

Orchid Cultivation

POTTING

Potted orchids need adequate drainage, and can grow equally well in plastic or terra-cotta pots. Most orchids will thrive with a potting mix specifically for orchids. Potting mixes help balance the air and moisture around an orchid's roots. Without this balance, orchids can literally suffocate, as they require well-drained soil to survive. Both Terrestrial and Epiphytic orchids will benefit from a free-draining potting or bark mix, made up of charcoal, sponge rock, orchid bark or perlite. Specialized orchid pots with extra drainage can be found at nurseries and online. The large drainage holes allow water to flow through the mix, and also helps sustain the balance between air and moisture.

WATER

Most orchids require frequent watering. The easiest way to water a potted plant is to bring your orchid to your sink. Thoroughly soak the plant and flush the soil with lukewarm water. Doing so will assist in the removal of any fertilizer salts that may have accumulated. Flushing your plant will also create pockets of air in the orchid's roots, which helps mix the soil and prevents bacteria and fungus from forming. Try not to get any water on the flowers themselves, as too much moisture can cause petals to rot or develop spots. Orchids should dry out between watering. Blooming orchids do need more water than orchids not in bloom, and a dry plant may not flower properly.

