Most plants seem to get along just fine in nature. They have access to water, good soil, and sunlight, which helps them grow. But when we decide to bring a little bit of nature inside to brighten up our house, we sometimes forget about what a plant needs to survive indoors. The key is finding the right plant for the right place. The best choices for a houseplant are plants that grow naturally in conditions that are most similar to those in your house.

Your home may be nice and warm in the winter, but the dry air can make it feel like a desert to a fern plant that is used to the high humidity of the tropics, so maybe you’ll need to hang it in the bathroom. Other plants, like the Christmas cactus or Camellia, don’t mind the dry air, but they like it nice and cool! So you just might have to lower the thermostat and wear a sweater all winter long if you want them to bloom in your house.

Light is also essential for plants, and getting enough can be one of the biggest problems for a houseplant. Don’t have tons of windows in your home? Then choosing plants that are adapted to lower light levels works best. Think about the kind of plant that naturally grows on the floor of a tropical rainforest. Since the trees above often block out much of the light, they’ve gotten used to low-light conditions and might work best. You'll find many of those plants in the Palm House.

Not all plants are finicky; some are easier to grow than others. But just in case you’re feeling that houseplants are way too much work, you might want to check out the ‘cast iron plant.’ That one sounds pretty indestructible!