

# Cactus & Succulent Q & A

## HOW MUCH LIGHT IS RIGHT?

Cactus and succulents can require anything from full sun to bright indirect light. In general, the desert plants do better in full sun and you would be safe growing most any of the others in morning sun or strong indirect light.

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD THE PLANTS BE WATERED?

Plants in sunny spots will use more water than plants in lower light. Those in warm locations will dry faster than those in cooler sites. A small pot will dry out much faster than a large one.

A general guide would be to water once or twice a month during the growing season (April through September for most). As you get to know your plants you'll be able to tell when they need water by sight and touch. Succulents will "wrinkle" when they get very dry. Cactus with vertical ridges will look "pleated" and all will feel softer when gently pushed with a pencil eraser. Till you get the feel of it, try marking a calendar when you watered last.

## CAN CACTUS AND SUCCULENTS BECOME INFESTED WITH PESTS?

Yes. Mealy bugs, scale, aphids and spider mites all prey on these plants. Infestations are usually worse if the plants are inside and some types of cactus and succulents are more prone to attack than others. Use paraffinic oil to suffocate these pests. It's safest to spray on a cloudy day if the plants are in a sunny spot. More than one spraying will probably be needed. It's MUCH easier to clear up an early infestation than one that's really entrenched so check your plants frequently. If your plants are outside you'll need to patrol for slugs.

## WHEN SHOULD I TRANSPLANT?

Spring and early summer are the ideal times to transplant. Cactus and succulents are happiest and have fewer problems with root rot if they're in tight pots. When potting up they should be moved to a pot no more than one inch in diameter bigger than their current pot. A fast draining potting mix is essential. Wait 5 to 7 days before watering.

## WHY DON'T MY CACTUS FLOWER?

Cactus flower when they're old enough. Times vary with different types of plants. But, sometimes, a plant is old enough to flower and doesn't. Frequently it's been pampered too much. Cut the watering way down during the winter and keep the plants in a room that gets cold at night. Most of these plants are used to having very few blessings and many need to be stressed to produce flowers.

HAVE FUN!

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5816 162<sup>nd</sup> Avenue East, Sumner, WA 98390  
[www.windmillgarden.com](http://www.windmillgarden.com)