

Potting Mediums



Something that is important to all growers - very important part of growing – too many new growers get the right plant, pot, fertilise and then go and get some poor quality mulch or some rubbish to pot plant in - worth paying for a good quality mix - a massive choice of mixes now compared to when I started to grow 25 years ago - bark was the universal choice - it is now starting to get expensive and has had some PH problems - orchid growers are always looking for the new miracle mix. eg. Absorbastone - if your mix works why change?

Bark

- available in various grades.
- most now comes from AusGro – the last couple of years there has been a quality problem with the PH
- getting more expensive
- there is going to be a supply problem in the future (trees are harvested younger)
- I'm now soaking my bark (as is Aranbeem) and sun drying it – Important I feel to dry your - bark if you are not going to use it straight away – keeps better.
- add whatever you want charcoal
- bark not the quality it was – breaking down faster.

Peat and Perlite

- ratio 8 to 1 or 10 to 1.
- available in different grades – best for orchids super coarse or jumbo.
- less than half the cost of bark – I'm using it for all my plants coming out of flask as I can control the PH and seems to dry out at a more uniform rate – keeps young plants moister.
- Oncidiums love it – never seen Zygopetalums. back bulbs come away so fast.
- John Green has all his Cattleyas, Oncidiums in peat and perlite.
- seems best to me for finer root plants.
- old rule of thumb, finer root plants in finer bark.
- doesn't break down – easy to repot - just pot up.



Coconut Husk Chips

- new mix
- 2 types – Brunnings – ready to go – just soak and use – makes 30 litres of mix – about $\frac{1}{2}$ the cost of bark.
- other type- no brand – needs to be soaked 2 times and treated – Calcium nitrate 50gms to the bale and Magnesium sulfate 30gms to the bale.
- retains moisture – PH seems to remain stable longer – mix with perlite, styrofoam, bark – I would tend to mix with styrofoam



- have seen good growth in this – Noela and Italo Frizzo are potting almost everything in it – good root growth – however to be fair if you haven't got good root growth this time of year you are in trouble.
- important things to know – each mix has a different environment and you need to learn how to grow in it.
- each mix dries out at different rates.
- too many growers have plants in different mixes and treat them all the same and this is where they get into trouble.

- I do this but deliberately ie. plants that want to be drier in a mix that dries out faster ie. large bark – plants that want to be moist in a mix that dries out slower.
- pot size is important – old rule of thumb take pot size in inches and water that often need to ask yourself what sort of waterer you are. If you water all the time then grow in large bark not coco husk.

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