

Creating a Succulent Dish Garden

Are you interested in growing succulent plants indoors or on your patio in a small, decorative container? A dish garden is an easy way to grow a unique mini-landscape.

What is a Dish Garden?

A dish garden is a planting in an open, shallow container often grown indoors.

What are Succulents?

Succulents are drought-tolerant plants with thick, fleshy stems that are designed to store water.

Planting Your Dish Garden

Follow these instructions when planting a succulent dish garden.

Choosing Plants

There are many types of plants to grow in a dish garden. Foliage and tropical plants, cacti and succulents can be grown successfully in a dish garden. Look for plants that have similar light and water needs, grow very slowly and/or have a dwarf growing habit and do not require a lot of pruning.

In a succulent garden choose combinations of Echeveria, Sedum, Sempervivum or one of the other interesting varieties available.



PHOTO BY: ANNE YASALONIS

Choosing a Dish

Containers, or dishes, can be made of a variety of materials such as clay, porcelain, plastic or hypertufa. If your dish does not have a drainage hole, you can use a diamond drill bit and an electric drill to create drainage holes. Or, you can add a layer of gravel on the bottom of the dish 1/2 to 1 1/2 inches thick. Cover the gravel with a layer of screen so that your soil does not settle into the gravel layer.



PHOTOS BY: ANNE YASALONIS

Soil

The soil in a succulent dish garden should be well-drained. Use a mix of potting soil, sand, peat moss and perlite. This recipe is easy to measure and incorporates both organic matter and porous materials.

Succulent Dish Garden Soil Recipe

- 1 part potting mix
- 1 part peat moss
- 1 part play sand
- 1 part perlite

Thoroughly mix, moisten, and add to your container.

Planting

Gather your container, soil, tools, decorative stone and plants. Fill container with soil, install plants, top with decorative stone if desired. Water in plantings until water drains out of the bottom of the container.



Maintenance

Proper maintenance will ensure a healthy succulent dish garden.

Water

Water as needed according to the type of plants in the dish garden. Be careful to not overwater succulent or cactus gardens. If you place a saucer underneath your dish garden to collect excess water, make sure to empty it after the container drains.

Light

Most plants in a dish garden will enjoy bright, indirect light for 4-6 hours each day. They will benefit from periods of time outdoors, but take care to not place them in direct sunlight.



Pests

Pests in a dish garden may be due to poor cultural practices, such as overwatering. If you notice fungus or rot occurring, you may need to check the soil moisture and ensure that the plants are receiving enough light.

If insects pests, such as mealybugs or scale, become a problem, you can use general insecticides such as Neem on the plants or wipe off the leaves with an alcohol swab. Always read the pesticide label and make sure it is safe to use on succulents.

Fertilization

Fertilize as needed.

Where can I find more information?

For a list of our programs and related topics, go to our website <http://polkextension.com>

Or, Call your County Extension Agent:

Anne Yasalonis
Residential Horticulture Agent
Master Gardener Coordinator
UF/IFAS Extension Polk County
P: (863) 519-1047
E: anneanne@ufl.edu
W: <http://polkextension.com>