



Growing Flask Orchids (Mini Jars)

We want your experience with orchids to be a happy one with many beautiful flowers in your future. This brief explanation will cover the basics; but, as with most things, it can be made as complicated as one's imagination will allow. We'll keep it simple.



Some history about your mini flask of orchids:

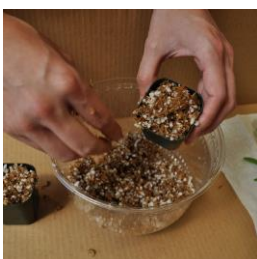
For about the first two years of an orchid's life it is grown in vitro, which means in an environment that is sterile. It is one process of plant propagation that's created in a tissue culture laboratory. Orchid seeds have no stored carbohydrates. The lab technicians supply the media to initiate germination and growth. The media is made of a gelling agent, fertilizer salts, sugar and water. The seeds (very small and look like dust particles) are put onto the media and will germinate in less than one year. Once they have germinated the pronto corns (initial growth) will be put into another flask and thinned out a bit. After about six months, when they have formed the beginnings of leaves and roots, they will be moved to another flask and thinned again to about 40 plants per flask. In this case, we have separated it further into a jar containing 5 plants as a convenience for the consumer who may want fewer plants. They can grow for about 3 months in this jar but we recommend planting them up as soon as you reach home.

Planting out your mini flask:

These instructions will help guide you through the initial planting process for your flask orchids so you can have the best chance to raise healthy, young orchids into maturity. Always start with a clean working area, sterilized tools & clean hands.



1. Open the glass flask jar & carefully remove the young plants from the agar jelly (using forceps or clean fingers) into a bowl of lukewarm water. Rinse each orchid plant carefully removing the agar off the roots. Gently separate each plant & place onto a moist clean paper towel. Be careful not to damage the roots.



2. Now that you have the plants out of the flask, you will need a suitable pot for them. A 2" plastic pot will do fine and are easy to come by. Mix one part of ground peat moss or sphagnum moss with one part of number two perlite (number two is about 1/8 inch). These ingredients can be purchased in most garden shops. Moisten the mixture with clean water until fluffy and damp. Squeeze out the excess water before using it to pot.



3. Fill the pot with the moss mixture. Do not pack it down. Using a skinny dowel or chopstick, create a small hole in the center of the moss mixture. Gently place the plant in the middle of the pot and use the same dowel to tuck the roots into the moss. The base of the leaf should be at the top of the media. Do not over pack the pot with moss; the roots NEED air circulation. Keep the moss moist but not soggy.
4. The newly transplanted orchids should be kept in an area with diffused light, good air circulation and about 40 to 60 percent relative humidity.

Now that the plants are potted up, you may want to use a general purpose fungicide (a root and foliar fungicide) every couple of weeks after planting for the first few months. This fungicide can be purchased at any garden shop. You do not necessarily need to use the fungicide as this is just a preventive measure. If you do decide to use it; follow the directions on the container for making the solution and keep it in a separate container for use. Once this is done, water your plant first then put about ½ tbsp of the fungicide solution in each pot.

The watering frequency will depend on the warmth and dryness of your location. Water only when the media starts to dry out; this is when the media starts to lighten in color and weight. Liquid fertilizing may be started three weeks after planting, and may be continually given once a week. Use a general purpose liquid fertilizer at half the recommended rate.

You could have flowers, depending on your growing location and expertise, in 3-4 years. Happy growing and may your life be blessed with many lovely and fragrant blossoms.

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