

DIEFFENBACHIA, DUMB CANE



Dieffenbachia was named after J. F. Dieffenbach, a German physician and botanist living from 1794-1847.

Botanical Name *Dieffenbachia maculata*

Ethylene Sensitivity Slightly sensitive.

Interior Light Level 100–250 foot candles

Storage 60–65°F. Acclimatized plants can be stored for up to 15 days at proper temperature and humidity. Ideally, plants will be stored for 1 week or less. It is chill sensitive, so hold at proper temperatures.

Purchasing Hints Purchase plants with sleeves to reduce plant damage during transport. Plants should have good variegation at time of purchase, free of yellow leaves and leaves with off-colored spots. Except for very tall specimens, there should be sufficient leaves to cover the basal portions of the canes when viewed from the side.

Additional Information A wide range of leaf variegation, plant size, and form exist in the market today. Dieffenbachia are very good indoor plant choices. Plants should be placed in a medium-high light location and soil should be kept moist. Leaf margins will turn brown if plants dry out. Production fertilization generally does not adversely affect the postharvest performance of this species. The common name “dumb cane” is in reference to the fact that, if put into one’s mouth and chewed, the high levels of oxalates can cause the mouth and tongue to swell, resulting in the inability of the individual to talk (i.e., become “dumb”). Thus, keep this species away from pets and children.