

Discover the World of Orchids



The U.S. Botanic Garden (USBG) presents "Discover the World of Orchids"

from February 28 through May 3, 2020. The exhibit continues the Garden's celebration of its 200th anniversary, showcasing its largest specialty plant collection since the 1800s. The 25th annual orchid exhibit is in partnership with Smithsonian Gardens, and this year shares stories of the history of orchids and how technology has aided their conservation.

From transporting orchids across the ocean in Wardian cases during the 18th century to growing orchids from tissue cultures today, technology has changed the way we grow orchids over time. This year's spectacular display is possible thanks, in part, to years of technological advancement. Come explore how technology continues to help orchids grow, and understand orchids.

The Garden Court features shipping crates, barrels, and docks overflowing with orchids plus a special rope sculpture cradling orchids by artist Susan Beal titled "Weaving Narratives." The sculpture uses 10,000 feet of natural manila rope (made from *Musa textilis* in the banana family) of varying widths from 1/4" to 2 1/2 pounds.

Visitors will find large, 8-foot-high curtains made from colorful Vanda orchids in the Plant Adaptations and Rare and Endangered houses. In the Tropics house, many orchids are on display, including an arch of epiphytic orchids that will be a favorite photo opportunity. In South Transition, discover stories on the conservation of orchids, modern orchid growing techniques, how the Garden cares for a diverse orchid collection, and more.

The Garden will offer orchid-themed programs and activities for adults and children, including an Orchid Family Day Festival, orchid care demonstrations, photography workshops, lectures on orchid diversity, conservation, and more.

Caring for Your Orchid

Test the Light
Here's a quick way to test the light for growing orchids indoors: 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.

What's Your Exposure?
Unobstructed southern exposures offer the most possibilities for growing orchids. However, a wide variety of 'high' light and 'moderate' light orchids will thrive on windowsills with a western or partially obstructed southern exposure. Eastern exposures will allow 'low' light orchids to bloom.

Cooler Nights
Many orchids prefer a nighttime drop in temperature. In some, this helps encourage flowering. For several weeks during the fall, leave the windows cracked open slightly at night to allow the temperature to drop 10 degrees. This should help your orchids set spores for winter and spring blooms!

Saving Orchids
Orchids are one of the largest and most widespread plant families—as well as one of the most threatened. Many wild orchids are in danger of extinction due to climate change, habitat destruction, and poaching. Thanks to laboratory propagation, orchids are now widely available for anyone to grow in their home. This

ORCHID HOME CARE



plants, post cards, chocolates, books, and other educational and botanical gift items, and will be open Friday through Sunday each week of the orchid exhibition. A coffee and beverage stand will be run by local coffee roaster Zeke's Coffee and will be open all weekends through Memorial Day weekend. Proceeds from the gift sale will benefit education programs at the USBG. Learn more and plan a visit at www.USBG.gov.

Orchid Care

Download a brochure to learn how to care for orchids at your home!

[Download the brochure >](#)

Video Tour

Join us for a multi-part video tour of the orchid show. Start the first video in the series below or [click here](#) to see the full playlist:

Source URL: <https://www.usbg.gov/orchidshow>