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PC-5 Cattleya Orchids

About Cattleya Orchids

Cattleyas are among the most commonly grown orchids, and their culture is often used as a comparison with other types of orchids. Like most other cultivated orchids, cattleyas are epiphytes or air plants that grow on top of trees. They have water-storage organs called pseudobulbs and large, fleshy roots.

Temperature and Light

Mature plants need a 15 to 20 degree Fahrenheit difference between night and day. Temperature at night should range from 55 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit; daytime temperature should be 70 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Cattleyas can tolerate temperatures up to 95 and 100 degrees Fahrenheit if shading, humidity and air circulation are increased.

Cattleyas grow and flower best in strong, dappled sunlight. They like full sun in the morning, but will require shading from about 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.; less shading is essential in the late afternoon. Their leaves should be medium olive green; a darker green color indicates too little sun. Under lights, place four 40 watt fluorescent tubes and two 40 watt incandescent bulbs directly over plants. Plants should be naturally upright, without need of much staking, and of a medium olive-green color. Dark green, limp foliage indicates too little light. Keep out of cold, dry air while in bloom.

Water, Fertilizer and Humidity

Plants must dry out between watering (they are used to drying out between the rains in their natural habitat).

Feed weakly, weekly with a dilution of half the recommended rate of **Grow More Premium Orchid Food**. Cattleyas need 50 to 60% humidity. In the home, place on trays over moistened pebbles or use a humidifier if conditions are too dry.

Potting

Repot Cattleyas every two to three years in the spring before plant mix breaks down. Pot them firmly in a porous container with good aeration and ample drainage; allow enough room for two years' growth. We recommend planting them in pre-moistened **Orchiata**, a premium-grade pine bark from New Zealand. After repotting, the plant should immediately be watered with warm water with a drop of **SUPERhrive** added to the water.

Our source for much of this information is the **American Orchid Society Guide: Growing Orchids**.

We highly recommend purchasing your own copy (available at our Moana Lane Garden Center) to ensure greater success with your orchids.

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