



LANDSCAPE · NURSERY · GARDEN CENTER

Orchid Care ONCIDIUM

Taxonomic Name: *Oncidium*
Orchid Family
Herbaceous Plants

Oncidiums are a contrast in large and small. The flowering stems of some species can be over three feet long, but the flowers they bear are often no more than an inch or two square. Some hybrids, such as the ever-popular Sharry Baby, can fill a room with a sweet, chocolate-like aroma. Most selections have yellow flowers with exquisite, darker markings; however, Sharry Baby is dark maroon and ivory. The oncidium genus contains both epiphytic (tree-dwelling) and terrestrial (ground-dwelling) species. This sheet deals with the epiphytic types, which bear water-retaining pseudobulbs. For more information on the terrestrial types, see the Orchid Care sheet for Equitant Oncidiums.

How to Care for Your Plant:

LIGHT: Some direct sunlight, or at least very bright indirect sunlight, is preferable. If possible, place your oncidium in an unobstructed southern or western window.

WATERING: When the plant is actively growing or flowering, make sure the top inch of the potting medium dries out between waterings. When the plant is dormant (neither growing nor flowering), let the medium dry out a little bit more--add an extra two or three days between waterings.

FEEDING: Follow the orchidist's time-honored adage: *Feed weakly, weekly*. Apply an orchid fertilizer once a week, but at one-quarter the concentration listed on the product label. NOTE: If your orchid is potted in fir-bark mixture, use a high-nitrogen (high first number) orchid fertilizer. If your plant is rooted in any other medium, use a high-phosphorus (high middle number) orchid fertilizer.

TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY: Oncidiums tolerate normal daytime temperatures and prefer a nighttime temperature of 55-60 degrees Fahrenheit. Provide at least 50% humidity--use a room humidifier nearby or a set pebble tray partially filled with water under the plant.