

Rhizome cuttings

a. Those whose rhizomes creep across the surface of the soil may also be propagated using sections of the rhizome. Simply cut off the growing tip to a length of about 5 cms (2 inches), leave at least one leaf on the cutting if possible and half-bury it in cutting medium, root side down. If the leaf is very tall you may need to stake it to hold the cutting upright. Several more cuttings may be taken from the rhizome behind the tip cutting and treated in the same way: (figs 8 and 9))

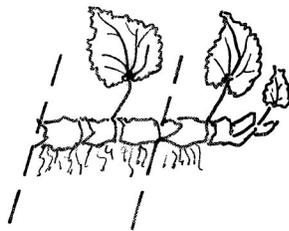


Figure 8

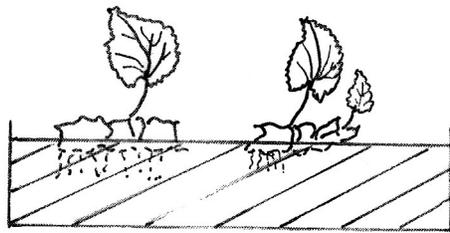


Figure 9

b. Those whose rhizomes have an upright growth habit, referred to as 'rhizome erect', may be propagated by simply cutting a length from the growing tip (say 10 cms or 4 inches) and inserting its cut end down into cutting medium. New roots will develop in a short space of time to produce a new plant.

Tip and Stem Cuttings

Tip or stem cuttings are used to propagate all begonias other than rhizomatous and tuberous types. When selecting tip cuttings make sure that at least one, and preferably two, nodes will be available to be inserted below the surface of the mix. Use only a very sharp blade or secateurs, which should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, so that a smooth cut is achieved. Reduce the amount of foliage by removing all but one or two of the topmost leaves, depending on size and state of development, then trim the remaining foliage to leave a small amount of leaf surface. Dibble a hole in the cutting mix to receive the cutting, insert it so that at least one node is below the surface, firm in with gentle finger pressure and water when all cuttings have been put down. Cuttings taken from further down the stem (stem cuttings) are