



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.

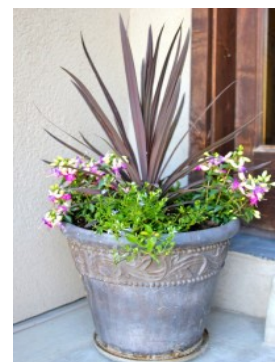


Growing Medium

- ♦ 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