

## Orchids 101 – Cheat Sheet



### A. Basic Needs - **FLAW**:

#### a. **F**ood

- i. Weekly, Weakly
- ii. At ½ recommended strength
- iii. Feed first, then water

#### b. **L**ight

- i. Palm "Shadow" Test
- ii. Thick leaves (Phals i.e. Moth orchids), lower light
- iii. Medium leaves (Cattleya, Dendrobium, etc.), medium light
- iv. Thin Leaves (Vandas with roots hanging), high light

#### c. **A**ir

- i. No soil!
- ii. Pots: Clay or plastic, with holes; baskets, or mounted, using "zip ties"
- iii. Media: (No Sphagnum Moss in Florida!)

Organic	Inorganic
Orchid Bark	<u>L</u> ight <u>E</u> xpanded <u>C</u> lay <u>A</u> ggregate (LECA)
Coconut Husk	Lava Rock
Wine Corks	Perlite
Natural Cypress Mulch	Pumice

#### d. **W**ater

- i. "Damp Finger/Bamboo Skewer" Test or "Pot Weight" Test
- ii. Water until the "sponge" turns green (takes less than a minute)
- iii. Brrrrrrr...NO Ice!
- iv. No "wet feet" I.e., no sitting in water

### B. Temperatures: When you're comfortable, they're comfortable!

### C. Easy-to-grow orchids for "beginners" and availability

- a. Phalaenopsis (Moth Orchid): "Big Box Stores" and Orchid Shops
- b. Cattleya family (Corsages): Some Big Box Stores, HoneyBee, Orchid Envy
- c. Dendrobiums (Keikis, long lasting blossoms): Same as Cattleyas
- d. Oncidiums (some smell like chocolate): Same as Cattleyas

### D. Pests, Diseases

- a. BioAdvanced Insect, Disease & Mite Control (Blue Bottle)
- b. Alcohol (undiluted)
- c. Hydrogen Peroxide (undiluted)
- d. Cinnamon (Never on Roots!)
- e. Slow-Release: Nutricote or Dynamite (Red can)

### E. Resources

- a. American Orchid Society: aos.org
- b. Venice Area Orchid Society: vaos.org
- c. Royal Horticultural Society: rhs.org.uk
- d. Google: Orchids, Orchid Care, Orchid Types
- e. YouTube.com: missorchidgirl
- f. Book (the "Bible"): Martin Motes, "Florida Orchid Growing"

### F. Truisms:

- a. When in doubt, dry it out!
- b. You can water too often, but when they're thirsty, you can't water too much!
- c. If you think it needs water, test it. If damp, wait a day!
- d. People kill 'em with kindness!