

Caring for Moth Orchids

Resource: Hermes Floral

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Phalaenopsis, the Moth Orchid, is one of the easiest orchids to grow in the home. Mature plants can flower twice a year, with flowers lasting 2-4 months. To encourage a second blooming, cut off only the flowering segment of the spike when all the blossoms have expired. 80% of the time the plant will flower again within 90 days. After the completion of the second flowering, cut the entire spike off at emergence from the plant and repot. This allows the plant to put its efforts into vegetative growth necessary for the next flowering season.

Light

In the home, Phals prefer east, west or to be near a shaded south window. In dull, northern winter climate, full southern light may be needed. Phals also grow well under artificial light. Use 2-4 fluorescent tubes placed 4-56 inches above plants for 12 to 15 hours a day.

Temperature

Average house temp of 62-85 degrees are ideal for growing Phalaenopsis. In the fall or winter, night temps fallings slightly below 62 for 2-3 weeks will help initiate flower spikes. Keep in mind phals stop growing at temps below 60.

Humidity

Between 50-70% humidity is recommended. This can be achieved by placing plants on a humidity tray. Misting in the morning and grouping plants together also increase and maintain humidity.

Water

Take our plant to a sink, water thoroughly, water runs freely from the pot, and drain well. Never allow the pot to stand in water. Do not water again until bark is nearly dry. On the average, water every 5-10 days depending on the season and environment. Water early in the day and avoid water collecting in the crown of the plant. They have no water storing organs other than the leaves and should never be left completely dry.

Fertilizer

Phals are known for fast and continual growth, therefore regular feeding is a must. We recommend 30-10-10 from January to August. Dilute one tsp to a gallon of water and apply every third watering. During the months of Sept – December use Blossom Booster 10-50-10. One tsp. to a gallon to promote new flower spike growth. Continue until flower buds are visible around mid-January. Mix our fertilizer ahead and store in a plastic container that can be labeled and capped. This ensures the solution is thoroughly diluted, at room temp and ready to use.

Repotting

Done annual, mature plants should be potted in eh spring or after flowering. Us a fir bark orchid mix that is well draining. Remove all old medium from roots, trim off soft rotted roots and spread remaining roots over handful of moist medium in the bottom of the pot. Fill the rest of the pot working moist medium through the roots so that the junction of the roots and the stem is at the top of the medium. Do not water for several days after repotting and keep slightly dryer for 2-3 weeks to promote new root growth.