

LIVING WREATH

Most of the work in making a Living Wreath is in the preparation. You'll need the following materials:

1. Two twelve-inch wire wreath frames
2. One 410 cubic-inch bag of green moss (You'll probably use about half of this.)
3. Two packages of hair pins and one package of floral pins
4. Soil lightened with perlite and dampened with water so it holds together (I'll let you know how much soil after I do some measuring.)
SOIL: 6 CUPS
PERLITE: 3 CUPS
WATER: 1 CUP
5. A plastic drop cloth
6. A bucket of water for soaking the moss
7. An old ballpoint pen or a pencil
8. Approximately 120 succulent cuttings at least two days old so the cut part has formed a callus

(I bet you're already tired, and we haven't even started.)

Spread the drop cloth on a picnic table or work bench. Then place both frames, open side up, on the drop cloth.

Soak one half bag of moss in the bucket of water. (The remaining half is just insurance.)

Pick up pieces of moss, squeeze out the water, and completely cover the concave sections of both frames so that no spaces are visible.

Next, arrange small, contiguous mounds of dampened soil over the moss on one frame. Place both frames together to make a moss and dirt sandwich. Then tie fishing line to the frame, and wrap the line repeatedly for a complete circuit. Now tie the line once more at the original tie location and wrap a complete circuit in the opposite direction for a third and final tie. So now you've got three ties at the same spot and two complete wraps holding the framed moss and dirt sandwich together. (Some establishments serve this with a side of slaw or fries.)

Now you're ready for the succulents. Raise the frame above the table by setting it on an upside down flat. To attach a succulent, use the pen to make holes in the sandwich. The callused end of each succulent will be inserted in the holes. Ring the outer frame circle with large succulents such as jade. Larger succulents will need pinning in two places with hair pins or floral pins. Next, decorate the inside circle with flat succulents. Now imagine sectioning your wreath into thirds. At each dividing point pin either three or five larger or contrasting succulents. Then fill in the remaining spaces, massing color where possible. And that should do it.

Have fun, guys, and buy lots of succulents.