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NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

SIX DESIGN STUDY UNIT LESSON PLANS
ON
BASIC FLOWER ARRANGING

National Garden Clubs, Inc.
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St. Louis, Missouri 63110-3492

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Design Study Lesson Plans on basic flower arranging are designed to attract new members to garden clubs. A recommendation from Mrs. Raymond Schuster, 1992 membership Chairman.

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VERTICAL LINE DESIGN

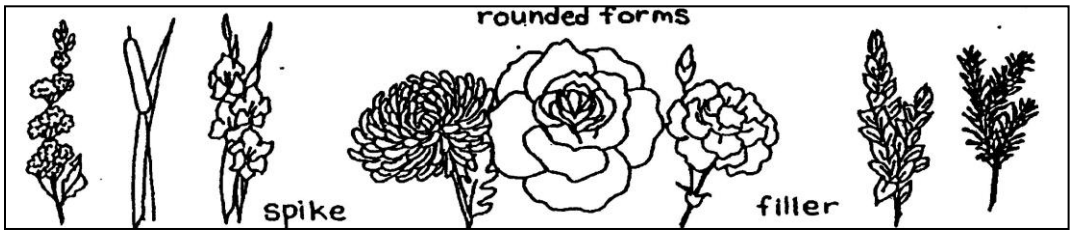
I. NECESSARY PREPARATION

A. **Types of plant material needed.** Three (3) types of plant material from the garden or florist
Select **one** variety of plant material from each of the three basic forms:

1. Spike forms for line **and to establish skeleton.** Example: Stock, gladiolus, cattail, umbrella plant, sansevieria, bare/budded branches, delphiniums, iris, podocarpus, etc.
   Needed: Three (3) pieces of the same variety for line.

2. Rounded forms for **emphasis.** Example: Chrysanthemum, roses, carnation etc.
   Needed: Three (3) flowers, preferably bud, half open and fully opened.

3. Filler or transitional forms to **give contrast of texture, round out design, and cover mechanics.**
   Example: Leaves, small flowers or small leafed foliage, euonymus, yew, boxwood, begonia, philodendrons, pittosporum, leather leaf fern or hosta, Texture is the surface quality of the plant material, such as rough or smooth, dull or shiny.
   Needed: Three (3) or four (4) pieces depending on size, texture and color selected.



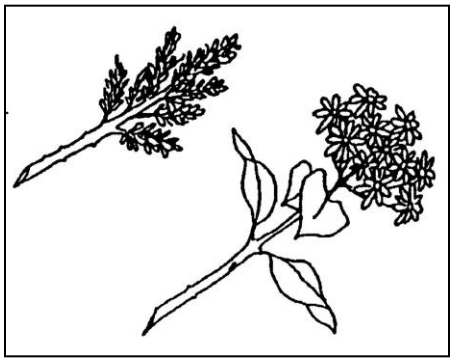
B. **Preparation of plant material for design.** Conditioning: conditioning is a process allowing plant material to take on more water than it gives off, putting it into a prime state of freshness for its use.

1. Cut stem on a slant with a sharp instrument. Cut again under water.*

2. Place specimen in lukewarm water up to the neck of the flower.

3. Remove the foliage that will remain under water. Water causes it to deteriorate quickly

4. Place in a cool, dark room, out of drafts for several hours or overnight.



C. Special treatment: Before conditioning in water one of the following treatments may be helpful

1. Woody stems, such as azaleas, should be cut crosswise in an (x) at the base, or peeled back and split for an inch or more.

** Please note. This manual may differ in some way from the videos. Please know there are several methods to reach the same goal.*

2. Milky stems, as many types of euphorbias (poppies, dahlias, poinsettias, etc.), must be sealed. Recommended methods are with a flame or by dipping end momentarily in boiling water each time they are cut. Also stems may be **cut under water** before conditioning in warm water and **cut under water** each time the stem is cut. These type plants require water during arranging as well as after arranging.

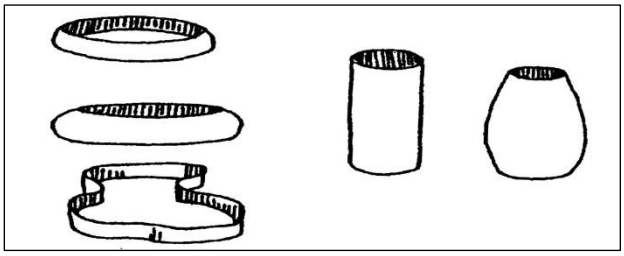
3. Most foliage should be immersed completely for several hours in order to absorb adequate moisture.

4. Brittle stems, such as stock and chrysanthemums, may be broken for better water intake.

D. Containers: A container is a receptacle for the display of plant material. It should be selected to act as visual and sometimes physical support of the plant material. It must hold sufficient water for the plant material and be compatible in size, color and texture with the plant material.

Two types of containers are used in the Design Study Lessons:

1. Vertical (upright)
2. Horizontal (low & flat)



E. Mechanics: Mechanics are contrivances to hold plant or control plant material. The most common are:

1. Needleholder, sometimes called needlepoint or pin holder, made of lead and sharp pins.

2. Floral foam (Oasis™) for fresh flowers. Green in color. Must be soaked in water until it is saturated prior to use. It is not biodegradable. Also, Oasis™ will not absorb water if it dries out completely.

F. Other Mechanics: Also sometimes referred to as mechanics or tools

1. Receptacle for mechanics such as: basket, tool for fishing box

2. Sharp scissor type clippers for stems and heavy clippers for branches. Also a knife, rubber bands, a glue gun, and wire may be useful.

3. Oasis™ which must be soaked in water until saturated prior to use

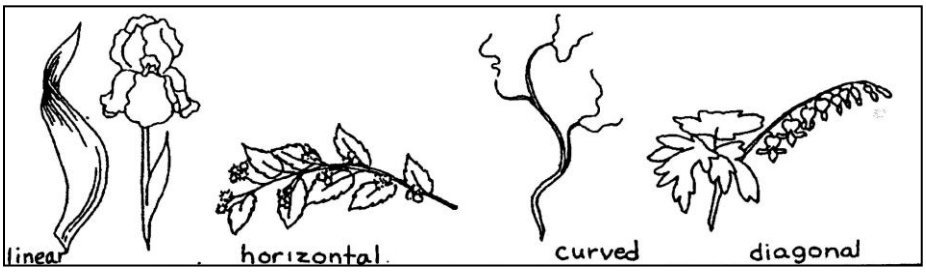
4. Florist clay called “Cling,” “Tacky clay” or “Handi-tac” to anchor pin holder. Sometimes available in craft departments.

5. Floral tape (corsage type) a waxed paper tape. The tape must be stretched to stick to stems.

6. Waterproof floral tape used to strap Oasis™ into a container. This tape is dark green in color.

II. LINE DESIGN: A line design is characterized by <u>restraint</u> in the quantity of plant material used and an open silhouette. Line is the **foundation** of all design. Line is one of the elements of design. An element is a working ingredient used to achieve the principles of design. Line creates a visual path through the design. The line determines the linear direction and the form the design will achieve. It may be vertical, horizontal, curved, diagonal, or zigzag. Lines may be long, short, thick, thin, etc. **<u>Linear pattern should dominate.</u>**

III. VERTICAL LINE DESIGN: The vertical design made in this class should have greater height than width. A vertical thrust with restraint in the amount of plant material and an open silhouette is desired.

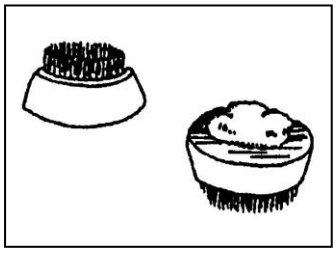


A. Materials needed

1. Shallow, flat, container or bowl.
2. Needleholder (pin holder), clippers and florist clay.
3. Three pieces of line material (see page 1, #1 spike forms).
4. Three round forms (page 1, #2 flowers).
5. Three or four pieces of transitional/filler material (page 1, #3).

