



## ORCHIDS

The toughest orchids are the cymbidiums but, though they're relatively hardy, they respond particularly well to some extra care. Here are some handy tips for growing wonderful cymbidiums.

After cymbidium orchids have finished flowering it's the best time to tidy them up and prepare them for their new growing season.

Take a good look at the orchid and see if the clump is crowded enough to need dividing. Sometimes this decision is easy: the clump of bulbs is so full that it's literally bursting out of the pot. Or, there are so many dead bulbs in the pot that the plant will obviously benefit from their removal and from being given the chance to make a fresh start in new orchid mix.

### How to re-pot an orchid

- Remove the plant from the pot. Sometimes it might even be necessary to break the pot to free the orchid!
- Take a knife or another strong tool and use it to lever between the bulbs. Separate the clump into at least two sections. Remove most of the leafless, dead-looking bulbs, although it's wise to leave a single row of these back bulbs next to the leafy shoots.
- Check the roots for damaged, rotted or tangled sections. Remove these.
- Choose new pots. Yates Tuscan pots are ideal because they have plenty of drainage holes. Good drainage is critically important for orchids.
- Pack some Yates Thrive Orchid Potting Mix into the base of the pot.
- Sit the orchid in the pot and fill around the base with the mix. Make sure that each bulb is sitting above the mix.
- Water well and sprinkle some pellets of Dynamic Lifter Organic Plant Food on top of the pot. Feed with Yates Thrive Concentrate Orchid Food every two weeks.

After Christmas, to encourage flowering, use Yates Thrive Flower & Fruit Soluble Plant Food fortnightly. Remember, though, that after orchids have been divided, it can take two or three years for them to reach flowering stage again.

### Orchid problems

- *White, sometimes fluffy, mealybugs cluster on stem and in leaf bases.* - Spray with Confidor (available in both ready-to-use and concentrate formulations).
- *Snails and slugs eat holes in leaves and flowers.* - Sprinkle Blitzem or Baysol pellets at the base of the plant. Protect pets by placing pellets in a pet-proof container.
- *Spotted leaves and poor growth caused by viral diseases.* - Best to remove and destroy affected plant.
- *Lack of flowers* - Give plants more time to reach maturity. Feed with Thrive Flower & Fruit Soluble Plant Food.

Make sure the orchid plant gets plenty of morning sun during autumn and early winter.



## Shopping List

- Yates Tuscan Pot
- Yates Thrive Orchid Potting Mix
- Dynamic Lifter Organic Plant Food
- Yates Thrive Concentrate Orchid Food
- Yates Thrive Flower & Fruit Soluble Plant Food
- Confidor
- Blitzem or Baysol Snail Pellets