



ORCHID ROOT HEALTH GUIDE

“What are Air Roots?”

Airborne roots are normal in Phalaenopsis and other epiphyte orchids. Unlike terrestrial orchids that root in the earth, epiphyte orchids grow above the ground, using their roots to attach themselves to tree branches – **absorbing the moisture and carbon dioxide they need to thrive** directly from the air.

The growth of aerial roots sticking into the air, looping above the pot's surface or creeping over the sides of the pot **are perfectly normal** for Phalaenopsis orchids.


just add ice
ORCHIDS®





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How to Trim Air Roots:

If you notice the air roots on your orchid are brown or shriveled, wait until your orchid stops blooming, then use a sterile knife or scissors to cut away at those particular roots.



Care Starts at the Roots:

If you are unsure when to water your orchid for the first time, the orchid roots are a great indicator for watering. **Well-watered roots should be a healthy green color, while grayish-white roots indicate more water is needed.** If you examine the roots of your Phalaenopsis orchid, you will notice that they are thick and coated with a spongy material that both aids adherence to tree bark and nutrient absorption.

Every Just Add Ice Orchid comes in a clear growing pot. The growing pot is equipped with holes on the bottom to provide maximum water drainage. Be sure to empty any extra water in the bottom of the decorative pot after each watering, as **orchid roots should not sit in excess water.**



Watering with Ice:

Watering orchids with ice will not harm the leaves or roots. When placed on top of the media, the ice cubes will **slowly release over time** with no worries of over-watering. With the slow drip process, the water melts into the bark soil and seeps into the roots. The roots slowly soak up the water as it drips down, which prevents water from sitting at the bottom of your pot.



Dry Roots are Greyish-White

Care for Dry Roots:

If your orchid roots are a grayish-white color, this is an indication **more water is needed**.

Water your orchid as you normally do, but if it continues to be dry, check to see if the plant is located near a draft and move the orchid if it is. Then you can try soaking the plant (only the roots/bark) in a sink/bucket of water for 2 minutes. Orchid roots hate to sit in water, so be sure to let all of the water leach out the clear growing pot before placing it back in the decorative pot.



Brown, Mushy Looking Roots

Care for Overwatered Roots:

One of the most common problems that develop with orchid roots is Root Rot, occurring when your orchid is over watered.

If you see any brown or mushy-looking roots, immediately stop watering your orchid and wait for the roots to dry out. There is a chance your orchid will bounce back to good health, but if the roots don't appear to get better, wait until your Just Add Ice Orchid has finished blooming to treat. Then, remove the plant from the pot and trim off any problem areas using a sterile knife. Repot your orchid in **fresh, new potting mix**.



Replacing Orchid Medium

Phalaenopsis orchids should be repotted every one to two years in order to replenish the orchid potting media and maintain **optimal growing conditions**.

Just Add Ice Orchids are potted in course-cut, chunky pieces of pine bark and other materials that provide the aeration and fast drainage that these orchids need for healthy root growth. Over time, these materials break down. The particles become smaller and more compact, no longer providing the airy spaces that promoted proper air flow and good drainage. Finer particles also hold more water than large, loose particles; and compacted soils retain water longer, creating a saturated environment that can cause orchid roots to rot.

When you notice orchid potting materials starting to break down, it is time to repot your orchid. Please visit our website for tips and video instructions on [repotting your orchid](#).

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