

## Growing and caring for Aspleniums

Aspleniums are a wide and diverse range of ferns, ideal for garden, pot or basket growth.



Common name Spleenworts, Bird's Nests, Hen and Chicken Fern

Cultivation In nature, Aspleniums grow in a diverse range of habitats – along stream banks; in rainforests; in lowlands; in alpine regions; along coastlines. Generally Aspleniums are terrestrials (growing in the ground) but some are epiphytes (growing on hosts such as trees). In cultivation Aspleniums grow successfully under 70% shadecloth in pots and baskets and in the ground.

Aspleniums like conditions which are well lit filtered sun but protected from the sun. Although they need air movement around them, they also need protection from wind. Some hardy species are frost tolerant.

Aspleniums make excellent pot or tub subjects and prefer to be underpotted rather than overpotted; many species with drooping fronds are suitable for basket culture; many grow well in the ground.

Potting Mix A well drained open potting mix is generally suitable to allow air movement around the roots. Augment good quality potting mix with additional ingredients such as cow manure, tree fern fibre, charcoal, peatmoss. A small amount of lime/dolomite is also beneficial.

Watering Aspleniums like plenty of water during the warm growing months and are best kept on the dry side during winter.

Fertilisation Aspleniums in pots/baskets like slow release fertilizers added to the potting mix and respond to a regular treatment of half strength liquid fertilizers such as fish emulsions or seaweed extracts during the spring/summer growing period.

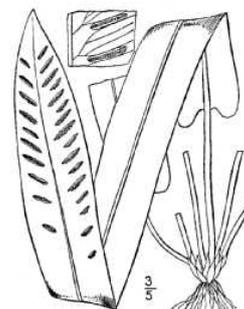
Aspleniums in the ground like a spring dressing of blood and bone or cow manure as well as regular liquid fertiliser at half strength in summer.

### Some hardy Aspleniums to grow

*Asplenium bulbiferum* (Hen and Chicken fern) – ground/tubs/baskets

*Asplenium australasicum* (Bird's nest fern) – ground/tubs

*Asplenium oblongifolium* – baskets/pots



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