

Tropicals from seed

This is a generic set of instructions for those seeds which do not require specific handling. Most seeds I sell will grow given the following treatment.

Pre-treatment – Larger seeds (over 2mm) may be soaked in hand hot water overnight to speed up germination. Smaller seeds need no pre-treatment.

Sow in a moist, good quality seed compost, barely covering the seed. Place in a propagator or seal in a plastic bag and keep at 18 – 28 Deg C. Germination should be fairly rapid (3 – 4 weeks or so), although it can take some time for all of the seeds to geminate. The following types can take up to 8 weeks to germinate – Aralia, Cussonia, Fatsia & Ficus. Above all else, unless you are certain that the seeds are not going to show (mould, algae or thick moss on the surface of the pot), persevere. Seeds have inbuilt survival mechanisms that will prevent germination unless conditions are right and may wait months before doing anything if sown at the wrong time.

Grow on, maintaining a close atmosphere opening the bag or propagator every few days to freshen the air. Once 2 or 3 true leaves appear the seedlings can be gently transplanted in order to grow on. Use any good quality houseplant compost for the potting on – garden soil should never be used as it is very variable in quality and may contain many weed seeds and pests.

Continue to pot on as required, some vigorous species may need 3 – 6 repottings per year, whereas slower growers may need potting on every other year. Let your plants tell you when they need to be potted on (they will slow-down in growth or just ‘look’ unhappy)

If you have any questions please contact me at bob_b@bsquared.demon.co.uk and I will be happy to help.