



FLOREAL DESIGN BASICS

Turning store bought bouquets from drab to fab

Before you start designing

- One of the most important things to consider when arranging any type of floral is the vessel. I learned that the wrong vase can make an otherwise great assortment of flowers look terrible, so make sure you get just a few good vases that will be good for lots of uses.
- There are some important things to remember when you're purchasing flowers. Make sure to get a bouquet that has 2-3 main types of flowers, one filler, and greenery. Single flower arrangements are much more difficult without smaller blooms and greenery for all of the in-between area. H-E-B has a great assortment of flowers and I love Trader Joe's flowers. Instead of buying a bouquet that they already put together, I like to pick a greenery, and then 2 bunches of flowers and one filler flower.
- You know the little packets of flower food that come with your flowers? They are there for a reason! Use them! Read the directions on the package and mix the food with the correct amount of water in a pitcher. Then add some water to your vase, but don't fill it up to the top because it will overflow when you add flowers.
- A good trick to keep your flowers fresh! Add a penny to your vase. Copper is a fungicide, so **putting** a copper **penny** in the water of your **cut flowers** helps keep yeasts and fungi from growing. Aspirin is an acid that helps kill bacteria. You can also control bacteria by mixing a quart of water with two tablespoons of lemon juice or vinegar, or 1/4 teaspoon of bleach. And change out the water when it starts to look gross!

Flower Arranging- cutting and a good base

- First, cut your stems to 1.5 times the height of your vase. Cut off the bottoms of the branches/stems and remove all of the lower leaves (this will result in a cleaner looking arrangement and prevent bacteria from forming in the water), and try to make sure that the stems are all going toward the same imaginary center point.
- Use a sharp knife or good pruners to cut your stems at a 45 degree angle. Cutting the stems at a 45 degree angle allows more surface area so your flowers stay fresh and hydrated longer.
- Start with your greenery to form a base for your focal and filler flowers. One little trick florists use is making a grid with tape. You can use special floral tape or since most people don't have that laying around, you can use scotch tape! Just cut a piece of Scotch tape in half lengthwise and tape it in a grid over the top of your vase.
- If you want a little more texture to your design, use a couple of different types of greens in your arrangement.

Adding your flowers

- Next, use whichever flower would be your focal flower. The tiger lilies are the largest and most dominant, so I chose those. Make sure that each dominant flower stem is placed equidistant with one sticking straight up to begin creating the overall shape. Once you have an outline for your shape and size created with the dominant flower, start adding in your secondary flowers (mine here are mums and daisies).
- Try to make sure all of the secondary flowers are sticking out of the vase about the same amount, and that some stick more perpendicular to the vase, extending over the edge of the vase.
- Once all of your secondary flowers are in, go back through and fill in any blank spots with a filler flower. This is usually something that is sort of a flower, sort of a green.
- Last, add in just a couple touches of greenery in the top of the arrangement.
- I like to take a step back and look at the overall shape to see if it needs any tweaking. Maybe there is a little gap somewhere that could use some filler or just a touch of greenery.

More Gratitude Give Me

- “Grateful in Any Circumstances” by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, April 2014
- This is one of my favorite talks given in conference. I have listened to it at least 4-5 times. So when asked what part of the song, “More Holiness Give Me” I wanted to use in my class, I immediately thought of the line, “more gratitude give me”.
- We all want to be more grateful right? We all have been taught that we should be grateful for what we have and pray each day and say what we are thankful for. But it really is easier said than done to truly have a thankful heart.
- President Uchtdorf said, “Sooner or later, I believe that all of us experience times when the very fabric of our world tears at the seams, leaving us feeling alone, frustrated, and adrift. It can happen to anyone. No one is immune. Everyone’s situation is different, and the details of each life are unique. Nevertheless, I have learned that there is something that would take away the bitterness that may come into our lives. There is one thing we can do to make life sweeter, more joyful, even glorious. We can be grateful!

