

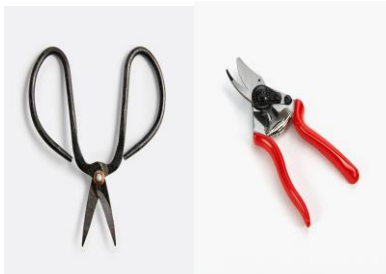


Building a pumpkin centerpiece from your late fall garden

Things you will need:

-Vessel to place flowers in: I like to use a big, tall water drinking glass. You can really use anything around your home or garden as a vessel as long as it is the appropriate size to fit inside your pumpkin. You can also use a floral frog to help keep stems upright.

-Garden Shears: I switch between Felco #4 shears (good all-purpose pruning & trimming) & Gardening scissors (good for thinner stemmed plants). Best tools to use>>



-Flower Food: This keeps your flowers fresher longer & helps fight the mold. Here's a simple recipe to make your own right from your own kitchen>> 1 quart water + 2 tablespoons lemon juice + 1 tablespoon sugar + 1/2 teaspoon bleach. The sugar is the food part and the bleach will help to slow fungi and bacteria growth.

-Silica Packets: You know when you buy a new pair of shoes & there are those little white packages full of tiny beads that say do not eat on them...those are Silica drying agents that help keep moisture at bay.



Whenever you are carving pumpkins utilize these packages & slip a couple packages of them into your pumpkin once it's carved & it will keep the mold & rot at bay & extend the life of your carved pumpkin.

Ok now that we have all our materials & our florals of choice lets get arranging!

Step 1:

Carve your pumpkin! Remove all the organic material from inside the pumpkin. Don't forget to save the seeds, roast those seeds (head to our website to learn Jenn's family roasted pumpkin seed recipe).

Step 2:

Take a walk in your garden & find what florals & foliage speak to you! This is the best way to determine what type of arrangement you are inspired to create. Utilizing plants that are about to hit their peak in the season in which you are arranging helps you enjoy the season even more! All the flowers that we will be using today are all late fall bloomers. Don't forget to have your bucket of cold water & shears & start snipping away!

Step 3:

Start placing the biggest florals first (these should be your show stopping stems, the ones that are really going to be your big show blooms). I like to select these stems in different stages of blooming (EG: one stem fully opened, one stem fully closed, one stem partially opened etc.) that way over the course of the arrangements life it will always have blooms. These bigger/thicker stems will act as stabilizers for the rest of the arrangement. Tips:
Here's what not to do>



DONT cut all your stems the same size. Snip each individual stem as you place them in your vessel for varying heights to increase visual interest.

Step 4:

Place your tall or bushy foliage. These should be your foliage items that are more filler rather than blooming stems. Instead of just using traditional salal for filler I like using fillers such as: eucalyptus, fountain grass, golden rod, hare's tail, Amaranthus, rosemary, etc. Making simple arrangements using garden flowers & herbs is not only extremely gratifying, but also a great way to use herbs that might otherwise be wasted. Sometimes herbs grow very fast and it's hard to use them quickly enough.

Step 5:

Now it's time to add in the smaller more delicate flowers around the sides. Remember these aren't your big show bloomers these are smaller bloomers that act more as a base around everything else.

Step 6:

Fluff! Now it's time to pull things out again that the sizes don't work for your aesthetic. This is all personal preference; you don't have to adjust anything that you already like the look of. You are also moving around your stems to get a better flow of staggering in your arrangement. Keep an eye out for bare spots in your arrangement, if all sides will be seen ensure that all sides have evenly dispersed flowers & foliage.

Step 7:

Upkeep is key! In order to enjoy them for as long as possible, it's important to pamper them a little. Every other day, empty the containers and refill with fresh water. Another trick is to

re-snip the ends of all the stems. This will open up the stem again so the fresh water can be absorbed. Don't forget to re-introduce your home-made flower food.

Floral arrangement is so fun! There are so many different types of arrangements & one of the best ways to learn more about floral arrangement is through books, YouTube, & t.v. shows.

Here are some of my favorites>>

YouTube channels:

- Hitomi Gilliam
- Garden Answer

Books:

- In Full Flower: Inspired Designs By Floral's New Creatives
- On Flowers

T.V. Shows:

- The Big Flower Fight
- Full Bloom
- Gardener's World

Another great way to enjoy beautiful floral arrangements is by shopping local. So instead of buying from Trader Joes, support local independent florists.

Some of my favorite local florists are...

- Busara Floral
- Fleurs De Moufette
- Flower Lab
- Analog Floral

Enjoy the rest of your autumn & be well!

-Leah