

Epidendrum Orchids

Originally, a genus of "*Epidendrum* orchids" was created that included all epiphytic orchids: "those that grow on trees". The *Epidendrum* genus still contains over 1000 species, but now has a much clearer taxonomic definition, with its species now sharing a common ancestry sometime in the distant past and are no longer all epiphytic.

Typical *Epidendrums* have long, cane-like pseudobulbs with alternating leaves all along their length. A flower stem emerges from the top of each pseudobulb, typically producing a roughly hemispherical cluster of flowers. The flower stem usually lasts a lot longer than the individual flowers do: old flowers drop off as new ones open. Common colors include red, yellow, purple, and white orchid flowers.

Light: Most *Epidendrums* like bright light; direct sunlight may be appropriate. Not enough light is the most common reason for them not to bloom.

Temperature: intermediate in the lower 70's (21-25C) by day, with a 10-15°F drop at night (6-8C). This varies widely, so research your particular plant. Most *Epidendrums* tolerate cold as long as they don't freeze.

Humidity: 50-70%, ideally, but varies depending on where the species is from.

Water: water as they approach dryness.

Repotting: use orchid potting mix based on fine to medium size bark. Since many of the plants get tall and top heavy, using clay orchid pots can help keep them stable or you can add a few rocks to the bottom of the pot.

Propagation: They readily form keikis, which makes propagation easy. An old cane can be cut it into pieces with one or two nodes each, and set them on moist sphagnum moss. In time, many will grow into new plants.