

HOW TO GROW PHALAENOPSIS



Phalaenopsis, commonly known as Moth orchids, are one of the most loved flowering plants in the world. Well-grown phalaenopsis can produce multiple blooms of long-lasting showy flowers each year. Native to tropical East-Asia, these orchids are warm growing and for this reason makes them an ideal indoor plant.

LIGHT

Bright, indirect light is needed for growing phalaenopsis. In a glasshouse environment they require at least 75% shade, especially in the warmer months. Indoors, they will grow easily near a bright window that doesn't receive direct sunlight. A north or east facing window is ideal. Many have great success using artificial lighting by placing them 150mm - 300mm away from the foliage, 12 - 16 hours a day, following natural day length.

TEMPERATURE

Phalaenopsis are a tropical orchid and therefore need warmer temperatures to thrive. Ideally, they should be grown in a glasshouse, however you can have just as good success when growing these plants indoors. In order to promote growth, temperatures should be between 24-29°C. Temperatures held consistently above 26°C suppress flower initiation. Night time temperatures between 16 - 18°C, for a few weeks in early autumn, are needed to initiate flower spikes. Phalaenopsis grown under higher temperatures produce more vigorous growth, however need to be accompanied by increased humidity and air movement. Sharp rises and falls in temperature can cause bud drop, so avoid growing your plant close to a heater!

WATER

This is often the area most beginners struggle with, so take note! Correct watering is critical for phalaenopsis because they have no major water-storage organs other than their leaves. They should not be allowed to completely dry out however overwatering can be fatal. To achieve a perfect balance with watering, the potting mix should be thoroughly soaked and then not watered again until it is nearly dry through the pot. The time between watering will vary depending on your personal growing conditions. Watering should be done in the morning, avoiding the crown if possible, so that the plant itself will be dry by night time.

HUMIDITY

The recommended humidity is between 60% and 80%. In the glasshouse, keep the ground moist and utilise misting systems. Indoors, place orchids on a tray of gravel, partially filled with water. Mist plants on warm days, or during dry weather. Grow plants in groups or with other indoor plants to help regulate humidity. Phalaenopsis love the bathroom! The humidity created when showering is ideal. Keep in mind that with higher humidity, increased air movement is necessary to prevent air around plants becoming stagnant.

FERTILISER

Apply fertiliser on a regular basis to get the best results out of your phalaenopsis. Many growers recommend the "weakly, weekly" approach, applying a dilute (1 tsp per 10 litres) fertiliser each time they water. Use a fertiliser not high in nitrogen (NPK approx. 15 : 2 : 15), with trace elements, higher calcium and magnesium are ideal. 'Strike Back for Orchids' works great!

POTTING

Potting is usually done in the spring after flowering, usually every two - three years or when the potting medium decomposes. Phalaenopsis plants can be potted in bark, perlite, sphagnum moss or a combination of these. When mature, phalaenopsis will remain in the same size pots for a number of years. To repot, shake all of the old potting mix off the roots. Remove dead or rotted roots and spread the remainder over a handful of potting mix in the bottom of a fresh pot. Back fill with mix, working it around the roots, so that the bottom leaf of the plant is just above the substrate. For added results, water in well with a plant hormone that promotes root growth to help establish the plant in its new pot.



75%
SHADE



60 - 80%
HUMIDITY



16°C - 30°C



WINTER TO
SPRING



EVERY 2
YEARS



2 TIMES
A WEEK

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