



Surrey, BC, Canada  
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## *Phalaenopsis*

The “moth orchid” or “phal”, is the easiest orchid to grow. Lavish arching sprays of 3 to 14 blooms, in pink, white, yellow or mauve can last 3 to 5 months. Patterns range from solids to spots and stripes. Repeat blooming, twice a year, is easily achieved with a simple cooling period.

**Temperature:** Phals prefer average household temperatures 21 to 29°C (70 to 85°F) during the day, night 16 to 19°C (60 to 67°F). Keep out of draft.

**Light:** Prefers low light conditions, such as north or east facing window or west window with sheer curtains. Shade from direct sunlight. Too much light will result in red pigment on the leaves.

**Watering:** Drench pot by letting water run through. Water just before pot completely dries out, every 8 to 15 days during the winter. Water more frequently during summer months. Do not let plant stand in water. Never let water sit in the crown, as this will encourage crown rot.

**Fertilizing:** Fertilizing year round at half strength with 20-20-20 is adequate. For maximum performance, feed at ¼ to ½ strength with 28-14-14 with every watering to promote leaf growth. Use bloom-boosting formula 10-30-20 at ¼ to ½ strength when a new stem emerges. This enhances flower count and quality.

**Re-blooming:** Phals require a cool period of temperatures between 16 to 20°C (62 to 68°F) to re-bloom. This is easily achieved by placing the plant on a north or east windowsill, anytime from fall to early spring for 6 to 8 weeks. When flower stem is finished blooming, cut at base of stem. Mature plants can be induced to branch by cutting 1 cm (1/4 inch) above the highest green node on the stem. This prolongs the blooming period but secondary branches are usually less showy.

**Repotting and potting medium type:** For best results, repot every 18 months. Use a mixture of medium grade fir bark, coarse perlite, charcoal, and sometimes peat chunks.