



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CUT FLOWER GARDENS AND ARRANGEMENTS

Planting

- Select appropriate site – good soil, good drainage and minimum of 6 full hours of sun (shade begets leggy plants and weak blossoms).
- Integrate cutting flowers in vegetable garden to ease cultivation and harvest.
- Plant a mix of bulbs, annuals, perennials, shrubs, and trees to provide ornamental foliage, flowers, and seedpods all year round. Don't forget herbs, vegetables, grasses and vines.
- Select flower varieties with an eye to color, texture and form. Choose those varieties with long strong stems.

Cutting

- Ideally cut flowers early in the morning or at dusk – avoid the heat of the day.
- Cut most flowers as loose buds. Too tight, the buds won't open, too full, the flowers won't last.
- Cut stems on a slant to maximize water intake, and with sharp pruners or scissors to avoid crushing the stem.
- Plunge stems in tepid water immediately after cutting. Carry a bucket with you to the garden to make the task easier.

Arranging

- Any kind of container that will hold water can serve as a vase for your arrangement – just be sure that it is sparkling clean. Select a vase size in good proportion to your arrangement.
- Recutting stems under water will keep air from blocking water intake and wilting your blooms. Cutting in a small bowl of water, or turn on the tap and cut under running water. Strip stems of all foliage that will be below the water line of the vase to inhibit the growth of bacteria.
- Add a commercial preservative, home-made preservative, or 7-up to your water.
- Think balance, harmony, color, and form as you arrange your flowers. Use all three flower forms – round shapes for focal points, spikes or spires add height and line, lacy fillers draw the arrangement together. Arrange in the round so your flowers look good from any angle. Place larger, taller flowers in the vase first.
- For longer lasting arrangements keep flowers away from heat and sunlight. Change the water regularly.

Equipment for Flower Arranging

- Sharp scissors and strippers to strip leaves and cut stems
- Pruners
- Gardener's twine
- Floral wire or tape
- Glass marbles, frogs, pebbles, or floral foam (soaked in water) to hold stems in place
- Watering can
- Variety of vases or other water-tight containers

Vase Life of Selected Cut Flowers*

<u>2 -7 Days</u>	<u>5-10 Days</u>	<u>7-10 Days</u>	<u>10-14 Days</u>
Buddleia	Achillea	Echinacea	Allium
Centaurea	Anemone	Kniphofia	Dahlia
Cosmos	Aster	Lilac	Lavender
Iris	Astilbe	Lily	Liatris
Scabiosa	Chrysanthemum	Sedum	
Snapdragon	Gladiola	Statice	
Sweet Pea	Gypsophilia	Zinnia	
Tulip			

*from Kansas State University Cooperative Extension Publication

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