

Bud grafting adeniums

By Dr CHRISTOPHER TEH

Do you have a question about plants or how to maintain your garden? Send your questions to the Plant Doctor! Email your questions to lifestyle@thestar.com.my with "Plant Doctor" in the subject field. Questions may be edited for brevity and clarity.

Dear Plant Doctor,

Q Adeniums need frequent trimming, fertilisation with bone meal powder and regular spraying of fungicides to bloom abundantly. Recently, I saw some videos about grafting adeniums to obtain new varieties of flowers. Can you share some easy ways of bud grafting them and also highlight how we determine the kind of flowers produced by grafting? Thanks. – Elaine Lee

Bud grafting is a fascinating technique used to combine the desired traits from two different adenium plants. The key is to select a healthy, mature rootstock plant and a scion (bud with stem piece) from a plant with beautiful, abundant flowers.

The grafting process begins by making a precise cut in the rootstock using a sharp and sterile scalpel or razor blade. Common techniques include a T-shaped cut, V-shaped inci-



Careful scion selection allows gardeners to craft the desired floral displays on their grafted adeniums. — 123rf

sion or the removal of a small bark patch to insert the scion bud. Aligning the green cambium layers – the green tissue between the bark and wood of both the scion and rootstock – is key to successful grafting.

The V-shaped or cleft graft is often recommended, as it maximises cambium contact

and holds the scion and rootstock firmly in place, similar to a clamp. Online resources with pictures and videos clearly demonstrate this V-grafting technique.

After inserting the scion, it is secured with grafting tape or a soft tie to seal the graft union. The grafted plant is then kept warm, shaded and

humid, sometimes covered in plastic to maintain moisture levels during healing.

The resulting flowers reflect traits of the scion plant, not the rootstock. Scions determine the colour, size, shape and other flower characteristics. Careful scion selection allows gardeners to craft the desired floral displays on their grafted adeniums.

Successful bud grafting requires scion-rootstock compatibility, precise cuts and proper healing conditions.

While rootstocks provide structural support, scions define future floral display, making grafting an excellent way to experiment with new adenium varieties.

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