

### **Preparing your Orchids prior to potting**

Start by gently, but firmly, pulling the plant out of its old pot. Pry out from between the roots as much of the potting material as you can. Trim off any dead roots or dead pseudobulbs, holding the roots in your hand with the rhizome sitting on top of your thumb and index finger, cut off any roots hanging below your little finger. Having a root with one clean cut is far better than having a root that has a number of breaks and squashed into a pot. A dip of mixed Fungicide or a squirt of Steri-prune (Bitumen grafting compound) on the cut end of the division can help stop disease from entering the rhizome.

**Re-potting Cattleya Orchids** Use a medium grade pine bark. In general, re-potting should be done about every 2 to 3 years when active growth is detected. Re-potting becomes necessary when the plant has outgrown its pot and the new growth reaches out over the edge, or when the potting medium has broken down. Pick a pot that is large enough to accommodate 2 or 3 years growth (1 or 2 new pseudobulbs per year) Position the plant with its oldest pseudobulbs to the back of the new pot. Then, spreading the plant roots out, fill in the space with the potting medium, gently tapping the side of the pot to settle it into place. Build up the bark until the plant rests with its rhizome on the surface, about a half-inch below the rim of the pot. Newly potted plants have a tendency to wobble, but a couple of stakes and tie wire will help support the plant.

**Re-potting Phalaenopsis Orchids** is best done, after flowering. Phalaenopsis plants must be potted in a well-draining mix, such as bark, tree fern, and various types of stone, sphagnum moss, Coconut Chips or a combination of these. Potting is usually done every year. Phallies just love fresh mix. Mature plants can grow in the same pot until the potting mix starts to decompose, usually in two years. Root rot occurs if plants are left in a soggy mix. Seedlings usually grow fast enough to need re-potting yearly, and should be re-potted in a medium grade mix. Mature plants are potted in larger-grade mix. When mature, a plant may stay in the same pot for many years, but must have the mix changed. To re-pot, remove all the old mix from the roots, trim soft, rotted roots, and spread the remaining roots over a handful of mix in the bottom of a new pot. Fill the rest of the pot with mix, working it through the roots, so that the junction of the roots and the stem is at the top of the mix. Keep the plant shaded and humid, a good quality fertilizer can be helpful in establishing new roots.

**Re-potting Oncidium Orchids** Re-pot every 1 to 2 years as the mix breaks down or the plant outgrows the pot. Plants potted in a bark mixture should be carefully pulled out of the pot. Clean off the roots of the old mix, being careful not to break the good roots. Roots that are bad and should be cut off are those that are brown and mushy or papery. Those roots, which are white or tan and are firm to the touch should be left alone. Simply place the plant into a new pot placing the oldest growth towards the back of the pot so there is room for the newer growths to

develop for about 1-2 years. Oncidiums can be divided when there are 6 or more pseudobulbs. Divide, leaving 3 growths per each division.

**Re-potting Cymbidium Orchids** A 150mm (5") pot will generally suffice for back bulbs. A 3 to 4 bulb flowering plant would need a 200mm (8") pot or larger. As good drainage is essential, black plastic standard pots with large drainage holes are ideal. When re-potting large plants, you may either pot into a larger pot by leaving the roots undisturbed and packing more compost around them in a new pot or divide the plant into two or more sections and pot each section individually. If breaking up the plant, cut off any leafless bulbs, back bulbs. Remove all roots and dead leaves and put into a separate small pot. When dividing, always leave at least 2 or 3 bulbs together per piece and try not to break too many roots. Pot your plant, packing the pot fairly tightly with a good quality purpose made Cymbidium compost till the bottom 1/5 of the bulbs are covered. Plants need re-potting approximately every two years, with the back bulbs to the side of the pot to allow new growths to progress across the pot. Never over-pot i.e.: use too big a pot for the size of the plant. As a general rule of thumb, The Orchid should take up about two thirds of the width of the pot.

**Re-potting Stanhopea Orchids** Stanhopeas are best grown in a wire basket. The slatted wooden baskets look nice but make sure that there is room between the slats for the flower-spikes to find their way out. Any compost that gives quick drainage is OK I've seen Stanhopeas grown well in straight Cymbidium compost, in straight sphagnum moss, in fine seedling bark and in other various mixtures. We line the baskets with two to three sheets of Newspaper. Coconut fibre works well, but don't put it in too thick. Gutter guard at the bottom of the basket is ok as well. Gutter guard must be of a large enough mesh size to let the spike come through.

**Re-potting Dendrobium Orchids** Hard cane and Soft Cane (Nobile) Dendrobiums prefer a very open, free draining mix. In a pot that is not too large and that has good drainage .Use and recommend 'Port Pots', and 'GCP' pots 100 mm to 125 mm is ideal. Under cover we use a medium grade of Coconut Chips and Perlite or a Small grade of Composted Orchid Bark if under Shade Cloth we also add about 10% of Course Perlite. After preparing the plant for potting just hold the plant in place and pour the mix in and tap on the sides of the pot to settle. We place all of our Dendrobium Orchids in a Wire hanger to keep the plant from moving while it gets its new roots into the mix. Do not push down on the mix. Flush pots with water to remove any fines. Hard Cane Dendrobiums love to be hung up under a Fibre-glass roof and protected from Westerly Winds. While Nobile type Soft Cane Dendrobiums prefer a Shade Cloth environment with plenty of good filtered sunlight.