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# How to Grow Sedum: The Complete Stonecrop Guide



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# Planting, Growing, and Caring for Sedums

By [Catherine Boeckmann](#)

Last Updated: July 12, 2024



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duces clusters of star-shaped flowers that bloom from midsummer to fall. It's easy to care for and beloved by pollinators, too! Here's how to grow sedum in your garden.

## About Sedum

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Perennial plants don't get much easier than sedum, a genus of succulents with fleshy stems and succulent leaves —also called “stonecrop” or “live-for-ever.” A hardy plant that grows well in shallow soil, this is a sedum variety for almost every garden.

We like to divide sedum into two main categories based on the plants' growth habits: **low-growing sedum** and **up-right sedum**.

- **Low-growing sedum** spreads along the ground, reaching only a few inches (or less) in height.

gardens, or cascading down a stone wall.

- **Tall or upright sedum** tends to form tall, upright clumps that produce large flower heads in tight masses of tiny reddish-pink flowers. Their height and attractive flowers make them good candidates for border gardens or pollinator gardens. A few years ago, upright sedum was reclassified to another genus, *Hylotelephium*, but it is still commonly referred to as a “sedum.”

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## PLANTING

Sedum enjoy full sun, but will tolerate

5 and colder), plant in full sun to improve overwintering capability.

Sedum grows well in poor or sandy soil, but it's important to have well-drained soil to avoid fungal diseases. It is very susceptible to root rot if grown in soil that holds too much moisture. Overly rich soil can also encourage leggy growth, which can result in upright sedum varieties becoming top-heavy when they bloom.

## When to Plant Sedum

- Sedum is usually bought in plugs or pots and transplanted into the garden. The best time to plant sedum is in the spring—after the threat of frost but before the heat of summer kicks in.
- Plant sedum seeds in early spring in well-drained, average to rich soil. (Learn more about soil amendments and preparing soil for



## How to Plant Sedum

- Space plants between 6 inches and 2 feet apart, depending on the variety. Low-growing sedums will readily spread to fill any gaps, while upright sedums tend to stay more compact.
- **Planting full plants or divisions:** Dig a hole deep enough so that the top of the root ball is level with the surface of the soil, then place the plant in the hole and fill in around it. Be careful not to bury the stems of upright sedum, as this can lead to rot.
- **Planting cuttings:** Like other succulents, sedum can be readily prop-

ting should have no trouble rooting under proper lighting and watering conditions.

## GROWING

- Once established, sedum plants require little care. During the summer, check your plants regularly to make sure they are not too dry and water (sparingly) if needed. As long as your area gets rain every couple of weeks at the least, sedum shouldn't need any extra watering.
- After flowering, cut back the plants to maintain their shape or contain them in one area.
  - **Tip:** For added winter interest, leave the flowers of upright sedum alone after they bloom. They will form attractive seed heads.
- Remember to divide your plants in the spring or fall to control their





## Types

- *Sedum humifusum* makes for a great ground cover and has beautiful, bright yellow flowers
- ‘**Brilliant**’, ‘**Autumn Fire**’, and ‘**Autumn Joy**’ upright sedum (*Hylotelephium spectabile*, aka *Sedum spectabile*) add bursts of bright pink and magenta to your garden
- ‘**Blue Spruce**’ (*Sedum reflexum*) is a low-growing sedum with blue-green, spruce-like foliage and yellow flowers

## GARDENING PRODUCTS



## PESTS/DISEASES

- Mealybugs
  - Scale insects
  - Slugs
  - Snails
  - Birds, deer, squirrels, and voles
- may nibble on the succulent foliage of sedum.

