



Fact Sheet

CACTI & SUCCULENTS

Cacti & Succulents (*from the Latin word 'succos', meaning juice*) are plants that have evolved various ways to survive in hostile environments. They like to grow without too much interference from we humans.

Cacti & Succulents are the ultimate survivors as they have the ability to withstand intense heat, cold and drought. However some species are prone to rot. There's no need to fuss over these wonderful plants, just sit back, observe and enjoy them. These plants are truly amazing and once you have your first plant, you won't be able to stop collecting them.

They are plants that store water in their enlarged fleshy leaves, stems or roots. Many of these plants have a waxy coating on their leaves and stems which helps them to retain moisture.

Cacti and Succulents are ideal for you to grow in that hot, sunny spot in your garden where the ground is always drying out and nothing else survives. They are also ideal plants to grow in bowl type pots as mini gardens, or in a single pot on a sunlit window.



Because succulent and cactus plants do not all bloom at the same time of the year, you can have flower colour for several months if you take some care in selecting these plants.

Cacti and Succulents need very little watering.

The appearance of Cacti can be quite contradictory - some varieties can look really ferocious because of their prickles but the same plant will also produce amazingly delicate flowers. The flowers on most Cacti are brilliant with "neon", "fluorescent" or "metallic" characteristics.

****TIP:**
Watering Cacti in spring encourages flower growth.



FACT: The spines of a cactus are actually modified leaves.

Make sure you are adequately protected when handling cacti. Gloves are not always sufficient because the thorns of some varieties can slice right through leather.



The best way to handle cacti is to wear leather gloves and then wrap a thick wad of newspaper gently around the plant taking care not to snap the cacti off at the base - some specimens are extremely delicate. You can then gently tip out the plant for re-potting.

Cacti and succulents often produce small plants that can be loosened off from the parent plant and replanted as new individual plants.

They have adapted many weird and wonderful shapes and make a truly interesting feature garden.

Use cacti and succulents to transform an empty embankment from an eyesore to an attractive feature.

POTTING MIX

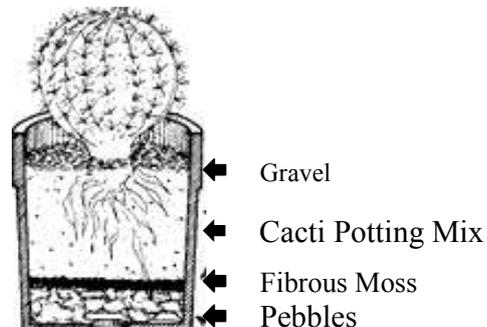
Never plant your Cacti or Succulents in ordinary potting mix or soil as they won't develop a good root system.

Cacti and Succulents require a very gritty mix, made up largely of sand, grit and small stones. Stoneman's Garden Centre carries the Amgrow brand of Cacti Potting Mix in both 5 litre and 30 litre bags.

When potting a cactus - for better drainage add a few larger pebbles in the bottom of your pot, then add a thin layer of fibrous moss, such as peat or sphagnum, to stop the soil from filtering down through the larger pebbles - arrange the plant and carefully fill with Cacti Potting Mix.

The simplest way of filling soil in around the roots of a cactus you are re-potting, is to make a chute out of newspaper to keep your hands away from dangerous spines. Put a moderate amount of potting soil on a large square of paper, then grasp paper from the centres of opposite sides; the cross-section of the paper with soil will form a "U" shape. Now you have your paper chute; simply pour the soil around the cactus roots in your pot.

Pour soil into pot using paper chute



POTTED MINI GARDENS

Cacti and succulents make the perfect indoor garden! Not only do they look spectacular and make a great addition to any décor, but you can go away on holiday and you don't have to worry about getting someone in to water them.

You can make a stunning centre piece for your table by potting a few cacti & succulents together - or use just cacti or just succulents - whatever takes your fancy. There is an endless selection of sizes, shapes, colours and textures.

You could also make a little garden of cacti or succulents by arranging them on a tray filled with pebbles for a effect, the possibilities are endless.

In summer, a mini garden too close to window glass may burn. A screen or light curtain will provide adequate shade if you don't wish to relocate your mini garden.

Some advantages of a mini garden:

- * Stunning to look at.
- * You can take it with you if you move house.
- * Needs very little TLC.
- * Only needs watering occasionally.
- * No weeding.
- * No dig garden.
- * Rarely needs pruning.



Many cacti & succulent plants have been used throughout history for medicinal purposes. One of the most common examples of this is Aloe.

Some of the medicinal uses for Aloe are:

- Cape aloes or aloe lump is used as a laxative.
- Leaves or roots that are boiled in water are used for treating arthritis, eczema, conjunctivitis, hypertension and stress, also taken as a laxative.
- The leaf sap of other species, like *A. arborescens* and *A. greatheadii*, is applied externally to treat skin ailments, bruises and burns.
- The Dried leaves of *A. marlothii* is a popular ingredient in some snuffs.
- Aloe is also found in many lotions and supplements.
- Fresh bitter sap is used for conjunctivitis and sinusitis.

***** Before using any of these remedies consult a qualified health practitioner.*****