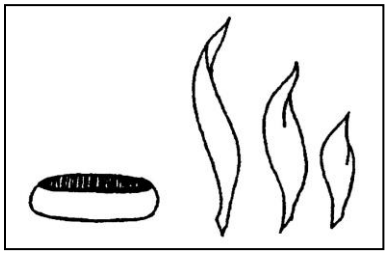
B. Construction:

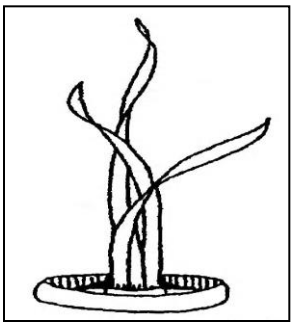
1. Take small amount of florist clay or "Cling", roll it for form a long narrow piece.
2. Place it firmly around the edges of the bottom of a dry needleholder.
3. Press on center bottom of the dry container. Twist
4. slightly. Carefully test by lifting the needleholder, while supporting the container
5. with your other hand. If it adheres to the container, it will hold the design.



C. Measurements: Line material (3 pieces of line material). The following guidelines are not rules, but a good method to obtain proper height, width and depth.

1. First line: Cut a minimum of 1 ½ times the length or diameter of container, plus the depth of the container. This line becomes the main line of the design.
2. Second line: Cut about ¾ the length of the first piece.
3. Third line. Cut about ¾ the length of the second piece.





D. Placement of line material: (This composes the outline of the design)

1. First stem: Insert upright in center slightly to the back of needleholder. This becomes the **main line.**

2. Second stem. Place in front of main line and to the left. Let the top flair out and away from the first stem.

3. Third stem: Insert just in front of the other two and let it flow to the **right** of center. Seek to maintain a vertical movement.

E. Selection of Flowers and placement: Select 3 flowers.

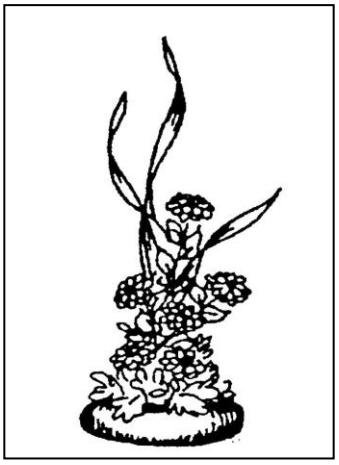
1. Selection.

a. Longest should be least open
b. Second longest more open
c. Shortest, fully opened and largest flower.

2. Placement: Try to prevent two stems from being the same height of another flower or the line material. This will achieve greater depth and permit the eye to move easily throughout the design. Flowers should be in the lower 2/3 of the design and placed within the structure of the line material. Each placement should follow the general pattern down towards the top of the container to create a center of interest with the largest flower placed at or near the base of the main line.

a. Insert longest, lease opened flower in front of the main line (longest pike form). It should be about 2/3 the length of the main line.
b. Insert second more open flower in front of the second line (spike form). Turn it to the left.
c. Insert the largest flower toward the front of the container at the base of the main line. But slightly to the right.

F. Completing the design with transitional/filler material. Insert the third type of plant material, using it to round out the design. Place some over the rim of the container. Insert one to the back of the design. Insert these stems close to the other stems at the base allowing the foliage to flow out over the container and up into the design. Depth may be aided by completing all around.



Vertical design with 3 types of plant material

IV. APPRECIATION TIME! Focus on the beauty that has been achieved. Stand at a distance and check it overall. It should be tall and slender in width. A strong vertical placement is needed Does the design have an open silhouette and restraint? Each stem should be a different length than the lines and flowers (plant material) already placed in the design. Does the design appear crowded or stuffed? Skill as a design comes with **practice** and **study.**

Lesson 2

HORIZONTAL LINE DESIGN

I. REVIEW: LESSON PLAN NO. 1.

A. Types of plant material needed:

1. Spiked forms for the main line.
2. Rounded forms to give emphasis.
3. Transitional or "filler" material.

B. General conditioning:

1. Cut plant material either early morning or late evening. Remove lower part of foliage before placing into water.
2. Cut end of stem or a slant and place into lukewarm water.
3. Place in a cool dark room for several hours to condition.

C. Special treatment: Before conditioning in water, one of the following treatments may be helpful:

1. Woody stems like azaleas should be cut in an X at the base, or peeled back and split for an inch or more.
2. Milky stems, like many types of euphorbias (poppies, dahlias, poinsettias, etc.), must be sealed. Recommended methods are with a flame, or by dipping end momentarily in boiling water each time they are cut, or cutting stem under water before conditioning and when arranging. These plants require water after arranging.
3. Most foliage should be immersed in water for several hours to absorb adequate moisture.
4. Brittle stems, such as stock and chrysanthemums should be broken to expose a greater surface for water intake.

D. Mechanics:

1. Receptacle to hold mechanics.
2. Sharp clippers.
3. Needleholder and/or Oasis™ (prepare Oasis™ by soaking in water first).
4. Floral tape, wire and floral clay ("Cling", "Tack-clay" or Handi-tac").

E. Review of line designs. A line design is the most restrained of the three types of design. It uses less plant material than a Line-mass or Mass design. It has a center of interest at or near the lip of the container. Line as an element of design is the foundation of all design. It dictates the direction the line will take, whether vertical horizontal, curved or diagonal. Lines can be long, short, thick or thin.

II. HORIZONTAL LINE DESIGN:

A Horizontal Line Design is a design where the main line is placed in a horizontal manner. There is restraint in the amount of plant material used and an open silhouette is characteristics of a Line Design. The line direction is horizontal but it may follow the form of a straight line, curved, s-curve (Hogarth), zigzag, etc.

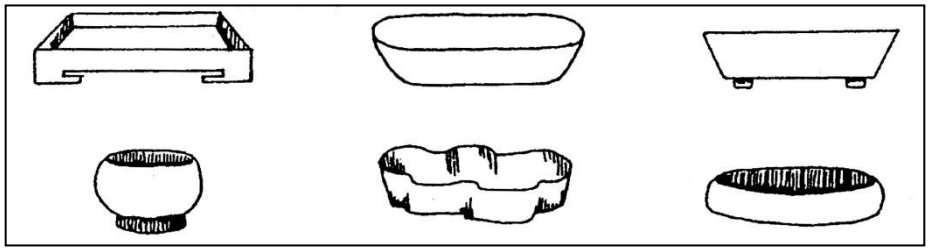
A. Container.

1. Shallow and flat or low footed. Low ceramic bowls are often used as containers. Cup needleholder or container on a base is useful. Bases are designed to be placed under an arrangement. Bases are used for unity and/or visual weight. They are made of bamboo, cork, fabric, glass, metal, straw, wood, etc.

2. Styles of containers: round, square, oval, rectangular, boat shaped, square-footed, round footed.

3. Color: beige, black, green, blue, brown etc. Some colors need to be repeated in the plant material to avoid too much contrast. Example: White containers need to have white repeated in the plant material.

Variety of shallow containers



B. Mechanics: See Lesson I, page 2.

C. Material needed:

1. Select three groups of plant material of the same variety, but of different lengths. Tall and thin, medium and slightly larger, shorter stemmed and largest. Use the tallest least opened flower down to shorter stemmed and largest most fully opened flower.

2. Three pieces of line material (spike forms) as on page 1.

3. No more than five round form flowers (mums, roses, carnations, etc.)

4. Four or five pieces of transitional/filler material.

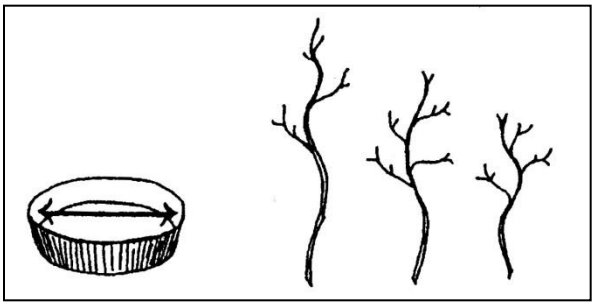
5. A low shallow container, needleholder, Cling and clippers.

D. Construction: Often horizontal designs are used as table centerpieces. They should be attractive from each side.

1. Needleholder can be placed in either end of the container, about 1/3 the diameter of the container. The design's balance will be asymmetrical. Balance is visual stability. It is the result of placing equal weight, either actual or visual, on opposite sides of an imaginary central axis. Asymmetrical balance has equal visual weight.

2. Place florist clay (Cling, Handi-Tac, etc.) on needleholder as described in Lesson 1 page 3.

E. Measurements: Cut three pieces of line material



1. First piece; Minimum 1 ½ times length or diameter of container, plus its depth.
2. Second piece: ¾ length of the first piece.
3. Third piece, ¾ length of the second piece.

