

With all of their unique beauty in shape, color, and fragrance, orchids have a reputation for being difficult to cultivate. With proper knowledge and attention, anyone can grow and orchid at home.

LIGHT AND TEMPERATURE

Maintaining the right amount of light and temperature is important to keeping an orchid healthy. Most types of orchids need between four to six hours of bright, indirect light per day. Monitor the leaves on your orchid; if the foliage is turning yellow or wilting, your orchid is receiving too much light and should be relocated. Although orchid temperature requirements vary depending on the species, most plants need a cool down period before blooming. Temperatures should be carefully regulated, as orchids will not grow well in climates that are too hot or too cold.

EXTRA CARE

An orchid deserves extra care after it's flowers have wilted. Orchids are growing and storing energy to produce new blooms during their dormant period. To treat a dormant plant, remove the flower spike and continue to water the orchid. With adequate water, light, and fertilizer during the dormant period, an orchid will most likely produce new flowers in the coming year. Some species of orchids will even flower up to three times a year in the proper environment.

1. Potted orchids need good drainage. **2.** *Paphiopedilum bellatulum* "Herman" orchids are native to Thailand. **3.** *Paphiopedilum* "Lord of Rivendell" is one type of lady slipper orchid. **Below:** Staking orchid blooms ensure the buds are oriented properly once they open.

