

## Include imagination when arranging flowers

Our gardens are blooming profusely now and we can gather flowers for arrangements and bouquets to our hearts' content.

If it's only one stem or a great big bunch, your home or outdoor living space will be a brighter place for your effort!

### GARDEN SPOT



MARTY FIGLEY

Before you go to the garden, look around your home to find a container that will complement the flowers you will choose, and the decor.

There are basically six categories for the shapes: cylinder, sphere, bottle, low pan, pall and trumpet. I'm sure you'll find several of these in your stash if not all.

Don't let the fact that you've never used a particular piece for flowers deter you. Use your imagination and give yourself time to enjoy the experience.

We often see pictures of gardeners gathering flowers and putting them in a basket. Rather than doing that, take a container of water to put the flowers in.

Cut the stem at an angle so there is more area for water to fill. Then when you're indoors, cut them again to the proper length.

Generally warm water is best, but if you're choosing flowers grown from bulbs, such as lilies and irises, immerse the stem in a deep container of cold water, not warm; the flowers will stay fresh longer.

Here are some suggestions:

- A tall bud vase in the same color as the flower
- A flower with a pale color such as yellow or pale pink in a white vase
- A large, single bloom in an old bottle, perhaps with a tint of green or blue
- A single blossom floating in a shallow bowl can be impressive.

All who see any of these displays will understand how much you appreciate the beauty of one particular flower.

We often feel that we have to use a variety of flowers. Set a bunch of one kind of flower in a clear vase and let the stems be part of the show.

Remove all the foliage and lay each flower across your hand and position the flower so the stem crosses the next. Slightly twist the bunch before placing them in the vase. This "teepee" effect also supports the arrangement.

The latest trend is to cut the stems very short and bunch them into the bowl to create a Victorian look. Large flowers look best such as roses, peonies and hydrangeas. An old epergne raises the display to another level. Another idea is to place three blooms in three short beverage glasses and set them on a pedestal cake plate.

Iris and daylilies don't last very long as cut flowers, but they sure do glow when they are put in a short vase and allowed to cascade gently over the sides.

The idea is to create an illusion of lushness. If you have a metal container or basket that gives the look you want, put in a container that doesn't leak inside and you have the beginnings of an unusual display, one that is your own choice.

Sometimes it's necessary to use a frog to hold the



**In place:** Sky blue hyacinths in a glass vase are both simple and elegant. Fold the edge of a wired ribbon over the opening of the vase to hold it in place and tie a pretty bow.

stems, especially when a "fewer is more" display is wanted. To protect the vase from being scratched by a metal frog, place it on a cushion of plastic wrap.

A floral preservative will help to keep the flowers fresh, as does a daily change of water.

If your garden is so full of plants that you have some to spare, invite a friend or two to come and gather and arrange with you.

Perhaps you could exchange a plant or two to add to your gardens.

**GOOD GARDEN TIP**  
It's still necessary to water, feed, deadhead and spray or dust our garden plants.  
Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. Her fax number is (248) 644-1314.

## GARDENING CALENDAR

■ The Michigan Regional Lily Society will have its 40th annual Lily Show Saturday, July 13, at the Community House, 380 S. Bates, south of Maple and east of Southfield Road in Birmingham.

Many beautiful stems of colorful hybrid lilies will be displayed. Admission is free. The show will be open for public viewing 1-5 p.m.

You don't need to be a member to enter a hybrid lily stem in the competition. Registration stems will take place 9-11 a.m. Help will be available if you have never entered a stem in a show before.

■ English Gardens conducts free gardening seminars for the public 10 a.m. Saturdays at its five metro-Detroit stores, including locations in West Bloomfield (phone (248) 851-7506), Royal Oak (phone (248) 280-9500) and Dearborn Heights (phone (313) 278-4433).

In Perennial Gardening July 13, learn about perennial plants, and how to select plants, combine colors and care for perennials during and after the growing season.

For more information, call (800) 335-CROW or visit [www.englishgardens.com](http://www.englishgardens.com)  
■ Merrittscape Inc.'s annual Daylily Dig ("You pick 'em, we dig 'em") is here again, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, July 13-14, and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. July 20-21. Merrittscape Inc. is at 5949 Cooley Lake Road in Waterford. Call (248) 681-7955.