F. Flowers and transitional/filler selection.

1. Five (5) flowers. If possible, select different sizes, from bud stage to fully open. This gradual change in size will aid the rhythm of the design.
2. Four or five pieces of transitional material. (see Lesson I, page 1)

G. Placement of plant material for Line. This becomes the structural outline. (3 stems, see diagram page 8)

1. Insert first line material on left side of needleholder slanting to the left. It should flow over the edge of the container several inches above the rim. This becomes the main line.
2. Insert second line material on the right side of needleholder.
3. Insert third line material at center rear of needleholder slanting low toward the back.

H. Placement of flowers. No stem lengths should be the same length of the flowers or the line material. Cut each stem according to page 4 Lesson I.

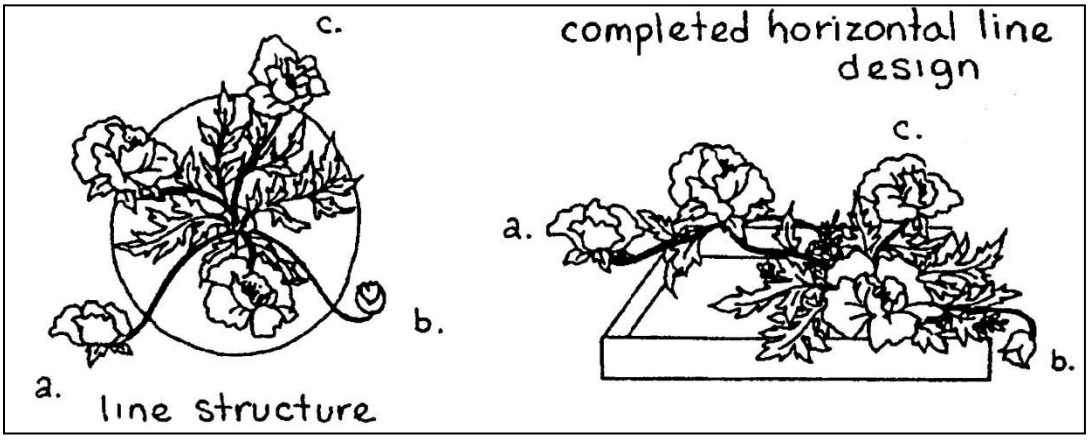
1. Insert bud or smallest flower in center of needleholder following the main (longest) line. It should be shorter, slightly lower and facing toward the front.
2. Insert another flower following the line direction of first line material. This is to the left slanting upward. The flowers should be above the rim of the container.
3. Insert another along the line formed by the second piece of line material. That is to the right side and towards the front of the container. It should be shorter than the line material.
4. Insert next flower towards the back, slighter higher than the third line material. It should be shorter than the line material.
5. Insert the largest flower in the center of the needleholder, slanting forward, in a low position, toward the front of the container.

L. Placement of transitional/filler material.

1. Each stem should be of a different length than the plant material it is placed near. In this design it is used primarily to cover the needleholder, give contrast of texture and depth to the design.

2. Always prune off lower leaves to prevent them from being underwater. Leaves deteriorate quickly underwater.

3. Material can also be placed between the line and flower placements to soften the change from line to round forms.



III. APPRECIATION TIME!

After the design is completed, it should be checked to see if it is visually stable. Does any part appear to be falling down or out of the container? This relates to the principle of balance.

Does the eye flow easily through the design following the placement of the line? All placements should be within the framework established by the line material not leading the eye out in different directions.

If the line material is delicate, the flowers and other forms should be delicate also; this is referred to as scale, another principle of design.

Reference above has been made to the elements of line, form and size and also to the principles of balance and scale. These will be discussed more fully in later lessons.

Focus on the beauty that has been achieved! Focus on the beauty of the flowers. **Skill as a designer comes with practice and study.** The challenge of developing the skill of flower arrangement is exciting and fun.

Lesson 3

VERTICAL LINE-MASS DESIGN

I. REVIEW: LESSON PLANS NO. 1 & 2

A. Types of forms of plant material needed: spike, round, transitional

B. The best time to cut plant materials is either in the early morning or late evening.

C. Conditioning explained in Lesson 1 pages 1-2.

D. Mechanics: Clippers, needleholder and/or Oasis™, waterproof floral tape wire, and "Cling".

E. Plant material selection and placements for vertical and horizontal designs.

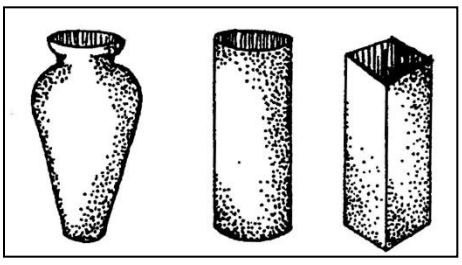
F. Review diagrams illustrating text.

II. PRINCIPLES AND ELEMENTS OF DESIGN. In the first two Design Study lessons, **line** was emphasized as an element of design necessary to create an arrangement. The other elements are **space, light form, pattern, texture, color and size**. The **forms** found in plant material have been pointed out in the selection of plant material. A **color** should be selected that will coordinate with the area where the design is placed. **Texture** refers to the surface structure as rough or smooth, shiny or dull.

The Principles of design are basic in all art. The principles **are balance, rhythm, contrast, dominance, proportion and scale**. **Balance** is visual stability. **Rhythm** is the dominate visual path through the design. **Proportion** is the relationship of one area or amount to the other area or the whole design. **Scale** is a pleasing size relationship to the container and to the other plant material. **Contrast** of one or more elements is necessary to make the design interesting, to stimulate the eye and the senses. However, there must be more of one element stressed to achieve **dominance**.

III. VERTICAL LINE-MASS DESIGN. In a vertical Line-mass Design, additional material is added to strengthen the line. The dominant line is combined with more plant material at the center of interest. The center of interest is placed at or near the point where all plant materials emerge from the container. Strive not to cross the line of another stem. Line-mass designs are generally narrow instead of wide, with the tallest lines grouped together for **dominance of the line**. Each piece of plant material should be of a different length to keep the design thin and eye movement toward the center of interest. The first flower, if a bud, may be inserted toward the back so this vertical movement will continue. Flowers are added one at a time, each one of a different length along the established lines. Turn one to the right slightly and the next one to the left. Follow the lines down to place the largest, most open flower, at or near the top of the container. Two or more flowers may be used together to create this center of interest or focal area.

A. Materials needed:



1. Tall straight-sided container, either round or square between 10" and 20" in height. Color, any color that harmonizes with the plant material chosen. (Green, beige, blue etc.)

2. Prepare Oasis™ by soaking in water, or if the container has a wide mouth it is possible to place a needleholder down into the container with florist clay. Florist anchor tape, clippers, and knife (See Lesson page 1).

Materials needed: continued

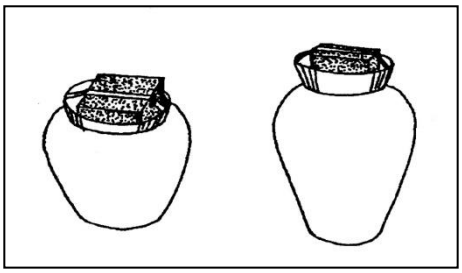
3. Five (5) pieces of linear material (spiked forms like gladiolus, liatris, snapdragons and/or bare, flowering or green branches of trees or shrubs, long pointed or strap foliage as iris, flax, yucca, sansevieria, etc.

4. Seven (7) round flower forms (carnations, mums, zinnias, roses, crested or trumpet shapes also may be used like iris, lilies or celosia.

5. Five (5) or six (6) pieces of transitional/filler of intermediate size or small leafed material. If the line and round forms are of similar texture these should be of contrasting texture. Example: podocarpus and pompom chrysanthemums need smooth textured large leaves for the third material.

B. Construction: Cut a piece of **new** Oasis™ to fit into the container that will extend 1 to 1½ inches above the rim of the container. Float the Oasis™ in water in a sink until it is saturated. Tall containers should be filled within 2 inches of the rim with newspaper, gravel or sand etc. Place the prepared Oasis™ into the container. Secure with one or two strips of waterproof florist anchor tape over the top, placed slightly off center. (The center is needed for the main line.) Press the tape firmly to each side of the dry container.

