

# HOW TO CARE FOR MOTH ORCHIDS

One of the more popular houseplants to take care of is phalaenopsis orchids or moth orchids. With thousands of orchid varieties to choose from, this variety is the most popular one as it is a good orchid choice for beginners. It brightens up the living space instantly with its elegant and showy flowers. With the right combination of light, nutrients and water, you will be rewarded with multiple flowers buds that can bloom for a month or more if given proper care. A single multi-branching flower spike can have more than 20 flowers and individual flowers can last for weeks.

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## Planting Procedure:

A. Choose a clay pot that is about the right size for the orchid with drainage holes in the bottom and a saucer under it. Add some potting mixture at the bottom of the pot. Set the plant at the center of the pot with leaves showing above the rim. Fill the gaps in between roots with potting soil. Keep filling the pot until you have reached below the base of the lower leaves. Water the plant after potting.

B. When the soil is dry, gently pour water over the potting mixture until water runs through the bottom of the pot. Remove any water remaining in the saucer to prevent root rot. Once the soil is completely dry, repeat the watering process.

C. After watering the orchid, add some fertilizer either powder or liquid form. Use half or quarter strength fertilizer meant for orchids by checking container label for dosage requirements. During winter season, less fertilizer is required than usual. Over-fertilization can actually damage orchid plant which happens when tips of the leaves turn brown.

D. Place the orchid plant in an area where it can receive 8 hours of indirect sunlight. It is recommended to dust off the plant with a mild cloth as dust can inhibit proper light absorption. During summer season, relocate your plant to a shady location to shield the plant from the harsh and direct sunlight.



## Planting Procedure:

E. Maintain orchid at a warm temperature. It is recommended to keep daytime temperature between 19-30°C and evening temperature between 16-19°C

F. Deadhead the orchid flowers when they start to turn brown using trim scissors. Orchid flowers usually last about 3 months.

G. When the leaves die, repot the orchid plant which usually happens after 2 years. First, hold the orchid gently by the stem and ease it out of the pot. You may have to break the pot if necessary. Next, pick off the dead leaves by hand and dead bloom stalks and use razor blade to cut off dead roots.

H. Remove bugs by spraying water or dabbing alcohol swab on the plant. Never use pesticides on the plant as it may be toxic for the orchid plant.

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