

### DENDROBIUM

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Dendrobiums, also known as the Spray Orchid, are among the most commonly encountered orchids in the retail trade. Like most other cultivated orchids, Dendrobiums are epiphytes, or air plants. They have well-developed water-storage organs (pseudobulbs) often called canes for their upright, leafy appearance. They should be potted in porous, free-draining media. There are many different types of Dendrobiums; the most commonly encountered is *Den. Phalaenopsis*.

**Light:** Sufficient light is important for healthy growth and flower production. Provide bright light, with up to 50% sun, ideally an east, west or lightly shaded south window. In a greenhouse, provide about 30 to 50% full sun. Under grow lights, use four 40-watt fluorescent tubes and two 40-watt incandescent bulbs directly over plants. Plants should be naturally erect without need of much staking and with leaves of a medium olive green color.

**Temperature:** Mature plants need a 15 to 20 degree difference between night and day, ideally nighttime temperatures of 60-65 degrees and day temperatures of 80 to 90 degrees. Temperatures of up to 95 to 100 degrees are beneficial if humidity and air circulation are increased. Low temperatures (below 50 degrees) may cause leaf drop.

**Water:** Keep Dendrobiums evenly moist while in active growth. Allow to dry between watering after growth is mature (indicated by terminal leaf.)

**Humidity:** Dendrobiums need 50 to 60% humidity. In the home place plants on trays over moistened pebbles; in a greenhouse, use a humidifier if conditions are too dry.

**Fertilizer:** Plants should be fed on a regular basis during their active growing period. The exact fertilizer used will depend on the mix in which the plant is growing. A general rule is to use a balanced (10-10-10, etc.) fertilizer weakly, weekly; fertilize every week at 1/4 to 1/2 of the recommended formula.

**Potting:** Re-potting should be done every two to three years before mix breaks down. Pot firmly in medium, giving aeration and ample drainage, allowing enough room for two years of growth. Dendrobiums grow best in pots small for the size of the plant.