HOUSEPLANTS · INDOORS, BY A VERY BRIGHT WINDOW

Let's grow jade plant.

Crassula ovata

This plan is for **Crassula ovata**

Jade plant care: a sunny window, a draining pot, and time to dry between drinks.

Keep its nursery pot **1 rooted plant**

Before you start

Start indoors year-round by a very bright window; keep the plant away from freezing glass and cold drafts in winter.

By jennyzhuang

Sources checked September 27, 2026 View sources ↗

LIGHT

Bright light and some sun

Aim for a very bright window with about 4 or more hours of direct sun, introduced gradually.

WATER

Let the mix nearly dry

Check the top inch and pot weight; wait if the deeper mix is still wet or heavy.

FEEDING

A small, occasional feed

After nursery feed ends, use a dilute feed at a needed watering about every 2 months while growing.

ASPCA lists jade plant (Crassula ovata, also listed as Crassula argentea) as toxic to cats and dogs. Keep the plant and fallen leaves out of reach; contact your veterinarian if ingestion is suspected.

BEFORE YOU START

Your little kit.

- ✓ 1 rooted jade plant in a draining 4–6-inch nursery pot
- ✓ 1 saucer or an outer pot you can empty
- ✓ A watering can and a thin wooden skewer for deeper moisture checks

THE SOIL

Keep a healthy, freely draining nursery mix at first. When a repot is needed, use a cactus and succulent potting mix; check whether it already contains fertilizer.

Start with what's on this list. Add plant food only when the feeding section says it's needed.

YOUR SIMPLE GROWING PLAN

One pot. Here's the plan.

Indoors, by a very bright window. Start with **small plant**.

THE POT

Keep its nursery pot

Start with one plant in a draining 4–6-inch nursery pot with a stable base. This is our starter choice, not a mature-size limit.

HOW MANY

1 rooted plant

Choose a labeled Crassula ovata with firm growth. Keep an existing healthy plant in its suitable pot; do not downsize it to match this starter recipe.

THE CONTAINER

Keep its nursery pot



No immediate repot

START WITH

1 rooted plant



Illustration · not to scale

Keep its nursery pot · 1 rooted plant Start with one plant in a draining 4–6-inch nursery pot with a stable base. This is our starter choice, not a mature-size limit. Choose a labeled Crassula ovata with firm growth. Keep an existing healthy plant in its suitable pot; do not downsize it to match this starter recipe. Original illustration; not to scale.

01

Keep one stable, draining pot

Start with one rooted jade in its 4–6-inch nursery pot. Set it on a saucer or inside an outer pot that can be emptied.

02

Introduce sunshine gradually

Use a very bright window and work toward about 4 or more hours of direct sun. Do not move a shade-grown plant straight into intense afternoon rays.

03

Check moisture, not the calendar

Check weekly at first. Let the mix approach dry, using a dry top inch and a noticeably lighter pot together; wet deeper mix means wait.

04

Water the roots and drain

When ready, wet the root zone evenly and let excess drain. Empty the saucer. Do not keep adding small daily drinks or wait for severe shriveling.

When it is time to repot: check drainage and choose a container mix. Follow this plant's mix instructions.

Other ways to start

Root a stem cutting

Take a healthy 3–6-inch stem with clean pruners and remove the lower leaves. Let the cut end dry for several days until sealed, then insert it into a small draining pot of fairly dry cactus mix. Keep it in bright, indirect light while rooting. Avoid a soaked pot or a jar of water; the unrooted piece does not use water like an established plant.

Start with one whole leaf

Detach an intact leaf, including its base where it joined the stem. Let the break dry, then rest it on lightly damp cactus mix with the base touching the surface, not buried. Keep that surface just slightly damp while roots and a tiny new plant develop. This shallow rooting setup differs from watering a rooted jade; do not drench the whole container.

YOUR EVERYDAY ROUTINE

Water & fertilizer at a glance.

WATER WHEN

Check weekly at first. Let the mix become nearly dry: top inch dry and pot much lighter. Wait if deeper mix is wet or heavy; when ready, water thoroughly and drain.

FERTILIZER

Miracle-Gro Water Soluble All Purpose Plant Food (US 24-8-16)

AMOUNT

¼ teaspoon in 1 US gallon of water

WHAT THAT AMOUNT COVERS

Mix into water. Apply only enough solution to wet this pot and drain; the mixing batch is not the amount to pour on.

HOW OFTEN TO FEED

Once every 2 months during active spring or summer growth.

