

## How to Water Orchids



### **Watering Orchids – the Golden Rules**

When watering Orchids; how much is too much? Orchids are becoming increasingly popular as a houseplant with their gorgeous appearance, reduce cost and increased availability over recent years. Many owners however are struggling to keep their orchids alive by not providing the correct growing conditions. One major factor that contributes to their demise in the home is over or under watering. How much and the technique for watering is largely dependent on the species and its origin.

#### **For an Orchid Humidity is Crucial**

In general orchids hail from more tropical areas around the globe where they are subject to enormous quantities of rain and extremely high levels of humidity. Setting humidity in the home to something approach that of a rainforest (80% or higher) would be extremely uncomfortable, so it's necessary to develop a strategy that provides high humidity to your orchid without raising the level throughout the home. A couple of techniques can be employed. One is to sit your orchid pot on top of tray or saucer, fill the saucer with pebbles and water the pebbles making sure that no water is actually touches the orchid pot. Another simple technique is to group a number of orchids, and/or other plants requiring high humidity, together. This will work to retain and hold more moisture in the air surrounding the plants.

#### **How Frequently should you Water Orchids?**

Over watering orchids is significantly more prevalent than under watering orchids causing the owner to 'kill with kindness'. There is a common misconception that if potting media looks dry, particularly tree bark, then the plant requires watering. Bark can often appear dry but retains plenty of moisture. As a guideline, it is best to water your orchid sparingly once or twice a fortnight and make sure that any bark has dried out completely before re-watering. In their natural habitat, many orchids grow on the trunks and branches or trees where it is common for roots to completely dry out before water becomes available again. This has led to a natural hardiness when it comes to water which belies the orchid's beauty. Spraying a fine mist of water containing fertilizer is a good approach to watering your orchids with suitable fertilizers being found at most good garden centers. Creating a schedule that fits in with other routine's around the house is a great way to guarantee that you water your orchids at the right time, allowing you to enjoy them for years to come.

#### **Other Growing Factors**

The home is a great environment to grow thriving orchids providing that a number of factors are correct. In this article we've discussed the importance of making sure that orchids are watered correctly and touched on applying and using the correct type of fertilizer. Of equal importance is the need to ensure that orchids receive the correct amount of light (sunlight or artificial), the right potting media and the right time to repot your orchids. Combining all of these factors will ensure that you have the best possible success growing orchids.