

A living succulent centerpiece can be made by planting small succulents in a shallow pot with drainage holes and gritty cactus and succulent mix. Give the plants space, keep them in bright light, and water only after the soil has dried.

Select the planter and succulents

Choose a shallow bowl or planter with drainage holes, and place it on a saucer to keep the table protected. A container without holes needs more careful watering because excess water cannot escape, so a draining planter is the easier option.

Pick compact succulents that need similar amounts of light and water. Choose plants with firm leaves that are stable in their pots. Combining rounded rosettes, upright stems, and trailing growth adds variation in shape. Leave enough room to avoid a crowded look.

Consider the arrangement's height before planting. A low centerpiece on a dining table keeps people visible to one another and makes conversation easier.

Prepare the materials

Set up a clear work area and gather the supplies before you begin. You will need:

- A shallow planter with drainage holes and a saucer
- Small succulents in their nursery pots
- Potting mix intended for cacti and succulents
- A small trowel or scoop

- Fine gravel for a decorative surface layer, if you want one

Fill the planter with potting mix rather than placing gravel beneath the soil. The drainage hole provides a way for extra water to leave the container.

Arrange and plant the succulents

Put enough mix in the planter to cover its base. For a trial layout, set the plants on the mix while they are still in their nursery pots. Position a larger plant a little away from the center, then place smaller ones around it. Set any trailing succulent close to the rim.

After settling on the layout, take each plant out of its nursery pot. Carefully loosen roots that are packed tightly, then place the plant in the mix. Keep its base near the same level of soil it had in its original pot.

Add mix to fill the open spaces and press it gently into place. Leave small gaps between plants so air can move and the succulents can grow. If using gravel on top, spread only a thin layer and keep it clear of leaves and stems.

Maintain the centerpiece

Display the planter in a bright location. A dining table that is away from a window can work for a meal, but may not offer sufficient light for continued growth. After the meal, return the planter to a brighter place.

Feel or check the soil before adding water. Once it is dry, water thoroughly and allow the excess to drain into the saucer. Pour water out of the saucer afterward. Remove dry leaves as they develop, and turn the planter from time to time so light reaches the plants from different directions.

Common questions about succulent displays

Is a pot without drainage holes suitable?

It is possible to use one, but water can collect around the roots. A planter with drainage holes is a simpler choice.

What is the right watering schedule?

Use the soil’s condition rather than a set timetable. Water when it has dried. How quickly it dries depends on the light, temperature, and container.

Can cut flowers go in the arrangement?

Yes. Put the cut flowers in a separate small vessel of water beside the planter. Do not push their wet stems into the succulent soil.

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