

Care of your Jewel Orchid

The jewel orchid that you receive has been grown in moderate light greenhouse conditions with warm days and cool nights, but should quickly adapt to your home. In nature, jewel orchids are terrestrials, so they grow in leaf litter on the forest floor where they experience relatively low light levels due to shading by the trees under which they grow, and high humidity. These plants do not have pseudobulbs, so moisture is mainly stored in the stems and leaves. If the leaves are smooth and firm feeling, the plant is getting enough water. If the leaves and/or stems start wilting, this means that the plant needs more water, but even a badly wilted plant will perk up quickly when watered. It is beneficial to keep the plants slightly moist at all times, but never allow them to stand in water. When watering take care that no water is standing in the crown of the plant, as this could lead to rot. You can remove excess water simply by tipping the plant so that it runs out, or by blotting with a tissue or paper towel. Even though jewel orchids are called "terrestrial" orchids, this does not mean that they can be potted in soil. Sphagnum moss is a good medium, as is a mixture of about equal parts of fine fir bark and perlite.

When feeding, use a urea-free fertilizer, diluted to half strength. When plants are actively growing you can feed about once a month, but do not overfertilize. Jewel orchids do well in low light conditions, so are ideal houseplants, and are often grown in terrariums, where the extra humidity is beneficial. Different species and hybrids bloom at different times of year, but are typically grown for their beautiful foliage, not their flowers. Jewel orchids produce a spike that comes up through the center of the leaf cluster and may take a long time to mature. The growth that bloomed usually dies back, but new growths will branch out from the stem of the old one. Jewel orchids can be divided when there are multiple growths, or they can be grown into large specimen plants. Jewel orchid cuttings can be rooted in water or a medium like sphagnum moss.

Enjoy your orchid! If you have any questions about caring for your orchid, feel free to contact us by e-mail or phone.

Olympic Orchids

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