



Berry Show · Pot Plant Section Education Series

Collection of Cacti or Succulents Grown in one Container - Class 1405

Bringing structure, texture, and colour together in a living display.

Why Enter This Class

This class is perfect for creative gardeners who enjoy combining plants. A well-designed cactus or succulent collection brings contrast and harmony — a miniature landscape of form, texture, and colour.

Understanding the Class

A collection must be grown together in one container, not assembled on the day. Plants should share similar light and watering needs. The arrangement must look intentional and balanced — not overcrowded or random.

Plant Selection

Choose plants that contrast but also complement each other. Include tall, rounded, and trailing forms for interest.

Form	Purpose	Examples
Thrill (Height & Focus)	Provides structure and draws the eye.	Columnar cactus, Euphorbia trigona, tall Aloe.
Fill (Body & Texture)	Adds mass and contrast around the centre.	Crassula, Graptoveria, or Echeveria.
Spill (Flow & Edge)	Softens edges and links the pot to the surface.	Sedum morganianum, Senecio rowleyanus, Portulaca.

Potting Mix and Containers

Use a free-draining mix: two parts quality cactus and succulent potting mix, one part coarse sand, and one part perlite. Choose shallow or wide containers (maximum 35 cm width and 10 kg total weight). Make sure drainage holes are clear.

Design Inspiration

1. Desert Landscape – Mix columnar and rosette forms in sandy gravel for a natural desert look.
2. Modern Bowl – Use bold Echeveria surrounded by low Sedum and cascading Senecio for a sculptural, modern effect.

Growing and Care

Water sparingly and only when the soil is dry. Feed lightly with a low-nitrogen fertiliser once a month during active growth. Keep in a bright, airy position protected from excessive rain.

Quick Entry Option

Purchase three or four healthy plants from a nursery in November or December. Re-pot them in a decorative container with a fresh mix, ensuring roots have room to grow. Keep the design well-balanced and straightforward — one tall, two medium, one trailing.

Month	Key Tasks	Purpose / Notes
August–September	Plan your design. Decide between a pure succulent mix, a cactus-dominant dish, or a desert landscape. Sketch layout ideas and select a shallow, well-draining pot ≤ 35 cm wide.	Early planning lets you source species with contrasting forms (upright, rosette, trailing).
October	Propagate and collect plants. Take cuttings or buy small starter plants. Start establishing them in individual pots.	Early propagation gives roots time to harden before assembly.
November	Assemble the collection. Arrange plants in your final display pot using a gritty mix: 2 parts cactus/succulent mix + 1 part pumice or perlite + ½ part coarse sand.	Gives 10–12 weeks for roots to knit and top-dressing to settle naturally.
December	Light and water management. Place in full sun or bright light; water lightly every 10–14 days. Watch for stretching or scorching.	Keeps growth compact and colour vibrant.
Early January	Refinement stage. Remove any overgrown or unbalanced plants,	Defines clean lines and contrast to

Month	Key Tasks	Purpose / Notes
	and top-dress with decorative gravel or crushed quartz.	facilitate judgment.
Mid-Late January	Final grooming. Remove dead leaves, dust foliage with a soft brush, and wipe the pot clean. Check for mealybugs. Hydrate 3-4 days before the show.	Presentation polish without stressing roots.

Companion Resources

- Thrill, Fill & Spill – Designing Mixed Pots (PDF and 30-second video)
 - Cactus & Succulent Specimens (Classes 1404 & 1406)
- (Both part of the Berry Show – Pot Plant Education Series)