

Flower Arrangement

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Flower arrangement is a fascinating hobby for many people. It is a natural art which invites you to express yourself in an original way. Some people have a flair for arranging flowers, but the average person profits by learning and following a few basic rules and techniques. In either case the home quickly reflects the beauty of well arranged plant materials.

Cut and Prepare Your Plant Material

Cut flowers and plant material in the late afternoon when the sun is not on them, or early in the morning. Either way they stay fresh longer than if gathered in the middle of day.

Place plant materials immediately in deep lukewarm water. Allow to stand in a cool place for several hours or over night so that the stems will fill with water before arranging them. This process is spoken of as hardening the plant material, or conditioning it.

In making your arrangement, cut off all leaves that will be below the water level. Leaves decay quickly under water. Arrangements will last longer if you cut newly opened flowers or buds just ready to open. Such flowers as asters, zinnias, marigolds, chrysanthemums and delphiniums should be fully open, however.

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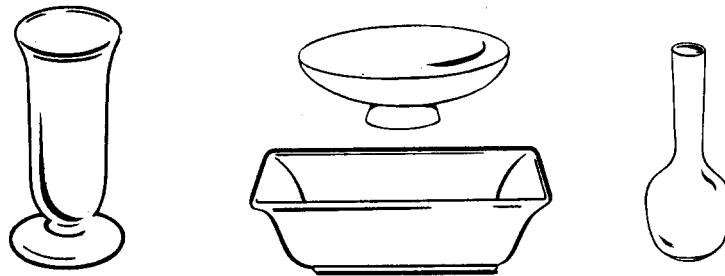
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Choose Your Container with Care

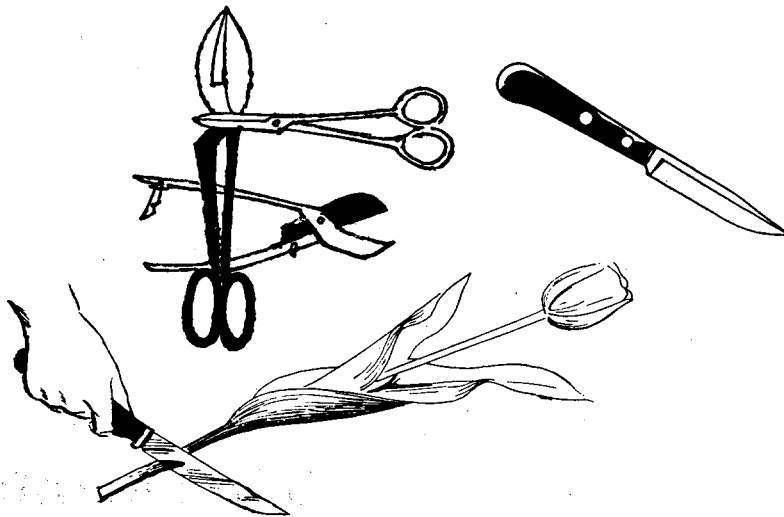
Containers must not steal the show from the flowers. Choose containers that are simple in line and neutral in color. Soft leaf green, browns, or dull yellows, as well as white and black are good. Suit the container to the texture of the flowers. Delicate sweet peas require one type of container, coarser zinnias another type.

The container should be large enough to hold flowers without crowding and deep enough that adequate water is provided. Be sure your container is absolutely clean if you want to lengthen the life of your flowers.



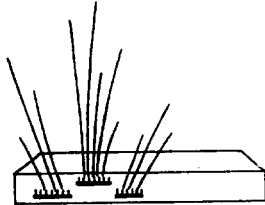
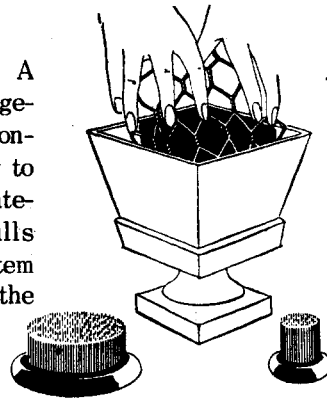
Tools Are Important

A sharp knife or scissors insures a good clean cut which permits greater absorption of water and longer life for the flowers. Cut stems at an angle so the cut end does not rest flat on the bottom of the container.



A newspaper to catch your trimming saves work in cleaning up when the arrangement is made.

Holders are a must in flower arrangement. A needlepoint holder is excellent for low arrangements. Have several sizes on hand for convenience. A piece of chicken wire is handy to use in deeper containers for holding plant material. Roll or fold it in such a way that it fills the mouth of the container and so that the stem is held in place by two or three layers of the chicken wire.



Use more than one holder if necessary.

Plastic foam is another type of material used for holding plant material in place. Two varieties, Oasis and Snopak, are bought in blocks and must be saturated in water before use. Oasis is used by sticking the flower stems into the saturated block. Snopak is best with soft stemmed flowers. It can be crumbled and saturated with water before stems are added. Styrofoam is used either in the block or crumbled, but is for dry arrangements.

Modeling clay is useful to prevent the needlepoint holder from toppling over when heavy with flowers. Clay grips only on dry surfaces. Be sure the container and needlepoint holder are clean and dry. The clay itself must be dry also. Make a roll of the clay or pinch off bits and press in place around the bottom of the holder. Then press the clay and holder firmly against the bottom of the bowl.