WHEN TO START OR PAUSE

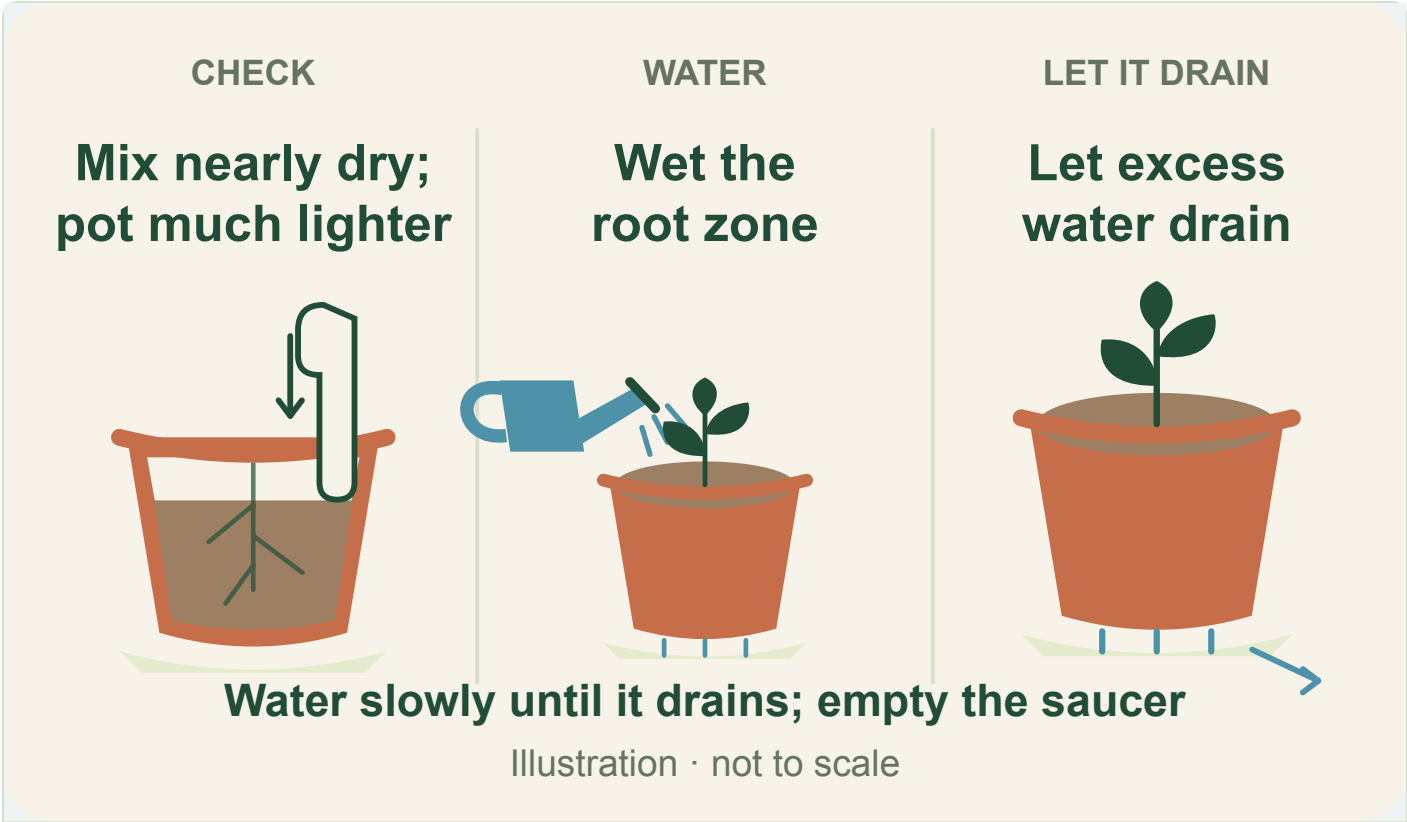
Wait until nursery feed ends. Skip immediately after repotting or while resting; feed at a needed watering.

Our adapted succulent recipe: ½ teaspoon (the US product's indoor rate) × ½. Not a jade-specific label rate.

01 / EVERYDAY CARE

When to water.

Check weekly at first, more often if a sunny, warm spot dries the small pot quickly. Let the mix become nearly dry: feel the top inch and lift the pot. If the top is dry and the pot is much lighter, water thoroughly and let excess drain; if deeper mix is still wet or heavy, wait. A clean skewer near the pot edge can help check below the surface. Do not deliberately leave it dry until the leaves shrivel. Expect longer waits in a cool, dim season, and empty the saucer each time.



Check before watering. Check weekly at first. Let the mix become nearly dry: top inch dry and pot much lighter. Wait if deeper mix is wet or heavy; when ready, water thoroughly and drain. Original illustration; not to scale.

> **The easy rule**
>
> Check first. Water only when the plant needs it.

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02 / PLANT FOOD

Exactly what to feed it.

Skip fertilizer while a new jade settles in, while nursery feed is active, or immediately after repotting. Check the tag or mix bag and wait for healthy new growth. Do not feed an unrooted cutting or use fertilizer to treat a soft, struggling plant.



¼ teaspoon in 1 US gallon of water Mix into water. Apply only enough solution to wet this pot and drain; the mixing batch is not the amount to pour on. Once every 2 months during active spring or summer growth. Wait until nursery feed ends. Skip immediately after repotting or while resting; feed at a needed watering. Original illustration; not to scale.



