



THE ROSEDALE PLANTSMAN'S GUIDE TO GROWING CACTI

What are cacti? Cacti are a very diverse and widely-distributed group of plant species that are specially adapted to growing in very arid conditions, in hot to continental climates. Many Cacti species have developed specialized adaptations in order to grow in desert-like conditions:

- Many thick, leathery exteriors that reduce water loss by the plants.
- Most Cacti have a fleshy interior that enables them to hold large quantities of water in their membranes.
- Cacti plants usually are leafless, with photosynthesis occurring within the main plant, under the thick, tough skin to reduce the plant's exterior surface area and thereby limit water loss.
- Many Cacti have thorns or a "fuzzy" surface growth to help further reduce water loss and to prevent browsing by animals.
- Most Cacti have slow growth rates to conserve food and water.

These same characteristics make Cacti very interesting and attractive plants, and well-suited for warm, sunny locations in the house.

Care of Cacti

Cacti are easy to care for, and will thrive if you follow a few easy steps:

1. Most Cacti species need a sunny location in the house. The area can be warm or cool, but Cacti (and other houseplants) should not be set directly on or very near to a radiator.
2. Cacti should be potted in a sandy, well-drained sand/soil mix. Avoid heavy, moisture-retentive potting mixes. Our Cacti plants are already potted in a special soil mixture especially of them.
3. Water Cacti about every 10-14 days, not more frequently.
4. Cacti do not need, and cannot use, very much fertilizer. They will thrive with a dilute solution of Miracle Gro or Peters houseplant fertilizer every 4-6 months.
5. Most Cacti are slow growers. They will not need repotting until the top portion of the plant appears to be disproportionately large or top-heavy in relation to the container size and weight.

Please feel free to ask us any questions that you may have about your plants. We hope you enjoy your Cacti!

Helpful Materials for Growing Cacti

Cactus Potting Soil

Terra Cotta Pots

Miracle-Gro or Peters Fertilizer

Suggested References

CACTUS AND SUCCULENTS (Ortho Books)

HANDBOOK ON SUCCULENT PLANTS (Brooklyn Botanical Garden)