Container Gardening

SLC Master Gardeners: Sharon Babcock, Marilynn Turner and Skip Griffith

Container gardening is simply growing plants for enjoyment in containers instead of directly in the soil. There are a number of things to consider when gardening with containers:

- **containers available** – wooden, bowls, pots, hanging baskets
- **size** – small and moveable, large and stationary
- **drainage** – drainage holes are necessary
- **appropriate plants for location** – light requirements for best growth
- **food plants** – herbs, tomatoes, etc.
- **flowers** – for sunny locations, shady locations
- **soil** – use a good quality potting soil, not topsoil
- **fertilizer** – slow release fertilizer will be less work for you
- **water** – containers generally dry out quickly
- **wind** – protection

1. Choose the location for your container garden, then decide on sun or shade requirements.

2. Choose your container, making sure the container has drainage holes. Holes could be drilled if necessary.

3. Choose plants based on the look you desire and the plant’s needs. As you choose plants, arrange them in the cart, as you would place them in the container. A taller plant for the centerpiece plus two other smaller growing varieties for alternating on the sides of the container. Choose plants in colors and
texture that compliment each other keeping in mind the location for the completed container. Remember flowering plants require more sunlight than green plants. Now the fun begins.

1. Punch out drainage hole if necessary. Holes may be drilled into some containers.

2. Place tallest centerpiece plant in pot, bowl, or basket, filling in potting soil loosely as needed for next level of plants.

3. Place edge plants alternating color, angle plants toward the outside edge of container. Fill in potting soil as needed, add measured amount of slow-release fertilizer.

4. Water container plants as needed.

Completed Herb Pot

Two weeks later.

Four weeks later.
Now sit back and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Top 12 Containers Plants for the Hot-season (Container Gardens for Florida by Pamela Crawford)

April through September

   Caladiums
   Cannas
   Coleus
   Ground Orchids
   Heliconia
   Mandevilla
   Melampodium
   Mussaenda
   Pentas
   Sweet Potato Vines
   Torenia, Trailing
   Torenia, Upright

You can find more plants and ideas from:

University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Science publication website:

   http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/

   (Type in “container gardening”)