

# Vanda sanderiana



## Unveiling the Secrets: How to Propagate the Regal Vanda Sanderiana

The Vanda sanderiana, also known as Waling-waling in its native Philippines, is a sight to behold. With its large, vibrant blooms and captivating fragrance, it's no wonder this orchid reigns supreme as the "Queen of Orchids." But did you know that behind its regal appearance lies a surprisingly accessible method of propagation?

While growing orchids can seem intimidating to some, propagating your Vanda sanderiana doesn't have to be a royal decree understood only by experts. This guide will unveil the secrets to successfully expanding your orchid family.

### Understanding Vanda Sanderiana Propagation

Unlike many orchids that readily produce plantlets, Vanda sanderiana primarily propagates through **keikis**. These are essentially miniature clones that emerge from the main stem,

complete with their own roots and leaves.

### **Spotting a Keiki:**

- Look for small growths emerging from nodes on the main stem, usually above the leaves.
- Observe the development of tiny roots and leaves, differentiating a keiki from a flower spike.

### **Patience is Key:**

- Remember, keiki development isn't an overnight process.
- It can take several months or even a year for a keiki to mature enough for removal.

### **The Art of Keiki Removal:**

1. **Timing is Everything:** Wait until the keiki has developed a healthy root system of at least 3-4 roots, each about 2-3 inches long.
2. **Gather Your Tools:** You'll need sterilized pruning shears or a sharp, clean knife, a small pot, and appropriate orchid potting mix.
3. **Careful Extraction:** Gently wiggle the keiki base while simultaneously pulling it slightly away from the mother plant. It should detach with minimal resistance.
4. **Post-Separation Care:**
  - Dust the cut end of the keiki and the mother plant with cinnamon or a rooting hormone to prevent infection.
  - Pot the keiki in a well-draining orchid mix, ensuring the roots are completely covered and the base sits just above the mix's surface.
  - Water thoroughly and place in a warm, humid environment with bright, indirect light.

### **Alternative Propagation Method – Top Cutting:**

While less common, *Vanda sanderiana* can be propagated through top cuttings if your plant has become overly long and leggy.

1. Using sterilized shears, cut the upper portion of the stem, ensuring it has several healthy roots attached.
2. Follow the same potting and care instructions as for a keiki.
3. The remaining base of the mother plant may produce new growths over time.

### **Factors Influencing Keiki Development:**

- **Light:** Adequate bright, indirect light is crucial for keiki formation.
- **Hormonal Imbalance:** Sometimes, stress or hormonal fluctuations can trigger keiki growth.
- **Genetics:** Some *Vanda sanderiana* cultivars are simply more prone to producing keikis.

### **A Rewarding Endeavor:**

Propagating your *Vanda sanderiana* is an enriching experience that allows you to multiply these stunning orchids. Remember, patience, observation, and a gentle touch are your greatest tools. With a little care and dedication, you'll soon be enjoying a flourishing family of these majestic orchids.