



Floral Arranging Tips Suggested by: Ron Morgan

Listed are the many suggestions that our recent speaker, Ron Morgan, spoke of during his demonstration on January 9, 2012 as well at the workshop held the next day at the Naples Garden Club office.

- When using oasis, the printed side is always up. When soaking oasis, put a teaspoon of Clorox in the water.
- Never use an oasis again for an arrangement but don't discard. Used oasis can be soaked in a mixture of Root Tone and water and placed on a Styrofoam meat tray for rooting cuttings, i.e. begonias, geraniums, etc.
- When you want to hide the oasis, always start in the middle of the arrangement and work out.
- Always start with the big items first.
- Always have your widest items at the girth of the container.
- If using a round opening vessel, you can curl dried branches into a circle and place on top of the round opening.
- When adding water to an arrangement, add a little Clorox to the water.
- Use a turkey baster to draw out old water of an arrangement and to replace the water.
- When conditioning flowers, you can wrap them in newspaper, place in a bathtub of water with a brick on top to hold under water overnight. Always add a cigarette-the nicotine helps.

- Always use a knife and not scissors or clippers which tend to squish the stems and cuts off the flower's ability to draw water.
- Always mist your arrangement as well as water. The misting helps the flowers and foliage draw in water from another source.
- Use stems of lilies in centerpieces.
- For a dinner party, remember your arrangement should not be higher than from your elbow to wrist.
- A dog dish makes a great vessel for an arrangement.
- When using produce in an arrangement:
 - Use lots of wooden picks dipped in oil of cinnamon or oil of cloves to help preserve the produce.
 - If using small cabbages, place them on their stems in a dark closet for two days to turn a paler color. This can also be done for flowers you would like to drain the color from.
 - If using a large cabbage, peel back the first row of leaves to resemble a rose.
 - If using broccoli, place in half Clorox and half water to drain the fragrance-this is also true of marigolds.
 - If using ginger root, scratch the bottom to release the fragrance. Ginger root can be placed in openings of a vessel or in the bottom of a vessel that you are growing paper whites or tulips.
 - Leaves and fruits can be sprayed with Pam and patted dry if you are using them under water.
- When using long green leaves to make them more pliable place the leaf under your hand on a table and run the leaf against the edge of the table.
- If using hens and chicks, place them on wooden picks.
- When using leaves, take off the bottom sections (one on each side of stem) to obtain a point that you can place through the top of the leaf to make a loop or half way to make a tail
- Can use green apples with looping leaves by placing the apple within the loop

- When using roses, try to use Polo roses-they last up to a month.
- Use one material at a time working it over the arrangement.
- If using a white vessel, you need to have white in your arrangement.
- For depth, once you place your first flower in the arrangement, one should go in back.
- If you want calla lilies to bend or turn down, take a knife and strip a little of the skin off the stem
- You can also use unopened calla lilies as candle holders by taking out the center and inserting a candle and placing in candle holder.
- Opened calla lilies can be used to serve sorbet in for dessert-also remove the center.
- Don't very rarely use blue containers since blue is a hard color to match.
- Yellow and blue are the most popular colors. Yellow is a neutral color and makes things come alive in an arrangement.
- If using a circular vessel, you can glue marbles or buttons on the bottom to raise it off the table.
- Use E600 glue which is available at Ace Hardware stores for floral arranging.
- If you want to remove glue, place the item in the freezer.
- Leaves can be used on the inside of a glass vessel as well as glued to the outside.
- If working with dry leaves, you can coat them with Vaseline Intensive Care lotion.
- Flax leaves can be slit and woven between each other.
- If using twigs, spray with fabric glue before spraying with metallic paint.
- If using gerbera daisies in a glass vessel under water, glue the flower to the bottom of the vessel, wait an hour, and add water.
- If using the sheath from a new shoot of bamboo which has become flat, wet it when it is dry, roll it and place elastic around it to curl.