

• Orchids

characteristics

This guide focuses on the most common orchids that are grown in home settings, Phalaenopsis. Once you master their care, there are many other hybrid types that you can experiment with.

planting

Phalaenopsis orchids require a moist growing medium, but also needs to dry out to the touch. Drainage and air movement are also very important. Use sphagnum moss along with charcoal and styro-foam in the pot. Do not let moss dry for extended periods of time or during flowering as this will cause bud and/or flower drop.

Orchids will flower for 2-4 months at a time when they receive the care that they desire. They are very susceptible to changes in light and temperature. They will rest during the winter months and become active again in the spring.

care & maintenance

In summer, place the orchid near a window that receives early morning or late afternoon sun. A sheer curtain blocking direct sunlight is best. In winter, they need more light but must be kept from cold drafts.

Face back of plant towards window and new growth facing into the room. This keeps new growth from becoming scorched from the sunlight. Avoid areas of rapid temperature change such as the bathroom, a doorway, or the kitchen sink.

Placing them on a tray of pebbles with water provides needed humidity.

Orchids



For actively growing orchids, water them evenly moist, one to two times per week. Fertilize with orchid or houseplant fertilizer at its lowest dose every second or third watering.

For resting orchids, water occasionally, once every 2-3 weeks until you see new activity.

Orchid roots are made annually at the start of new growth spurts. Be careful not to damage the existing roots, the plant cannot replace them until the next active period. Roots above the ground do not benefit the Phalaenopsis. Encourage these roots to stay in pots next to rooting media, in order to take in nutrition.

Repot only at the beginning of a new growth season, using the proper media. Potting bark, moss, or other media specifically for orchids should be used.

problems

If your orchid fails to flower, and the plant is otherwise healthy, it is probably the fault of incorrect light and temperatures. New blooms continue to open at the ends of a flower spike. When the orchid is done blooming, cut off the flower spike at the bottom.



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