

# HELP YOUR SUCCULENTS THRIVE INDOORS WITH GROW LIGHTS

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Guest Blogger

This week we are pleased to welcome our friends at Soltech Solutions to the blog to shed some light on the mystery of grow lights. Their white LED plant lights have helped us bring our most sun-loving succulents into our homes and offices and we hope their guide helps you understand how to use and select the right grow light for your plants. Because succulents are too beautiful not to have indoors and out!



## Growing Under Lights: Where to Start

Succulents need sunlight to live and grow, but it can be difficult to get enough light to your plants when they're growing indoors. While some varieties of succulents like Jade (*Crassula*), *Haworthia*, air plants (*Tillandsia*), and *Kalanchoe* will tolerate low indoor light levels, many varieties can show signs of stress like stretching and greening when kept inside over the long term. To get these succulents, in particular *Echeveria*, tender *Sedum*, and cacti to thrive indoors, supplemental light is recommended.

If you have noticed your plants suffering in the dark, what's there to do? You've heard of grow lights, but one Google search will get you "about 549,000,000 results". So where do you start? Here we'll break it down to get you and your plants the lighting help you need.



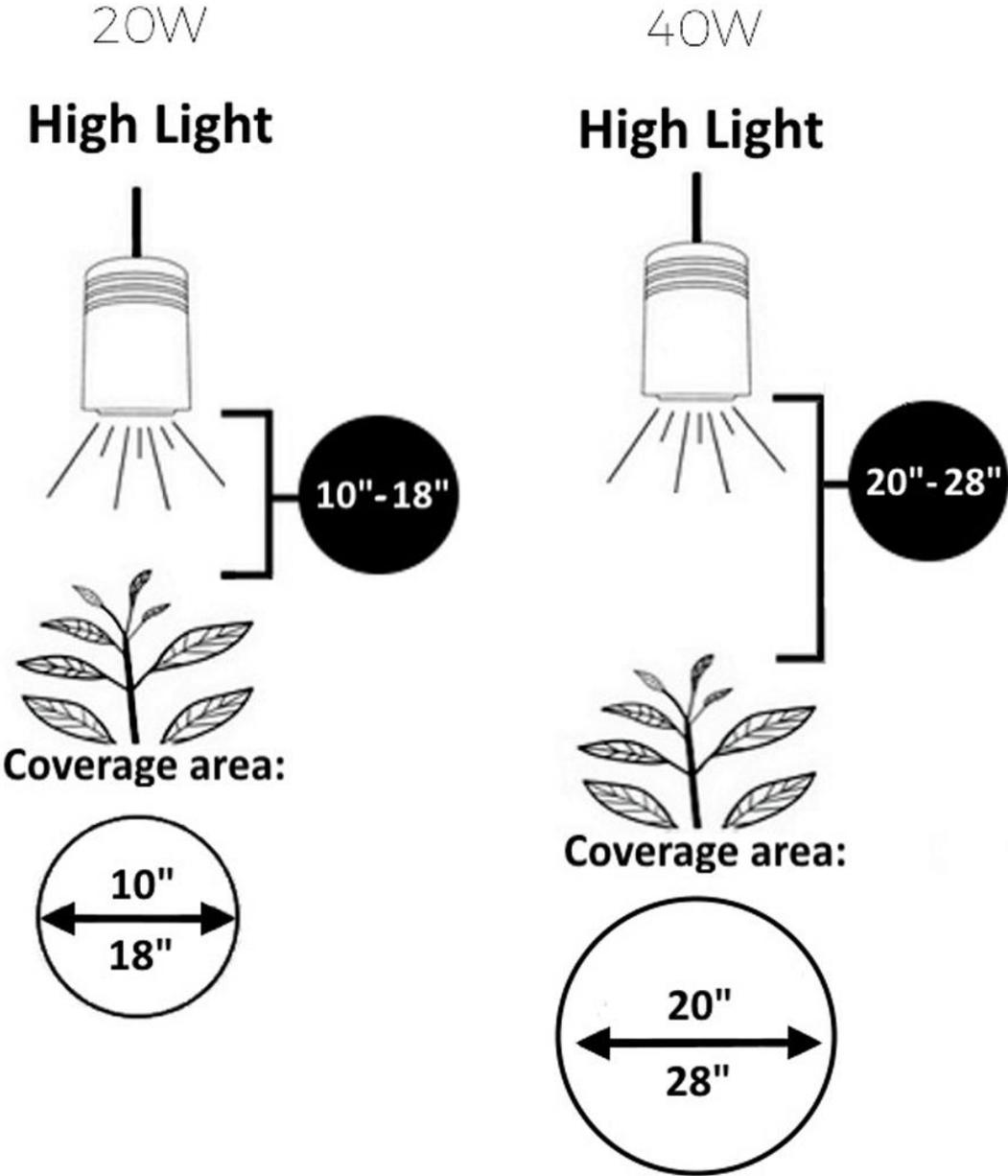
## Why do plants need light?

Light provides plants with the energy they need to live and grow. The leaves and petals act as solar panels and absorb the specific photosynthetic light from the sun necessary to plant life. This is why normal lights won't support plant growth and why even sunlight filtered through a window pane can be insufficient. That's where grow lights come in. They mimic the sun's photosynthetic spectrum and essentially provide your plant with synthetic sunlight.



# How much light do they need?

Most succulents are accustomed to growing outdoors with six to eight hours of sunlight. By providing about 12 hours of supplemental light indoors, you can keep succulents from stretching and fading in color. If you're using white LEDs, you can use the graphic below to guide your placement of a grow light based on its wattage and the size of your plant.



# Types of Grow Lights

There are many types of grow light to choose from of different sizes, looks, and purposes. Read on to explore the pros and cons of the most popular types of grow lights.

## FLUORESCENT GROW LIGHTS

- Popular for small plants and starting seedlings
- Fairly cheap in the short-term
- Bulbs typically have a short lifespan

## HIGH-INTENSITY DISCHARGE (HID) AND METAL HALIDE

- Used in large, commercial grow operations
- Produce the highest amounts of light and heat
- Consume the most energy and result in expensive electric bills for the entire life of each light

## RED/BLUE LIGHT-EMITTING DIODES (LEDS)

- Precisely pinpoint the ideal photosynthetic spectrum needed by plants
- Energy efficient and low-cost in the long-term
- Use bright and obnoxious red and blue lights to reach high levels of efficiency

## WHITE LEDS

- Energy efficient and cost-effective like red/blue LEDs
- Soft, white color for pleasant ambient lighting
- Ideal for growers who love their homes as much as they love their plants

Enjoy bringing succulents into all corners of your home and for more tips and additional resources, we recommend:

- Bloom & Grow Radio podcast, specifically Episode 12: Everything You Need to Know about Indoor Grow Lights with The Sill's Chris Satch.
- The recently released book *Gardening Under Lights: The Complete Guide for Indoor Growers* by Leslie Halleck. Her chapter 'Ornamental Plants' discusses how to successfully grow all sorts of succulents under different kinds of grow lights.

