

Fall Container Gardening

Container gardening is a beautiful and simple way to add color and texture to your patio, porch, and garden or to cope with poor soil in your yard. Containers can create a focal point in the garden and accentuate your yard. Mixing textures, shapes and colors will heighten the visual interest. Be playful and use your imagination.

Container Choices

Pick a color palette that matches the colors of your house or compliments your existing pots and containers. Ensure you have proper drainage to keep your plants from drowning. You may want to group your containers to make a massive display or use a single container as a spotlight. If you group containers, try a single type of plant in one and another full of color and texture. The possibilities are endless!

Plant Choices

As you choose your plants consider how much time you plan to re-plant each season. Hardy perennials will come back year-after-year while annuals will need to be replaced at least each year, sometimes more often. Are you looking for spectacular color or is depth and texture more important? Consider the light conditions (sun or shade) of your container location and pair with the proper plants. Keeping in mind that container plants require more water than those planted in your garden, make sure your pots have access to a water source. If the spot is remote, drought tolerant plants are a great choice. Be creative and remember, containers can be easily changed and moved.

Planting Specifics

Choose a single plant, considered a **Thriller**, as the focal point of your container. This is usually placed in the center of the planting area and sets the tone. If your container is against a wall or in a corner, your focal plant can be planted in the back. Adjust placement to the configuration of your pots. You will work outward from here by adding other complimentary plants. Match colors and plant types to complete the look you want. This will give you a permanent starting point each time you decide to make changes throughout the year. Next, add some **Fillers** that mound to give your container some depth. Change these out with the seasons to keep a fresh look. Finish up with **Spillers**. They cascade outside the pot, add form, and tie everything together.

Planting your container

- Fill the container about 2/3 of the way with potting soil.
- Mix fertilizer in with the potting soil if needed.
- Carefully remove plants from pots and loosen the roots.
- Add the plants to your container.
- Fill in the areas between with soil and gently pack. Do not compress the soil as this will remove the air pockets the roots need for survival.
- Water the container until water comes out the bottom. This means the soil is saturated.
- Check for any gaps caused by the water and fill soil as needed.

Maintenance & Care of your container

- Water thoroughly and regularly as your plants have restricted areas for water access.
- Deadheading, pinching, and pruning your plants will encourage new growth and blooms.
- Don't be afraid to pull out a non-performing plant and replace it with a similar one.
- Check regularly for pests. In many cases, simply removing the damaged plants will eliminate the issue. You may also spray with a non-toxic fungicide or insecticide.
- As annuals die with colder weather, the perennials will have more room for growth. Adding cold hardy plants, for the cooler season, is another great option.

Thrillers

Aspidistra – Cast Iron Plant
Chard – Rainbow – Edible *
Coprosma *
Cordyline *
Chamaecyparis pisifera *
Cryptomeria japonica *
Echinacea *
Eunomous japonica *
Fatsia – Spiderweb *
Ferns – Evergreen *
Grasses – Tall *
Holly – Sky Pencil *
Hinoki Cypress *
Kale – Curly - Edible *
Kale – Dino - Edible *
Lemon Cypress *
Mahonia – Arthur Menzies *
Mahonia – Charity *
Millet – Ornamental
New Zealand Flax *
Podocarpus *
Rudbeckia - Annual
Rudbeckia Goldsturm *
Salvia – Perennial *
Thuja * - Tall, Narrow
Windmill Palm *
Yucca *

Fillers

Anemone *
Aster – Hardy *
Choisya – Aztec Pearl
Choisya – Sundance *
Chrysanthemum – Mum *
Cyclamen
Dahlias – Summer
Dusty Miller *
Echinacea *
Euphorbia - Perennial *
Ferns - Foxtail
Ferns – Hardy Evergreen *
Grasses *
Heath / Heather *
Hebe *
Helleborus *
Heuchera *
Heucherella *
Hosta *
Leucothoe *
Ornamental Cabbage / Kale *
Ornamental Peppers
Pansies *
Phlox – Upright *
Pinus Mugo *
Sage – Silver *
Salvia – Perennial *
Thyme – Shrub *
Violas *

Spillers

Ajuga *
Asparagus Fern
Baby Tears
Creeping Charlie *
Creeping Jenny *
Gaultheria – Wintergreen *
Grasses *
Heath / Heather *
Hedera - Ivy *
Iberis – Candy Tuft *
Lamium *
Laurentia *
Leptinella squalida *
Lithodora *
Mazus reptans *
Pansies *
Sedums - Evergreen *
Succulents *
Thyme – Creeping *
Veronica *
Vinca *
Violas *
Wire Vine *

Shrubs and Perennials for Container Grouping

(This selection of plants is great for planting solo)

Blueberries *	Hosta *
Choisya *	Hydrangea *
Conifers – Dwarf *	Japanese Maple – Dwarf *
Cornus – Shrub	Japanese Maple – Laceleaf *
Cryptomeria *	Lavender *
Echinacea *	Leucothoe *
Grasses – Evergreen	Mahonia *
Heaths / Heathers *	New Zealand Flax *
Hebe *	Rosemary *
Helleborus *	Rose – Shrub *
Herbs – Annual	Rose – Tree *
Herbs – Perennial *	Sarcococca *
Heuchera *	Thuja *
Hinoki Cypress *	

Non-living Fall Décor

(These items can be used in containers as pops of interest)

Branches - Curly Willow
Branches – Red Twig
Branches – Yellow Twig
Gourds
Pumpkins
Squash

*Hardy Plants