



How to get an orchid to re-bloom

The phalaenopsis, commonly known as moth orchid, is the most popular flowering houseplant in Europe and the US. It blooms for ages, loves our warm homes and is remarkably resilient to ill treatment. Even those that give a plant little attention manage to get their orchid to re-bloom again and again. So, what's the secret of success?

Phalaenopsis need plenty of light, especially in winter. In spring and summer they may be scorched by direct sunlight, so take care. They need watering regularly; about once a week, giving the growing medium a good drenching; then allowing it to drain before returning the plant to its pot cover. Feeding with the right orchid fertiliser makes all the difference. When your plant is in flower, feed with Vitax Orchid Bloom Feed, this helps the buds to develop and the blooms to reach their full potential. It strengthens the plant for a longer flowering period.

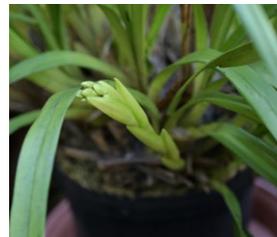


When the flowers eventually fade, cut back the flower stem to two nodes above the leaves. Often a new flower stem emerges from here, if not it will eventually appear from between the leaves. Until the next lot of flower buds have developed feed regularly with Vitax Orchid Growth Feed. This helps new leaves to develop and promotes strong growth.

Both Vitax Orchid Bloom Feed and Vitax Orchid Growth Feed are liquids that are simply added to your watering can when you water your plants. It is important to remember that phalaenopsis orchid roots have a mind of their own and love to sprawl at random, much to the annoyance of the tidy minded owner. This is quite natural because these orchids thrive up in the branches of forest trees and those roots are adapted to taking water and nutrients from the air. Do not cut them off or try to control them; they are part of the natural beauty of your plant. They love to be misted with Vitax Orchid Mist which helps to keep aerial roots and leaves healthy; it also combats the dry atmosphere of a house.



So what about cymbidiums? They flower just once a year; in winter or early spring. These are terrestrial orchids, in other words ground dwellers. They have long strappy leaves and swollen structures called pseudobulbs that store water and nutrients and sit on the surface of the growing medium. Cymbidiums like cool light conditions in the house or conservatory in winter and they like to be outside in sun or semi-shade in the summer. Water them regularly allowing the compost to become quite dry before giving them a good soak and letting them drain. When the blooms have faded cut off the flower spike, keep watering and feed with Vitax Orchid Growth Feed. In late April or early May put them out on the terrace in sun or semi-shade and feed and water regularly. By late summer shoots should have started to develop at the base of the plants. Reddish, rounded shoots are the new flower spikes and flattish, pointed green shoots that are the new growths that will form next year's pseudobulbs. Cymbidiums that fail to bloom have often been starved of light. Feeding regularly always helps and some may prefer Vitax Orchid Feed – a soluble fertiliser that can be used throughout the growing season.



Once you have succeeded with one type of orchid you may want to try others, and there are plenty to choose from, flamboyant cattleyas for example. The secret of success with all varieties is not to kill them with kindness. Do not overwater and do not leave them to dry out. Use Vitax orchid fertilisers regularly and you will be rewarded with years of fabulous flowers.




Andy McIndoe for Vitax



What you will need to create your shopping list



Orchid Bloom Feed



Orchid Growth Feed



Orchid Feed
(soluble) 20g



Orchid Mist
Spray

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