

# A Guide to Succulents

Proper care techniques as well as  
propagation, soil preparation, and tips



# SUCCULENT SOIL

An important tip to remember is to water your succulents moderately. You want soil that drains well and to only water the plants when the soil is completely dry. If they are watered while the soil is damp you are at risk of over-watering them.

One way to get dirt for the succulents is to buy it commercially where the dirt is specially made for succulents such as the Miracle-Gro® Potting Soil for Cactus, Palm, & Citrus. A second option is to make it yourself, below is a simple DIY if you want to try this out.

## DIY SUCCULENT SOIL

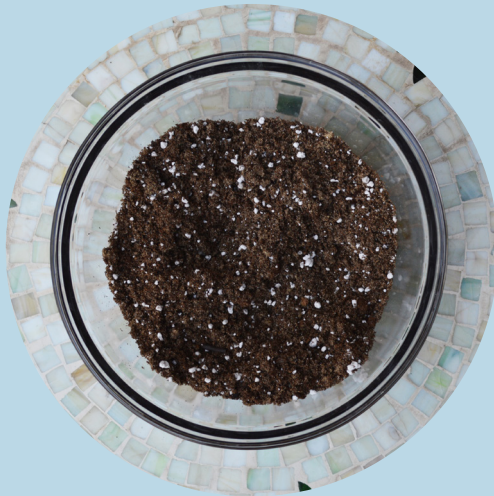
- First, you need potting soil that does not hold moisture well. Many recommend using **peat moss** instead of the typical potting soil.
- Second, you need a **coarse grained sand**. Most kinds will work, just be sure it's not too fine. The purpose is to aerate the dirt to allow the water to pass through.
- The final item is **Perlite**. This will also open up the soil to allow even more drainage.
- To distribute these, you'll want to use three parts dirt, two parts sand, and one-part Perlite.

1 Part Perlite

2 Parts Sand



3 Parts Peat  
Moss







# SUCCULENT PROPAGATION

## **Step 1:** Obtaining Clippings

Succulents are very versatile on how to propagate them. You can either clip an entire branch off of the succulent (which gives it a better chance of growth) or just can pluck individual leaves off of the plant. This generally varies on the type of plant you have. To remove a leaf, gently wiggle it back and forth until it comes off clean. If it isn't done correctly, it may just wither and die.

## **Step 2:** Let them cure!

Once the clippings are obtained, let the ends cure (or callous over) for about three days indirect light. This ensures the cutting will keep all of the moisture from escaping. If this isn't done and they are watered, they will rot.

## **Step 3:** Root Growth



Once the ends have dried, you can now place them on the prepared dirt. One trick you can do before leaving them to root, is to place the cut ends in a rooting hormone. This is completely optional but it accelerates the rooting process. Then you can either leave them on top of the prepared soil, or like me, just place them on the windowsill in partial sun until roots form. Every week or so I'd spray them with a little water. Also, keep in mind not every clipping you gathered will grow.

#### **Step 4:** Planting the Clippings

It will take a few weeks for the cuttings to show signs of growth, but when you see the little roots you can cover them with a light amount of succulent soil. Again, try not to over-water! The clippings need about the same amount of water as a fully grown succulent. Just spritz some water on the ends every few days.





These are all of the cuttings that I chose to use that day. I left them on my windowsill and checked back in a few weeks later...

Below are my results after a little over a month. The only one from the original group is the clipping in the bottom right picture. The left one happened to break off another plant a few weeks later. It only took about four weeks to grow roots. I did not use rooting hormone for any of the cuttings.



# HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR PLANTS

The most important parts of keeping succulents happy, is to keep the water they receive in check and to keep them out of direct sunlight. They are meant to be forgotten about and be watered when the soil is completely dry. If the plants are placed in direct sun, they are at risk of getting sunburned. As shown in the picture above, you can see succulents turn brown and splotchy when burned. This can be avoided by placing your plants in partial sun or putting a shade cloth in the window to protect them. When the plants are getting just the right amount of light, they can "blush" and change beautiful colors.



Photograph from the Succulent  
Blog at: [succulentexperiment.  
wordpress.com](http://succulentexperiment.wordpress.com)

Another thing to remember, is that succulents do not like too much heat. Even though they are drought tolerant plants, this does not mean they can totally withstand excessive hot weather. Most succulents prefer temperatures around 60-90 degrees (F).

You also want to keep in mind that there is a difference in temperature if you choose to keep your plants in the ground or in pots. If they are planted, the soil will



naturally be cooled and won't suck up so much heat. For pottery, you will have to watch the temperatures more and may have to water them more as well. Even though they don't like to be over-watered, they would rather sit in water than suffer in the heat. A good practice is to water the succulents in the morning. Doing this gives the plants a way to cool off while the sun is hottest.

One last tip to think about is fertilizing your succulents! Many do not know this is an important care step but doing so can help your plant create more color and ensure they are getting the nutrients they need. Using a mild fertilizer every few months can really help the plants thrive. Some recommendations for fertilizer are Authentic Haven Brand Manure Tea or Miracle-Gro® Cactus Fertilizer.

I hope these tips and tricks gave you some insight on how properly care for succulents and to keep them healthy and happy!

**For tons more info on keeping succulents happy visit:  
[TheSucculentSource.com/QUESTIONS](https://TheSucculentSource.com/QUESTIONS)**

