

PHALAEOPSIS CULTURE

This is probably the most popular orchid. They grow in tropical rainforests in Southeast Asia, especially the in the Philippines and Borneo. The orchid enjoys dappled sunlight on tree branches. Fleshy roots and leaves act as water reservoirs. The most noticeable part of the flower is the two petals. The first explorers mistook the flowers for moths at first sight, and hence the nickname “moth orchid”. The latest hybridization enables this orchid a variety of colors and sizes. Their long lasting flowers have established their popularity.

LIGHT: they grow and bloom well in a bright window with sheer curtain. In the home an east window, shaded south or west window are all ideal. Never allow direct sun to fall on these orchids.

TEMPERATURES: for Phalaenopsis, it should be 60° F at night and between 70 and 80° F during the day. In order to initiate flower spikes, night temperatures of 55 to 50° F for several weeks in the fall is desirable. Fluctuating temperatures, over-watering and drafts can cause bud drop on plants with flowers ready to open.

WATER & FERTILIZER: plants should be thoroughly watered. Allow the potting mix to nearly dry out before watering again. Two weeks is a good rule of thumb. If you are unsure, wait at least two or three days rather than over-water by watering too often. Water more in summer and much less in the winter. Phalaenopsis grown in sphagnum moss should not be kept wet. Make sure the moss has just dried out completely, and water immediately.

Using a watering can with the orchid in the sink works best. Pour at least one gallon through the pot to make sure the orchid is watered well. Remember, you can not over water by pouring too much water through the pot, only by watering too often.

A balanced fertilizer, like a 20-20-20, should be applied on a regular schedule. It is best to apply fertilizer at 1/4 strength with every watering.

RE-POTTING: it can be done in the spring, after blooming. Phalaenopsis can be potted in any well-draining mix, such as sphagnum moss. Re-potting is done every 1 to 2 years once the potting medium starts to decompose.



by appointment
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