

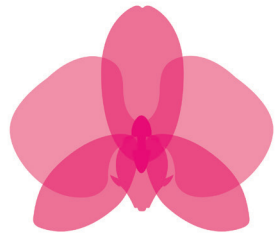


Grow Fabulous and Easy Orchids



Inspiration by

Costa
Farms®



ORCHIDS ARE EASY®
Simple Elegance. Easy to Care for Orchids by **Costa Farms®**.

Easy. Colorful. **Fun.**

Who doesn't love the elegance of a beautiful orchid in bloom? It's easy to grow them in your home—probably easier than you think—so now is the perfect time to incorporate a beautiful orchid into your life. Or brighten someone else's day with one of these as a gift!

We've put together this guide so you can learn more about beautiful, easy-care Phalaenopsis orchids and get ideas for how to use them in your home or office. If you have questions beyond what you find in this idea book, please visit our website at www.costafarms.com or send us an email at information@costafarms.com and we'll be happy to help however we can.

Happy Gardening!

—Your Friends at Costa Farms



start with healthy plants

Pick the Perfect Plant

Use these criteria for evaluating an orchid before you purchase it to ensure it will stay healthy and beautiful.



Look at the Roots

The first thing you'll realize about an orchid is that it's not planted in soil. Because orchids are epiphytes, which means they grown in air, their roots are generally set in a mixture of bark and other large organic material and placed in a pot. The roots should be light green if they are dry and dark green when they are wet. They should look thick and succulent (as opposed to white and shriveled). Also, unlike houseplants that grow in soil, the roots can be exposed to the air. In fact, that's how they drink in water and nutrients.

Look at the Leaves and Stems

Different orchids produce different leaf shapes and textures. But all healthy orchid leaves and stems should be green, with no yellow marks or dark blemishes. Stems should be upright and arching (most will be attached to a stick which helps keep them erect and safe from snapping off in shipment and while in the store).

Bringing Your Orchid Home

Once you've purchased an orchid, you need to get it home safe and sound.

Cold weather: If the weather is cold outside, make sure the orchid is well wrapped when it leaves the store so that cold wind and freezing temperatures don't damage it before you get it home. Bring your orchids indoors as soon as possible.

Hot weather: Don't leave your orchid in the car on super hot days because extreme temperatures can damage it. Even a few minutes of extreme temperatures can shorten the lifespan of the flowers.

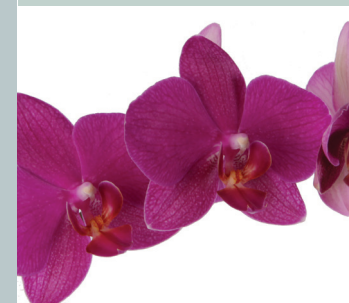


Popular Phalaenopsis Colors

Oh-So Pink



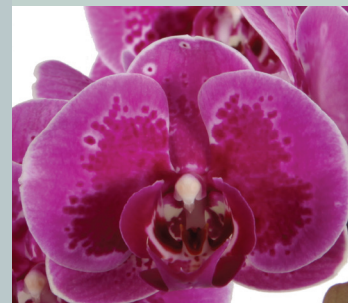
Pleasing Purple



Pure White



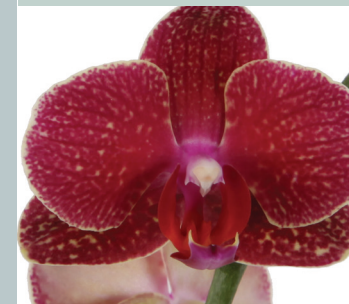
Purple Speckled



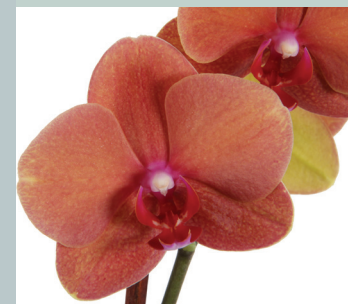
Sublime Lime



Vivacious Veining



What-a-Peach



Yellow Stripe



make your orchid last

Simple Tips that Work

Light and moisture are two of the most important elements to long-term orchid success.

Orchids, like all living things, need sunlight, moisture, and food.

Placing your orchid in the right environment and giving it proper long-term care is the key to long-lasting blooms (and rebloom!).

