

## QUICK REFERENCE PLANTING GUIDE

LIGHT/SUN EXPOSURE	Full sun.
USDA HARDINESS ZONES	Winter hardy in zones 9 to 11. In zones 3 to 8, we recommend planting in a container so you can move the plant indoors before the first frost.
PLANT TYPE	Annual/Tropical.
PLANTING DISTANCE IN-GROUND	At least 4 feet apart.
CONTAINER SIZE	One plant per 10-inch or larger container.
MATURE HEIGHT / SPREAD	4 to 8 feet tall with a 3 to 5 foot spread. Planting in a container will limit the plant's growth and keep it at a more manageable size.
TIME TO REACH MATURITY	12 months.
FACTS OF NOTE	Makes an excellent houseplant. Drought tolerant and easy to grow. Unique appearance and colorful foliage.

# Thank you for your order!

### PLANT WARRANTY

We warrant perennials for 1 year and annuals for 90 days from the time of the original shipment. If for any reason you are dissatisfied, we will replace your plant with a similar or comparable one, at no charge. If your replacement is not available or it is too late in the season to ship, it will reship the following shipping season.

If you have any questions or concerns about your order, please contact us at 888-593-3644 or [help@cottagefarmsdirect.com](mailto:help@cottagefarmsdirect.com).

**Caution: Do not assume any plant is safe to eat. Only parts of plants expressly grown to be eaten should be considered edible. As with any product that is not food, care should be taken to make sure that small children and pets do not ingest any part of a plant that is not expressly grown to be eaten.**

Unless specifically stated, this product is intended for ornamental horticultural use only and is not intended for consumption or ingestion by humans or pets. Most plants are harmless but some contain toxic substances which can cause adverse health effects. Furthermore, some individuals and some animals are sensitive or allergic to certain plants and precautions should be taken to limit or avoid physical contact with particular plants. Some plants have thorns or spines that can be painful if handled.

**In case of ingestion contact a poison control center immediately.  
1-800-222-1222**

# PENCIL CACTUS



\*Image on cover is representative of the type of plant(s) in this offer and not necessarily indicative of actual size or color for the included variety.

## OUT OF THE BOX

### PENCIL CACTUS

Your plants have been shipped to you in pots. We urge you to remove them from the shipping box and plant them as soon as possible. Should planting be delayed due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances, roll the plastic bag down around each plant and place them near a bright window or other sunny location. Keep them well-watered in their pots until permanently planted. Once planted, they begin setting roots and, as the weather warms, begin showing new growth. Please plant as soon as possible, provide reasonable care and be patient.

The foliage on potted plants may appear slightly wilted or yellow upon arrival. This is due to the stress of shipping and is usually nothing to worry about. Water the plant thoroughly, place it in a shady location and remove any foliage that does not recover.



SHIPPED AS SHOWN

### SOIL PREPARATION

We recommend having your soil tested periodically by your local County Extension Office ([www.nifa.usda.gov/extension](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/extension) or by calling 1-800-333-4636). A soil test can determine if your soil needs any amendments to enhance the growth and performance of your plants.

Ideal garden soil is easy to dig in and drains well while still holding the nutrients and water vital to plant growth. To prepare a bed for in-ground planting, spade or till the soil to a depth of roughly 12-18 inches. Next, spread a 2-4 inch layer of organic matter such as compost, shredded leaves or peat moss over the soil and mix well.

## PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

Always plant pencil cactus in well-drained soil or in a container with drainage holes. We strongly recommend planting in a container in order to properly protect the plant from winter damage. Use the following instructions as a guide for container planting.

**Important:** Thoroughly hydrate the plant by submersing the root zone in a container of water for 10 minutes while you prepare for planting.

- A** Fill the container with soil to within 4 inches of the top. Remove the pot and prepare the root ball for planting by gently disturbing the surface roots with your fingers, fork, or gardening tool and pruning any damaged roots. Dig a hole in the soil to insert the lower part of the root ball.
- B** Once the plant is properly positioned in the pot, begin filling the pot with soil. Work the soil around the root ball with your hands, firming the soil around the plant with your fingers. When the hole is filled, tamp the soil to remove any air pockets.
- C** Water well and, if necessary, adjust the plant so it is upright and add additional soil if needed. Check to be sure the plant is not planted too deeply. If it is, raise the plant carefully and re-firm the soil.



### CONTINUING CARE

- FEEDING** Feed your plants once every 2-3 weeks during the growing season with a water soluble fertilizer. Discontinue feeding after September 1st so your plants can prepare for winter. Resume fertilizing when new growth appears in the spring.
- PRUNING** Remove any dead, damaged or unsightly growth at any time to maintain an attractive appearance. If any shoots become too tall or disproportionate, trim them as needed to achieve desired shape. Always wear gloves when pruning pencil cactus.

## CONTINUING CARE (Continued)

### WATERING

Adequate and consistent watering is essential during your plant's first year in the garden. Once established, this plant is very drought tolerant and requires little watering.

Due to variable geographical and environmental conditions, a specific watering schedule is difficult to define. However, as a rule of thumb, you should not allow the soil or the original root ball to completely dry out. During the first summer, you may need to water as often as every few days in periods of drought and extreme summer heat. To determine if your plant needs water, dig a few inches into the soil next to the plant. If the soil is dry 2-3 inches below the surface, it is time to water.

If you plant in a container, allow the top half of soil to dry out moderately between waterings. Water thoroughly until the soil is well-saturated and excess water drains out of the drainage holes at the bottom of the container. Never allow the plants to sit in a saucer of water. Pots may be kept in saucers after any excess water has drained from the pot.

In mild zones (9-11), pencil cactus may be planted in-ground. If freezing weather is expected, protect the roots by mounding a 6-8 inch layer of shredded bark, compost, leaves, straw or other organic material over the crown of the plant. Potted plants should be moved into a protected area on exceptionally cold nights.

### WINTERIZING

In colder zones (3-7), pencil cactus should be grown in containers and moved indoors before the first frost. Once the plant is indoors, remove any foliage that has begun to die back.

Watering should be reduced significantly while the plant is indoors. Do not overwater or allow your plant to sit in water.

In spring after the threat of freezing weather has passed, remove mulch from in-ground plantings and move containerized plants back outdoors for the summer.