

## Tips for Container Gardening with Ornamentals Fact Sheet #47

Wendy L. Wilber

Growing plants in containers can be a rewarding form of gardening. Container gardens can be used to:

- Provide easy access to plants if you have physical limitations.
- Have quick and easy color where we want it.
- Dress up front doors or walks
- Provide an instant fix for problem areas.
- Architectural structure in otherwise blank spots.
- Portable plants.
- Use beautiful pots or whimsical containers.
- Use as gifts.

### Suggested Plants for Containers:

Alpinia	Angelonia
Begonia	Caladium
Coleus	Croton
Dracaena	Geranium
Impatiens	Lantana
Nemesia	Pansy
Pentas	Petunias
Red Fountain Grass	Salvias
Sweet Potato Vine	Variegated Ivy
Variegated Vinca	Verbena
Zinnia	

### Plants for Drama:

Agave	Ferns
Anything big	Succulents (so easy)
Bromeliads	Topiary

### Plants for the Holidays:

Amaryllis	Cyclamens
Christmas Cactus	Poinsettia

Add white (mums, alyssum, and variegated ivy) to these deep colors to really make it pop, and look finished.

### Tips

- Plant large flowers low in the container so it doesn't look heavy.
- Use tall, light colored blooms with small flowers up high to open up at the top.
- Choose dark flowers or foliage at the center to impart depth into the container.
- For height, consider vines or a trellis in the pot.
- Select butterfly attracting plants to bring these beautiful insects closer to view.



### Container Selection

Choose for impact and fun.

Terra cotta pots	Glazed urns
Plastic pots	Bird baths
Half barrels	Wall hangings
Galvanized tubs	Old shoes or boots

- **Remember - three is not a crowd when it comes to containers. Group them together, using different sizes to create an arrangement.**
- If you have troublesome shady spots under trees think about using a few large potted plants in a mulched bed instead of fighting the roots & shade.

### Container Step by Step

1. Select the best container and use a light potting soil
2. Place the tallest plant first in the center, if the container is to be viewed from all sides or in the back if it will be one sided.
3. Add medium sized plants next to the tall focal point
4. Place trailing plants around the edges
5. Water until moist, not soggy
6. Fertilize with slow release fertilizer for a perennial container or a liquid feed for an annual container

