

Bring garden inside during winter months



YOU CAN CHASE AWAY THE COLD WINTER BLUES by creating a miniature spring garden right in your home. It's simple. All you need are a pot each of tulips, hyacinths and daffodils; some house plants soil and a decorative container in which to plant your spring scene.

When you begin to fear that winter never will end, cheer yourself up with an indoor spring garden. Pots of spring flowering bulbs transplanted from their clay pots into one large, decorative container create a miniature garden.

Now in winter tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, crocuses and irises that have been started indoors by garden centers and florists are ready to bloom. Select plants that are tightly budded and you will have the joy of watching flowers open gradually in your home.

The materials needed to create and plant an indoor spring garden are: an attractive container (with a drainage hole) that is large enough to accommodate several plants; three types of bulbs, each of a different height (tulips, hyacinths and crocuses respectively are tall, medium-sized and small); a few foliage house plants; stones for good drainage; potting soil and sheet moss.

After cleaning the container thoroughly with warm water and soap, line the bottom with stones to prevent soil from flowing out of the drainage hole.

Fill the container halfway with soil and arrange the plants. Plan the garden design with special attention to spacing and height. Leave enough room between plants to keep the roots from becoming tangled.

If you use a hanging house plant such as philodendron or English ivy, position it at the edge of the container. The advantage to combining bulbs with house plants is that they will fill in when bulbs fade.

A layer of sheet moss on top of the soil gives the miniature garden a woody, outdoors look. Sheet moss also helps retain moisture for the ever-thirsty bulb roots.

Unlike other winter flowering house plants, which require hothouse conditions, spring flowering bulbs will thrive in a cool room (60°-65° F.). So, by turning down the heat in your home this winter, you'll conserve energy, save money and prolong the life of your indoor spring garden.

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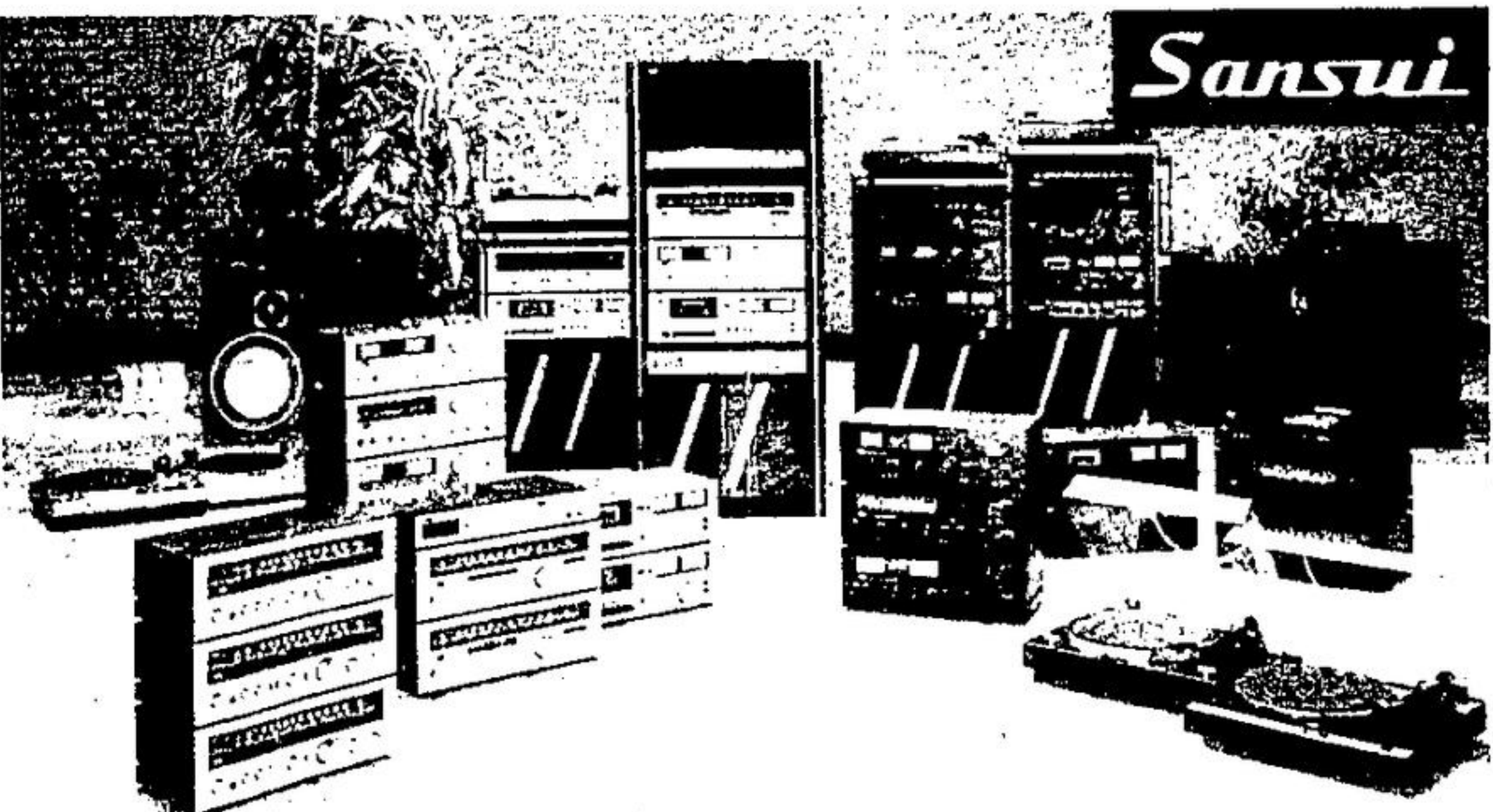
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