

THE TOP 10 MOST COMMON REASONS WHY YOUR ORCHID WON'T RE FLOWER

Ryan "The Orchid Guy"

Reason #10: Young or Recently Divided Orchid

Reason #9: Soil Conditions Are Too "Wet" During The Winter

Reason #8: Pests or Diseases...

Reason #7: Not Enough Humidity

Reason #6: Overwatering in Cold Temperatures

Reason #5: Not Using Enough (or the Correct) Fertilizer

Reason #4: Not Enough Water

Reason #3: Not Enough Light

Reason #2: Temperature is Too Hot or Too Cold

And finally, without any further delay, here is it...

....The #1 Most Common Reason Why Your Orchid Won't Flower...

(Drum roll please) :)

REASON #1

Temperature Change from Day to Night is Too SMALL!

One of the most unique temperature requirements of orchids is that they require a significant fluctuation between their daytime and night-time temperatures in order to thrive -- and flower!

In fact, this is by far the most overlooked reason why newbie (and experienced) orchid growers can't get their orchids to flower, or experience shorter-than-average flowering periods.

If you remember from yesterday's newsletter, when we talked about temperature categories (cool, intermediate, and warm) the temperatures that I listed were for ideal *night-time* temperatures.

Daytime temperatures should be 15F/9C warmer than the ideal night-time temperature for your particular variety. If you're talking to an experienced grower or consulting a temperature chart, be sure to confirm whether the temperatures quoted are for nighttime or daytime - this one little step can save a lot of frustration down the road!

Last month, we also talked about the importance of using a max/min thermometer.

That'll be your easiest (and cheapest) way to measure the daily temperature fluctuation in your home. Be sure to take readings at several times during the day, from early morning to late evening, and several times in between.

After taking your max/min temperature readings in several locations within your home, you may discover a spot that is perfect for your plant... or you may need to get a little creative in modifying the environment a bit :-). But either way.... with these tips, a little up-front planning can yield you an orchid that will generate gorgeous blooms, for years and years to come!

REASON #2

Wrong Temperature... Too hot or too cold!

Simply put: Orchids will ONLY re flower when they are maintained in their preferred temperature range...

But before you start worrying too much, one of the reasons why Orchids make such FANTASTIC indoor plants is because they typically thrive in temperature ranges that humans find comfortable!

However, that being said... Getting the temperature just right for your orchids can still sometimes be a challenge -- especially in parts of the world with extreme temperature fluctuations during the year.

When you're choosing an orchid for yourself, it's important to understand that orchids can be divided into three temperature categories, which we'll broadly define as: Cool, Intermediate, and Warm.

The *night-time* temperatures that correspond with each of these categories are:

- Cool = (45-55F/7-13C)
- Intermediate = (55-60F/13-16C), and
- Warm = (65F/18C or higher)

*Remember, we're talking about *night-time* temperatures here. Just keep that detail in mind for now. (I'll explain the significance of this fact in a future newsletter... but for now, let's keep moving forward.)

Cool orchid examples include most Cymbidiums and Dendrobiums.

Intermediate examples include Paphiopediliums and Oncidiums.

And Warm examples include Phalaenopsis and Vandas.

Just be sure to consult a temperature chart to determine the optimal temperature for YOUR particular variety.

Once you've determined the optimal temperature range for your orchid, the next step is to evaluate the temperature conditions in your home.

When you do this, I have a few tips for you.

First, you'll want to use a "maximum/minimum thermometer" to get an accurate reading of the high & low temperatures throughout the day & night.

Remember, you should place the thermometer in the exact location where you plan to place your plant - it's not uncommon for the inside temperature of a home (or even a single room!) to vary by 10-20 degrees F or more depending on location of heat/ air-conditioning vents, natural light, airflow, and appliance use. So in other words, you'll want to be more accurate than simply taking the reading of an unmovable, wall-mounted thermometer (unless of course you happen to plan on placing your orchid next to that thermometer).

Also, don't forget to account for temperature changes within your home from one season to another.

For this, I like to take a temperature reading on the 1st & 15th of every month, and keep track of this in a little notebook or a calendar.

If you live in a place that experiences extreme fluctuations in temperature from one day to the next, you may want to take readings more often.

Finally, if you find that your home isn't the ideal temperature for your particular variety - don't despair!

Sometimes all it takes is moving your plant to a warmer/cooler location within your home - e.g. closer to the heating vent or a north-facing window, and presto! Problem solved :)

One thing's for certain, the better you know your home's environment, when adding future plants to your collection, the better you'll be able to choose varieties that are a perfect match for you, and your home!

To be Continued Next month