A new research from Australia shows that plants can learn and remember. Unlike animals, plants don’t have the luxury to move around which is why they need to learn faster to adapt. The latest study by researchers at The University of Western Australia’s Centre for Evolutionary Biology has shown that plants - mimosa pudica - retained a learnt behavior. Mimosa pudica or touch-me-not plant (also the humble plant) folds its leaves when touched. Scientists believe that the plant movement is a defense mechanism against herbivores. Grazing animals are less likely to want to eat shriveled leaves than succulent ones. For the study, researchers trained Mimosa plants' short and long-term memories by dropping water droplets at regular intervals. Mimosa leaves fold when a drop falls on them. In the
study, however, plants soon learnt that the water drops weren't disturbing them and soon stopped closing their leaves. The experiment was done both in low and high-light environments. Researchers found that plants seemed to be learning faster in unfavourable environments such as low light. Also, the plants were able to remember this learnt behaviour several weeks after the test.

"Plants may lack brains and neural tissues but they do possess a sophisticated calcium-based signally network in their cells similar to animals' memory processes," researchers wrote, according to a news release. The study is published in the journal Oecologia.

Previous research, published in the journal eLife, has found that plants do precise mathematical calculations to use their energy reserves. Also, plants use fungus to warn each other of aphid attack. Daniel Chamovitz, director of the Manna Center for Plant Biosciences at Tel Aviv University, says that people tend to think of plants as inanimate things, whereas these organisms live dynamic lives and are constantly changing. Chamovitz wasn't part of the current study.