US PRODUCT REFERENCE

Miracle-Gro

Water Soluble All Purpose

24-8-16

Soluble: mix into water

Check the official US product ↗

Illustrated reference; check the manufacturer's current packaging and US label.

½ OF THE US PRODUCT'S INDOOR STRENGTH

Miracle-Gro Water Soluble All Purpose Plant Food (US 24-8-16)

Mix ¼ level teaspoon of Miracle-Gro Water Soluble All Purpose Plant Food (US 24-8-16) into 1 US gallon of water. This is ½ teaspoon × ½: the official indoor rate reduced within Iowa State's succulent guidance. Our plan uses Wisconsin's interval of about every 2 months during active growth, at a watering the plant needs. Use enough solution to water this pot and drain, not the full gallon. Pause when growth stops. This is an adapted care plan, not a jade-specific label direction; do not carry the dose over to a different fertilizer formula.

Check the manufacturer's product page ↗

Use the named US formulation. A different product or concentration needs different directions. The amount mixed is a batch, not a dose to pour into one pot.

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03 / WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Slow growth into a branching plant

New leaf pairs appear at the tips and older stems gradually become woody. Healthy indoor jade plants often do not flower, so new, firm growth is a more useful first goal.

Growing indoors through winter

Grow indoors year-round for this plan. Keep leaves clear of freezing window glass and cold drafts. If you move it outdoors in warm weather, build up sun exposure gradually and bring it inside before frost.

For regional planting windows, find your local Cooperative Extension office ↗.

Something looking off?

Do wrinkled jade leaves always mean it needs water?

No—check the pot before deciding. A light, nearly dry pot with shriveling leaves may need a thorough watering. Leaves dropping alongside persistently wet mix or a soft stem call for checking the roots and drainage instead. Leaf texture alone cannot diagnose the problem; do not keep watering a wet pot to chase firmer leaves.

How can I make a leggy jade branch?

First improve inadequate light gradually. For a healthy, established plant, Wisconsin Extension recommends spring pruning back to a lateral branch to encourage branching and a stronger trunk. Keep healthy cut pieces for propagation. Fertilizer alone will not correct the stretched growth caused by a dim location.

Are white marks on jade leaves always mealybugs?

No. UConn describes small mineral spots that can rub off, while mealybugs tend to form fluffy clusters, often at leaf joints or on new growth. Inspect closely and separate a plant with suspected pests before choosing a treatment. A white mark by itself is not enough reason to spray it.

Repotting and rooting cuttings

Choose a stable pot when repotting is needed

Inspect a jade that is tipping over, tightly crowded, or sitting in deteriorated mix. When it is growing, choose a stable pot only slightly wider than the root ball, with drainage holes and fresh succulent mix. A heavy pot can improve stability without adding a large volume of wet soil. Handle the brittle leaves and stems gently.

Start another plant from a leaf or stem

Once roots have formed, move the new jade to its own small pot with drainage holes and succulent mix. The lightly damp surface used for leaf rooting is temporary: as the plant establishes, shift to the nearly-dry watering check above. Do not keep an established jade on a daily misting routine.

Help with your next step.

Match a houseplant to your window

Compare foliage, light needs and starting setups before choosing another indoor plant.

Keep water from collecting around the roots

A draining nursery pot and an empty outer pot support a succulent drying routine.

BEHIND THIS GUIDE

Where the advice comes from.

Plant care is based on the sources below. Planting layouts and beginner routines combine that guidance into one practical plan; they are editorial choices, not results from a Plant Care Steps growing trial.

- Illinois Extension: jade light and nearly-dry watering cue ↗
  https://extension.illinois.edu/houseplants/jade-plant
- UConn: jade seasonal watering, sun acclimation, and white leaf marks ↗
  https://homegarden.cahnr.uconn.edu/factsheets/jade-plants/
- Wisconsin Extension: jade feeding interval, cuttings, and pruning ↗
  https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/jade-plant-crassula-ovata/
- NC State Extension: jade growth, indoor flowering, and leaf drop ↗
  https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/crassula-ovata/
- Iowa State: succulent potting and reduced fertilizer concentration ↗
  https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu/how-to/growing-succulents-indoors
- Iowa State: separate stem-cutting and whole-leaf methods ↗
  https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu/how-to/how-propagate-succulents
- Illinois Extension: nursery plants, drainage, and acclimation ↗
  https://extension.illinois.edu/houseplants/get-started
- Iowa State: existing potting-mix fertilizer and active growth ↗
  https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu/how-to/how-care-houseplants
- Manufacturer: US fertilizer formula and application directions ↗
  https://scottsmiraclegro.com/en-us/brands/miracle-gro/products/plant-food-and-care/miracle-gro-water-soluble-all-purpose-plant-food.html
- ASPCA: jade plant toxicity ↗
  https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/aspca-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants/jade-plant

Something needs updating? Suggest a correction

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Compiled with AI assistance. These first-edition guides have not yet had an independent horticultural review. Read our editorial approach.