Use of Oasis™ in tall container



C. Measurements and placement of the material:

1. First piece of line material: Cut a **minimum** of 1½ times the height of the container. Hold the stem in your hand over the spot you desire to place it and check if the length is correct. Oasis™ will break easily so stems should not be pulled out once placed. Insert gently ½" to 1" into the Oasis™ slightly back of the center point of the top of the Oasis™. This is the main line of the design. It sets the pattern all other lines follow. The top of the line should be over the point that it emerged from the Oasis™ for proper balance. When completed all the lines should appear to radiate from one point.

2. Second line should be cut noticeably shorter than the first line. About 1" to 3" depending on the width of the line and the length of the material. Insert it in back of the main line. Let the tip flow out to the right of the main line, but close so the vertical pattern will be established.

3. Third line should be cut shorter than the second line. Insert it in front of the main line and let the tip flow out to the left from the main line, but still close (within an inch or two) at the top.

Measurements and placement of the material: continued

4. Fourth line should be cut shorter than the third line. Insert it to the right of the main line and let the tip flow to the right, maintaining the vertical pattern.

5. The fifth piece is the shortest. It is placed low and to the left of the main line.

D. Selection and placement of 7 flowers:

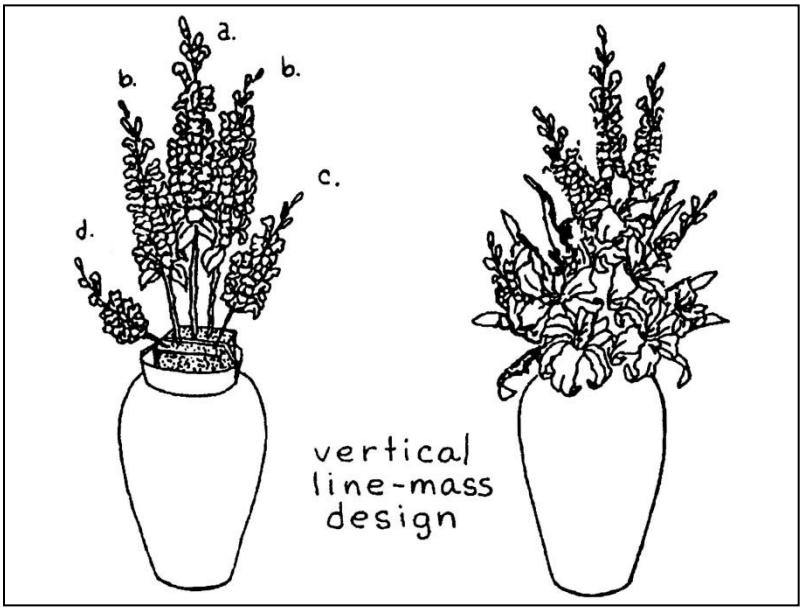
1. If there are different sizes of flowers, cut the bud or smallest flower a little longer than the fourth piece of line material. If it is a bud or smallest of the flowers, insert it in front of the main line. If all flowers are the same size consider placing it behind the main line and peeking out to the left so only part of the flower will show.

2. Cut the rest of the flowers different lengths, according to size. The tightest and least open should be the longest/tallest.

3. Insert each flower in a gradual descent down to the rim of the container. Unless the flowers are large two or three should be used in front and low near the rim of the container. One of them should be placed at or near the base of the main line and come forward over the rim of the container.

E. Selection and placement of transitional/filler material.

Use this material to add depth by placing to the back of the flowers and line material and to obscure the Oasis™. It may be related or contrasting in color and texture. Bring some of the material over the front of the container in a downward manner to prevent the appearance of a design sitting on **top** of the container not in a container. Usually with Oasis™ the lower plant material is inserted with an upward motion so that the material will flow over the rim. Sometimes an extra flower is needed to achieve this goal.



IV. LINE-MASS DESIGN IN A LOW CONTAINER:

A. Container. The same line-mass design is attractive in a low, shallow container. Use the plant material as needed in the tall container. A needleholder is advisable. It should be anchored into the container as described in Lessons 1 and 2 using florist clay.

B. Measurement and placement of lines, flowers and transitional/filler.

1. Measure the diameter of the container, plus the depth, a minimum of 1 ½ times the length for the main line (first line). The remaining lines are cut as on pages 9, 10, 11 and in Lessons 1 and 2.

2. Cut and place the flowers (round forms) by the same general measurements as on pages 9, 10 and 11.

3. The transitional/filler forms are cut and placed in the same manner. Care should be taken to cover the needleholder and to come out over the front of the container to prevent the horizontal line from being too strong.

Line-mass design in a low container

V. APPRECIATION TIME.

Is all of the plant material well-conditioned, fresh, and crisp? Does the design appear to be stable? Has anything fallen out of the container? Is the tip of the main line at or near the point from which the lines radiate? These questions refer to the principle of **balance**.

Is the selection of plant material suitable for the container? Elements to be considered at this time are line, the correct forms, contrast in textures, harmonious colors, and size. Does it follow the established pattern of a vertical line-mass design?

Focus on what you have achieved. Skill in design comes with **practice** and **study.**

Note**:** Line-mass designs are popular. They may follow any pattern, vertical, horizontal, right-hand or left-hand, triangles, crescents, s-curves, or zigzag direction. The dominant line has a large amount of plant material in the focal area and the silhouette is open. There are large spaces between the lines, flowers and foliage.

Lesson 4

MASS DESIGNS

I. REVIEW OF LINE AND LINE-MASS DESIGN

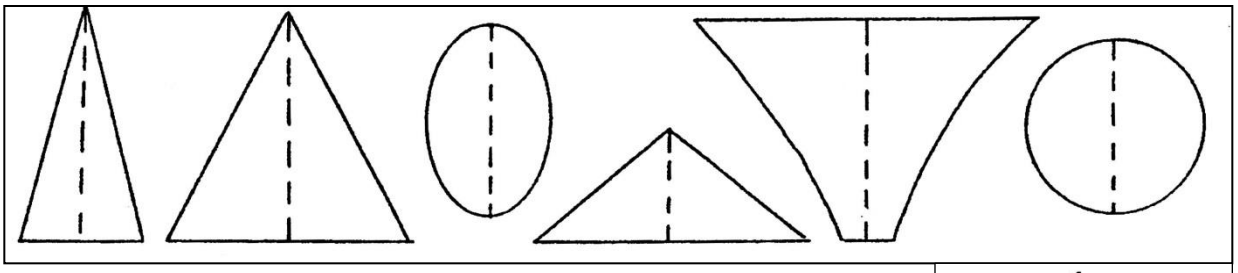
A. Line designs were studied in Lesson I and 2. The linear pattern is dominant, characterized by restraint in the amount of plant material, and an open silhouette (spacing between the plant materials). Vertical and horizontal line designs were outlined, referring to the elements (visual characteristics) and principles, (basic standards which organize the elements). The elements and principles are present in all flower arrangement. **In Line designs spaces between the plant material exceeds the amount of plant material.**

B. Vertical Line-mass design was studied in Lesson 3 using both tall and shallow containers. More plant material was added to strengthen the line; additional flowers were used low in the design near the point where all the plant materials emerged from the container. This creates a center of interest. The outline of the design against the background (the silhouette) should appear open, not packed or crowded with plant materials. **In a Line-mass design the spaces between the plant material are equal to the plant material.**

II. STUDY OF MASS DESIGNS: Mass designs, adapted from Europe, were characterized by the use of a large quantity of plant material. The design had a closed silhouette; however, the plant material is **not crowded or packed**. Distinction largely depends on the grouping of forms and colors to create a focal area (center of interest). Even though this is the most dominant part of the design, a gradual blending of color, size and forms should blend the center of interest into the overall design.

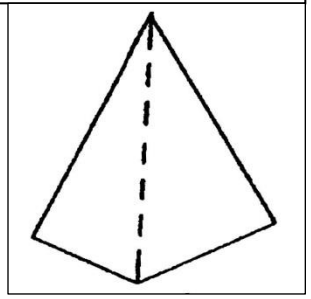
Line is present but it is not the dominate form. The line is softened with the **amount** of plant material. In a Mass design the plant material exceeds the spaces within the design. Choose one or more types of plant material.

These geometric designs Line, Line-mass and Mass are the foundation of all floral designs and continue to be used in **all** types of designs. The geometric types were derived from the cone, sphere and the cylinder. Mass designs may be vertical, horizontal, right triangles, left triangles, symmetrical triangles, s-curves, crescents, or Z shaped. It is primarily the **amount** of plant material and the way it is placed into the design that determines whether the design becomes a Line, Line-mass or a Mass design.



