A Guide to Creating Fabulous Floral Arrangements

Selecting Flowers

Start with color

Consider limiting the palette to one or two colors. Use analogous colors (like pinks and purples) or complementary colors (like blues and oranges).

Find a focus

Look for a “focal flower” or a show stopper that will immediately draw attention.

Think texture

Combine textures to add another layer of interest. Think fluffy flowers mixed with closed, tight buds or spikey blooms mixed with willowy blossoms.

Think About the Finished Product

Where is it going? Will it be seen from one side, or all sides?

What is the general shape?

Loose and asymmetrical
Low and tight
Tall and narrow

Prolonging Your Blooms

Recut stems at an angle as you insert flowers into the arrangement.

Replace water regularly (don’t just add it).

Use floral food if available, or make your own:
1 qt water, 1 tsp bleach, 1 tsp vinegar, 1 Tbsp sugar.

Remove and/or replace blooms as they fade.

Flower arrangements and photos by Ami Wilber
The Mechanics of Building a Floral Arrangement

A step-by-step guide by Ami Wilber, floral and event décor designer

Step 1
Prepare your container.
Put chicken wire in and tape it down with floral tape.

Step 2
Create the support of the arrangement to hold other stems steady.
About 70% of the container should be “greened.”

Step 3
Define the arrangement’s height, width, and proportion with architectural elements (such as branches, seed pods, “line flowers,” etc...).

Step 4
Add flowers (it can be helpful to use odd numbers of each type).
Use the largest flowers first.
Add the most delicate blooms last.

Step 5
Fine tune the arrangement.
Step back and remove any discolored leaves. Add greenery to any bald spots.

Step 6
Appreciate the beauty of what you created!

Recommended Resources
Available in Hillwood’s Museum Shop

The Flower Workshop by Ariella Chezar
Floret Farm’s Cut Flower Garden by Erin Benzakein with Julie Chai
The Flower Recipe Book by Alethea Harampolis and Jill Rizzo