

Nomenclature

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Genus species 'Cultivar' (Common Name)

Every plant has a botanical name consisting of at least two words. The first name is the genus (always capitalized) and the second name is the species (lower case). If one plant of a species is selected for a particular quality that makes it different from the norm, it is given a cultivar name (always capitalized).

For example: *Miscanthus sinensis* "Variegatus"

A third name (the cultivar) is always written with single quotes. A cultivar name when a species of plant has naturally occurring distinct forms. These are referred to as varieties, subspecies, or forms. In this case, the plant will have two lower case names after the genus. For example *Amosonia ciliata* var. *filifolia*.

Plants can have several different common names, depending on what your mother called it or your mother's mother. So what one person knows as airplane plant, another may call it spider plant. Using the botanical names is a sure way to identify the plant.