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## PAPHIOPEDILUM ORCHIDS

Paphiopedilum orchids are a genus of orchid that contains approximately 80 accepted species with seven natural hybrids. This genus is native to Southeast Asia, particularly the Indian subcontinent, southern China, New Guinea, and the Bismarck Islands. They are a favorite among orchid collectors and hobbyist growers for their compact size, ease of care, and long bloom time. They are often referred to as “paphs” by horticulturalists. These orchids naturally occur on shaded forest floors as terrestrials, though there are a few epiphytic varieties. They are sympodial type orchids which lack pseudobulbs yet produce one or more flowers for each new growth. They often have short, rounded, mottled leaves. The genus was first described in botany by Ernst Hugo Heinrich Pfitzer in 1886, who coined the name paphiopedilum with the root word Paphos, a city in Cyprus, and the Ancient Greek *pedilon* “slipper.” They are also commonly referred to as “lady slipper” or “Venus slipper.” Today these orchids are commonly sold as evergreen, flowering houseplants and make an excellent addition to any orchid collection.



**Latin Name:** Paphiopedilum

**Type:** Tropical flowering evergreen houseplant

**Hardiness:** Not frost hardy

**Soil:** Orchid bark, peat moss and perlite

**Size:** 2' x 2'

**Exposure:** Moderate indirect light

**Growth Rate:** Medium

**Growth Habit:** Sympodial, new growth appears from the base

### Where should I plant my paphiopedilum orchid?

Paphiopedilum orchids are a compact, flowering houseplant that repeatedly flower if their cultural conditions are met. They are sympodial orchids, meaning that their new growth appears from the base of the plant. Each new growth will produce a single, large flower that can last for up to 6 months. Typically, these plants bloom once or twice per year. They need to be repotted about every 2 years as the medium deteriorates. They have lower light requirements than some other orchids such as phalaenopsis and appreciate shading from direct sunlight. Place your paphiopedilum orchid in a moderate, indirectly lit location. These orchids also appreciate temperatures between 70-85 degrees.

### How much water will my paphiopedilum orchid need?

Orchids need excellent drainage and cannot sit in water for any length of time, and paphiopedilum orchids are no exception. A proper watering schedule is different with every plant and location, however, typically these orchids enjoy being watered about once per week. Thoroughly saturate the roots and medium and let any remaining water drain away.

### When should I fertilize my paphiopedilum orchid?

Paphiopedilum orchids do not have high nutrient requirements and can sustain on monthly feedings with either a water-soluble fertilizer or less often with a balanced slow release granular format.

### Are there any pests or diseases I should be aware of?

Typically, these orchids are not visited by many pests, although bacteria may become an issue. They can however, become prone to thrips, and mites. The most common fungal infections for paphiopedilum are rhizoctonia, botrytis, or anthracnose. Many of these ailments can be cured with proper ventilation and proper watering.