

Haworthia & Haworthiopsis Care Handbook

Tiny, shade-tolerant windowsill succulents

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AGreenNest Plant Guide

Haworthia and Haworthiopsis are the introverts of the succulent shelf - small, striped, and happy in the kind of bright indirect light that would scorch a desert cactus. Perfect for desks and north windows, they are among the easiest plants you can grow.

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Cathedral Window Plant - Haworthia cymbiformis

Fat windowed leaves need almost no direct sun.

Care at a glance: light: low to bright indirect light; keep it out of hot, direct sun; water deeply every ~18 days (far less in winter); a gritty, free-draining succulent mix; happiest around 55-85F; propagate by an offset pup pulled from the base or a single leaf laid on dry soil; pet-safe.

Quick facts

- Light: low to bright indirect light; keep it out of hot, direct sun.
- Water: deeply every ~18 days, far less in winter.
- Temperature: 55-85F (13-29C).
- Humidity: average home humidity is fine.
- Soil: a gritty, free-draining succulent mix.
- Propagate: an offset pup pulled from the base or a single leaf laid on dry soil.
- Pet: generally safe around pets.

The leaf tops are see-through so the plant photosynthesises with light passing through.

Cooper's Haworthia - Haworthia cooperi

Translucent leaf tips act like windows -- grow it where light is soft.

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Those clear tips let light reach inner tissues, so it glows on a sunny windowsill.

Haworthia - Haworthiopsis attenuata

Dark, east-facing spots keep the stripes crisp.

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- Water: deeply every ~18 days, far less in winter.
- Temperature: 55-85F (13-29C).
- Humidity: average home humidity is fine.
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- Propagate: an offset pup pulled from the base.
- Pet: generally safe around pets.

It is one of the most forgiving succulents for a desk.

Zebra Plant - Haworthiopsis fasciata

White ridges are just bumps, not pests -- don't scrub them.

Care at a glance: light: bright indirect light, with a little gentle morning or evening sun; water deeply every ~18 days (far less in winter); a gritty, free-draining succulent mix; happiest around 55-85F; propagate by an offset pup pulled from the base or a single leaf laid on dry soil; pet-safe.

Quick facts

- Light: bright indirect light, with a little gentle morning or evening sun.
- Water: deeply every ~18 days, far less in winter.
- Temperature: 55-85F (13-29C).
- Humidity: average home humidity is fine.
- Soil: a gritty, free-draining succulent mix.
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- Pet: generally safe around pets.

Commonly sold as 'zebra cactus' though it is no cactus at all.

General Care Principles

No matter the species in this handbook, a handful of principles carry most of the weight. Get these right and the individual notes above become fine-tuning.

Match the plant to the light: sun-lovers go in the brightest window or under a grow light; shade-lovers go in east or north light. Wrong light is the single most common cause of failure.

Water on the plant's schedule, not the calendar. Soak thoroughly, then let the soil dry before the next drink. In winter, ease right off - most of these plants want a cool, dry rest.

Use the right soil and a draining pot. Free-draining for succulents, moisture-retentive but aerated for ferns and foliage. A drainage hole is non-negotiable.

Propagate to multiply. Almost every plant here can be cloned from a leaf, offset, division, or cutting - see each species for its best method.

Frequently Asked Questions

How often should I really water?

Forget frequent sips. Soak the soil completely, then let it dry out fully before the next drink. In winter most of these plants want a long, dry rest. The lift test (light pot = dry) beats any calendar.

My plant is stretching and pale - what does that mean?

It wants more light. Move it to a brighter window or add a full-spectrum LED grow light. New growth will be compact and colourful; the stretched part will not undo itself, so behead and re-root the top if you like.

What soil should I use?

A free-draining mix is non-negotiable. For succulents that means gritty, sandy soil in a pot with a real drainage hole. For leafy types a peat-free houseplant mix is fine. Sitting in wet soil is the fastest route to rot.

Is this plant safe around my pets?

We note pet safety per species in this guide. 'Pet-safe' means it is not on the usual toxic lists, but no plant is food - keep curious cats and dogs from chewing leaves, and call a vet if you are worried.

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