

## **Dr. Bill's Orchids, LLC Basic Culture Sheet -** **Oncidium**

**Temperature:** Oncidium do best in an intermediate to warm growing condition. A 62 to 65 degree Fahrenheit night temperature and a 68-80 degree Fahrenheit temperature is usually considered best. Oncidiums will grow well in a normal home condition- generally, if you're comfortable, they will be comfortable. They can tolerate 90+ degree Fahrenheit temperatures if humidity and air flow are also increased. \*If in high temperatures and other factors (humidity and air flow) are not changed, leaves are prone to getting sunburnt/crispy quickly!

**Light & Shade:** Although Oncidiums and their Oncidinae intergenerics are somewhat variable in their light requirements, most should do well with 2000-3000 foot candles of light. A general rule I've found with this group is the thicker the leaf, the more light it can usually handle. If grown in the home, an eastern exposure or lightly shaded south or west exposure should give the best results. Oncidiums can also do very well under artificial lights. Plants should not touch most lamps/lights as it can cause burning (part of Temperature discussed above as localized heat and pure light intensity is too much)

**Watering:** During the Spring & Summer months, Oncidiums should be watered frequently. I generally recommend watering twice a week or so during this period, but this may vary with different growing conditions. If you're unsure, stick your finger in the pot and see if it is still damp. Do not let the plant become totally dry between waterings. During the Fall and Winter months when there is less growth, curtail your watering accordingly. \*Even though I have been growing these for years, I still occasionally will stick my finger in there when seasons change to help gauge when plants are starting to "wake up" or "take a small snooze". Every plant can be different in how much water it goes through- until you get an idea of your particular plants, check it!

**Fertilizer:** I recommend using a balanced fertilizer at half strength solution with each watering during the growing season (Spring & Summer). Personally, I tend to feed around 100 ppm N or so at each watering. For Fall & Winter, this can be reduced to once every second or third watering depending on what concentration you're feeding.

**Humidity:** Oncidiums grow best with 50-80% humidity. However, most varieties will tolerate a much lower humidity. If leaves are starting to "accordion"-fold, then there is not enough humidity and/or they have not been watered enough.

**Potting:** If your Oncidium is potted in one of the bark mixes, I generally recommend re-potting once a year or so due to the frequent watering. If the potting material is still firm and the plant is not overgrown after one year, you may hold off re-potting for an additional year. The best time to re-pot is when new growth appears, usually right after blooming. I usually use a medium size bark mix with bark, sphagnum moss, perlite, and charcoal, but others have been able to grow well in pure sphagnum moss. These are not usually stressed by repotting much, so don't get too worried about handling or treatment during the repot. I've repotted all times of the year, letting the plant tell me when it was ready with the growths/media status.