

## ORCHIDS ON THE WINDOWSILL: WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EXPOSURES

An unobstructed southern exposure offers the most possibilities for growing orchids. However, a wide variety of 'High' light and 'Medium' light orchids will thrive on windowsills with a western or partially obstructed southern exposure.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- You may need to provide a little shade at certain times of the year – generally spring through fall. A sheer window curtain will allow you to moderate the sun's intensity.
- To keep your orchids cooler, a small fan will help to keep the air circulating.

### GROWING GUIDE

- Grow 'High' light orchids such as *Cattleya* and *Dendrobium* closest to the glass.
- 'Low' light orchids such as *Phalaenopsis* can be grown in the shadow of those plants, or on a table placed a moderate distance from the window.
- The sun gains intensity during the spring and summer months, and you may need to use a sheer window curtain to moderate the light and avoid sunburn.
- In warm climates keep a fan running, especially through the heat of the summer and into early fall.

### SUGGESTED ORCHIDS TO GROW

'High' light orchids: *Cattleya*, *Ascocenda*, *Phragmipedium*, *Brassia*, and *Dendrobium*

'Medium' light orchids: *Oncidium* and many miniature *Cattleyas*

'Low' light orchids: *Paphiopedilum* (slipper orchids), *Phalaenopsis* (moth orchids), *Ludisia* spp. and other jewel orchids (grown for the beautiful foliage)

### TIP

Here's a quick way to test the light for growing orchids: on a bright, clear summer day, hold your hand about six inches above your orchid to see if a shadow is cast on the leaves. A faint shadow indicates that 'Low' light orchids may be grown, while a strong, distinct shadow indicates there is enough sun to grow 'High' light orchids.

Your local orchid society is usually the best place to gain important information on which varieties do well in your area. For more information visit the National Capital Orchid Society at [www.ncos.us](http://www.ncos.us). The information on these signs can be downloaded from [www.usbg.gov](http://www.usbg.gov).

