Hens and chicks are members of the Sempervivum group, mat-forming succulent plants that produce clusters of rosettes. They are commonly called houseleeks and grow well indoors and out, in cool or hot temperatures. Hens and chicks plants are so called because of the rosette shape and habit of the plant to produce numerous babies. A rockery or dry, nutrient challenged location is a good place for growing hens and chicks.

An alpine plant, which gives it an amazing tolerance for poor soils and unwelcoming conditions. The mother plant is attached to the babies (or chicks) by an underground runner. The chicks may be as small as a dime and the mother can grow to the size of a small plate. The mother plant will die off after four to six years and should be removed. The plants produce a flower when mature and these should be pulled off the plant when they expire. Divide the chicks from the mother plant at least every two years to prevent overcrowding.

### Name(s)
Sempervivum tectorum; Hens and chicks; houseleek, hen widdies

### Origin
Mountainous and stony areas of Southern and Central Europe and North Africa

### Flowering
Tall flower stock of light pink to reddish purple in summer, which may happen after one year or several. Mother will die after flowering so remove. Flowering can be a sign of poor conditions (drainage/sun)

### Size
4” tall; 2’ or more in width

### Temperature
Ideal is between 65 & 75F (18-24C); extreme temps of high or low will cause the plant to become semi-dormant and will cease growing.

### Light
Full sun to light shade

### Watering
Drought tolerant perennials; very little is required

### Soil
Well drained and gritty (cactus or succulent mix or mix two parts topsoil, two parts sand and on part perlite); requires very little and can even grow in rock crevasses; ph: 6.6 to 7.5

### Fertilizer
Liquid diluted by half should be used during spring and summer irrigation

### Propagation
Gently pull or cut small plants from the base of older ones, getting a bit of stem attached. Set into moist potting soil that has some coarse sand, perlite, pumice, or grit added for better drainage. Allow the plants to dry for a day or two to heal before watering. Place them in bright, indirect light for a few days or a couple of weeks, then water gently as needed without keeping the plants wet. You may also simply twist off plump, mature leaves and lay them atop moist potting soil or stick them stem-end into the soil; within weeks an entire new plant will form and begin to grow rapidly.

For seeds, sprinkle the seeds on top of the soil or a gravel mix. They need light & warmth to germinate and you should keep them moist but not wet. They should sprout within three weeks. Then add some fine gravel and mulch.

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https://www.diynetwork.com/how-to/outdoors/gardening/hen-and-chicks-succulents


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