



GROWING ORCHIDS

ONCIDIUMS

ONCIDIUM ORCHID CULTURE

Oncidiums are found exclusively in the Western Hemisphere. The individual flowers are not large, but this is more than compensated for by the great number of flowers produced on long, often branched flower spikes. The growing conditions for cattleyas are generally satisfactory for oncidiums.

Light -

All oncidiums appreciate considerable sunlight, but some shade is beneficial when flowering. Just like the cattleyas, they need bright light in a home. An east, west or shaded south window is ideal.

Temperature -

Performs best in 70° to 85°F days, and 60°F nights with good air circulation.

Water -

They require abundant water throughout the growing and flowering season with a dry period (no water) for several weeks following the completion of new growth. Never allow bulbs or leaves to shrivel.

Fertilizer -

Must be fertilized regularly since the potting medium holds little water. During spring and summer, use a 20-14-13 fertilizer every two weeks at a rate of ½ teaspoon per gallon of water. During fall and winter, use a 11-35-15 fertilizer every 2 weeks at ½ teaspoon per gallon of water.

Potting should be done after new growth begins, but before tender developing root tips can be broken. It is essential that drainage be good. Oncidiums should be repotted every second year as they do best if not divided often, but are instead allowed to become specimen plants. To avoid frequent repotting of plants, mount oncidiums rather than pot them. Tree ferns or cork plaques are most commonly used. When using these, make sure you water more often. Oncidiums root strongly on plaques and with their roots exposed to air. They often do not require remounting for five years or more!



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