Set in the Right Light

Orchids can live in natural and artificial light. In nature, most moth orchids grow in the shade of tropical rain forests and don't need full sun. In your home, your moth orchid will best thrive in an east- or west-facing window. If you have a sunny south-facing window, use a sheer curtain to help diffuse the light. If you don't have a good light from a window, use artificial light. Place plants 1 to 2 feet beneath fluorescent light bulbs. If you keep your orchid in an office under ceiling level fluorescent light, they don't need to be that close. One easy general rule is that if you have enough light to comfortably read by most of the day, you have enough light for an orchid.

Provide Adequate Moisture

To keep the flowers at their best, allow the orchid's potting mix dry out a little between watering. Depending on temperature, humidity, and light levels, you should add moisture once a week. What if you forget?

No worries! Moth orchids are amazingly tolerant of inconsistent watering; they can survive a few weeks without water (but keep in mind that their flowers may not last as long in this situation).

Humidity is also important to orchids since they can pull moisture from the air through their roots. Moth orchids do best in at least 50 percent relative humidity.

Boost Humidity

You can boost the humidity around your plants in the following ways:

Group orchids together. Plants increase air moisture as a part of their breathing process.

Place orchids around other houseplants. Grouping houseplants together around orchids looks pretty and increases the humidity around all the plants.

Use a humidifier. Place a small humidifier near your orchid to create a pocket of humid air for your plant.

Create a humidity tray. This is an old-school humidifier. Fill a bowl or tray with pebbles or gravel, and add water so just the tops of the rocks are dry. Set your orchid on top of them. As the water evaporates, it goes into the air around your moth orchid.



When it comes to light, orchids don't care if it's natural or artificial—as long as they get enough of it.

more orchid care

Temperature and Fertilizer

Easy-care orchids prefer a warm range of temperatures and an occasional snack.



Consider Temperature

Moth orchids like rooms the same temperatures we do: Between 70 and 80F (21 to 27C) during the day and 60 to 70F (15 to 21C) at night. Although orchids are from the rain forest, they don't like super-hot conditions. If daytime temperatures are consistently over 85F (30C), their flowers won't last as long.



Orchids for Outdoors

Orchids thrive in warm weather and are ideal plants for outdoor patios and decks. Attach them to a tree with fishing line and they will grow there happily all summer. When the temperatures shift from hot to cool, bring your orchid back indoors.

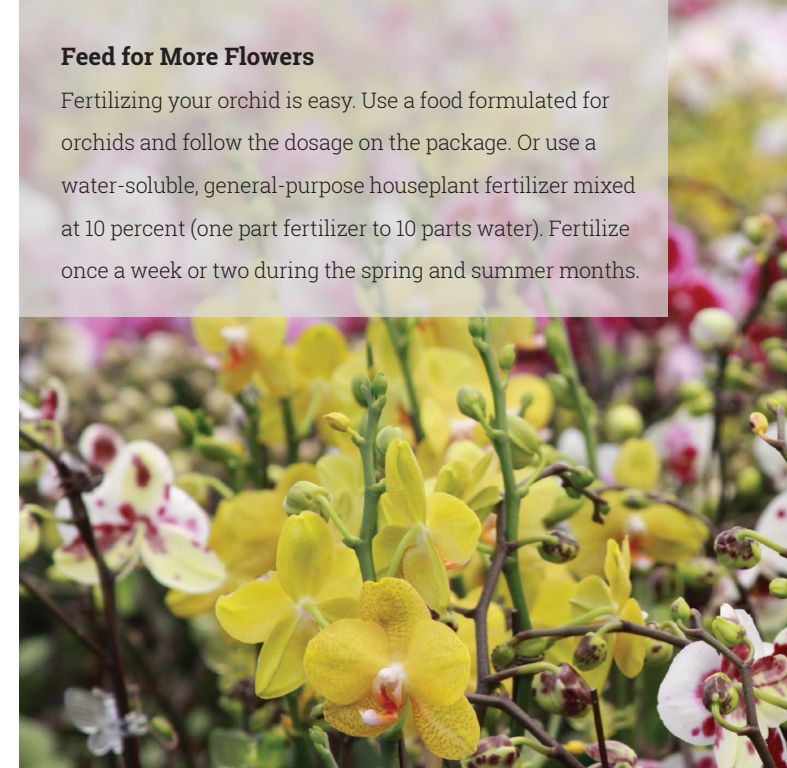
Feed for More Flowers

Fertilizing your orchid is easy. Use a food formulated for orchids and follow the dosage on the package. Or use a water-soluble, general-purpose houseplant fertilizer mixed at 10 percent (one part fertilizer to 10 parts water). Fertilize once a week or two during the spring and summer months.