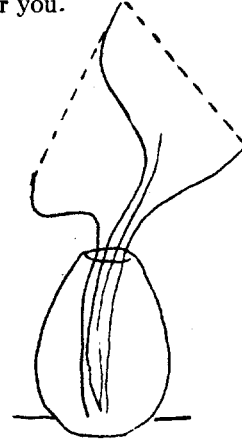
Florist's tape and florist's wire, some fine (No. 28-30) and some heavy (No. 21-24), may come in handy in arranging flowers. You will need them especially for making corsages. Tape is sometimes used to hold tall branches or foliage in place. Fasten it to the side of the container, in the back where it won't show. Small stemmed flowers, such

as cornflowers or sweet peas, are easy to handle if they are tied in small bunches before being placed in an arrangement. Fine florist's wire is excellent for this purpose.

You'll find it is easier and you will enjoy it more if you sit down while you work with flowers. While constructing the arrangement, you will be viewing the flowers from the same position as others will see them. Be sure your table is of the right height for you.

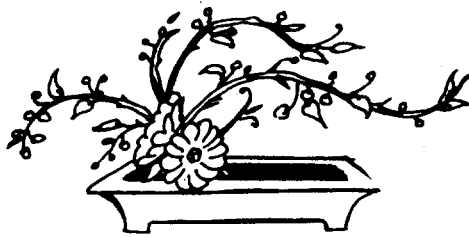
How to Make a Well Designed Arrangement

Begin your arrangement with a triangle. Choose a stem that is $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 times the height of a tall vase, or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the width of a low bowl. This stem establishes the line of height. Cut the second stem $\frac{2}{3}$ the height of the first one and the third one somewhat shorter.



Place the tallest stem toward the back center of your holder. Then place the other two stems, forming the right and left sides of your triangle at a spreading angle that brings them slightly forward toward you.

These three basic stems form a pocket in which other flowers and branches are placed. They form a skeleton on which to build the finished arrangement. Place the heavier material and darker colors near the center and at the base of the arrangement to give it balance.



For a low arrangement this same triangle outline may be used but the line of height may become the line of length. As you add stems be sure they do not cross each other.

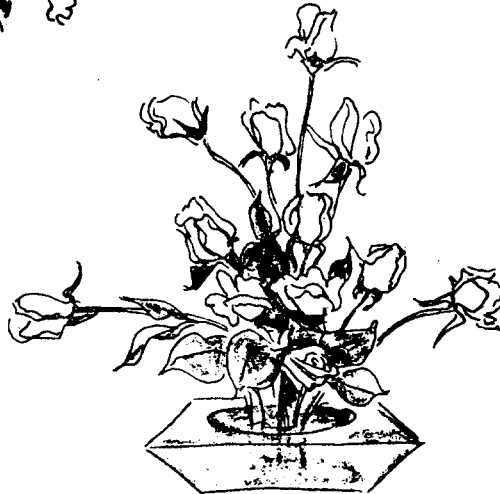
Some Arrangement Suggestions

Study your plant material, container and setting to see what type of design you will use.

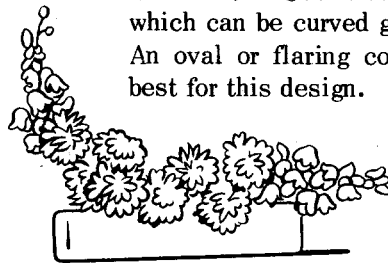


Right-angle: The most popular of the basic plans is the side triangle. It lends itself to many kinds of flowers. The high side may be on either right or left.

Triangle: The full triangle with all sides equal is easy for a beginner. This can easily be changed into a half circle or fan-shape by lengthening stems at either side of the center.



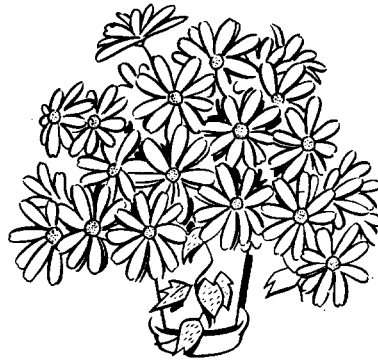
Crescent: Use flower stems which can be curved gracefully. An oval or flaring container is best for this design.



Vertical: An arrangement of this type fits a narrow wall.



Horizontal: Excellent design for dining table. Heavier and larger flowers at the center give a feeling of balance and is the focal point. Tips of the line are low but should not touch the table.



Oval: This form suggests a mass arrangement. Keep the center of interest low with larger, heavier and darker flowers. Open spaces and smaller, lighter flowers should come at the outer edges.

FOR FURTHER REFERENCE:

Good Housekeeping Book of Flower Arrangements.
 Better Homes and Gardens Flower Arranging Book.
 Flower Arrangement for Everyone — Biddle and Blom.
 The Art of Flower Arrangement — Tatsuo Ishimoto.
 The Art of Driftwood and Dried Arrangements — Tatsuo Ishimoto.
 Flower Arrangement — Rockwell and Grayson.
 Arranging Flowers from the Roadside, Fields and Woods — Amelia Leavitt Hill.
 Flower Arrangements Anyone Can Do Anywhere — A Signet Key Book.
 Today's Woman Book of Flower Arranging — Loret Swift — Fawcett Book No. 229.
 Corsages —
 The Trick of Making Your Own Corsages — Sophia Naumburg, Floral Art, Teaneck, New Jersey.
 Corsages for Milady — Glad Reusch, Garden Art Studio, 3602 Tacon Street, Tampa, Florida.
 Corsages from Your Garden — Irma E. Koerner, 445 — 42nd Street North, St. Petersburg, Florida.
 Making Corsages at Home — Biddle and Blom.

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