Forms of Mass design

Flower arrangement is a 3-dimensional art form. Mass designs should be completed in the back to avoid flatness and to give depth to the form.

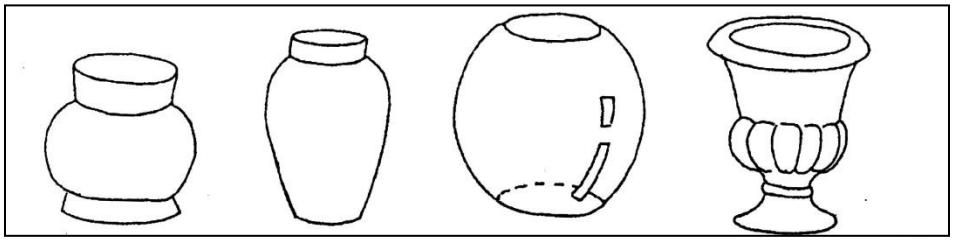


Side view of mass design

A. Containers for Mass Designs:

1. Containers may be traditional in form. These may be tall or low, with a wide mouth to enable the designer to use large amounts of plant material. All material should emerge from one opening and appear to come from one point.

2. The types of container may include pottery, copper, brass, silver or pewter. Urns or compotes with a pedestal and/or a shallow top may be used. Containers may have straight or curved sides.



B. Mechanics: Generally, Oasis™ as described in Lesson 3 page 10, is the easiest to use in a tall container for a mass design. It is easier because it allows easy placement of material down over the top to the container. A large needleholder is best in a low container.

C. Plant Material:

1. Elongated, linear forms to establish the structural pattern of the design. Select at least 5 to 9 pieces of line material. The amount depends on the size of the container and the width and thickness of the plant material. Materials to consider: Iris foliage, gladiolus, eucalyptus, cattail, sansevieria, aspidistra, delphinium, bells of Ireland, celosia, or any other linear form.

2. Round forms: To create mass effect, at least 7 flowers; the number depends on the size of container and the linear material.

3. Transitional/filler: May need 7 to complete the design. It is necessary to complete the back, and close the silhouette.

4. Plant material should complement the container in color, size and texture.

D. Structure:

1. Select a tall urn or compote type container compatible with plant material. The design will take the form of a symmetrical triangle.

2. If using a tall or urn-shaped container, cut Oasis™ to fit; prepare by floating in water until saturated. Build up the bottom with newspapers, sand, or old Oasis™; insert prepared Oasis™. Be sure the Oasis™ extends above the mouth of the container 1 to 2 inches. Place one or two narrow strips of florist anchor tape across the top of the Oasis™; press to sides of the dry container to secure. See Lesson 3 page 10.

3. If working in a compote style container a large needleholder secured with floral clay may be used; Oasis™ or a combination of both may also be used.

4. The design selected is a symmetrical triangle. Each side of the design should have the same amount of plant material. They do not need to be exactly alike but similar. The **visual weight is equal.**

E. Measurement of linear materials. To achieve symmetrical balance, that is balance equal in visual weight on each side of the design, plant material should be the same length and placed at approximately the same distance from the main line into the Oasis™ or the needleholder. It may be easiest to cut these stems at the same time to insure they are the same length.

1. Choose a tall piece of plant material, measure height and width of the container, cut line 1 ½ times or more than this measurement. This is the first placement (#1).

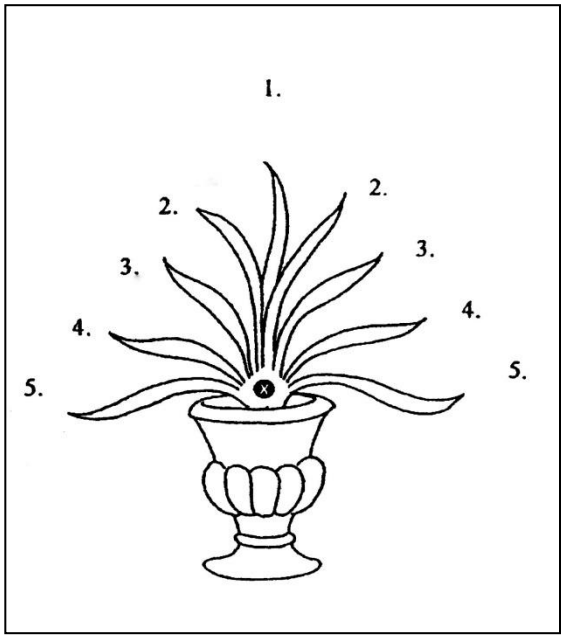
2. Cut **two** (2) pieces of line material about one half the length of the first line cut (#1). These lines are placed to form the lower portion of a triangle and placed second into the design.

3. Cut **two** (2) pieces of line material 3 to 4 inches shorter than the #1 line. To be placed near the #1 line.

4. Cut **two** (2) more pieces of material 2 to 3 inches shorter than the last lines cut, #3 line. To be placed between the #3 and the #2 lines; place one to the right and one to the left.

5. Cut **two** (2) more several inches shorter than the last two. To be placed at the front and angled downward and outward. Two more could be placed in the same position in the back to achieve greater depth.

F. Line Material placements:



1. Insert first line in the center back of the needleholder or Oasis™, in an upright position. It becomes the main line.

2. Insert two stems about half the length of #1 low on each side **angled** downwards below the rim of the container. These stems form the lower portion of a triangle.

3. Insert on right and left sides, towards the back, slanting tip slightly at the top near #1.

4. Insert on each side, angling slightly forward ; between #3 and #2 stems.

5. Insert two shorter stems about half the length of #4 at the front and back on both sides, angled downward and outward.

6. Do not go beyond the boundaries of the triangle formed by the placement of #1 and #2 lines. All stems should **appear to radiate from one point** at or near the base of the main line.

G. Cutting and Placement of Flowers:

1. The least opened flowers or buds should be the tallest. Cut shorter than the main line. Place in front of the main line and in the same upright position.

2. Cut two flowers several inches shorter than the one above #1. Insert one on either side of the main line and angling a little toward the back. Reinforce the triangle shape. Do not go beyond its boundaries. Show the side of the flower rather than the face.

3. Cut two more flowers several inches shorter. Continue to insert to the left and to the right down to the rim of the container.

4. Cut two or three flowers shorter, but of slightly different length. Place these at the base of the main line (at the center of the imaginary point of emergence). Only one should be facing fully forward. Turn each flower slightly for greater interest.

5. Additional flowers may be inserted to the left, to the right, and to the back. The design should not become crowded!

H. Transitional/Filler:

1. The transitional/filler plant material should be cut shorter than the line and flowers that it is placed near. Each piece should be cut 2 to 4 inches shorter than the line. Other pieces cut 2 inches shorter should be placed in the front of the main line with the tips going forward over the rim of the container.

2. This pattern of placing two on either side and to the back and one or two in front should be repeated. The design should not appear crowded packed or stuffed.

Grouping of flower forms ***Completed design***

III. APPRECIATION TIME.

Mass designs are much loved for their beauty of flowers, forms and colors. Characterized by the use of a large quantity of plant material the design should have a closed silhouette, however, the plant material should not be crowded. Distinction largely depends on the grouping of forms and colors to create one center of interest near the point where all plant materials emerge from the container. The stems should not cross each other but flow out in a radiating pattern. The pattern selected (symmetrical triangle) should be followed with the placement of each stem.

Line is present but it is not the dominate form. It is softened with the amount of plant material. In a mass design the plant material exceeds the amount of open space within the design.

For mass design, sometimes a bushier type of linear material may be used like celosia, bells of Ireland etc. In this case less plant material may be needed. The measurements and placements would be the same. The overall effect should be that of a mass design with a closed silhouette. There should be little space between the plant materials, but it should not be crowded or packed.

The element of color in design is the most compelling element. Consider the colors of home decor in creating a compatible design. Consult books and charts on color for study and practice for use in floral design.

Mass designs may be either symmetrical or asymmetrical. Symmetrical has equal amounts of plant material on each side. Asymmetrical has unequal amounts of material on either side of an imaginary axis. This is referred to as balance. Balance is important in all designs from side to side and from front to back. After the design is completed, it should be checked to see if it is visually stable. Does any part appear to be falling down or out of the container? This relates to the principle of **balance**.