Getting Your Orchid to Bloom Again

Moth orchids naturally bloom once a year, usually in winter. Cool temperatures at night—52 to 58F (12 to 14C)—help signal a change in the orchid's chemistry, which triggers it to form flower spikes. A healthy orchid that receives the following will bloom again:

- consistent, proper light
- adequate water and humidity
- regular feeding



how to repot your orchid

Refresh Your Orchid

Keep your moth orchid in top shape by following these easy repotting steps.

Moth orchids typically bloom in winter, then send out new growth—roots and leaves—in spring. When the blooms have faded and the new growth has just started, it's an ideal time to repot regardless of the time of year.

So why do you need to repot your orchid? Since orchids grow in a loose potting medium, instead of soil, the potting medium can break down over time and needs to be replaced and refreshed. It's not difficult though. In fact, repotting an orchid is more like disassembling it and removing the potting material, then reassembling it with new medium. It's so easy, you can repot an orchid in just minutes!

The Pot

Choose a pot that will hold the root mass and potting material. The proper pot size should be determined by the size of the roots. Don't choose a container that is a great deal bigger than the original

pot. Make sure it has ample drainage holes or use a container specifically created for orchids (which has air holes around the circumference). Because terra cotta breathes better than plastic, it often makes a better choice for growing orchids.

The Mix

There are many different types of media that orchid roots can happily grow in. You can use the same material that your orchid was originally planted in or change it. Common materials include bark, moss, peat moss, or rock. Do not use regular potting soil.

Because moss holds water better than bark, you'll need to water your orchids less frequently if you use this medium. However, you'll also need to take care not to overwater and allow the moss to stay moist too long. If you tend to water plants too much (overwatering is the most common cause of death for orchids), look for a bark-based mix.



1. Prune the Flower Stem

Use a pair of clean, sharp pruners to cut off the old flowering stem.



2. Remove the Rootball

Remove the orchid from its pot. If the roots are tightly wedged in the pot, gently work them free.



3. Loosen the Roots

If the orchid is rootbound, carefully spread the roots apart.



4. Clip Damaged Roots

Cut off any dead or damaged roots (those that are not firm and gray-green in color).



5. Prepare the New Mix

Pull away the old mix from your orchid and fill the pot with fresh moss or bark.



6. Pot It

Place your orchid in the new pot, gently packing mix around the roots to secure it. Water well.

orchids for every room

Infuse Romance in Every Space



A: Cool Kitchen. Orchids add an air of elegance to counter tops. If you have a monochromatic kitchen, use white orchids. Or add a blast of color with fuchsia orchids on a black counter top.

B: Marvelous Mantle. Dress up a mantle with a collection of colorful orchids.

C: Spa-Like Bathroom. Your orchid will love your bathroom. Every time you shower, your orchid will drink up from the steamy air. Orchids add an instant spa feel to a bathroom.

D: Lovely Living Room. Check out any home decor magazine and you'll see orchids gracing the rooms of the most elegant homes. Just adding an orchid to your living room ups the visual appeal.

E: Blissful Bedroom. Add an orchid to a nightstand to create a calming, beautiful ambiance in your bedroom. Orchids improve the air quality in your bedroom so while you are getting your restorative ZZZ's, you are also breathing naturally filtered air.



B



C



D



E

dress up your orchids

Showcase Your Orchids

Long-lasting and exotic, moth orchids are ideal gifts. Plus, they're beautiful and add color and life to your home.

Here are 10 easy ways to dress up store-bought orchids.



Feather Your Nest

A windfall robin's nest provides a natural vessel for an orchid. Set the nest onto a ceramic dish and simply insert a mini orchid. If you don't have a nest on hand, source a twig nest from a hobby store.

One of the wonderful things about easy-care moth orchids is that they're relatively inexpensive—and easy to personalize.

For a short-term display, such as if you're creating centerpieces for a dinner party or other decor, you can drop your orchids in any container as long as the roots won't be submerged in water.

For long-term displays (remember, the flowers can last for months), be sure to grow your orchid in something that provides drainage, so excess water can escape. If there's extra aeration, so the roots can breathe, all the better.

While one orchid is beautiful, putting more together creates a bolder display. Depending on your style, you can look for orchids that bloom in all the same color or add interest with multiple colors of blooms.

And don't forget that you can also mount orchids on piece of wood or other surface to grow them vertically!



