

Arrange Flowers To Suit Your Mood

By BETTY FRANKEL
Special Writer

Flower arranging is the art of displaying flowers so they look their best.

An arrangement is planned so that the flowers, leaves, branches and container work together to form an interesting design.

Color of flowers and leaves, texture, shape, size and line must all be considered. The design can be in a traditional style or in a contemporary mood. It can be a period piece to complement a particular

style and period of interior decor, such as a French provincial or early American room, or the plant material can be used to create a totally modern abstract design.

The arrangement can be designed to fit a particular room or place in a room, to set the mood for a special party, or it can be designed to interpret a particular theme such as the abundance of the harvest season, the winds of autumn, the joys of spring's awakening.

IN A TRADITIONAL design the plant material is placed in the container so that it forms a geometric shape such as a triangle, circle, half-circle, crescent or curve.

There is more freedom in contemporary design which is often a free-form design interpreting an abstract theme. The shape of the design is influenced by the shape of the container and the size and form of the flowers and foliage being used.

One of the easiest ways to make a successful arrangement is to place some sturdy flower stems or branches in the container to make a skeleton of the shape the arrangement is to have. These first stems, which should be securely fastened in a pin holder or other type of holder, establish the basic lines of the desired design. They are known as the "main lines."

Once this skeleton is placed to your satisfaction it is relatively easy to fill in with additional flowers and foliage to make a well designed arrangement.

BUDS, slender spikes, or tapering branches are generally used for the "main lines" with open flowers filling the central area to form a colorful, relatively heavy looking focal point. Additional flowers and foliage are used to fill in and complete the design, but avoid a cluttered look.

A triangular arrangement with equal sides is often made in a low, shallow container. A tall stem is positioned first to form the central line which is then flanked on each side by

equally spaced side lines.

A tall narrow triangle is used in tall slender containers. A side triangle is the most frequently used design of all and is easy to construct. The triangle may face either right or left. An upright stem forms the high side of the triangle with another stem of approximately equal length extending horizontally to form the base of the triangle. These should be slender and light in feeling, especially at the tips. Shorter stems placed in between complete the triangle and flowers, berries or foliage are grouped to give a feeling of weight and stability at the lower corner of the triangle.

A CIRCULAR arrangement can be made in an urn or container with a pedestal. An upright center line is surrounded by equal curving lines on either side with the lower lines curving down over the edge of the container.

A low half-circle or mushroom top arrangement is made with a short center line flanked by long spreading lines at the sides. It can be used effectively in a container with a slender pedestal or in a low container for a dinner table arrangement.

Curved stems or branches can be played to form a crescent arrangement. This is good in a low round or oval bowl. The crescent can be equally high on each side or it can be tipped so one side is higher than the other.

Curved stems can be placed in a tall container to form an S curve. This graceful arrangement is known as a "Hogarth line."



MRS. HAROLD BROWN, Farmington flower arranging instructor and flower show judge, displays her contemporary abstract arrangement that she terms a "stable" because it shows "arrested motion." A piece of driftwood painted black forms the dominant line. Long slender grey-green bromeliad leaves, placed to curve inward so the lines cross, express motion. Brilliant orange miniature hebe flowers from Florida add exotic color and form.

Imagination Pays Off When Money's Scarce

If you don't have lots of money to spend on decorating, don't despair.

Let your imagination and creative instincts take over. Furniture can be purchased from thrift and secondhand shops or salvaged from basement or attic and be made not only usable, but attractive.

Try painting or re-finishing old furniture. Bright colored paint can make old chests, tables, chairs, desks, etc., look young again. Old furniture can be made to look older—but better—by antiquing.

Antiquing kits, in a wide choice of colors and simulated wood finishes, are inexpensive and readily available. The process is easy and fast—wipe with liquid sander; apply undercoat paint; when dry, paint on glazing liquid; finally, wipe off liquid for desired effect. Old sofas and upholstered

chairs can be given new life by using fabric spray and putting new slip covers on the cushions.

Gluing fabric, wall-paper, contact paper or decals on furniture, boxes, what-have-you, can color or design co-ordinate a room and make it look most attractive.

An old door that has been varnished or painted and placed on wrought iron saw horses, then covered with vinyl, makes a large and attractive dining room table.

Cover an old table with a "skirt" or bright fabric and fringe.

"Do-it-yourselfing" not only saves money—it can be fun. And more important, your home will truly be a reflection of your own individuality and creativity.



A SMALL BIRD is used as an accessory in the triangular arrangement made by Mrs. George Moore for a Farmington Garden Club flower show. A branch of smoke bush with deep bronze-maroon foliage forms the upright line. A long arching branch of pyracantha forms the lower line of the triangle, and the clusters of orange pyracantha berries form a focal point. The glass goblet used for a container, the small glass bird, and a horizontal branch have been painted gold. The background is rough-textured grass-cloth.

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As decorative point out, by adding squares of tile together you make rectangles or stripes, and by cutting a square in half you automatically get two triangles. Various combinations of tile offer almost unlimited design possibilities. With a little imagination, you too can have a "custom design" floor.

Let's take the dining room as an example. You want a border around the edge of the room. A vinyl asbestos pattern is suggested with a neutral background, highlighted with a border color chosen from some accessory—a color from your favorite china pattern, perhaps. The border should be several rows from the wall for full effectiveness but not so far that it is hidden by the table.

An excellent spot for a more complicated tile design is the foyer. The design can be quite complex. Don't, however, let the colors and pattern here conflict with those in adjoining rooms. And use colors and designs you'll enjoy living with for a long time.

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