Does the eye flow easily through the design, following the placement of the line? All placements should be within the framework established by the line material, not leading the eye out in different directions. This dominant visual path through the design is called **rhythm,** a design principle. Each stem **gradually**, becomes shorter as it is placed lower in the container toward the center of interest. There is a grouping of forms and colors to create this center of interest. Even though this is the most dominant part of the design, a gradual blending of color, size and forms should blend it into the overall design.

If the line material is delicate, the flowers and other forms should be delicate also. This is size relationship of one object to another is referred to as **scale**, a design principle. Is the container too tall or too small for the amount of plant material in the design? A small space (proportion) requires not only a small arrangement but a small container (scale) and a small amount of plant material (proportion). **Proportion** is the relationship of areas and amounts to each other and the whole.

Is there interesting contrast of lines (spiked) and round forms; a contrast of textures? **Contrast** means difference. It is a design principle. However, to achieve unity and harmony in the design there must be more of one line, more of one color, more of one form, more of one texture *etc*. to establish **dominance**. The balance between the design principles of contrast and dominance binds the design together to form a unit.

Focus on the beauty that has been achieved! Focus on the beauty of the flowers and colors. Skill as a designer comes with **practice and study**. The challenge of acquiring this skill and developing a love for the beauty and fun of flower arranging is exciting

DECORATIVE WOOD IN DESIGN

I. **REVIEW: Design Study Lessons 1,2,3,4:**

A. Vertical and Horizontal Line designs in low, shallow containers;
B. Vertical Line-mass designs in tall or low containers;
C. Mass designs in tall or shallow, compote-type containers.

II. DECORATIVE WOOD AND ITS USE IN DESIGN:

A. Decorative Wood Defined and Sources:

1. Decorative wood is an all-inclusive term that includes weathered wood (wood that has had its surface color, texture and/or form altered due to exposure to weather, wind, sun, *etc.*) Some wood has been changed in texture from rough to smooth by pebbles and stones. It may be dried branches, sections of tree limbs or trunks, cypress knees; wood whose surface has been waxed, varnished, or otherwise treated. Heavy, woody vines may also be decorative wood. **All decorative wood is plant material.**

2. Interesting unusual shapes appeal to the designer. The different forms and textures of wood and the rhythm of the grain are eye catching. In particular, cypress knees, gnarled roots, decayed stumps and driftwood washed up on the beach or river banks may be exciting.

3. Excavation sites expose all kinds of decorative wood. Roots that are no longer part of living trees. Dried tree branches with interesting shapes, such as manzanita, live oak, sweet gum, peeled wisteria, fasciated weeds, and heavy woody vines may all be called decorative wood.

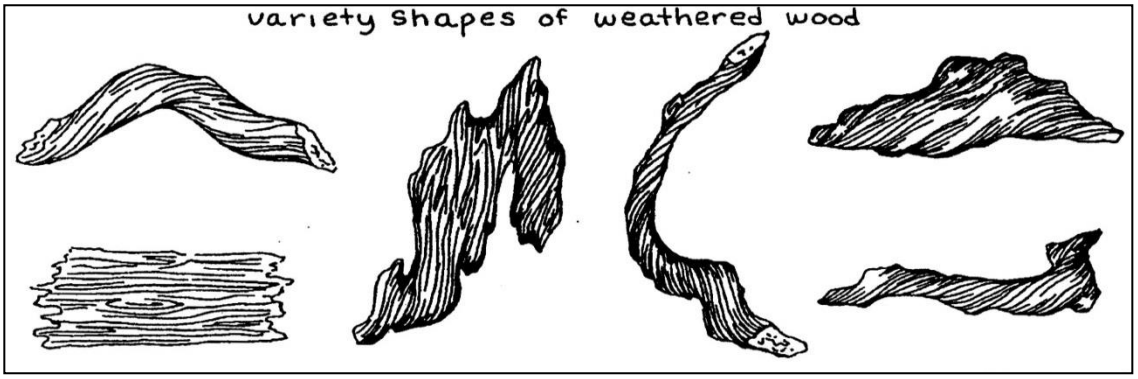
B. Preparation of Decorative Wood. NOTE: After cleaning, let the wood dry thoroughly before treating.

1. First, spray decorative wood with strong jets of water to remove insects, soil, dust, sand, *etc*.

2. A narrow bottle brush may be needed to clean crevices of imbedded particles. Use a wire brush for more extensive cleaning. This intensifies the weathered look and enhances the grain.

3. Rotted sections should be scraped out with a knife, or cut off with a saw and then smoothed with sandpaper. Insect repellent should be used to protect the wood.

4. Damaged bark may be peeled from wet roots or tree trunks. If the roots are dried out, soak them in hot water, and then peel using a sharp knife.



C. Methods of Treatment: There are many ways to change the patina of wood. Here are a few:

1. Experiment by bleaching. Soak for an hour or more in equal parts of household bleach and water. Rinse carefully in fresh water. The wood will dry to a warm tone. Sunlight will also bleach wet wood.

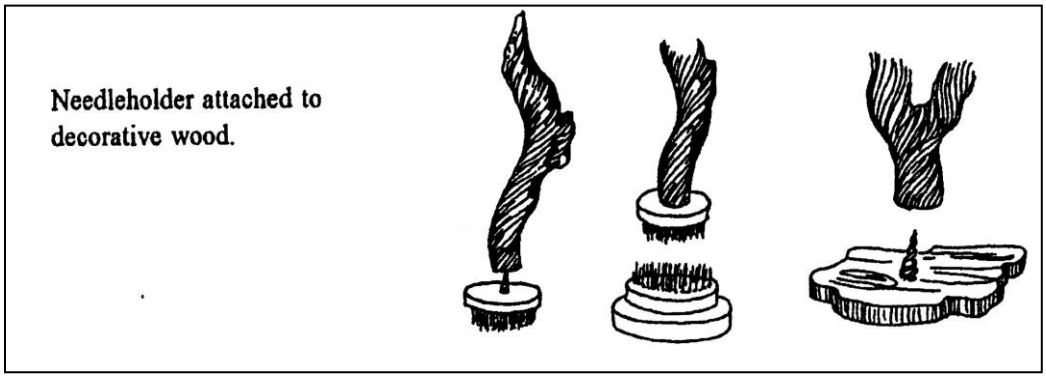
2. The wood may be waxed, oiled, or stained.

3. The wood may be lightly wiped with paint to enhance its color, or painted to change the color and enhance the drama. Painting may change the grain.

D. Methods of Using Decorative Wood: There are several ways to join and support decorative wood:

1. For hard pieces of wood that have a narrow end, saw to flatten the part that will rest in the bowl. Pieces may be joined with a dowel inserted into each piece to connect together.

2. Some needleholders have a hole drilled for a screw to be used to anchor to wood. Secure another needleholder right-side up in the container and lock the pins of the small holder that has the wood attached into it.



Needleholder attached to decorative wood.

E. Mechanics:

1. Sections of wood may be joined together by drilling holes and fastening the pieces together with screws. Cover these mechanics by using wood filler, sanding, or paint to match the wood.

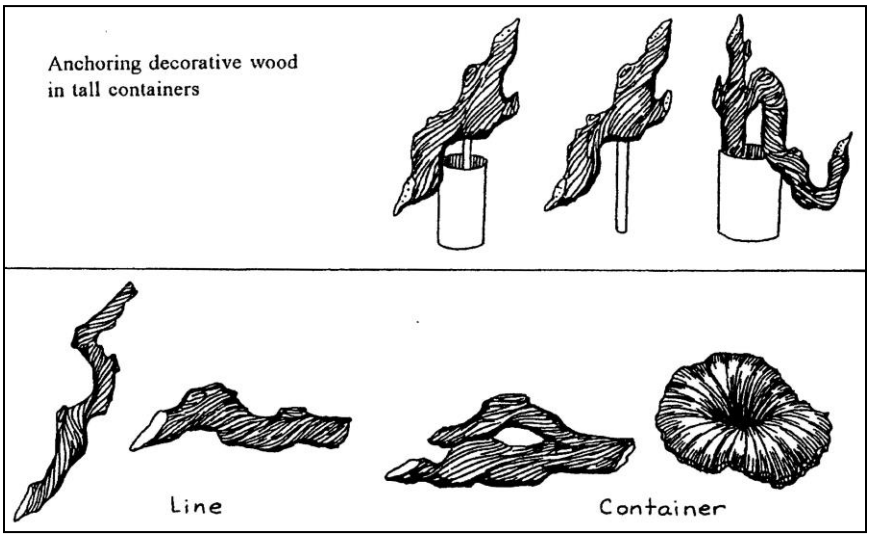
2. Wire can be cut from metal coat hangers into pins and inserted into drilled holes to connect different pieces. Wooden dowels may be used in the same manner.

