

Cactus Care Tips

Cactaceae family



Origin: Southwestern U.S., Mexico and South America

Height: Varies by species

Light: At least 2-3 hours of full sun a day.

Water: Water regularly spring through fall while plant is growing, sparingly in winter. If the plant appears shriveled and wrinkled, it's underwatered. To rehydrate it, water lightly, and then again the following day, and it will recover nicely. Be careful not to drench the soil. Cactus is likely to rot if its roots become soaking wet.

Humidity: Average to dry air.

Temperature: Average room temperatures 65-75°F/18-24°C. In winter, a cooler place to rest -- 50-60°F/10-16°C at night is ideal.

Soil: Use a potting mix that drains well. You can buy a [mix specially made for cacti](#), or use 2 parts all-purpose potting mix with 1 part sharp sand or perlite. Adding about a 1/2-inch layer of pebbles to the bottom of the container will help drainage and also add weight to the bottom. (Large cacti can become top-heavy).

Fertilizer: Typical [cactus house plant fertilizer](#) is 2-7-7. It needs less nitrogen than foliage plants and higher phosphorus and potassium for better flowering and strong roots.

Propagation: Many cacti grow offsets at the base of the parent plant. Cut them away with a sharp knife. Allow the cut surface to dry for a couple days so it doesn't ooze sap and to prevent the new plant from rotting. Place offsets on the surface of moist, sandy potting mixture. Keep new offsets in a warm, bright place, but out of direct sun for the first month. The best season to propagate is late spring or early summer, when plants are beginning their most active period of growth.