Succulent SUCCESS

By understanding the basics, you can create your own on-trend, water-wise garden.

Succulents come in a wide range of shapes, textures, forms and colours. They can be combined in different ways to create visually pleasing effects whether in containers or the garden. Easy to cultivate and propagate, fun to collect and exchange with friends, succulents are a great way to turn gardening disadvantages such as drought, shallow soil, nutrient-poor soil and lack of time into plusses such as hardy, no fuss, water wise, low-maintenance and on trend.
Choosing plants

Begin by choosing accent or focal feature plants first. These should be large, tall, spiky and dramatically different from the others. Good accent plants include yuccas, cycads, aloes, Euphorbia tirucalli and agaves. To add depth and interest, interplant with fine, medium and coarsely textured varieties.

**Fine texture:** Crassula multicava, C. rogersii, Sedum spp. Delosperma echinatum and ruschia.

**Medium texture:** Senecio ficoïdes.

**Coarse texture:** Cotyledons such as Cotyledon orbiculata, Kalanchoe sexangularis, K. thyrsiflora, Echeveria ‘Red Tip’, E. imbricata, Aeonium arboresum ‘Zwartkop’, Senecio serpens and S. barbertonicus.

**Colour:** The range of colours is also extensive so include plants with attractive hues such as red Kalanchoe sexangularis, Crassula ‘Campfire’, Echeveria ‘Fire and Ice’ and E. ‘Fred Yves’, blue-grey Senecio scaposus and S. ficoïdes, blue Echeveria secunda, black-rosetted Aeonium arboresum ‘Zwartkop’ lime-green Sedum angelina, deep-green Senecio barbertonicus, yellow Sedum nussbaumerianum and chalky purple Echeveria ‘Afterglow’.

Kalanchoe sexangularis, Portulacaria afra, Senecio scaposus, ebracteola, aloinopsis, Crassula capitella ‘Campfire’ and Sedum nussbaumerianum.

**Large texture:** Sansevieria hahnii and S. trifasciata.

**Coarse texture:** Cotyledons such as Cotyledon orbiculata, Kalanchoe sexangularis, K. thyrsiflora, Echeveria ‘Red Tip’, E. imbricata, Aeonium arboresum ‘Zwartkop’, Senecio serpens and S. barbertonicus.

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Planting patterns

BLOCK PLANTING
In contemporary and formal gardens, mass succulents in blocks according to their colour, shape and texture in structured, geometric patterns. Emphasise the contemporary style by laying gravel or bark chips between plants.

RANDOM PLANTING
This method imitates nature and the positioning is left to chance, giving the garden an informal, relaxed look. To recreate this effect, randomly plant larger succulents among groups of smaller ones.

JOHN SAUER OF NGENA SUCCULENTS HAS THIS ADVICE FOR GROWING SUCCULENTS
- Plant succulents in well-drained soil, using a combination of compost or potting soil mixed with 30 percent washed river sand. Add some bonemeal and Talborne Vita Grow.
- While succulents can survive for long periods of time with little water, they do require water at least once a week in summer to keep them looking good. Allow the soil to dry out between watering; overwatering can lead to root rot. Reduce watering to every second week in winter.
- Fertilise every six months. Over-fertilising encourages succulents to grow too fast and weakens their immune systems.
- Pests aren’t a major problem with small numbers of succulents, but keep an eye out for mealy bugs and lice. Ask your local nursery for a suitable pesticide.

Echeveria ‘Afterglow’

John Sauer’s award-winning garden combines succulents with different textures, forms and colours.
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**PLANT LIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Plant Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yucca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Agave attenuata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Euphorbia tirucalli</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Spekboom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Crassula multicava</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Crassula rogersii</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Crassula capitella</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Echeveria ‘Fire and Ice’</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Echeveria ‘Fred Yves’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Crassula mucosa</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kalanchoe sexangularis</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Senecio ficoides</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Senecio scaposus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sansevieria trifasciata</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources

Garden World

gardenworld.co.za

John Sauer

Ngena Succulents
ngena.africa

Tasha Tollman

DIY Garden Designer
diygardendesigner.com