

Taking Care Of Orchid

When it comes to taking care of an orchid, you must practice patience and care.

The proper balance of light, heat, and ventilation there remains only moisture to round out the growth formula.

The technique of watering orchids includes, besides watering in the pot, spraying and damping.

With orchids the old familiar watering in the pot is the trickiest and the most dangerous procedure when it comes to taking care of orchids. There are a few general rules to be observed.

Watering or spraying should be done only with a rising temperature. Daily watering of plants up to three inches in height is recommended; thereafter caution is urged.

Tiny seedlings should be kept wet at the roots, but must not be allowed to become soggy. Finally, when it comes to taking care of orchid, the beginner is warned once more not to acquire too many plants.

There should be only as many plants as can be handled individually once a week—never less often than once every two weeks. This is the only efficacious manner of checking watering needs, to say nothing of the fact that it provides a needed check on scale, fungus, and pests.

In watering, the amateur again finds wide variance in the needs of the many species. When watering Cattleyas, it is well to soak the pot thoroughly and then allow the potting material almost but not entirely to dry out.

The pots should not become completely dry since the bulbs may shrivel and plant growth may be retarded for at least a year.

Yet, if there is any doubt when taking care of orchids, it is far better to err on the dry side. Dryness will deter growth, but too much moisture will kill the plant. If water remains in the pot and does not dry out in a week or ten days, it is likely that the roots will have rotted off.

The pseudobulbs will shrivel and the leaves droop. Many amateurs mistake this for an indication of dryness, and treat the pot to another drubbing, thus rotting the remaining roots and probably killing the plant.

A plant that shows signs of shriveling from lack of roots will often respond to a daily gentle over head spray.

Laelia's and other plants with light, heat, and air requirements similar to the Cattleyas need about the same watering treatment. Laelia's like slightly more water after complete growth and before flowering. After flowering they will require slightly less.

Vandas, since they are without pseudobulbs, must have water at all times, but their lusty aerial roots will take care of some deficiency in watering by taking moisture from the air.

Phalaenopsis, also pseudo bulb less, must not be allowed to dry out entirely. Watering of this species must be done with care to prevent water from remaining in the crowns, a condition that is conducive to the growth of fungus.

Oncidiums must not be allowed to shrivel. They need a great deal of water when growth is being completed and flowering is beginning, but require less after flowering.

The bulbs of Cymbidiums should not be allowed to shrivel. Standing pots on damp gravel on the floor seems to give them the warmth at the top and coolness below that they find congenial.

They prefer water at the roots at all times, but the potting mixture should be well drained and not soggy. Cypripediums have no bulbs and require copious water at the roots. Odontoglossum's also require much moisture at the roots, and must be kept cool and shaded.

Evergreen Dendrobium's will require a moderate amount of water at the roots at all times, but the deciduous Dendrobium's must be allowed to dry out thoroughly during dormancy, at which time they resemble dry bamboo canes.

They need cooler conditions during dormancy. When the new growth is made and the joints of the cane begin to swell, indicating initiation of flower growth, they must be given large amounts of water and moved to a warmer spot.

Keep these tips in mind when you are taking care of your orchid.