

- The overall appearance of the plant will be poor or weak, and the lower leaves may die off at a higher rate than normal.

If you use artificial light, reduce the amount of space between your plants and bulbs or leave the lights on for a longer amount of time each day. Increase day length only one hour per week. You may also need to change your bulbs if they are old, but change only one at a time in each fixture to avoid shocking the plants from overexposure. If you grow in the window, experiment with different windows in your house, preferably east or south (with protection). Notice what kind of light the plants are getting at all times of the day. A south window will receive strong light for the entire day unless a tree helps to shade the sun. A west window may be

too intense in the afternoon if there is no shade, and a north window may be too dark to support strong growth and blooms.

To grow substantially better violets, a compact light cart or portable tabletop fixture is an excellent investment that you will never regret purchasing. Even an inexpensive under-the-cabinet light fixture will help. Most of the best plants are generally grown under lights, since the conditions are controllable. Of course, show-winning plants have been grown in windows, but they require extra attention to provide proper light intensity, a back-up plan for cloudy days, and daily turning for symmetrical growth. Watch the way your plants are reacting to their light source. Remember - whatever you do, make one change at a time and give the plants plenty of time to communicate with you. Good luck!