

## Flower Arranging for Exhibition

There are many different classes and themes and individual information is available on each. However there are general points that cover all pieces.

Picking your container.

If you wish the container to be a feature of the arrangement it should be clean and in good condition and the right size and weight to hold the materials intended. It should not detract from the arrangement by being too dominant. Trays and plates can be useful for formal arrangements as they give maximum access to the oasis [like the arrangement above] but the ability to hold a small reservoir of water enables top up of water and keeps it fresh longer. [do not fill the reservoir until you have placed your arrangement as it can spill and spoil]



Holding material.

Oasis is most useful and can be purchased at the florist. But you can also use crumpled chicken wire in the neck of your container or grip it [like the posy bowls]. Secure the oasis with tape or wire. And ensure it reaches high enough above the surface to take side or downward stems.



Soak your Oasis well before using [you can leave it in the bucket overnight to absorb the water.

Placing your materials.

Decide what shape you want from your arrangement and if there are any accessories to be included in the arrangement.



Triangular



L shape



Circle



curve or S



Freestyle

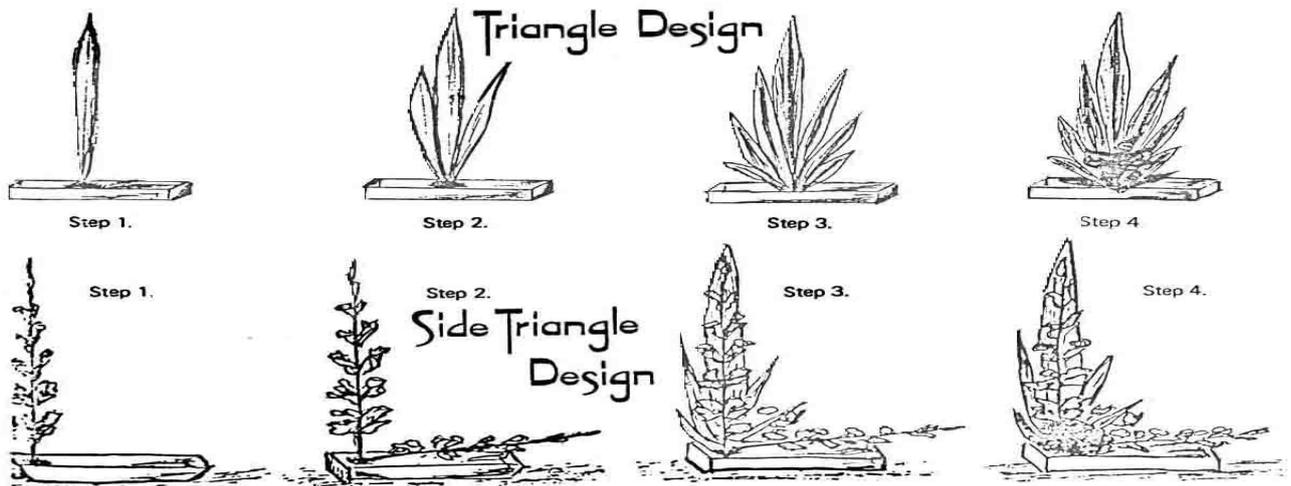
If you are making a feature of your container you should plan your shape to allow for this

For example working around a basket handle to incorporate it into the design. You can also use a variety of tall containers with a second container on the top to get a candlestick type effect.



This way the container becomes a feature rather than just a receptacle.

It is useful to form your shape with foliage and build up with main flowers and secondary materials



It is advisable to slope your rear materials back slightly to attain perspective. Larger and denser materials should be lower in the arrangement.

Make sure that the oasis or other holding agent is covered. This can be done with broad leaves or moss or other plant material. If you are using a glass container and wish to avoid oasis showing you may use a liner such as a leaf or fruit. Or a different securing agent like beads, pebbles, or shells.



## Materials

Must be in perfect condition for judging. If your materials are from the garden try cutting some a week before and put them in a warm place in the container medium you will be using, to check whether they wilt. Shop bought materials should be bought with opening and use life considered. Soak your materials in water in a cool place prior to using and put the finished piece in a cool place and mist if required. [If the piece is part of an exhibition piece with fabrics and props remember to mist away from these and then replace]. If using fabrics, ribbons etc. as part of your display these must be clean and crease free.

Think of materials that match your theme. ['touch of the orient', 'tea in the garden', 'wild and wonderful- the use of formal and informal flowers match different themes]

There are lots of tricks for enhancing your materials, like folding or pleating leaves, trimming them to shape or wiring and staking materials to include in your work.



You can add accessories to balance your arrangement or pull flowers down to balance a high arrangement.



The only difference between arranging for your own pleasure and for exhibition is the scrutiny of the judge. If your piece matches the brief well, has quality fresh materials and is balanced it will gain marks. Practice makes perfect and there are lots of tips and training materials on the web. **So don't be put off, have a go**

