

Fuchsia Cuttings  
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Fuchsias are generally considered to be some of the easier plants to start from cuttings. I've read several fuchsia books that will say you should be able to get 100% of cuttings to root. I'm good at propagation, but not that good. I'm happy when I get 75% success. However, it is frustrating to find certain cultivars seem a little more resistant to root. The ones I've had the most trouble with are encliandras. Perhaps their tiny leaves just don't retain enough water.

While perusing some of my fuchsia books, I found one that said fuchsias are so easy to root, you could just plop them in a jar of water. I hadn't considered trying that method for fuchsias; I thought that was reserved for coleus cuttings and such. I decided to try it and picked some varieties that I'd had trouble with rooting in the conventional way. I prepared the cuttings the same way I would for rooting in soil medium. I used tip cuttings about 2 to 4 inches long, removed the bottom leaves, cut some of the larger leaves in half and left at least one node under water. I also tried some with 2 nodes stripped of leaves under water. I could've just plunked a couple of stems in a jar of water and left it at that. But since I wanted to try a bunch, I filled 6 jars and put them in a clear plastic container partially covered with plastic wrap to increase the humidity. I put foil over the jar opening and poked holes for the stems. This kept the stems upright, but wasn't absolutely necessary. I put the container in a northeast facing window. I had success with all 6 varieties. The quickest ones rooted quite nicely in 15 days; the slowest took about 25 days. The ones with 2 nodes under water had two sets of roots on the stem. Since water roots are thought to be more brittle, I transplanted them into two inch pots in a very light seed starting mix. When I later potted them up to four inch pots, I used a regular potting mix. It's best to pot them into a soil mix when the roots are still less than one inch long so they don't get tangled or broken.

One of the best things about gardening as a hobby is propagation. How satisfying it is to see a plant in a friend's garden and be allowed to take a snippet home to start a new plant! Every gardener should try their hand at it. This method of propagating by putting cuttings in a jar of water could not be easier. Woodrose Gardens link: <http://woodrosegardens.com>