

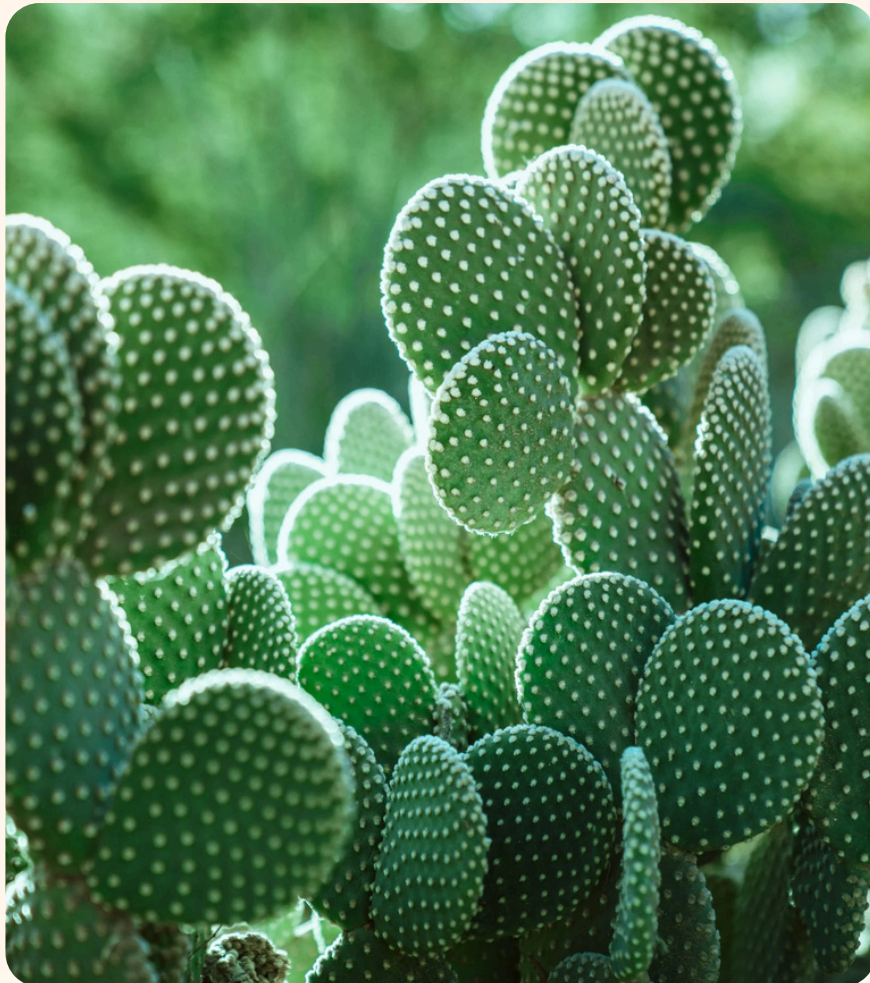


Nook & Nature

By Neha Kunal Deshmukh

Plant Care Guide

Simple steps for healthy , happy plants



Bunny Ear Cactus

(Opuntia microdasys)

The Bunny Ear Cactus, also known as *Opuntia microdasys* or Polka Dot Cactus, is a charming succulent with unique flattened pads resembling bunny ears. It features soft spines called glochids that give it a fuzzy appearance. This cactus is a popular choice among plant enthusiasts due to its cute and distinctive look.



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Origin: Origin: Mexico

Care Level & Placement: Easy care, Indoor or outdoor plant



Light

Place it near a window that receives several hours of bright, filtered light each day. Avoid exposing it to intense, direct sunlight for extended periods, as it can scorch the pads.



Water

Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. Water thoroughly and then let the soil dry completely before watering again.



Soil

Use a well-draining cactus or succulent potting mix. A mixture of regular potting soil, perlite, and coarse sand works well to provide good drainage. Avoid heavy or compacted soils that retain moisture for too long.



Fun fact

The soft spines of the Bunny Ear Cactus are actually modified glochids, which are small hair-like structures. They can detach easily and cause irritation, so it's important to handle the plant with care and avoid direct contact with the glochids.



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Pet Friendliness

While the Bunny Ear Cactus is generally non-toxic to pets, the presence of glochids can cause discomfort if ingested or if they stick to the fur. It's best to keep the plant out of reach of curious pets to prevent any potential issues.



Stress Signs

Shrinking or Wrinkling Pads: Shrinking or wrinkling pads indicate dehydration and lack of water. Increase the frequency of watering and ensure the plant receives adequate moisture, especially during hot and dry periods..

Yellowing Pads: Yellowing pads can be a sign of overwatering or root rot. Check the soil moisture levels and adjust your watering practices accordingly. If the soil is consistently wet, reduce the watering frequency and improve drainage.

Discoloration or Spots: Discoloration or dark spots on the pads can be caused by sunburn or sunscald. If the plant has been exposed to direct sunlight without acclimation, move it to a spot with filtered or indirect light to prevent further damage.



Botanical Family: Cactaceae

Botanical Name: *Opuntia microdasys*

Common Name: Bunny Ear Cactus, Polka Dot Cactus



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