

GARDEN SPOT NURSERY

Succulent Pot-in-a-Pot

Succulents are excellent plants for the beginning gardener or houseplant enthusiast. Many can be indoor-outdoor plants, making planter design attractive and versatile. A popular design style has emerged which uses a smaller pot within the main planter to create an illusion of a second design. This style can be utilized in many ways to reuse broken or vintage materials, create a wall hanging or table display.

Materials

- Large, shallow container for planting
- Small pot or mug for illusion/décor
- An array of sedum/succulents – you will want enough to “fill” your inner pot, not necessarily the outer pot
- Glass, stone, or moss top dressing
- Potting soil or cactus mix

Briefing on Succulent Design

Succulents are hardy desert plants. They need little water to survive, and prefer bright, warm light and to dry out between waterings. They can be indoor or outdoor plants and are easily propagated. Succulents can be trimmed and manicured to maintain form in your planter, or left alone to create a lush, cascading effect. There are many different types of succulents. In terms of design, they can be broken down into three categories: “spillers, fillers, and thrillers,” referring to trailing varieties, ground covers, and taller varieties, respectively. A good rule of thumb is to have at least one of each of these categories for an appealing design. In pot-in-pot design, we hold back on thrillers in favor of fillers.

How to Create a Pot-in-Pot Design

The concept of the pot-in-pot model is to create two designs in one planter. The design should look different from above as it does from the front. The first thing you’ll want to consider is your pot choice. The outer pot should be wide and shallow. You want to create a “picture frame” effect with the outer pot. Your inner pot can be anything that fits in your outer pot. This is a great opportunity to repurpose broken pottery, as it doesn’t need to hold soil or water, and you can hide imperfections beneath the soil. This could

also be a shining moment for a piece of artwork that you love the look of, but haven't found a use for. Once you've chosen your pottery, you will need to fill the outer pot with soil and set the smaller pot in perpendicular. Next, begin planting your succulents. You will want to arrange your succulents to "stack" on top of the inner pot. Use the fillers to create a full look in the pot while wrapping spillers around to look as if they are trailing out. You can plant the tall thrillers at an angle to look as if they are standing up in your inner pot. Once you have all your succulents planted, begin with the top dressing. This is where you can have some fun with your design. Use one dressing as a base and one as a background, make your design float in space, etc. You may need to fluff some of your spillers over the top dressing.

Maintenance

Succulents grow and multiply relatively quickly. To preserve your design, you will need to trim your spillers and thrillers, and thin out your fillers as it grows. These can be used to propagate and grow new succulents for future designs. Alternatively, you could allow the plants to outgrow the inner design and remove the inner pot to start again. The versatility of this design style is endless.

