



Cacti & Succulent Care

Most plants need very bright light and should have a couple of hours of direct sun each day or very bright indirect light all day. When you first get your plants home, you should acclimate them to direct sun if this is where they will be kept, otherwise they may become sun-scalded. Water only after the soil has become mostly dried out. Test with your finger or a moisture meter. Plants in clay pots will dry out faster than those in plastic or glazed pots. Most cacti, rather than other succulents, need to dry out more thoroughly between waterings. Starting in the fall, begin watering less as plants go dormant and stop growing. In the winter, water only enough to keep the plants from shriveling excessively. In the spring, slowly increase watering as flower buds begin to develop and other growth becomes evident. Fertilize only in spring and summer with a low dose, high phosphorus fertilizer. Large seedlings should be cared for as adult plants; smaller seedlings will require a more constant soil moisture level although still on the dry side.

It is best not to over-pot cacti and succulents. Too much soil will take longer to dry out and can result in plants rotting. When a plant becomes too large for its container, you can repot it in the next size pot using a well-drained soil. You can make your own cactus and succulent soil by mixing 8 parts high-quality potting soil, 5 parts perlite and 3 parts granite sand. Gravel can be used to top dress your plants.

Come to a meeting of the Austin cactus & Succulent Society, held at the Austin Area Garden center in Zilker Botanical Garden, on the 3rd Thursday of each month, to learn more about the care and culture of these interesting plants. For more information, please visit our Web site: www.austincss.com

The Austin Cactus & Succulent Society promotes the interest, study, propagation, conservation, and public awareness of cacti and other succulents.

