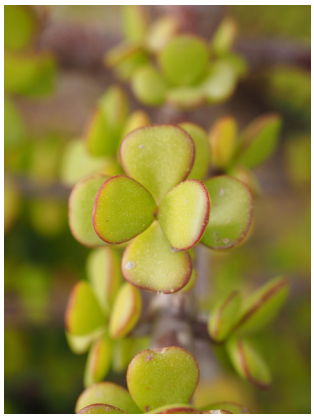
DLC RESOURCES, INC.

SUCCULENT OPTIONS

A great way to add a bit of color and interest to your yard is with succulents. These plants come in many shapes, colors, and textures, and most of them look very different from the annuals and perennial plants that may already be growing in your yard. The term, "succulent," refers to a wide variety of plants, most of which are well-suited for the temperatures and dryness of the Sonoran desert. Most types do well in hot temperatures with lots of sun and dry, well-draining soil. Just don't place them in direct sun; they benefit from a little shade, too.

Elephant Food (Portulacaria afra)

Elephant Food is native to South Africa, and — as its name suggests — it is commonly eaten by elephants in its original habitat. Elephant Food works well in containers or planted directly into the ground. If protected from frost effectively each winter, a single plant can span up to 12 feet across! However, it is susceptible to white flies, mealy bugs and spider mites, so be watchful for these pests.



Elephant Food

Plant Elephant Food in well-draining soil, and keep it out of direct afternoon sun as its leaves can suffer sunburn. Irrigate regularly in the summe, and avoid leaving the roots to sit in water. Wait for the soil to dry out completely before watering again.

If you'd like to propogate Elephant Food, the best time to do so is when daytime temperatures are between 65°-100°F. Elephant Food plants leak sap, so wear gloves to protect your hands. Use a sharp knife to cut a stem about 6-8" long, making a clean right cut at the branching point. Soak or spray the cut end with water until sap stops leaking. Harden the stem by letting it sit outside for a few days; then put the calloused end of the stem in soil at a depth of about 3-4". Water until well established.

Aloe Varieties

Aloe is probably the succulent most people are familiar with. While Aloe Vera is prevalent (and great for sunburns!), there are many more varieties in the Aloe family. Blue Elf Aloe, Soap Aloe, and Aloe Ferox are just a few types. Aloe plants are drought tolerant once established; however they do need protection from frost.



Blue Elf Aloe; photo courtesy of Mountain States Nursery

They produce "pups," smaller plants that can be removed entirely from the mother and grown as separate plants. Use a sharp knife to remove the pup(s) from the mother plant, and make sure you're including some of the roots. Allow to dry out completely before replanting. You can plant in a house plant pot or directly in the ground.

Hens and Chicks

Hens and Chicks succulents grow well outside in hot temperatures, making them an ideal desert plant. They have a nice rosette shape and produce many baby plants, all connected underground by the root system. You can either plant these succulents in the ground or in a pot.



Hens and Chicks

Hens and Chicks are available in most nurseries, and their growth and care are both relatively simple as (like most succulents) they are accustomed to very little water. These plants like light shade.

The mother plant will last for about five years, after which time you should remove it. Separate and replant the chicks every two years at least.

If you are planting Hens and Chicks in a pot, add succulent-specific soil. Keep in mind that potted plants should receive more fertilizer than those planted in the ground, but if you're planting directly into the soil, use a cactus mix and spray with water. Let the new plant dry out between waterings.

© DLC Resources, Inc. | dlcresources.com