

Succulent Care Sheet

During the growing season:

Outside succulents

Succulents prefer bright light when planted outside. Plant or place succulents in an area that receives about four to six hours of sun. Succulents that are planted in the ground only need watered during extended dry periods, especially if the leaves begin to pucker or wilt. Provide an inch of water or enough to water the soil and root ball.

If your succulents are planted in a pot outside, water only when the soil dries out completely. Drench the soil until it starts to drain out of the bottom of the pot; then allow the soil to dry down again.

Indoor succulents

Place indoor succulents near a window that receives filtered all-day sun, but not direct sunlight. Water only when soil dries out completely. It's best to direct the water to the roots of the succulent, don't just water the tops of the plants. During the growing season, you can water until you see it coming out of the bottom of the pot.

Typically, succulents don't require a fertilizer the way most plants do, but you can fertilize your succulents in the spring. Use a water soluble fertilizer formulated for cacti and succulents. Use according to the labeled directions. Don't fertilize during the fall and winter. You want to just keep them alive during these seasons; you don't really want them to actively grow.

Winter Care for succulents:

Bring all annual succulents indoors before cold weather. All succulents that are perennial (Hens and Chicks and sedums) can be left outside during the winter. If the perennial succulents are in a pot, move the pot to a more protected area for the winter. If your pot contains both perennial and annual succulents, you can pop out the annual succulents and pot them up to bring inside for the winter.

Succulents often have a habit of becoming stretched out or leggy when kept indoors. This can be minimized by taking into consideration three important factors when caring for them during the winter:

1. Light
2. Water
3. Temperature

Light is the biggest factor in keeping succulents alive in the winter. Too little light will cause them to be stretched, as they are trying to reach for the light. Indoors, give them as much light as possible. A south facing window is best, but an east or west window will also work. Fluorescent lights can be used if natural light is insufficient. Try to keep plants as close as possible to the light.

FYI: A cool bulb and a warm bulb in a fluorescent light fixture is the perfect grow light for plants!

Water just enough to keep plants from shriveling. In a cool room, you may only need to water once every 10 to 14 days. Succulents are better off too dry than too wet, especially during the winter. Be careful to keep the plant itself dry. Rosette plants like Echeveria will rot quickly when water sets in the center of the plant.

FYI: The quickest way to kill a succulent is to keep it wet! Think dry, dry, dry!

Temperatures can be kept cooler for most succulents during the winter. The important thing is to not let them freeze, 45-55 degrees is perfect. Keeping plants cool will also keep them in a semi-dormant state. Warmer temperatures will cause succulents to grow and with lower light intensities indoors during the winter, your plants will become leggy and stretched. Most people don't keep their houses 45 to 55 degrees, so if you have a spare bedroom or a part of the house that is kept a little cooler than the rest of the house, keep the succulents there, but only if there is good light. If you don't have a sunny window, use artificial light.

FYI: If all else fails and you end up with stretched, leggy plants by the end of the winter, you can cut the tops of the plants off and use those cuttings to start new plants.

Propagation

Propagating succulents happens two ways, by cutting and by leaf. If you have a succulent that is becoming stretched or leggy, you can cut the top off (I call it beheading them). Let that top dry out for a couple of days then lay that top on moist soil. In a matter of a few weeks, roots will start to grow and you will have a brand new plant.

You can also get more plants by an individual leaf. Start by removing leaves from the stem of a succulent. Be careful when you do this; you want to carefully wiggle it until it snaps away from the stem. Be sure to get the entire leaf. If you rip the leaf, leaving the base still attached to the stem, it will not be able to grow roots or a new plant. Once leaves are removed from the stem, let the ends of the leaves dry out for a couple of days, then lay the leaf or leaves on damp soil. Keep the soil moist and in a matter of months, roots and a tiny baby plant will appear at the end of that leaf. Wait until that baby plant gets to be the size of a nickel before planting it in its own pot.