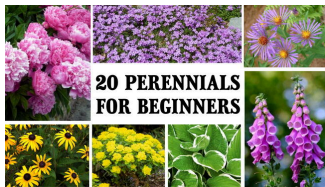
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## Catherine Boeckmann

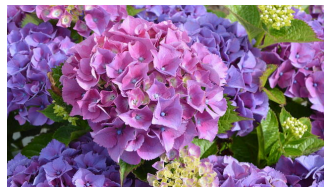


Catherine Boeckmann loves nature, stargazing, and gardening so it's not surprising that she and The Old Farmer's Almanac found each other. She leads digital content for the Almanac website, and is also a certified master gardener in the state of Indiana. [Read More from Catherine Boeckmann](#)

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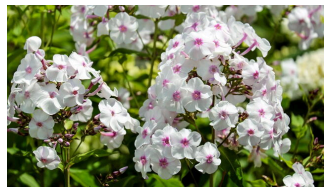
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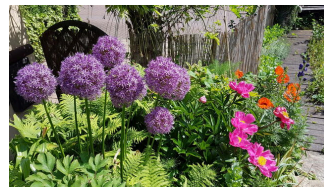
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# COMMENTS

ADD A COMMENT

Diana (not verified) 1 year 10 months ago

I was just gifted a 10-12 inch pot of stonecrop (friend bought it on clearance from a big box store.) It contains several variety of stonecrop plants densely planted in a pretty pot that has several drain holes in the bottom. Should I transplant all or some of the plants directly into the ground in an appropriate (sunny, well drained) area or leave the plants in the pot? It's mid-June, zone 6 with forecasted temps about 90 degrees with lows in the mid 60's for the next 10 days. Thanks for any advice you might share.

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REPLY

If you keep the pot well-watered,  
your stonecrop should survive.

Typically, the best time of year to  
transplant stonecrop plants is in  
the spring or fall, but if you  
choose to do so now, please make  
sure that they have adequate  
amounts of water through the  
summer months as they are build-  
ing their root system.

Happy planting!

**REPLY**

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**Nancy (not verified)** 2 years 6 months ago

When should I cut back my sedum or  
should it be cut back. We are now in last  
October so not sure if I should cut them  
back or what to do for winter.

**REPLY**

Cut back sedum once the flowers have finished blooming—or feel free to leave the flowers on the plants for added winter garden interest! The birds may also appreciate their seed heads during the colder months.

**REPLY**

**Dan Schwartz (not verified)** 1

year 5 months ago

Didn't know we had red sedum until they grew this year. We moved in our Michigan home in November and there was just dirt along our front sidewalk and voila these beautiful flowers bloomed. We don't need to cut or trim for winter?

**REPLY**

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The leaves on my Sedum plants have large pink spots on them. What is this? What should I do about it?

REPLY

**The Editors** 2 years 9 months ago

It could be a minor bacterial or fungal disease. Remove the infected leaves and monitor the plants for further infection.

REPLY

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**Kathleen Fargione (not verified)** 2 years 11 months ago

I have upright sedum. They are beautiful in the spring - perfectly shaped balls, but as they get bigger they flop and I have to stake them to hold them up. Is there anything that I can do to keep them shorter so they don't flop?



REPLY

**Bree (not verified)** 2 years 8 months ago

I avoid this by pinching off the tops of sedum in early June, keeping the plant at about 8" of height. The tops regrow and there are sturdy stalks and great flowers come fall.

I garden in Zone 5 so if you grow under a warmer/longer climate, you may need to top yours off earlier.

REPLY

**Janet Bosse (not verified)** 6 months 4 weeks ago

In zone 5, when do you stop pinching back the tops to 8" so they can form the flowers?

REPLY

MORE COMMENTS

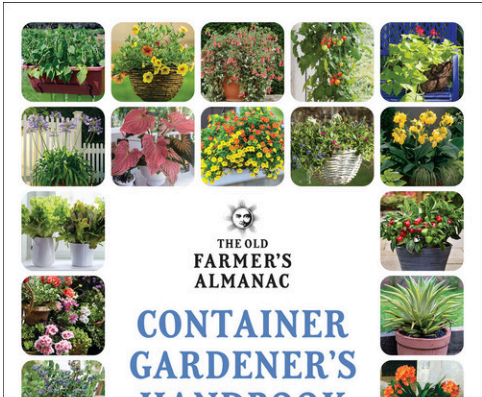
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