

■ Beginner's Guide to Keeping Cacti ■

Cacti are one of the easiest and most rewarding plants to grow. Their sculptural shapes and vibrant flowers make them perfect for bright windowsills, conservatories, or dry indoor spots — and best of all, they need very little care.

■ Light

Cacti love sunlight! Place them somewhere bright — ideally on a sunny windowsill or a south-facing room. During summer, they can even enjoy a spell outdoors in a sheltered, sunny position. In winter, keep them in the brightest place possible as natural light levels drop.

■ Watering

Less is more! Water only when the compost is completely dry. In spring to early autumn, give a thorough soak and let excess drain away. In autumn to spring, water very sparingly (once every 4–6 weeks). Never let your cactus sit in water. ■ Tip: It's better to underwater than overwater.

■■ Temperature

Most cacti like warm days and cooler nights. They thrive between 18–25°C (65–77°F) in summer. In winter, a cooler rest period (around 10–12°C / 50–55°F) helps encourage flowers in spring.

■ Compost & Repotting

Use a free-draining cactus compost or mix regular compost with grit or perlite. Repot every 2–3 years in spring, using a pot only slightly larger. Always ensure there's a drainage hole.

■ Feeding

Feed monthly in the growing season (April–September) with a cactus or succulent fertiliser. No feeding is needed during winter.

■ Display Ideas

Cacti look fantastic in small groups or clusters, decorative terracotta or ceramic pots, gravel-topped planters, or paired with pebbles, driftwood, or miniature ornaments for a modern touch.

■■ Common Problems

• Shrivelled or soft stems: Too little or too much water. • Pale growth: Not enough light. • Brown patches or rot: Overwatering or cold, damp conditions.

■ Bonus Tip

Many cacti bloom beautifully once mature — often after a cool, dry winter rest. Be patient; a happy cactus will reward you with a stunning flower show!