3. In tall containers drill a hole in the wood and insert a wire the length of the container. Place the wired wood into the container, perhaps bending it over the edge.

4. Look for pieces of wood that have a natural projection to hang on the container. The **wood may also rest on the table** for better balance.

5. Decorative wood can be used in a design in many ways: As a line, a container, and to cover the needleholder.

E. Mechanics: continued.



F. Decorative wood as a CONTAINER: Design may be Line, Line-mass or Mass.

1. Mechanics: Select a piece of decorative wood that can stand on its own. A flat area may be cut on the bottom. It may need to be placed on a base. Any line may be used for the design. Work with the wood to select the style of design. Let the wood show you the way.

2. Use a cup needleholder or a needleholder may be placed in a small can painted in a harmonizing color.

3. The measurements of the design will vary. For a vertical design, visually consider the size of the weathered wood and measure the main line at least 1 ½ times the visual weight of the wood. The other lines, flowers, and transitional materials will be measured for a vertical design as described in Lesson No. 1, Line design, and Lesson No. 3, Line-mass design.

4. Horizontal placements: If the plant material, such as a beautiful branch, has a flowing line, use it in a horizontal or diagonal design.

    a. First line: place slanting slightly toward the front to the right or left.
    b. Second line: Cut ¾ the length of the first line, placed toward back, slanting slightly backward.
    c. Third Line: Cut ¾ the length of the second line; place lower than first line, slanting over the opposite side toward front.

5. **Flowers and transitional materials** may be placed as described in Lesson No. 2.

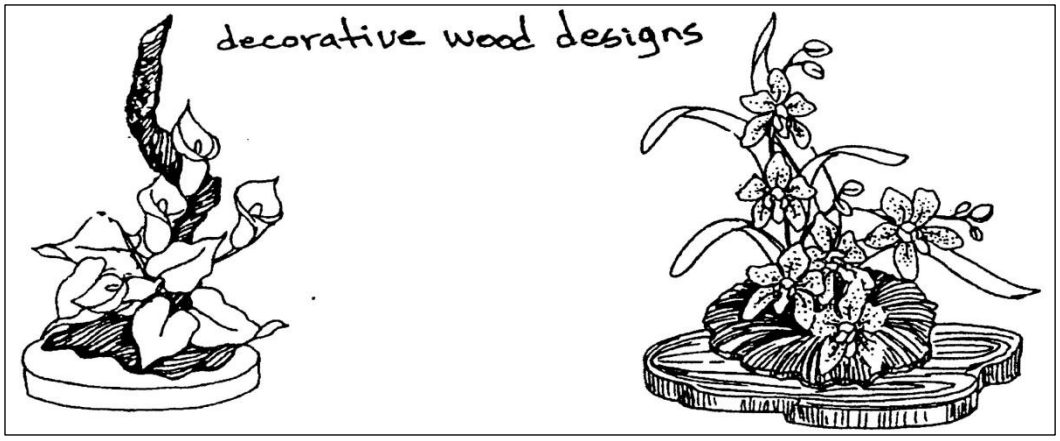
G. Decorative Wood used as LINE.

1. **Container:** Select a tall, short or low container and suitable piece of wood. The wood should have a liner form and be important enough to lead the eye if it is used as the line material.

2. **Mechanics:** Insert large needleholder in the bottom of the container. Prepare mechanics to join decorative wood to a needleholder with a screw. Place on the needleholder in the container (see page 19).

3. **Flowers:** Select flowers that are compatible with the wood. Spiked forms as well as round forms may be needed. If spiked or linear forms are need to add to the dimension of the wood, place them high in the design in back of the decorative wood. Others may be placed lower in the design to accent the wood. Place several flowers close together over the lip of the container to create a center of interest.

4. **Transitional material:** Finish with transitional material placed behind and between flowers as needed. One or more pieces of decorative wood may be used to cover mechanics if they contribute to the overall design.



III. APPRECIATION TIME!

Stand back from the design and check it overall. Appreciate the beauty that has been achieved. What did you learn? Is it visually stable? Does the eye go easily through the design? Is the rhythm of the wood expressed in the overall design? Is anything too large or too small? Is there contrast of rough and smooth? Is the wood used for a reason? Can it be seen or is it hidden?

Less of other kinds of plant material is often required in designs that include decorative wood. **Remember that line is the basic foundation of all design**. The lines create the visual framework of the design. All lines of a design should contribute to this order.

Color harmony is important in creating a design of decorative wood. Texture is also important to consider, as the surfaces of the decorative wood vary from rough to smooth and should be considered to blend well with the textures of the flowers and house décor, or other placements. Light, Space, Line, Pattern, Texture, Color and Size are elements of design with which the designer works.

USE OF FRUITS, VEGETABLES AND ACCESSORIES IN DESIGN

I. FRUITS AND VEGETABLES: Fruits and vegetables are fun to use. They are available, and attractive in a design with or without other plant material. **Note:** Cut fruits and vegetables are allowed in a flower show unless specifically disallowed by the schedule. However, c**ut foods must be sealed in some manner to discourage insects, odor and discoloration**.

A. Elements to consider:

1. **Form** applies to contour of individual parts or components of a design and is three dimensional.

2. **Color** refers to visual sensations. The colors should be harmonious. A variety of forms are exciting to combine. There are many color combinations to consider when fruits and vegetables are used.

3. **Texture** is the character of the surface generally referred to as rough or smooth, coarse or fine, glossy or dull, hard or soft. A variety of textures creates contrast and interest.

4. **Size** is not the actual dimension, but the apparent or visual size. However in this lesson size and weight determines the difficulty of the mechanics. The smaller forms like apples, lemons, limes, carrots and bananas are easier to secure into the design.

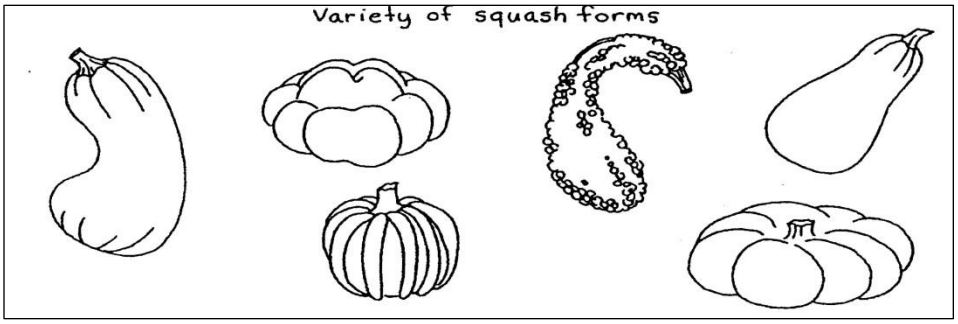
B. Forms to consider:

1. **Elongated:** Bananas, zucchini, squash, cucumbers, parsnips, carrots, etc.

2. **Round:** Apples, oranges, potatoes, limes, Brussels sprouts, lemons, nectarines, cabbage, cherries, peaches, etc.

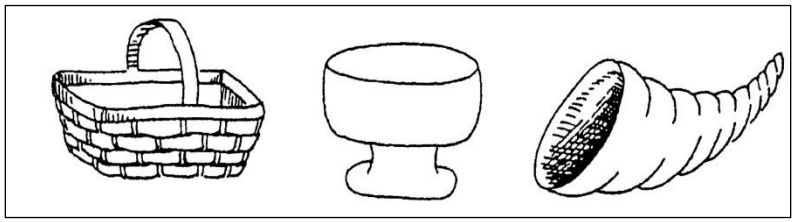
3. **Other forms:** Oval-shaped pears and peppers, dried corn with husks, grapes, pineapple, eggplant, nuts, turnips, radishes, pumpkin, etc. Sometimes it may be necessary to wire the elements together like nuts.

C. Variety of Squash: Of particular interest are the varieties of forms and colors of the squash family such as: Long or narrow; crooked necked, dome-shaped like acorn and pattypan.



D. Containers for Fruits and/or Vegetables: Bases, placemats, bowls, footed compotes, trays, cornucopias, and baskets are useful as containers. Squash, gourds, and other vegetables may sometimes serve as the container. A cup needleholder may be used if fresh flowers and/or foliage are included. Certain fruit or vegetables may also serve as a water source *i.e.,* an Irish potato.

