

## Phalaenopsis (The Moth Orchid)



The Phalaenopsis genus is in the tribe of Aerides. A close relative of the Doritis and is in the same tribe as the Vanda Orchid. Phalaenopsis is Greek for Phalluna meaning Moth and ophis meaning resembling. Thus the name Moth Orchid. Their growth habit is monopodial, meaning that the leaves are produced from only one point, commonly known as the crown.



Phalaenopsis do not have a water storage mechanism, like a Pseudo bulb, but they can store water in their thick fleshy leaves. The flower stalks can produce over 12 flowers per stem. Colors range from artshades, pinks, stripes, spots, yellows, and of course white, which is the most popular color.

### How to keep your Phalaenopsis healthy

**Light:** Moderate to bright indirect light. Ideally, early morning, direct light as in an east window. West windows are good provided direct sun is not on the orchid during the heat of the day. Evening sun is OK. A south window with defused light or away from the direct sunlight. The foliage should be medium green color, indicating the orchid is getting enough light to flower.

**Temperature:** The ideal temperature during the day is 75 to 85°F. Higher temperatures to 98°F will require less light and more air movement to prevent sunburn on the leaves. Night temperatures can range from 58-64°F at night.

**Watering:** Watering should be done in the morning hours. You can water heavy overhead, or soak potted orchid in the sink for ten minutes. In cold areas the water temperature should not be below 45°F. Watering with ice cubes is NOT recommended. Water is an essential nutrient for plant development. In moderate light water once every 5 to 7 days in winter, and every 3 to 4 days in summer. This may need to be increased in bright light conditions. When in doubt, check the bottom of the pot, if it looks dry, then water.

**Feeding:** Phalaenopsis are heavy feeders and require fertilizing every second watering. Use **Gublers Pro Blend Orchid Food 19-8-16**. This formula is exactly what we use to grow our Phalaenopsis year round. By feeding every second watering, you will be feeding more during the longer days of summer when the orchid requires more water, and feeding less in the shorter days of winter.

**Repotting:** Should be done once a year. It is best to repot in the spring after flowering. Plants that have overgrown their container should be potted into a suitable container the next size larger. You may choose any container, provided it has good bottom drainage. We do not recommend pots with slits on the side. Transplant using **Gublers Orchid Grow Mix- Fine Grade** for all Phalaenopsis orchids.

**What to expect:** Phalaenopsis mainly bloom in the spring season. They flowers can last Through cultural techniques, we are able to trick the Phalaenopsis into blooming virtually any time of the year. The most flowers produced on the stem is in the spring season. After flowering you should cut the flower stem one inch above the second node closest to the base of the plant. This gives you the possibility to have a secondary flower stalk within eight weeks. Moth Orchids produce two new leaves a year. They are a good beginner orchid, and make a wonderful addition to any orchid collection.