



Planting Instructions for Lady's Slipper Orchids

Please plant your new lady's slipper orchid as soon as possible.

Planting site

Semi-shade, no direct sun at midday. A very suitable place would also be on the north side of a building. Most Cypripediums are woodland plants and therefore prefer cool sites, which do not become too dry and hot during summer. Places where ferns thrive are also suitable for lady's slipper orchids. *Don't plant your Cypripediums close to trees or big shrubs because their roots are effective competition for water and nutrients!*

Lady's slipper orchids are completely hardy - no separate protection during winter is required. However, once they have started growing, the leaves are sensitive to frost. Therefore, protect the plants by covering with buckets if there are late frosts or snowfall once growth has started.

Soil

Basically, Cypripedium hybrids grow well in most garden soils. Lady's slipper orchids prefer a well-aerated, crumbly soil structure (4 inches deep) and medium moisture conditions. Dense and loamy soils have to be improved with mineral materials such as crushed clay pebbles or crushed lava. If the planting site is too wet, a drainage layer with crushed clay pebbles or crushed lava should be added.

In regions with constant winter dampness, a well-ventilated rain cover or a pure mineral soil mix is recommended. Otherwise, there may be losses due to rot.

In sandy soils, which dry out rapidly, it is recommended to increase water retention by mixing in perlite, Seramis® or Isolite®.

Covering the soil with a layer of conifer needles (e.g. spruce or pine) has a favourable effect on structure and moisture.

Planting

Spread out the roots in the upper 4 inches of the soil, the rhizome one inch below the surface, shoot buds upwards. Fill in the remaining substrate without compressing it, and water thoroughly.

Plant care

Fertilize your lady's slipper orchids regularly in spring, necessary for strong growth. Use any granulated commercial garden fertilizer, best are those with a long-term effect. After flowering the need for nutrients is low, but at the beginning of the growth season the need is high. Leaf coloration is a good indicator; leaves should always be bright green. A yellowish green indicates nutrient deficiency or too much sun. The soil should never dry out completely, therefore in dry summers careful watering is recommended. The shoots die back in autumn and should then be removed by diagonally pulling them out of the ground or cutting the stems off.

Combination with other plants

Lady's slipper orchids look best in combination with slow-growing ferns, Barrenwort (*Epimedium*) and small *Hosta* species. They cannot compete with vigorously-growing perennials, shrubs or trees. So always look after these delicate plants!

Protecting your lady's slipper orchids

Slugs can wreak havoc within one night. Particularly during springtime special protection is indispensable. The safest methods for controlling slugs are a slug fence or a barrier consisting of a vertically mounted copper plate (a few centimetres high), alternatively Etisso® Slug & Snail-Lentils.

On the website www.ladyslipper.de you will find photos, videos, garden examples and more.