	True wick/reservoir shelf vs. cachepot	Separates roots from standing water so roots breathe
Usable inner liner size	Inner diameter & planting depth (not outer shell)	A large reservoir or outer shell can hide a shallow liner
Water-level indicator	Measures reservoir water, NOT soil moisture	Prevents refilling while the root ball is still wet
Growing medium & setup	Porous wicking mix + top-water establishment	Dense soil waterlogs; new roots need top-watering first
Refill & cleaning access	Dedicated fill shaft + lift-out inner liner	Avoids wetting foliage and allows periodic tank rinsing
Indoor leak protection	Watertight outer base + indoor drain-plug rule	Protects wood floors and shelves from overflow leaks

3. SETUP & ONGOING MONITORING CHECKLIST (NO FIXED DAY GUARANTEES)

- ☐ Confirm indoor drain plug / overflow seal is closed watertight before placing on indoor furniture or wood floors.
- ☐ Pre-moisten porous potting mix or rinse mineral wicking layer and seat the wick/insert per manufacturer instructions.
- ☐ Follow initial top-watering establishment rules until roots grow down into the sub-irrigation zone.
- ☐ When the reservoir indicator reaches MIN, check root-zone soil moisture by finger and allow a plant-appropriate dry phase.
- ☐ Clean the reservoir and flush salt buildup periodically; test any new setup at home across several cycles before travel.
- ☐ If your existing drainage pot and saucer already keep the plant healthy with simple finger checks, keep what works.

4. PRIMARY SOURCES & DOCUMENTATION (NO AFFILIATE LINKS)

UMD Extension Watering Indoor Plants: <https://www.extension.umd.edu/resource/watering-indoor-plants>

UMD Extension Self-Watering Containers: <https://www.extension.umd.edu/resource/self-watering-containers>

LECHUZA Sub-Irrigation Docs & FAQ: https://www.lechuza.world/the-lechuza-sub-irrigation-system/sp_selfwatering.html