An Attitude of Gratitude

- Life is better if you develop an attitude of gratitude! Note the word develop- not have like it's given to you, develop it. Meaning you have to work at it! An attitude of gratitude means making it a habit to express thankfulness and appreciation in all parts of your life, on a regular basis, for both the big and small things alike. If you concentrate on what you have, you'll always have more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you'll never have enough.
- I love Podcasts and one of my favorite ones to listen to is called, "Awesome with Alison". In episode 8 she talks about one habit that she has started that she does each day. She goes on a walk and for the first 5 minutes, she listens to relaxing music and does some breathing exercises. She then thinks of as many things as she can for those few minutes that she is thankful for. She says at first she may think of simple things like "I'm thankful for grass", or "I'm thankful for the sun". And then more things will start to come to mind.
- I decided that I was going to try this out to see how it could help me in my life. I love it! It is such a great way to start each day. I usually do this at the gym while on the treadmill. It really makes you realize how many things you have to be grateful for!

Being Thankful in Our Circumstances

- It's not always to be grateful for things. Life is a rollercoaster and it has its ups and downs. President Uchtdorf said, "It is easy to be grateful *for* things when life seems to be going our way. But what then of those times when what we wish for seems to be far out of reach? Could I suggest that we see gratitude as a disposition, a way of life that stands independent of our current situation? In other words, I'm suggesting that instead of being thankful *for* things, we focus on being thankful *in* our circumstances—whatever they may be.
- We can choose to be grateful, no matter what.
- This type of gratitude transcends whatever is happening around us. It surpasses disappointment, discouragement, and despair. It blooms just as beautifully in the icy landscape of winter as it does in the pleasant warmth of summer.

Vernalization

- When I was in college at BYU-Idaho, I took a production class- where we learned how to grow plants. In this class we learned about growing bulbs. In order for bulbs to grow (tulips, daffodils, etc.) they need a period called vernalization.
- What is vernalization? It is the induction of a plant's flowering process by exposure to the prolonged cold of winter, or by an artificial equivalent. After vernalization, plants have acquired the ability to flower, but they may require additional seasonal cues or weeks of growth before they will actually flower. Vernalization is sometimes used to refer to herbal (non-woody) plants requiring a cold dormancy to produce new shoots and leaves.
- So what does this have to do with gratitude? As much as we don't like our trials, we need them to grow. If we didn't have to suffer through winter, we couldn't appreciate the beauty that spring brings. Our trials are what make us realize what we really are grateful for.
- How much of life do we miss by waiting to see the rainbow before thanking God that there is rain?- President Uchtdorf.

A Flower Does Not Think of Competing With the Flower Next to it. It Just Blooms.

- There are approximately 400,000 different types of flowering species in the world. Each flower is unique and beautiful in it's own way.
- Each of us are beautiful and unique in our own way and we are daughters of our Heavenly Father. He created us and He loves us just how we are. He wants us to love ourselves and he wants us to be happy.
- Don't compare yourself to others. Just don't do it. People may seem like they are perfect and that they have it all together and you may find yourself wishing you had what they have, but you don't know what things they are struggling with.
- In order for you to bloom, you need to feed yourself. Just like a flower needs water, sunlight and nutrients from the soil, you need water- apply the atonement in your life, sunlight- Jesus Christ, nutrients- read your scriptures (really read them every day) and fill your day with uplifting music, conference talks, etc.
- If you allow yourself to bloom, then you will find true joy. And people who are happy are grateful.

Grateful People Are Happy

- I truly believe being grateful and being happy are connected. I actually googled it! There is scientific research that proves that people who are thankful are indeed happier! A 2011 study published in the journal *Heart International* found that acute cardiac patients who had positive psychological interventions actually had better outcomes than those who didn't. "The people for whom gratitude is more of a trait than a state, we see that those people tend to be healthier. They tend to be happier. They have stronger social connections and stronger relationships. There's some evidence that people who are more optimistic or have a grateful attitude have higher immune functioning," says Erin Olivo, clinical psychologist and Columbia University assistant clinical professor of medical psychology.
- Don't we all want to be happy? 2 Ne. 2:25 says, "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy." It was necessary for Adam to fall so that we can know sorrow. And because we know sorrow, we can experience joy. Heavenly Father wants us to be happy!
- Russell M. Nelson in his talk "Joy and Spiritual Survival" said, "the joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives."
- So where is your focus? On what is going wrong in your life? Or what is good, lovely or praiseworthy? Find what you have to be grateful for and what makes you happy! You hold the key, you decide whether or not you can be thankful no matter what.