

Preparing Orchids for Benching

When considering exhibiting orchids for benching competitions of shows it is important to have your orchids presentable and in show condition.

Flowers and spikes.

1. Stake your plants early as spikes develop. If you don't, do not stake the spikes just before exhibiting them as the flowers may be upside down or sidewise which is not a good look.
2. If you pick your plants up or move them while the buds are developing then ensure that the you keep them in the same orientation otherwise the flowers are likely to be poorly arranged.
3. Ensure that flowers are free of insects and scale.
4. Cut off dead and dying spikes and flowers.

Staking

1. Staking must be unobtrusive.
2. Staking should enhance the natural shape of the spike.
3. Use green or dark stakes, shiny aluminium stakes detract from the exhibit.
4. Do not use oversized clips or ties, or use ornate clips that detract from the flowers.
5. Only tie the spikes to below the first flower or lowest branch. Never tie on part of the flower.

Plants

1. Make sure the plants are clean and free of insects and scale.
2. Cut off dead leaves and bulks.
3. Clean leaves with soapy water or diluted methylated spirits. Don't use white oil or other cleaning methods that make the leaves excessively shiny and can damage the leaves. Some people use milk.

Pots and Mounts

1. Make sure that pots and mounts are clean and free of weeds.
2. If the pots are dirty or have salt stains then putting the orchid in a larger pot for presentation can make the display better.
3. Mounts and straggly roots are natural.