COLORFUL CONTAINER GARDENS

Container gardens offer endless possibilities for small spaces or as focal points in larger landscapes. Containers range from traditional pots to buckets with holes, or cast- off boots!

How much water a container needs will depend on its size and material - is it porous or glazed pottery, metal, wood or plastic? Be sure you have a handy water source.

Here are a few easy recipes for annual flower and foliage combinations that use plants listed in Growing Tips 22 + 23, as well as other plants especially useful for containers.

Recipes for Success

For Sun – at least 6 hours of sun: These may need twice daily watering, depending on weather conditions.

Medium container- 15” – 24” diameter

Use slightly different shades of the same flower color with the dark vine:
- Petunias - 2 plants, same color: yellow, or lime, or violet
- Trailing Petunias (Calibrachoa) - 2 plants, same color: yellow, or lime, or violet
- Sweet Potato Vine - 1 plant, purple or “black”

Large container – larger than 24” diameter

Marigold (French Marigolds) - 4 plants, 2 each of different color patterns.
- Salvia – 2 plants, blue, indigo or violet
- Ornamental Pepper - 1 plant
- Feather Grass (Stipa) - 1 plant

Window Box - 24” long

Geranium – 3 plants – bold pink
Verifya – 2 plants, dark blue, indigo or violet
Dusty Miller - 2 plants, silver

For Shade - less than 6 hours of sun:

Check water needs daily.

Medium container - 15” – 24” diameter

- Wax Begonia – 3 plants, pink
- Bloodleaf (Iresine) – 2 plants, dark purple
- Lobelia – 4 plants, light blue

Large container- larger than 24” diameter

New Guinea Impatiens – 2 plants, coral or salmon
Arizona Wishbone Flower (Torenia) – 3 plants, yellow
Colesus – 2 plants, multi - copper, yellow, green
Sedge - 1 plant, golden-brown

Window Box – 24” long

Rieg Begonia – 2 plants, pink
Rex Begonia – 2 plants, multi - dark with deep pink
Browalia – 3 plants, white

Five Simple Steps:

1. Choose a soilless mix designed for container growing for best results. Avoid using garden soil.
2. Ensure good drainage. Shield holes in the bottom of the container with pebbles or pottery shards to prevent blockage.
3. Moisten the mix lightly before planting.
4. Fill the container – not tightly! – to within several inches of the top rim.
5. Plant transplants 3” – 8” inches apart. Adjust for container size and mature plant size.
6. Fertilize with a water-soluble or a slow release product according to directions.
7. Water with care. Check daily! → See Growing Tips 6 Watering New Plantings

Color, Height, Texture

• Color ideas: Choose complementary colors such as yellows and blues, or monochromatic selections such as shades of pinks or earth tones.
• Height: Combine trailing and spilling plants with bushy or filler plants. In larger containers, add tall vertical grasses or climbers on supports.
• Texture: Mix it up with ruffled plants, big leaved, narrow leaved, and stiff, spiky plants. Combine tiny and large flowers with foliage plants.

Tips

• Elevate pots on supports or wheeled platforms to allow for drainage and prevent mold and staining of surfaces.
• Empty pottery containers before hard frost to prevent cracking.