



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM PLANT CARE INFORMATION

PLANTING CACTI & OTHER SUCCULENTS IN THE GROUND

1. Dig a hole as deep as and much wider than the container. Good drainage is critical. If your soil is poorly drained, amend with about 50% coarse sand or until you have a loose, well-drained mix. Water should not puddle for more than a few minutes.
2. Remove plant from container. Trim broken roots, score matted roots.
3. Set plant in hole and carefully press soil around roots to remove pockets of air.
4. DO NOT WATER for at least one to two weeks in warm, dry weather or one month in cool, damp weather.

How to Water

Shallow watering is sufficient for most succulents, because they have extensive, shallow roots rarely more than a foot deep, usually much less. Once established, most will need little supplemental watering or feeding, except to encourage more rapid growth.

Hardening Greenhouse-grown Cacti for the Garden

Cacti and other succulents that are purchased in pots many be "soft" if they have been grown in greenhouses where conditions force lush growth. Even if a species is known to be sun- and cold-hardy, greenhouse-grown plants are apt to sunburn and/or freeze in their first outdoor season if they are planted out without proper acclimation.

1. If your plant has an "S" marked on the side of the pot, or on a label on one side of the pot, this denotes the side of the plant that is accustomed to full sun. Do not rotate the plant without offering protection as described below in number 3.
2. If your plant is somewhat sun sensitive, try planting it at the base of a tree or open shrub. Avoid the west or southern edges of the canopy, as mid-day and afternoon sun are most apt to sunburn a plant.
3. If your plant is labeled as sun hardy, but is greenhouse grown, go ahead and plant it in the full sun. Immediately cover it with twiggy branches from a plant such as creosotebush or desert broom. Over the period of several months these twigs can be gradually pulled off.
4. A greenhouse grown frost hardy plant may need winter protection the first season. When a frost warning is given, cover the plant with a foam cup or frost-cloth. If it is planted under the canopy of a tree or bush it will receive several degrees of protection.
5. Water and fertilize during the warmer part of spring and during early summer. Severely curtail or eliminate watering by October. This will help to harden off soft tissue and prepare it for the winter.



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PLANT CARE SHEET

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