

Nun's Orchid

Nun's orchid produces a few large, thin pleated leaves which can grow to a height of about three feet. The *inflorescence* (flower cluster) arises from a *pseudobulb* (a short, fleshy shoot found in most orchids) or a *rhizome* (an underground horizontal plant stem). The showy, fragrant flowers grow on stalks and are arranged in single file along an erect four-foot-tall branch.

Location

Place the nun's orchid where it will receive light shade during the hottest part of the day. Choose a spot that does not generally flood and allow room for a vigorous root system to develop.

Soil Composition & Moisture

Before planting your nun's orchid, work organic matter--peat, well-rotted compost, and partially decomposed pine bark--into the soil to a concentration of sixty to seventy percent. To improve soil drainage, add perlite and sand or use a commercial potting mix. Maintain soil moisture at an even level, allowing the top two inches of soil to dry out when new foliage matures.

Nutrients & Fertilizer

Soil pH should be in the range of 5.5 - 6.3. Apply an organic or slow-release fertilizer every three months and a fish emulsion or compost tea every two weeks while the plants are in active growth.

Weather Conditions

If temperatures are expected to drop below 40°F, bring the plant inside and place it near a sunny window. Nun's orchid can withstand temperatures as low as 35°F but are severely damaged below 32°F.

