



How to make a simple Summer Bedding Plant Basket



Summer planters make for a cheery welcome to our doorsteps, and with a wide range of 'ready to grow' summer bedding plants available from April in garden centres, and larger supermarkets, making your own basket can be a simple yet satisfying table top activity for many client groups.



Gather the materials, and gather around the table, engaging clients in light exercise that can support stress reduction, maintain motor and cognitive skills and spark creativity and the chance for relaxed conversation around the table.



The ingredients

- Good quality general purpose compost
- Basket of choice
- Selection of summer bedding plants
- Scoop for compost
- After care: watering can, plant food (fertiliser) and scissors

Selection of summer bedding plants is very much a personal choice.

However, to aim for an approximate pyramid shape for the finished flowering basket requires a mix of plant growth styles. This ultimate shape requires 1 x centre piece, upright 'thriller' plant, 3 x middle height sturdier 'filler' plants and 3 x cascading 'spiller' plants. We have selected 3 slightly different 'spiller' plants. Plant labels give good information on the habit and eventual heights of plants.

Colour choice plays a part also in the design and your choice of plants. Some prefer to mix and match colours and tones.

Here we have chosen plants that will give the pyramid shape in oranges, yellows and whites.



Upright Thriller



Sturdy Filler



Spiller plant 1



Spiller plant 2



Spiller plant 3

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Step 1

Step 1. Set round bottomed baskets into a sturdy pot as this will stabilise the basket making it easier to work in.

Step 2. If the basket liner appears 'thin', insert a further plastic liner (cut a circle out of a used compost bag, and snip a few slits for drainage into it) inside the basket to help reduce excess water loss.

Use a mug to scoop compost to fill the basket halfway full.



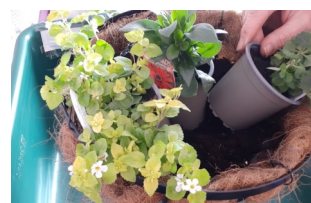
Step 2



Step 3

Step 3. Place the Thriller plant in the centre on the layer of compost. Check that the height of its pot is level with the lip of the basket.

Step 4. Place the 3 Spiller plants equally around the basket edge—at a 'jaunty' angle—leaning towards the edge of the basket, allowing the foliage to cascade over the basket.



Step 4



Step 5

Step 5. Scoop compost in and around the voids between the plants in their pots.

Step 6. Fill with compost almost to the height of the pots, leaving a 2cm gap between the compost layer and the lip of the basket.



Step 6



Step 7

Step 7. Lift the Thriller plant and pot out of the compost, leaving a hole behind. Gently squeeze the plant out of its pot, then pop the plant's rootball back into the hole in the compost.



Step 8

Step 8. Repeat for the 3 Spiller plants.



Step 9

Step 9. Use a spoon to scoop a hole in the compost for each of the 3 Filler plants—position them in between the Spillers and the Thriller.

Step 10. Gently fill in and around with more compost if required, keeping the compost level 2cm below the basket rim to ensure space for watering into.



Step 10

Step 11. Water well with a rose spray on a watering can to prevent dislodging the compost and young plants. Hang in a sunny sheltered spot if possible. Water regularly, and feed weekly once growth is well underway. Dead head fading blooms to encourage continuous flowering.



Step 11