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FIRST TIME IN ARRANGING FLOWERS

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This flier is for the beginner who wants to make attractive flower arrangements with simple materials and inexpensive containers.

When you think of flowers, the first thought that comes to mind is beauty. Beauty is a necessity in all our lives and flowers have the means of satisfying that desire. They add beauty to the world around them through their wealth of colors, variety of shapes and many fragrances.

First, you need some simple tools; next, study the guides of arrangement; and finally apply them to develop your own way with the flowers of your choice.

Interesting Things to Do:

1. Study the origin of various species of flowers.
2. List ways that flowers are used today.
3. Make a list of flowers that you know and learn about 5 new ones.
4. Make some slides of flowers; try to get various colors. (Try a color wheel of flowers.)
5. Take field trip to greenhouse to learn how flowers are grown.
6. Take a field trip to local florist to learn what flowers are available locally.
7. Visit library to examine books on flowers.
8. Make notebook of arrangements you like - include one arrangement for each month of the year.

What is Needed For Your Activity

Just as you need the proper equipment for good results in the kitchen, you'll need good tools for flower arrangements. Following are some of the most important:

TOOLS:

- Knife - a sharp paring knife.
- Shears - Either small or stout shears to be used for cutting heavy stems and wire.
- Container - Types of containers are unlimited; anything that holds water serves as one. Besides the variety of vases there are kitchen and home utensils that are suitable, such as pitchers, sugar bowls, cups, cookie jars, and baking dishes. Here's a chance to use your own imagination. Just remember the container should be simple in color and design, so it doesn't detract from the arrangement. The color should be neutral unless the container is part of the color scheme as it serves as a background for the flowers.
- Holder - A good holder is necessary to keep flowers in place. It should be heavy enough not to fall over, or, in the case of chicken wire, it should be wedged into the container tight enough not to slip. Do not use holders that will rust.

Heavy, rust-proof needlepoint holders for low containers and crumpled chicken wire for tall vases are two of the best types.

- Florists thread or heavy green thread, such as an old trout line, may be used to bunch flowers or leaves which are hard to handle separately. Wrap the thread around flower stems five or six times, being sure it crosses and recrosses itself. Tie near the stem's ends so that the bunch will not be too tight.
- Accessories - Native materials such as rocks, an interesting piece of old wood, unusual lichens or shells are example of accessories. Figurines, birds, other animals and insects (bees, butterflies) may be used to balance and add interest to an arrangement.

TYPES OF FLOWERS:

Flowers may be divided into groups according to shape -- round, such as zinnias and marigolds; and spear, such as larkspur and snapdragons. Flowers such as baby's breath (light and airy may be classed as fillers.) Some ferns are also used as fillers. In a mixed arrangement a combination of round and spear-shaped materials is more interesting than an arrangement in which flowers are all of one shape. If all flowers are of the same shape, leaves, or other plant material will add interest and variety.

DESIGNS:

Designs are classed as mass arrangements -- which contain many flowers -- and line arrangements -- which depend upon the lines of branches, stems, and void spaces between the branches for much of their beauty. Some designs are a combination of mass and line arrangements.

MAKING THE ARRANGEMENT:

Decide which flowers to use. Separate flowers into groups according to colors, shapes and texture. Select the container which will go with the flowers and fit into the place where arrangement will be used.

The height and width of arrangement are important. Although rules in flower arrangement are often broken, these guides may be helpful to beginners:

(Experiment and add your own guides)

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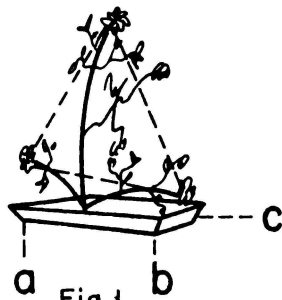


Fig.1

$AB + BC = \text{height of tallest flower}$

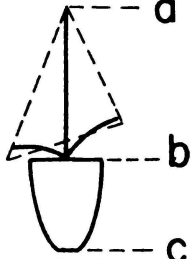


Fig.2

$AB \text{ is } 1.5 \text{ as tall as } BC$

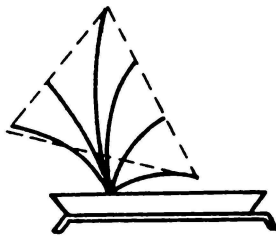


Fig.3

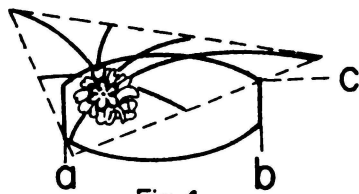


Fig.4

$AB + BC = \text{width of low arrangement}$

1. The tallest flower in a low container is as tall as the length plus the width of the container. In a tall container the tallest flower is 1-1/2 times the height of the container (Figure 1 and 2). Tips of flowers and small leaves do not count in these measurements.
 2. The second flower is 2/3 as tall as the first.
 3. The third flower is 1/3 as tall as the first.
 4. For this arrangement: Arrange these flowers to make a triangle.
 5. Add other flowers to fill in the arrangement. (Figure 3) Give each flower "breathing" room. Do not crowd. Add some plant material to the back and front so that the arrangement has depth.
- Experimenting and practice will help more than any set rules.
6. In a low arrangement, use the length plus the width of the arrangement (Figure 4)
 7. Do not let any two flowers come to the same height.
 8. Group flowers according to kinds and colors, rather than spotting them about one by one.
 9. Repeat colors and flowers by groups throughout the arrangement.
 10. Large size and dark colors appear to give flowers weight. Use heavy material low in the arrangement and light material high.
 11. Use all stages of development, from buds to seed pods.

12. Add green foliage when needed.
13. Arrange a center of interest low in the arrangement - one center of interest, if only one side shows; two centers of interest for arrangements to be seen from all sides.
14. Tie the flowers in with the container by letting some of the plant material cut across the rim of the container.
15. Let one color predominate in a mixed arrangement.
16. Do not let stems cross each other above the top of the container.
17. When the arrangement is completed, the holder should not show.

Place your flower arrangement in the area you have designed it for.

How does it look: -- height -- width -- color -- Does it express the feeling you wanted --

Try! Try! Your key is experimenting and practicing. Refer to Design For Flowers - Publication 138