



## Paphiopedilum (paff-ee-oh-PED-i-lum)

Paphs are orchids of great diversity in color and shape. They are easy to grow in a greenhouse or in the house. Most paphs are semi-terrestrials. Most paphs produce a single flower on a complete growth. Some are multiflowering. Flowers can last 6-12 weeks. Their blooming season lasts from October to May but some of them bloom in summer, or twice a year. Paphs can be divided into warm growing, mottled leaf types or the “beginners” paphs, or cool growing green leaved types. This temperature division is very relative, it signifies ideal culture conditions, but both types can be grown well at night temperatures of around 60°F.

### Origin

Southeast Asia, India, Burma and the Philippines

### Temperature

Mottled leaved Paphs grow best at 60-65°F night temperature and daytime around 80°F. Occasionally days can reach 90°F without harm to the plants if there is good air movement and 50-60% humidity. Similar conditions are good for the green leaves type except night temperature is best at 50°F

### Light

Paphs enjoy low-medium light intensity of 400-1200 foot candles most of the year. They may be grown in an east window or a south or west window shaded by a sheer curtain. Direct sun, except early morning sun, should be avoided.

### Humidity

Like most orchids, 60% relative humidity is ideal. Good air movement is always recommended.

### Watering

Paphs have no water storage parts so they should not be allowed to completely dry out. Water thoroughly every 5-10 days depending on the season and rewater before they dry out. Keep them always moist, water early in the day, so the foliage will dry off before nightfall, to prevent disease.

### Fertilizer

Paphs fertilizer requirements are moderate. Water with plain water first then fertilizer with 20-20-20 at  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon per gallon of water.

### Repotting

There are many different potting medias for orchids in general and paphs in particular. We very successfully use a mixture of 90% fine grade fir bark and 10% perlite for seedling paphs. We recommend soaking the bark in plain water overnight to separate the soft bark from the good, hard bark and also to wet it thoroughly. We use good hard bark and discard the soft bark.

Paphs should be repotted before the media breaks down. When potting, clean the plant of all dead roots and pot plants moderately tight in the pot by pressing bark all around the plant. Bark should reach over the base of the plant so the new roots can break into the media. We use a mixture of lava rock seedling bark and small coconut husk chips in ratio 5-5-1. Keep newly potted plants shaded for 2-3 weeks and lightly watered, after the plant has been established in this way, resume regular watering and light conditions.