

Rhipsalis Care Handbook

The shade-loving mistletoe cactus

FREE DOWNLOAD

A GreenNest Plant Guide

Rhipsalis baccifera, the Mistletoe Cactus, is a tropical epiphyte that trails from forest branches in soft, dappled light instead of baking in desert heat. Unlike desert cacti it wants humidity and gentle, indirect light. This handbook covers Rhipsalis baccifera and how to keep those slender green strands long and happy.

What's Inside

- Mistletoe Cactus
- General Care Principles
- Frequently Asked Questions

Mistletoe Cactus - Rhipsalis baccifera

Rhipsalis baccifera, the mistletoe cactus, is a trailing tropical cactus that grows in forest canopies in soft, dappled light rather than desert sun.

Care at a glance: light: bright indirect light, with a little gentle morning or evening sun; water deeply every ~12 days (far less in winter); a moisture-retentive but well-aerated mix; happiest around 60-80F; propagate by a stem cutting; pet-safe.

Quick facts

- Light: bright indirect light, with a little gentle morning or evening sun.
- Water: deeply every ~12 days, far less in winter.
- Temperature: 60-80F (16-27C).
- Humidity: it likes a humid spot or a pebble tray.
- Soil: a moisture-retentive but well-aerated mix.
- Propagate: a stem cutting.
- Pet: generally safe around pets.

It is the only cactus species that grows wild outside the Americas, naturally found in tropical Africa, Madagascar, and Sri Lanka.

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.

Enjoyed this free handbook?

There is plenty more where this came from. Visit AGreenNest.com for 200+ free plant-care articles, free growing tools, and more free ebooks - no signup, no paywall.

[Back to AGreenNest.com](https://AGreenNest.com) -> [Browse free articles](#)

(c) 2026 AGreenNest. A free plant-care handbook. Not affiliated with any brand named herein.