

WREATHS



FRESH
FORAGED
FOLIAGE
&
FAUX

Alys Dobbie

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This book is dedicated to Victoria, who was tireless in her assistance in putting this book together.



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Living Wreaths



Succulent Wreath

This living wreath is truly unique because it will completely change over time! As the plants grow, the wreath will fill out. You can use any low-growing succulents such as echeverias or aloes, and you can also use cuttings from your established succulents. The moist moss will help them all flourish quickly. Grouping the succulents by color is also a fun way to display them—it gives almost an ombré rainbow effect. This wreath can be hung indoors or outside.

Tools

Gloves (optional)
Large tweezers
Mister
Scissors

Materials

Binding wire
Copper wreath ring
Miniature succulent selection,
about 28–30 plants
Sphagnum moss
S-hook





1. Divide the sphagnum moss up into tennis-ball-sized shapes. Place one on top of the copper wreath ring, and unravel some of the binding wire. Start wrapping the wire around the moss to hold it in place.
2. Carry on attaching the moss to the copper ring in the same manner. Don't pull the binding wire too tight, though, since it will make the surface area of the moss too small.
3. When you get back around to the beginning, chop the wire and poke the end into the moss to hide it.
4. Place the succulents around your wreath, and arrange them carefully, balancing their different textures, shapes, and colors. The key is to make sure that no two of the same variety are next to each other (unless, that is, you are deliberately clustering them for effect).
5. When you've decided on your scheme, remove the succulents from their pots by gently squeezing each pot. Carefully tease away as much dirt from the roots as you can.
6. With your forefinger or thumb, create a small hole that is as deep as the moss is to the ring.
7. The hole should not be wider in diameter than your finger width. You can use a small stick or large tweezers if you find it helps.



8. Choose your first plant and place the roots in the hole you have just made. Try to tuck in all the roots, but don't worry if some stray a bit.



9. You can secure the succulent base with mossing pins. If you still feel that your succulents are too loose, then you can straddle a couple of the leaves with these mossing pins.



10. Carry on with this method until you have placed most of your succulents on your wreath.

In between finishing this wreath and hanging it up, the wreath must have a period of up to three weeks' rest. This is to let the succulents root themselves properly—it also makes it easier to water them later. If you are too impatient for this, you can hang it up, but you almost certainly will need more mossing pins to hold the succulents in place to begin with, and you must frequently bring it down to water the plants.

Watering can be done in two ways: you can constantly spritz the back of the wreath while it's hanging (little and often). Or, if you have a bath or a wide sink, you can bring the whole thing down and submerge it in about half an inch of water (but be careful not to get the leaves of the succulents wet). Leave the wreath submerged for about ten minutes; after this, let the water drain away and place it on a drainboard for a few hours to get rid of any excess water.

You can spruce up your succulent wreath by using dangly succulents such as string of beads or *Rhipsalis* (mistletoe cacti) as shown on the page opposite. They can be pinned onto the moss by their fronds, or you can plant them as the other ones have been planted.

Tip:

Mix and match your plant selection to suit your style—you can use cacti if you'd like this wreath to sit flat on a table, but don't drench it with water!

