

# Grafted Cactus



A grafted cactus is simply one cactus plant formed from two different species of cacti being fused together. Grafting makes it possible for two species of cactus to thrive by combining the top cactus (also called the scion) with green cacti bottoms (referred to as the rootstock). The rootstock shares its chlorophyll with the scion, allowing the often colorful scion to perform photosynthesis and survive.

## **Cactus, grafted**

- **Use:** Grafted Cactus is actually the product of two easy care cacti joined together to create one awesome plant. Use several cacti on a windowsill, tabletop, or mantel to create a fantastic and colorful display.
- **Exposure/Soil:** Grow in a bright spot; they do best when they get enough light for at least part of the day to cast a strong shadow. These indoor plants will tolerate lower-light spots, especially for relatively short periods. Water Desert Gems cacti sparingly. They typically don't need watering more than once every 10 to 14 days -- and possibly even less if they're grown in low light or consistently cool temperatures. Take care not to overwater these colorful cacti -- too much moisture is the easiest way to do them in. Desert Gems don't require much fertilizer, but if you wish to fertilize, you can do so as little as once a year or so with a general-purpose houseplant fertilizer. These cacti also don't require any pruning; they're truly easy to grow!
- **Growth:** Grows 4-7" tall and wide, larger over long periods of time.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 10-11, Annual, houseplant Bring indoors below 55 degrees
- **Foliage:** So why do these cactus need to be grafted and what is grafting? Grafting consists of taking two different plants and "fusing" them together. When they are combined correctly, they fuse together and grow as one. In the case of the moon cactus, it is a colorful *Gymnocalycium mihanovichii* which is the scion, or top part of the graft. The understock is usually a *Hylocereus undatus* (dragon fruit) or some other type of *hylocereus*. The reason the colored *gymnocalycium* need to be grafted is simply that they can not live on their own. What do plants need to live? They need the sun or electric light to make their food and to do that they need to have chlorophyll present. As you can see, there isn't any green color in the plants so they need to be grafted onto a green plant that can make food for them. This small *gymnocalycium* below (less than 2" across) is a green form and can photosynthesize for itself.
- **Flower:** Rarely flowers in our area.