

How to Grow Specie and Hybrid Orchids

The following is a general culture chart indicating the ideal growing conditions of many of the species and hybrids available. However, many types will adapt to conditions somewhat outside the ideal.

		Light	Temp	Water			Light	Temp	Water
Amra	Adamara	B	W-I	2	L	Laelia	B	W-I	2
Aergs	Aerangis	M-S	W-I	1	Lpt	Leptotes	B	W-I	2
Alcra	Aliceara	M	W-C	1	Lyc	Lycaste	S	W-C	1
Angcm	Angraecum	M	W-C	1	Masd	Masdevallia	S	W-C	1
Angcst	Angulocaste	M	I-C	1	Max	Maxillaria	M	W-C	1
Ascda	Ascocenda	B	W-I	2	Milt	Miltonia	S-M	W-C	1
Asctm	Ascocentrum	B	W-I	2	Milt	Miltoniopsis	M	W-C	1
Ascf	Ascofinetia	B	W-I	2	Mtdm	Miltonidium	M	W-I	1
Asp	Aspacia	B	W-I	2	Mtssa	Miltassia	M	W-I	1
Blira	Beallara	M	W-I	1	Mxa	Mizunoara	B	W-I	2
Bif	Bifrnaria	M	I	2	Mkra	Mokara	B	W-I	2
B	Brassavola	B	W-I	2	Nak	Nakamotoara	B	W-I	2
Brs	Brassia	M	W-I	1	Nan	Nanodes	M	W-I	1
Bepi	Brassoepidendrum	B	W-I	2	Neof	Neofinetia	M	W-I	1
Bl	Brassolaelia	B	W-I	2	Odbrs	Odontobrassia	M-S	W-I	2
Blc	Brassolaeliocattleya	B	W-I	2	Odont	Odontoglossum	M-S	W-I	2
Bro	Broughtonia	B	W-I	2	Onc	Oncidium	M	W-I	2
Bulb	Bulbophyllum	M-S	W-I	1		Onc Intergeneric	M	W-I	2
Burr	Burrageara	M	W-I	1	Paph	Paphiopedilum	S	W-I	1
Ctsm	Catasetum	B-M	W-I	2	Ph	Phaius	M-S	W-C	1
C	Cattleya	B	W-I	2	Phal	Phalaenopsis	S	W	2
Ctna	Cattleytonia	B	W-I	2	Phrag	Phragmipedium	S	W-I	1
Ch	Chysis	M	W-I	2	Pleu	Pleurothallis	S	W-C	1
Coel	Coelogyne	M	W	2	Pot	Potnara	B	W-I	2
Colm	Colmanara	M	W-I	1	Rntda	Renantanda	B	W-I	2
Cyc	Cycnoches	B	W-I	1	Ren	Renanthera	B	W-I	2
Cym	Cymbidium	B	W-I	1	Rnthps	Renathopsis	M	W-I	2
Dav	Davidsonara				Rhy	Rhynchostylis	B	W-I	2
Dgmra	Degarmoara	M	W-C	2	Rhv	Rhynchovanda	B	W-I	2
Den	Dendrobium	B	W-I	2	Rdgm	Rodriglossum	M	I	1
Dnchl	Dendrochilum	B-M	W-I	1	Rdza	Rodriguezia	M	I	2
Drac	Dracula	S	W-C	1	Smbc	Schombocattleya	B	W-I	2
Epc	Epicattleya	B	W-I	2	Sc	Sophrocattleya	B	W-I	2
Epi	Epidendrum	B	W-I	2	Slc	Sophrolaeliocattleya	B	W-I	2
Enc	Encylia	B	W-I	2	Soph	Sophronitis	B	W-I	2
Grmgms	Grammangis	M	W	2	Trcdm	Trichocidium	B	W-I	2
Grcm	Grammatocymbidium	B-M	W	2	Trpla	Trichopelia	M	W-I	1
Gram	Grammatophyllum	B-M	W-I	2	V	Vanda	B-M	W-I	1
Haem	Haemaria	S	W	1	Van	Vanilla	M-S	W	2
Hlc	Helcia	S	I	2	Vuyl	Vuylstekeara	M	W-I	1
King	Kingiella	S	I	1	Zygo	Zygopetalum	B-M	W-C	1

