

# Youth Gardening Activity

## The Cut Flower Garden

By Donna Aufdenberg, Field Specialist in Horticulture

### Supplies

- Flower seeds - mixed sizes, colors, and bloom times
- Hand trowels and cultivators
- Watering can
- Balanced fertilizer such as 10-10-10 or 20-20-20
- Straw and mulch materials



Kids love flowers!

### Kid-friendly, easy to grow flowers



Bachelor button



Black-eyed Susan



Celosia



Cosmos



Dahlia



Daisy



Gerber daisy



Coneflower



Nasturtium



Snapdragon



Sunflower



Zinnia

**Other flowers:** phlox, roses, marigold, globe amaranth, love-lies-bleeding, strawflower and peony

### Planning the cut flower garden

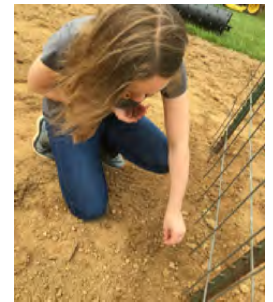
- Flowers can be planted in a new garden, and existing flower bed, vegetable garden or container.
- Plants need more than 8 hours of sun with well-drained soil.
- Decide what flowers to grow.
- Plan for mature size, shape and color difference.
- Choose showy, large flowers; small, delicate flowers; brilliant blazes of color; soft pastels.
- Look for varieties with long stems; some need staking.

### Planting

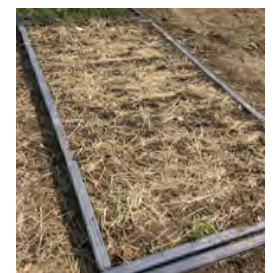
- Purchase seeds and plants early; plant after last frost.
- If planting in the ground, prepare the seed bed by turning the soil, and raking level.
- Seed packets will have planting depth and directions.
- Plants transplanted in the ground need water immediately.

### Maintenance

- Thin newly emerged plants if too thick.
- Supplement with water if needed.
- Fertilize twice a month with a well balanced fertilizer.
- Add 2 to 4 inches of mulch when plants are 6 inches tall.
- Removing dead blooms will promote longer blooming.
- Keep weeds out of flower bed.
- Stake flowering plants if needed.



Plant seeds in rows or individual spots in the ground or container



After seeding, cover with a light layer of straw to protect from heavy rain

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## Designing With Flowers

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### Plant material

- Large blooms - zinnia, black-eyed Susan, sunflower, rose, Shasta daisy, marigold
- Small blooms - bachelor button, cosmos, phlox, marigold
- Showy blooms - celosia, snapdragon, love-lies-bleeding, grass bloom head
- Filler flowers - baby's breath, statice, dill flowers, queen Anne's lace
- Greenery - fern, dill, basil, ornamental grass, feverfew, asparagus fern, peony leaves

### Tips for harvesting flowers out of the garden

- Harvest flowers during the coolest part of the day
- Select blooms that are half to three-quarters open; avoid blooms that are shriveling, fading, curling or falling off; avoid peak bloom time
- Always carry a bucket of water to place the stems; keep in shade
- Always use a sharp, clean pair of scissors or knife to make a smooth, even cut
- Cut long stems - 5-18 inches long; cut stems several inches longer than needed
- Remove foliage below the water line; foliage left in the water causes bacteria to grow and cloudy water
- Recut stems at an angle before placing in vase
- Consider using flowers and foliage from trees and shrubs for filler and greenery
- Keep stems in water while designing
- Use floral preservative for longer life of flowers

### Basics of flower arranging in a vase

#### Supplies

- Scissors or knife
- Vases with water
- Floral preservative (optional)



#### Directions

1. Gather materials.  
Select flowers and vase of choice
2. Fill vase 1/2 full of water
3. As stems are selected, remove any foliage that will be below the water line
4. Recut stems at a diagonal as this allows for a larger surface area and greater absorption of water
5. Start by placing 6 to 8 stems of greenery in a criss-cross fashion to create the base (figure 1)
6. Select large flowers as focal points and measure the flowers against the vase to know where to cut the stems. Stagger the height to fill the vase and create an eye-catching design
7. Fill in with smaller, secondary flowers
8. Add filler to soften the open spaces and round out the arrangement
9. Replace water every other day and use floral preservative if needed

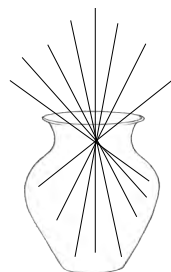


Figure 1