



## CONTAINER GARDENING

Container gardening is an easy way to add color and interest to your landscape.

### Containers

- ◆ Avoid containers with narrow openings which make it difficult to remove the plant if it needs to be repotted.
- ◆ Inexpensive plastic containers will fade if in direct sunlight.
- ◆ Terra cotta pots will dry out quickly.
- ◆ Glazed ceramic pots need drainage holes.
- ◆ Size and number of plants will determine size of container.
- ◆ Cover drainage holes with something water can permeate but not soil, like coffee filters, etc.
- ◆ Put containers on something to allow air flow and improve drainage.
- ◆ Think of items that can be repurposed as containers.



### Growing Medium

- ◆ Be sure growing medium drains well, but retains enough moisture for the plant roots.
- ◆ Leave 2" space between top of container and soil.
- ◆ Add half inch of mulch to assist with moisture retention.
- ◆ *Optional – sprinkle Mycorrhizal Fungi on the soil before adding plants so roots come in contact with fungi.*

### Plants

- ◆ There are many great fall plants from which to select.
- ◆ Be sure to check for light needs when combining plants. Sun plants need 6-8 hours of sunlight. Shade plants should not be combined with sun plants.
- ◆ Be sure to balance colors and texture.
- ◆ For interest, don't forget the Thriller, filler and spiller recipe –
  - Thriller is a centerpiece plant with star quality.
  - Filler is the foliage of flowering plants that will complement but not overwhelm the thriller
  - Spillers are plants that tumble out of the container.



### **Bone Meal or Blood Meal?**

A balanced fertilizer mixture must contain nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, the three macronutrients that are most important for vigorous plant growth.

Neither blood meal (nitrogen) nor bone meal (phosphorus) is a substantial source of potassium. If you use them in containers, you should supplement them with a fertilizer that contains an adequate supply of potassium.

### Next month's topics:

- Poinsettias
- Christmas cactus