Light: B=Bright M=Moderate S=Semi-Shade
Temp: W=Warm I=Intermediate C=Cool
Watering: 1=Keep moist below surface 2=Allow to dry

(see next page for more details)

LIGHT REQUIREMENTS

- “B” **Bright** light requirements (2500-4000 foot candles) which may be found indoors in a Southern or Western exposure with 5-7 hours of direct light
- “M” **Moderate** light requirements (1000-2500 foot candles) which may be found indoors in a Southern, Western or Eastern exposure with 4-6 hours of direct light
- “S” **Semi-shaded** light requirements (500-1500 foot candles) which may be found in any indoor exposure by varying the distance between plant and window or shaded direct light, 3-4 hours.

All of these requirements can easily be met by using a 4-bulb fluorescent fixture outfitted with cool white bulbs and left on for 18 hours, at least 20” above the plants.

TEMPERATURE PREFERENCE

- “W” indicates a preference for **Warm** temperature: Daytime 80-85°F, nighttime 65-70°F
- “I” indicates a preference for **Intermediate** temperatures: Daytime 70-80°F, nighttime 55-65°F
- “C” indicates a preference for **Cool** temperatures: Daytime 65-70°F, nighttime 50-55°F

WATERING

- “1” Keep continually moist below the surface of the media
- “2” Allow to dry out a bit below the surface of the media between watering

Most nurseries will adjust the potting mix to the moisture requirements of each genus so that watering schedules can remain consistent for the general population. However, you may need to make adjustments to suit your own growing environment and potting media preferences and/or product availability.

REPOTTING INSTRUCTIONS

Most orchid plants should not be repotted until they have finished flowering and new growth appears, when they have exceeded the pots, the potting mix has deteriorated and/or all of the above. Begin by removing all old potting media. The root system will determine new pot size, normally only an inch in pot diameter increase, roots should just touch the insides of the new pot. Choose a potting mix according to the watering requirements of the plant. Two general purpose mixes are: (1) 3 parts fine orchid bark to 1 part coarse sponge rock for plants that want more moisture or for smaller plants, (2) 3 parts medium orchid bark to 1 part coarse sponge rock for plants that want to dry between watering. The two can also be combined for an all purpose mix. There are now many commercial mixes available, though it is generally best to purchase from a local orchid nursery for a best quality product.

FEEDING METHOD FOR CONTINUED BLOOMING, TRIED AND TRUE

Understanding the “N-P-K” of your fertilizer is key to keeping your orchids healthy and blooming. Excessive nitrogen (N) in the orchid formulation will encourage disproportionate foliage growth with little or no blooming. Remember that most commercial nurseries have optimum light all day, so their growing conditions will be very different from yours, and thus, their fertilizing approach will not be appropriate for the home grower. Windowsill growing normally involves limited light, often interrupted by outdoor plants, buildings and significant seasonal changes. You might also consider using *Superthrive*®, a vitamin and hormone supplement that assists in better growth and longer blooming. Add it to your fertilizer solution or use alone.

Indoor & Windowsill Growing: Look for “Bloom” formulations as they have lower Nitrogen and higher amounts of Phosphorus (P) which focus more on blooming. A good formulation should have a ratio of approx: 1:3:2. Peter’s Blossom Booster® 10-30-20 and DynaGrow Liquid Bloom® 3-9-6 are both excellent formulas (DynaGrow Liquid Grow® is also lower in nitrogen, so could be used exclusively or seasonally). Use weak solutions frequently to allow the plant to absorb more food, rather than heavy, full-strength applications. Cut monthly directed formulas to ¼ strength weekly (DynaGrow is already formulated this way, follow instructions). Equal number fertilizers are too high in nitrogen for most in-home growing situations, stick to the low nitrogen, ignore manufacturer’s instructions.

Outdoor, Nursery and Conservatory Growing: Use equal number orchid formulations at ¼ strength during Spring and Summer months, switch to low nitrogen Bloom formulas in Fall and Winter.