

## Orchid Deflasking into Compots Made Easy

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I have been growing orchids for just on 10 years now and, as we all know, one eventually runs out of room. So, I came up with a system of deflasking, putting most of the orchid plants into compots.

I have tried a few different ways and I find this method faster, more productive, with more plants in less room.

Patience is necessary, allowing the plants in the flask to mature with strong root systems. It is necessary to keep the flask after purchasing until this has occurred.



Photo1.

My equipment: Pot size 125mm diameter, PCV pipe 65mm diam. Cut into lengths taller than the pot, thin cheap paper towel, so it will dry out quickly, potting mix, Rootex or Ezi-root, plastic bowl, 2 pegs (from the clothes line), 1 seedling tray, tweezers.



Photo 2.

If a person didn't have a set of tweezers to pull the plants out of the flask, one can be made from 2 chop sticks, 1 rubber band, 1 piece of paper – see photo above.

My mix consists of 2 parts power plus[medium]Orchiata bark + 2 parts super[coarse] Orchiata bark + 1 part jumbo perlite.

When deflasking try to take the orchid plants out of the flask when the type you are deflasking is in it's growth stage, not in dormancy. The orchids being deflasked in this exercise are plants of the soft cane, Dendrobium Pink Doll.

After removing the plants from the flask using tweezers, wash the medium from the roots.



Photo 3.

Place the plants in a prepared solution of Rootex, (follow the instructions on the bottle for quantities) for 15 – 20 minutes.



Photo 4.

After removing the plants from this solution, grade them according to size and place on a single layer of paper towel which has been spread on trays. Peg the paper to the tray, as a gust of wind can blow them away. (It has happened). Remember to place name tags in the trays.



Photo 5.

Allow the orchid plants to dry then spray them with water regularly, allowing them and the paper towel to dry out between sprays. Depending on the type of orchid I usually pot them up the next day, but they can be left for up to 2 weeks in the trays. Do not wet after 2:30pm and recommence the next morning. Grading your plants allows you to pot the larger ones singularly and the rest in compots.

Take enough paper towel to fit around your PVC pipe 65mm in diameter. Fold the paper towel into 3, longways, and lay the plants along it.



Photo 6.

Roll the paper towel around the PVC pipe.



Photo 7.



Photo 8.

Holding them tight, place them in the pot.



Photo 9.

Fill the outside of the pot with your bark mix, so all is firm around the pipe.



Photo 10.

Then fill the pipe to the height of the plants tapping the pot gently to settle the bark adding more as required.



Photo 11.

Holding the side of the plants, remove the PVC pipe. The compot is now complete.



Photo 12.



Photo13.

The two compots that were made are in the rear with the more advanced plants potted individually.

The paper towel enables the roots to stay wet for a short period and I find the paper breaks down in about 6 – 8 weeks.

The compots are watered once a day for about 2 weeks and then they are watered the same as the rest of my orchids, including fertilizers and sprays.

Photo14: The plant should look like this in a couple of months.



Photo 15: A year on they look like this.



This is my way, and, with a little practice, you should find it so easy too.

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**Images by Jan Heitman**

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