

ORCHID - PHALAENOPSIS

TEMPERATURE - Phalaenopsis enjoy a fairly warm climate. The ideal night temperature being above 60 degrees Fahrenheit and daytime temperature 75 degrees Fahrenheit and over. Since this temperature range is similar to that of many houses, it makes an ideal house plant.

LIGHT - Light requirements for Phalaenopsis are fairly easy to attain. If grown in a windowsill, north exposure proves to be best, otherwise, east or west with the plant being placed further from the light.

WATERING - It is important to water your Phalaenopsis early in the morning. This insures complete water evaporation on the foliage as well as the crown by nightfall. Do not allow the root system to be dry at any time. Water the plant as it approaches dryness. Under most growing conditions, watering is done at 4-7 day intervals. Avoid water in the crown of the plant. .

FEEDING - Phalaenopsis are known for their fast continual growth. For this reason, it is important that they are fed on a regular basis. We recommend a half-strength solution of 20-20-20 fertilizer every watering. During fall and winter, this should be reduced to every second or third watering.

HUMIDITY - Phalaenopsis are of monopodial growth without any pseudobulbs to help store moisture. For this reason, it is important to provide good humidity. 50%-70% is considered ideal. However, if plant is kept well watered, it will adapt to a lower humidity. Humidity can be provided with either a humidity tray or a pebble tray. To make a pebble tray, choose a drainage tray 3-4" larger than the orchid pot. Fill with pebbles to rest the pot upon. Fill drainage tray half full of water. Be careful that the plant does not sit in the water. This will promote root damage. If your tray is clay, remember that the moisture will seep through to furnishings. Consider a layer of plastic under the tray to prevent any damage.

FLOWERING - If your Phalaenopsis is of substantial size (5-8" pot), it is possible to flower it 2 to 3 times a year. After it has flowered, the first time, cut the stem approximately half way back just above the nearest node. From this node a new flower stem should emerge. Within 120 days, it should reflower.

POTTING - Because the Phalaenopsis is watered frequently, the potting material is usually ready for replacement once every year. Spring is generally considered the best time for transplanting.