Orchid on the Half Shell

Here's a nod to Botticelli's famous painting Birth of Venus (the one where Venus is balancing on a giant clamshell). Simply remove an adorable mini orchid from its plastic container and set in a clamshell (or pretty shallow dish). Surround the roots with moist moss.



Opposites Attract

Galvanized metal isn't a toney material until it's packed with three exotic orchids. The Cinderella transformation reveals a chic bucket of dressed up blooms that can serve as a centerpiece for an alfresco dinner party, a kickback front-porch planter, or masculine take on orchids.



Springtime Soup Tureen Planter

Pull out your grandmother's soup tureen (or any large bowl) and pack it full of spring violas or pansies for a fresh, seasonal centerpiece. Add an orchid or two to easily transform your tabletop into a stunning spring display. Your guests will be jealous!



Woodland Garden

An arching orchid pairs beautifully with a frilly fern. Surround the plants with moist moss. Add forest-floor features such as pine cones and a small stone cairn.



Orchid Terrarium

An orchid under glass somehow looks even more exotic. This easy recipe includes a tall cylindrical, clear-glass vase, pebbles, moss, and an orchid.



Bubbly Buddies

Celebrate a special occasion by dropping two orchids into a champagne bucket. It's easy and elegant! (PS: When giving an orchid as a gift, bring along champagne...)



Straw Bag Planter

Breathe new life into last season's summer purse by filling it with moss and tucking in orchids. If you don't have a bag on hand, visit a vintage shop for one. A straw bag is ideal, because when you water, the excess can escape.



Orchids and Friends

Pair moth orchids with a mix of festive foliage houseplants to complement their beauty. Choose variegated or colorful plants such as 'Marble Queen' pothos, 'White Butterfly' arrowhead vine, and purple waffle plant.



Sweet-Tooth Orchid

Flowers and candy say it all! Simply slip the roots of a mini orchid into a plastic bag, drop it into a clear-glass vase, and fill the container with colorful candy to complement or contrast the orchid's blooms. It's a sweet gift anyone will love!



Mounting Orchids

Because moth orchids are epiphytes, meaning they don't need to have their roots in soil, you can mount them on a piece of wood, cork, or another material to hang them on your wall like a piece of living art!

To mount an orchid like this, select a surface that has some character. Driftwood is, in particular, an excellent choice. Then remove the potting mix from around your orchid's root system and tuck a few pieces of sphagnum moss between the roots and the wood. Secure your orchid to the surface with fishing line.

To water an orchid mounted on a piece of wood, just mist the roots once a week or so. Take care not to let the roots dry out too much between misting.

why grow orchids

Let Orchids Change Your Life

Growing an orchid can help you feel better and look better. Discover more reasons to keep orchids in your life!

Orchids are long-lived companions that will deliver months of beauty to your environment. Here are six reasons to enjoy a moth orchid or two as a houseplant.

1. LOOK STYLISH. Few plants offer the style and sophistication of a beautiful orchid in bloom. Whether on your desk at work or at home, an orchid adds class and pizzazz.

2. FEEL SUCCESSFUL. Despite their exotic appearance, moth orchids are actually easy to grow and make a great starter plant if you've not had great luck with houseplants in the past. Simply keep it in a medium-bright spot (where you can read comfortably without having to turn on extra light) and water it once every 10 to 14 days. If you'd like to give it a little orchid fertilizer in spring and summer to help promote more blooms, feel free! And that's it—orchids are that easy.

3. IMPROVE YOUR LOVE LIFE. Yep! It's true. Just give a moth orchid to someone special to show how much you care. An elegant

gift, orchids last a lot longer than cut flowers, so it makes you look more thoughtful. If your significant other (or hope-to-be significant other!) loves chocolate, add in a little of that for extra firepower.

4. STAY HEALTHIER. As they breathe, moth orchids remove volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from the air. The result? You're taking in fresher air free of xylene, a common pollutant in paint, air fresheners, ink, and adhesives.

5. BE HAPPIER. Because that moth orchid cuts down on your stress and anxiety levels, you can feel more happy and relaxed. In fact, some researchers have found a link between having plants around and increased mood, self-esteem, and happiness.

6. ENJOY BETTER SKIN. If the air is dry in your home or office, moth orchid and other houseplants can help. They slowly release moisture into the air as part of their natural breathing process. Moist air helps reduce dry, flaky skin and chapped lips in the dry winter months.

