

-17- GROWING CATTLEYA ORCHIDS

Cattleya Lighting

Light is essential for the growth and flowering of Cattleyas, thriving best in direct sunlight from south, east, or west-facing windows.

- *Greenhouse Conditions:**
- Aim for **50%–70% full sun** (32,250–53,750 lumens).
- Use shade cloth in southern climates; northern growers can allow full sun.
- *Indoor Conditions:**
- Place in windows with **over 4 hours of direct sunlight**, ideally south-facing.
- No sunburn risk indoors.
- *Artificial Lighting:**

Requires **over 3,000 lumens** for optimal growth and blooming.



Cattleya Temperature

Cattleya orchids prefer nighttime temperatures of 55°F to 72°F (12.7°C to 22.2°C) and daytime temperatures of 70°F to 85°F (21.1°C to 29.4°C). Seedlings benefit from slightly warmer nights and can tolerate daytime highs up to 95°F (35°C) with proper humidity, watering, air circulation, and shading. Indoors, a consistent room temperature is suitable for their growth.

Cattleya Humidity

Humidity can aid Cattleya orchid growth but is not crucial. It helps prevent dryness and can enhance vigor slightly.

- In greenhouses, ensure good air circulation to prevent fungal and bacterial diseases in high humidity or low temperatures.

Indoors, well-watered Cattleyas do not require strict humidity control.

Cattleya Watering

Caring for epiphytes like Cattleya involves ensuring they experience quick wet/dry cycles. Key points include:

- Water Cattleyas immediately after their medium dries, using lukewarm water.
- Avoid water below 50°F (10°C) and hard or salt-softened water.
- Greenhouse growers should adjust watering to allow adequate drying time; mounted Cattleyas may need more frequent watering in warm conditions.

Indoor growers should water from the top or use a shower/sink method, allowing the plants to drip dry before returning them to their location. Watering frequency varies based on the drying rate of the medium in your environment.