

Container gardening is utilized by people for a variety of reasons. Containers of flowers or green plants add another dimension of design interest to an outdoor patio, 3 season room, or entryway. In Wisconsin, tropical or other indoor plants can be brought outside in the summer, adding an interesting element to the ambiance in the garden. People who live in urban environments or community living arrangements can still indulge their interest in gardening by growing flowers and vegetables on their deck, balcony, patio, or porch.

Whether you are growing vegetables or flowers, container gardening requires special considerations in regard to choosing containers, plants, and soil, and attention to watering and fertilizer needs. Check out this resource for the basics of container gardening.

<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/container-gardening/>

When designing containers for flowers, it helps to keep a few design principles in mind to make you container interesting and balanced

### **Think about Select Color Schemes and Plant Combinations**

A color theme for a container garden can help you select a good mix of plants. You can play off the color of your container, complement the color of nearby furniture, or even limit the color to lush green, but focus on leaf shapes. It's all up to you. Do what looks pleasing to you. However, when choosing plants, ensure they all need the same light levels and frequency of watering. Plant them in odd numbers, and be sure to have at least one "thriller", one "filler", and one "spiller" plant.

**Thriller:** These plants add height and a bold vertical element. Some options include plants chosen for foliage, and ornamental grass, or an upright flowering plants.

Thrillers typically go near the center of a container or can be in the back of the container if it always faces a wall.

**Filler:** Fillers tend to be more rounded or mounded and serve to make the container look full. These are generally placed in front of or around the thriller. They often have flower buds, but could also be a plant with interesting leaves.

**Spiller:** Plants that hang over the edge of the container are considered spillers. This could be a cascading blooming flower, like a petunia, or a vine-like plants like sweet potato vine or ivy. If your container garden is seen from all sides, place spillers all the way around.

### **Limit the Number of Plants you use based on the size of the pot**

Be careful not to overfill your container. If the plants are overcrowded, growth can be stunted both above and below the soil. Consider these recommendations for plants in 4 inch pots.

- 10" to 12" pot can hold 3-4 plants

- 14" to 16" pot can hold 5-7 plants
- 16" to 20" pot can hold 6-9 plants

Check this resource for more info on flower container gardens.

[https://www.chicagobotanic.org/plantinfo/tips/container\\_gardening](https://www.chicagobotanic.org/plantinfo/tips/container_gardening)