

# Calamus erectus



## Raising Regal Reeds: Propagating Calamus erectus

Calamus erectus, also known as the erect rattan palm or viciously thorny palm, is not your typical houseplant. This clumping, climbing palm adds a touch of the exotic to gardens in warm, humid climates with its vibrant green fronds and impressive height. If you're lucky enough to have this beauty gracing your space and want to expand its reign, propagation is the answer.

While Calamus erectus might seem intimidating with its sharp defenses, propagating it is surprisingly straightforward. Here's a breakdown of the methods for welcoming new rattan palm additions to your tropical haven:

### 1. Seed Propagation: A Test of Patience

- **Source:** Obtain fresh seeds from a mature plant or reputable supplier. Look for plump seeds with a firm texture.
- **Preparation:** Soak the seeds in lukewarm water for 24 hours to improve germination rates.
- **Sowing:** Plant seeds in a well-draining seed starting mix, keeping them about an inch deep.

- **Environment:** Provide warmth (around 75-85°F), humidity (consider a humidity dome or propagator), and bright, indirect light.
- **Patience:** Be prepared to wait; germination can take anywhere from a few weeks to several months.

## 2. Division: A Quicker Path to Success

- **Timing:** The best time to divide *Calamus erectus* is during the spring or early summer when the plant is actively growing.
- **Preparation:** Gently unearth a mature clump, ensuring you retain as much of the root system as possible.
- **Division:** Using a sharp, sterilized knife or pruning shears, carefully separate the clump into smaller sections, each with healthy roots and shoots.
- **Potting:** Plant the divisions in well-draining soil, ensuring the crown (where the roots meet the stems) is level with the soil surface. Water thoroughly.

## 3. Root Cuttings: A Less Conventional but Viable Option

- **Selection:** Choose healthy, mature roots at least pencil-thick during the active growing season.
- **Cutting:** Using sanitized tools, cut sections of root approximately 4-6 inches long.
- **Planting:** Lay the root cuttings horizontally in a shallow tray filled with a well-draining propagation mix, burying them slightly beneath the surface.
- **Care:** Maintain warmth, humidity, and indirect light, keeping the medium consistently moist but not waterlogged.

## Post-Propagation Care: Nurturing Your New Recruits

Once your new *Calamus erectus* plants are established, whether from seeds, division, or root cuttings, provide them with the following care:

- **Light:** Bright, indirect light. Avoid direct sunlight, which can scorch the leaves.
- **Water:** Keep the soil consistently moist, but allow the top inch to dry out between waterings.
- **Humidity:** This tropical plant thrives in humid environments. Consider using a humidifier or placing the pot on a pebble tray filled with water.
- **Fertilizer:** Feed your *Calamus erectus* with a balanced liquid fertilizer every 4-6 weeks during the growing season.

Propagating *Calamus erectus* can be a rewarding undertaking. While it requires patience and careful attention, the reward of multiplying these architectural marvels for your landscape or sharing them with fellow plant enthusiasts makes it an endeavor well worth pursuing.