



Growing guide | *Phalaenopsis*

These plants are commonly referred to as "moth orchids" and are considered among the easiest of the orchid family to care for. The long-lasting flowers bloom perfectly for up to six months, providing you ample return on your investment. The flowering intervals vary with each plant and you may be treated to a bloom as often as twice a year.

Temperature: *Phalaenopsis* enjoy much the same temperature range as we do. The minimum temperature at night is 15° - 18°C, while the average daytime temperature should be around 23° - 30°C. Occasional deviations will not harm your plant, except when it is in bud - chilly temperatures may cause the plant to stop budding.

Light: *Phalaenopsis* will flourish indoors under normal lighting conditions, with indirect sunlight being the most advantageous. Caution should be used when placing a *phalaenopsis* in direct sunlight due to the fact that its leaves burn easily from too much exposure to the sun.

Water: Water often enough to keep continuous moisture just below the surface of the medium, but be cautious of over-watering. Watering once a week is normally sufficient to keep your plant healthy and happy. Rather under-water than over-water!

Feeding: Good results may be obtained by using a general purpose fertiliser as well as fertilisers high in nitrogen all year round. Feed once a month at one-third or half of the recommended dilution.

Humidity: *Phalaenopsis* require minimum humidity levels of between 55 and 75 percent. To increase humidity in the house place the plants on trays of gravel, only partially filled with water so that the plants do not sit in the water. Air should always be moving around the plants to prevent fungal or bacterial disease, especially if high humidity or cool temperatures exist.

Repotting: Repot every two to three years during spring with a well-draining medium. Because they grow upwards without spreading, the plants can go back into the same sized pot. Water sparingly until the new roots are well established.

Cutting Dead Flower Spike: After your *phalaenopsis* has finished flowering cut the spike off 2 or 3 cm above the next growth node (looks like a little green bump on top of the spike) after where the flower closest to the plant was positioned. Your plant should flower from this point again.