Possible containers for fruits and/or vegetables

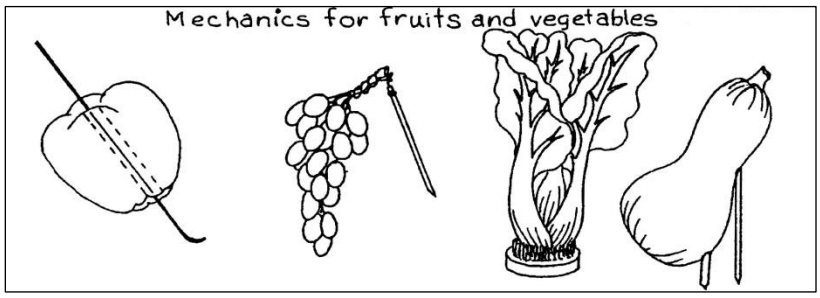


E. Mechanics

1. Clippers, needleholder, florist clay, extra stems and/or florist picks, wire (18 and 22 gauge), ice pick: wire cutters, pliers, hammer, pins, "twist stems" etc.

2. Techniques to use:

   a. Make a hole in an apple or other fruit or vegetable with the ice pick: pierce from one end to the other, insert wire, push through the fruit, twist the ends together and secure to a pick.
   b. Floral picks may be used to connect together and/or attach fruit to Oasis™ or needle holder.
   c. Some fruits and vegetables may simply be impaled on a needleholder.
   d. For large shapes such as eggplants and pineapples, tie with 28 gauge wire to a heavy stem made from freshly-cut, leafless branch. Insert stick into needleholder.
   e. Linear forms, such as cucumbers and zucchini, may be inserted at one end or side with a florist pick and then placed on a needleholder.
   f. Some fruits and vegetables may be placed in the design without mechanics.
   g. A roll of florist clay, "Cling", Handi-Tac *etc*., may be useful to stick fruit in place.



F. Designs with Squash and Foliage for Line:

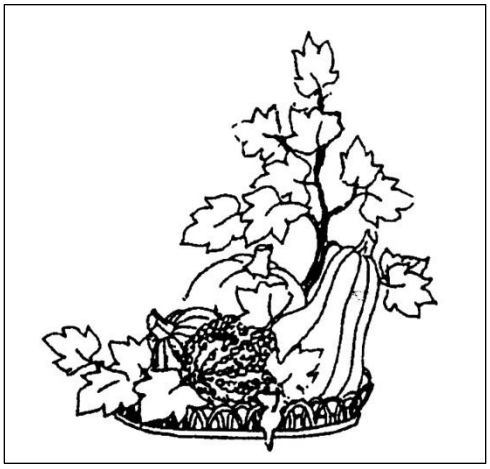
1. Place a cup needleholder and use in the following manner:

   a. Select long zucchini or squash, impale end on florist pick, cut the other end of the pick on a slant and insert it into the needleholder.
   b. Place two other zucchini or squash, each shorter, in the same manner near the largest; one slanting slightly forward and the other slanting toward the back.
   c. Picks may be inserted in squash and into the needle holder to secure it in place or any other mechanic that works.

2. Foliage material or small squash may be added, behind and in-between squash placements, and extending over the base or container. Be sure to finish back of design with squash or foliage.

3. These heavy forms may be challenging to control. All forms must be secured for actual balance as well as for visual balance. Additional tall plant material may be needed for proper proportion.

F. Designs with Squash and Foliage for Line continued.



II. DESIGNS OF LINEAR MATERIAL, FRUITS AND/OR VEGETABLES AND FLOWERS:

A. Selection and Placement:

1. Select wide bowl or large base. Press needleholder in middle, anchoring with floral clay.

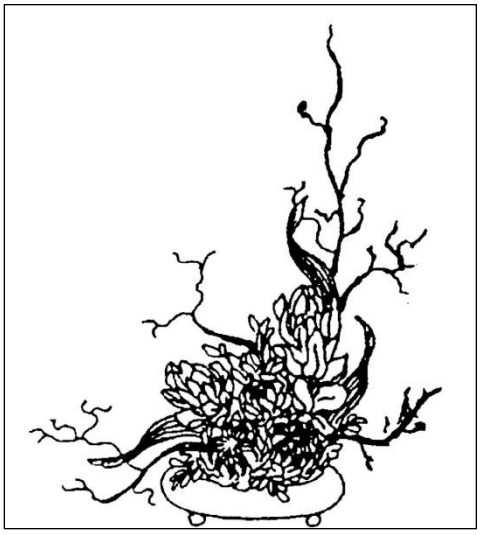
2. Look for unusual line material, such as crooked branch on a tree or shrub, Harry Lauder's walking stick (*Corlys contorta*), fan-tail willow, corkscrew willow, winged euonymus, loquat etc. Measure diameter of the container times 1 ½ for the first line (as in Lesson 1). This is a minimum length. Visually heavy elements demand greater height for the visual balance and the correct proportion. Place either upright or on a slant, using the front side to determine line direction. If line is thin, auxiliary lines may be added in back of and in front of main line. Branches should be studied critically to prune out overlapping foliage to emphasize the line. Be sure the line is balanced in the container.

3. Add a second, shorter line at the base to complete the design to the left or to the right. The pattern is an asymmetrical triangle. The motion may be to the left or to the right.

4. Select angular and rounded forms of fruits and/or vegetables to place in front of an in back of lines. Bananas or similar fruits or vegetables may be placed at angles and to follow the line.

5. Select flower colors to harmonize with the fruits and/or vegetables used. Add flowers in groups of three if they are small. These may be placed either high in the design or low for the center of interest.

6. Transitional material may be any type plant of material that blends or contrasts with the other elements.



III. ACCESSORIES IN DESIGN: Accessories have often been included as part of a design. Being able to use favorite figurines, small memorabilia, shells, *etc.* is fun. **Note:** If it is too large it becomes a feature.

A. Definition of Accessories: An accessory is something added; a helper, anything in a design in addition to plant material, container, base, special staging or mechanics.

1. It is **SUBORDINATE** in the design. Accessories are used for a purpose: to establish a mood or feeling, to interpret a theme, to add balance, or otherwise contribute to the design.

2. The line, form, color, size and texture of the accessory should be harmoniously related to the other components.

B. Use of Accessories:

1. To establish a mood or feeling. This can be achieved by placing a figurine or other accessory near a design. The room décor, idea or theme may be carried out by the use of an accessory.

2. An accessory may be placed for visual balance. To cover a needleholder you may use rocks, pebbles, glass marbles, shells, etc.

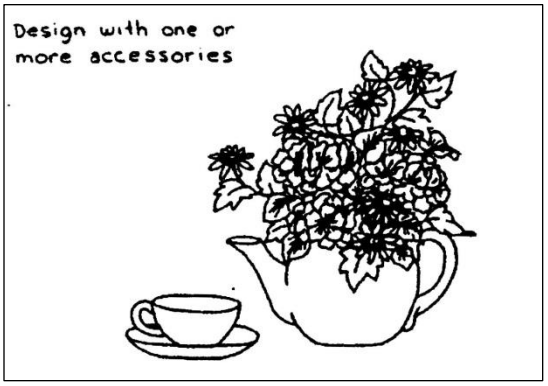
3. The accessory must be in scale with the design. (The size of the accessory must relate well with the design). Usually it should not be over one third the overall height of the design or it becomes too dominant to be called an accessory.

C. Designing with Accessories: The accessory should be an integral part of the design.

1. Place cup needleholder on a placemat, base, tray or use a needleholder in a shallow container.

2. Select linear material with unusual shapes, flowers that are compatible to other materials selected and transitional material as needed. Make either a Line or Line-Mass design as plant material dictates, and use one or two small accessories to carry out the theme, thought or idea.

3. The line of an accessary should be in harmony with the line of the design. It should not compete with the overall pattern.



IV APPRECIATION TIME!

Check the design for the visual stability.
Does the eye go easily through the design?
Is there a contrast of texture?
Is one color, form, or flower more dominant than another?
Is anything too large or too small?
Does the accessory have meaning in the design?
Is it in harmony with the rest of the design?
Is it related in some way to the other components?

Focus on the beauty that has been achieved!
Skill as a designer comes with **practice** and **study**. Continue to study the art of flower arranging. Study, practice and time are needed to meet the challenge of designing.