Thousands of hybrid daylilies are now in bloom, as well as a large variety of hostas and perennials. All plants are 20 percent off.

Daylily and hosta lectures will take place at noon, so come prepared with questions. Refreshments will be served. Youngsters can meet Tailgate the Clown.

■ Congress has declared 2002 the Year of the Rose. Rose, Nancy Lindley, owners of Great Lakes Roses, are celebrating with a series of programs 1 p.m. Saturdays that will enable Michigan gardeners to succeed with roses this summer.

Each presentation will last about an hour. Great Lakes

Roses is at 49875 Willow Road, between Rawlsville and Sumpter (Bartlett) roads in Sumpter Township, just south of Belleville. Call (734) 461-1230 or visit [www.GreatLakesRoses.com](http://www.GreatLakesRoses.com).

■ Growing Roses in Containers will be the topic July 13. The Lindleys will give a hands-on demonstration of techniques for planting and growing roses in pots, window boxes and hanging baskets. The program is free. Reservations aren't required.

■ Seven magnificent private gardens in Oakland County will be open to the public 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, July 14, rain or shine, as part of the Open Days Program of The Garden Conservancy. Three are in Beverly Hills, three are in Bloomfield Hills and one is in Southfield.

Admission is \$5 at each garden. Reservations aren't required. Call (888) 842-2442 for more information and which site to visit.

The tour starts at Judy's Garden, 3916 Cottontail Lane in Bloomfield Hills. The site is between Lahser and Telegraph, north of Maple off Gilbert Lake Road. Visitors will be given a flyer that gives driving directions to the other gardens.

The Garden Conservancy's Open Days Directory: The Guide to Visiting Hundreds of America's Best Private Gardens, 2002 Edition lists the gardens around the country that are in the program, and contains an order form for a book of Open Days discount coupons (six for \$25, or six for \$20 for Garden Conservancy members).

Each listing includes a garden description, travel directions, and the dates and times each garden is open. Many public gardens are also featured.

The 512-page directory costs \$16.95 and is available wherever books are sold.

To order the directory - with an additional \$4.50 for shipping and handling - write The Garden Conservancy, P.O. Box 219, Cold Spring, NY 10516, or call (888) 842-2442 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. The cost is \$10.95 for Garden Conservancy members, plus shipping and handling.

■ The Michigan Cactus and Succulent Society will have a field trip to Arrowhead Springs, 1310 Gregory in Fowlerville, 11 a.m. Sunday, July 14. Call (248) 524-0227 for more information.

■ The Michigan School of Gardening offers specialty and just-for-fun classes at The Community House, 380 S. Bates in Birmingham.

They include English Gardens: Capturing the Magic, 10 a.m. to noon Tuesday, July 16. The class will feature a slide-tour of gardens in England; a look at the elements of English design, and tips on design and plantings to re-create an English garden in your own back yard. Fee is \$20.

To register for this class, or to request a schedule, call The Community House at (248) 644-5832.

■ The Shelby Gardens Club will present the Shelby Township Garden Walk 1-3:30 p.m. Thursday, July 18, rain or shine. Tickets are \$7 in advance, \$10 day of walk. Tickets are available from the Shelby Library, Shelby Parks and Recreation and club members. On the day of the event, tickets will be available at Heritage Garden in Shelby Township, 52700 Van Dyke (Jack Mitchell Blvd.), south of 24 Mile Road, where the walk will start.

The walk will feature seven beautiful and exciting garden projects.

■ The S.E. Michigan Branch of the S.E. Michigan Branch of the Dale Meier's home in Midland to view his extensive greenhouse collection 2 p.m. Saturday, July 20. Visitors are welcome. For information, call (248) 380-7359.

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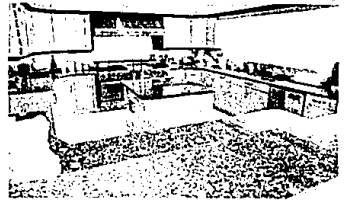
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