

## Container Planting Tips for Any Season Fall 2022 Master Gardener Training

### Basics

The bigger the pot the better  
All-weather containers  
Limitations: Imagination and Drainage  
Use high quality *potting mix*  
Fertilizer  
Water  
Moveable & Portable  
Seasonal  
Large & Elaborate  
Subtle & Understated

### Uses

Soften Edges  
Define Space  
Group pots for greater impact  
Traffic Control  
Add Spot Color  
Brighten dark areas  
Grouped to look like a garden

### What to Plant

Textures  
Monochromatic, combos, single plants  
About Anything Can be Grown in a Pot for a Season  
Herbs, Vegetables, Salads  
Trees, Shrubs  
Bulbs, Perennials. Annuals

**Basic Container Design Elements:** Thriller, Filler Spiller

**Fertilizer:** Apply regularly, according to label directions

**Water:** Check regularly; water until it runs out the bottom

## Types of containers

Window boxes, whiskey barrels, wire baskets, clay, terra cotta and plastic pots, concrete urns, tires, drainage tiles, milk jugs, buckets, wheelbarrows, baskets, bags of dirt. Just about anything that will hold dirt can be used as a container. Double pot when drainage holes are not present.

## Materials

**Plastic:** inexpensive, lightweight, but can deteriorate with UV exposure and become brittle. Go for a heavier-duty plastic or plastic, fiberglass mix.

**Clay:** expensive, breakable, heavy, they breathe, dry out quickly. Easily damaged by freezing and thawing. Do not leave outdoors during winter.

**Ceramic/glazed pots:** expensive, breakable, heavy. Easily damaged by freezing and thawing. Can be left out for winter, but may eventually deteriorate. Newer glazed ceramic pots are frost or freeze resistant.

**Concrete (cast):** long lasting, wide range of styles and sizes. Heavy. Sometimes vermiculite or fiberglass is mixed with concrete making it more lightweight.

**Wood:** natural looking. Protects roots from rapid temperature changes. Can be built by do-it-yourselfers with cedar or redwood. Pressure-treated wood or wood treated with preservatives not recommended for food crops. Line pressure treated with plastic if you plan to grow edibles. Rots out eventually. Can be heavy.

**Metals:** can “cook” roots. Conducts heat and cold, which makes roots susceptible to rapid temperatures changes. Must be lined with plastic if edibles will be planted. Not recommended.

**Fiberglass, resin:** can stay outside in winter, lightweight. Recommended.

## Eight tips

- Containers can go where you need them.
- Containers can be seasonal.
- Herbs, vegetables, flowers, bulbs, shrubs and trees can be grown in containers.
- Use plants that have similar moisture and light requirements in the same container.
- Select plants with long periods of interest.
- Thriller. Spiller. Filler.
- Use a potting *mix* rather than potting soil or soil from the garden.
- Plants in containers need to be watered and fertilized regularly.

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