

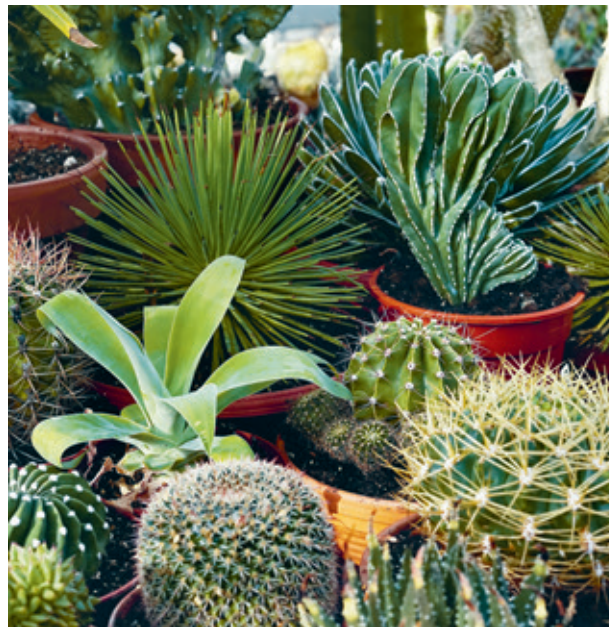
## LIGHT & TEMPERATURE

The majority of cacti and succulents have adapted over thousands of years to live in warm, dry climates. As plant owners, our aim is to try to replicate their natural environment to help them flourish in our homes. Greenhouses or conservatories are ideal, as they offer all-round light. However, that kind of space is a luxury that we can't all enjoy, especially the city dwellers among us. But a sunny windowsill will usually do the job – although some succulents do prefer half-shade (see the relevant entry in the Plant Gallery & Directory, pages 28–165). Be sure to rotate your plants every couple of weeks to prevent them from leaning towards the light.

Cacti and succulents require good ventilation during the summer months.

When plants are enclosed in our homes, it is hard for them to be aware of the seasons, as they would in their natural habitat. That means it is important for us to replicate the growing and dormant seasons for them: the former is early spring to mid-autumn, and the latter, mid-autumn to early spring.

From mid-autumn to early spring, keep your succulents and cacti in a cool position in the home: that is, not above a radiator or



other heat source, but at a temperature no lower than a comfortable 7°C (44°F). Central heating in our homes provides a warm and dry environment, which is perfect for these plants. However, in the dormant season this can cause them to continue growing, instead of enjoying their winter's rest. It's important to try to mimic the plants' natural environment so they can follow their natural rhythms and – all being well – provide you with beautiful flowers, right on cue.

