

HOW TO GROW CYMBIDIUMS



These orchids are prized for their long-lasting sprays of flowers, used especially as cut flowers or for corsages in the spring. There are two main types of cymbidiums - standards and miniatures. Cymbidiums orchids have been described as the easiest orchid plants to grow in the Sydney area. To keep your orchid looking and flowering at its best, observe the following growing tips.

LIGHT

Light is important for growing cymbidiums. Coming from cool and bright areas in Asia, they need high light but cool temperatures. The maximum amount of light possible, short of burning, should be given to the plants. This means only light shade during the middle of the day, or ideally about 30% - 50% percent shade. In cool areas, full sun is tolerated. Leaves should be a medium to golden green in color, not dark green.

TEMPERATURE

Temperatures are another critical factor in flowering cymbidiums. During the summer, standard cymbidiums are usually grown outside in semi shade, where day temperatures should be 20°C to 30°C (or more), but night temperatures in the late summer to autumn must be 10°C to 15°C to initiate flower spikes. Optimum temperatures in winter are 7°C to 12°C at night and 18°C to 24°C during the day. When plants are in bud, temperatures must be as constant as possible, between 12°C and 24°C. Miniatures can stand temperatures five to 5 degrees higher than standards and still flower. Most cymbidiums can tolerate light frosts and survive, but this is not recommended. If the temperatures are expected to be low and likely to have a frost, move your plants to a protected position.

WATER

Water to provide a constant supply of moisture to cymbidiums, which are semi-terrestrial plants. They generally produce all their vegetative growth during the spring and summer and need the most water during that period. Water heavily during the growth season, keeping the potting material evenly moist. Reduce water when the pseudobulbs complete growing in late summer. Keep barely moist during the winter.

FERTILISER

Cymbidiums have three distinct cycle periods: Growing, Flowering and Resting. The growing period is between spring and summer. Apply a fertiliser at least once a week. Fertilisers such as Aquasol T or Nitrasol T can be used. Fertilising should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Better to apply a weaker solution. The flowering period is between autumn and winter. Switch to a bloom booster type fertilizer to encourage the flowering process. An all round fertiliser can be also considered. The third period is resting. It is the time when cymbidiums plant prefers to develop growth and not flowers.

POTTING

Potting is usually done in the spring after flowering, usually every two years or when the potting medium decomposes. Shake all of the old potting mix off the roots, dividing the plant if desired. Pick a water-retentive potting mix; medium-grade fir bark with peat moss and perlite is a common mix. Select a pot that will allow for at least two to three years of pseudobulb growth before crowding the pot, while planning on placing the active growing pseudobulb(s) of the division farthest from the side of the pot. Spread the roots over a cone of the mix in the bottom of the pot and fill the container with medium, working it among the roots, tamping firmly. Single backbulbs need not even be placed in the mix until new growth and roots are noted. Keep shaded and warm until new growth sprouts, and pot as above.

PESTS

Most common pest experienced with Cymbidium growers are snails, and grubs of the white butterfly and cabbage moth. These pests cause damage to the young buds of the flowers. Sprinkle snail bait around your plants, especially after rain, as this is when these pests are most active. Cabbage grubs can be eradicated with either House and Garden T spray or Hortico T cabbage dust.



20%
SHADE



40 - 60%
HUMIDITY



10°C - 30°C



WINTER TO
SPRING



EVERY 2
YEARS



2-4 TIMES
A WEEK

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