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#H12

Caring For Cacti and Succulents

Steps for Success



#1



#2



#3

WHAT ARE SUCCULENTS?

Succulents are drought resistant plants especially adapted to storing a great quantity of water in their leaves, branches, stems and roots. The cactus family is only one of the numerous succulent families, perhaps the best known, and contains over 2,000 species!

LIGHT

Strong light, a few hours of morning sun is good. Remember that plants produced in a greenhouse will need protection from hot midday sun. Give them partial shade. In nature small plants grow under shrubs or are shaded by rocks. Too much shade will produce spindly plants. Don't move a plant directly from subdued light to full sun. It will get burned.

AIR AND TEMPERATURE

For vigorous plants, you need air circulation. This can be accomplished with a small fan indoors. Plants in stagnant air get weak. Most succulents take hot temperatures during the

vegetative period from April to October. In winter put plants in an unheated but frost free place with an average temperature of 45-55 degrees F.

WATER

In early spring plants should be watered, with caution, until they show signs of new growth. Once they are growing they need ample humidity. Soak them thoroughly and let them dry before the next watering every 2 weeks in spring, and at least once a week in summer. In the fall reduce the watering progressively to once a month and continue this thru the winter. As a rule, if in doubt...don't water. Wait a few days before watering a newly transplanted succulent. Cactus in pots require more care in watering than in the ground. The plant should not be allowed to go completely dry, just moist. In the house watering could be as little as once a month depending on the dryness of the house. Take a wooden pencil or dow rod and place it down through the soil to the bottom of the pot, when removed, if damp soil is on it don't water. After a few try's you will learn when to water.

FERTILIZER

Most cactus like several small feeding, better than one large feeding. Use **#1 PW Premium Continuous Release Plant Food** at low recommended rates. Use **#2 PW Premium Water Soluble Plant Food** fertilizer (spring, summer, fall) use low label rates.

PESTS

Mealy bugs leave white wooly patches on leaves and spines. Use systemic insecticide or insecticide soap as directed. Scale insects: control these small brown mound-like insects with systemic insecticide.

CONTAINERS

Use **#3 Baccto Lite Premium Potting Soil** for all potting and transplanting. For small plants (under 6") clay pots are not recommended. Water evaporates too fast and, as the clay heats up in the sun, fine roots adjacent to the wall of the pot will burn. Clay pots that are glazed on the outside are better. Plastic pots are best for all sizes. Repotting should be done early in the spring if possible.