

# RE-POTTING YOUR ORCHIDS

Many people are afraid to repot their orchids, but it's a necessary & vital part of keeping them healthy. You need to think about what kind of orchid you have (most are epiphytes), choose an appropriate mix and a new pot, and then have at it. Here are some things to consider.



## WHY REPOT?

- Plant is outgrowing its old pot— new growths & their roots over hanging the pot
- Mix is decaying
- Suspect a problem with the roots, perhaps

## WHEN TO REPOT?

- Don't repot when in bloom (unless there's a real problem)
- DO repot when in active growth, new shoots with roots about 1-inch long.
- Springtime is often best
- Any time you see or suspect a problem with the roots
- Usually every other year is good, more often for sphagnum, and for slipper orchids

## TOOLS FOR REPOTTING

- Appropriate mix-soaked overnight for all but sphagnum. I use a little KLN in the water to aid in root development—just a couple of drops seems enough.
  - Large bark for large roots
  - Small bark for small roots
  - Sphagnum
  - Usually a mixture of several things—bark/charcoal/pumice rock/ limestone/Etc.
- Sterile cutting tool—scissors, single-edge razor blades (throw away), etc
- Orchid Pots—super-good drainage and air holes
  - Don't make the pot more than 1 inch larger in diameter than the current one. Smaller is better.
  - Pot needs to have slots or holes, so the plant can breathe.
  - Plastic pots or terra cotta, but no glazed pots (they don't breathe)
- Physan, or sulphur powder to prevent fungal infections
- Stakes/string

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## HOW- TO: STEPS TO REPOTTING

- Soak the mix, and use appropriate mix. NO garden soil (unless it's terrestrial)
- Take the plant out of the old pot
  - Helps soak it first, for perhaps an hour
  - May have to cut or break the old pot
  - Try not to damage the roots
- Loosen and remove the old mix, as much as possible, especially if it's decaying
- Remove dead and rotted roots (brown/mushy/thin wiry bits/etc)
- Gently wash root area, then spray with Physan, or dust with sulphur powder
- Remove dead back-bulbs, and any that you don't think you will need.
- Choose a suitable pot, not more than 1 inch larger than the old one
- Put some foam pellets and/or a handful of mix on the bottom
- Position the plant in the pot -
  - near the edge for sympodial (cattleya, oncidium,etc.) , with active leads
  - Facing in so they have room to grow
  - in the center for monopodial (phalaenopsis, ascoscenda, vanda, etc.)
  - not all roots need to be inside the pot
- Fill with mix, tapping the pot to get it all around the roots, and pressing down (HARD!) to firm it up and keep the plant stable.
- Stake the plant to keep it stable while the roots establish themselves
- Water it

