

MAKING USE OF THE GLADIOLUS

Gladiolus can add an air of beauty to any room in the house. A decade ago, arranging was done by the book. It still applies today, but in a different form. We still need the basic lessons to compile a great arrangement, not a hit or miss vase of flowers. Different styles should be used for different rooms or occasions. When having a party, use bright and cheerful colors. If you want a quiet formal dinner, go for soft pastels. Try to use color schemes that coordinate with your room decor. Vertical styles work perfectly in an entry or hall. The straight lines carry the eye up and back. The addition of a few greens or small flowers used to cover the edge of the container, will complete your arrangement. If the arrangement is placed in front of a mirror, it will enhance the effect of the arrangement. Once a vertical arrangement is selected, make sure all material used is kept in an upright form. Remember, no matter what style of arrangement or where it is setting, be sure to finish the back. A few flowers placed low in back, yet visible from the front, along with foliage, will help to cover stems and medium. This gives an arrangement depth and a dimensional feel.

In the living room you can use almost any style, depending on the size of the table or space available. A mass of color may be just the thing in a corner. . In vogue at this time is making a ball on top of a vase. Use glads and delphinium for the circular and tuck in other flowers to form a gracious ball. Having a few cascade downward will cover the container. This will make the ball less flat on the bottom. Ivy will help with this effect. If time is short, a vase of glads will add a splash of color and interest to your room, with very little effort on your part. Be sure to use a large vase to give large glads a substantial base. If your container is small, miniatures will lend balance.

Vases often look best in corners or tall stands. For coffee tables and low stands, modern Japanese style arrangements lend themselves nicely. This style has influenced our arranging in past years. A twisty branch held in a *kin chin* (pin holder) in a low dish or small bowl, is your starting point. Three to five glad stems, placed at different angles will represent sun, man and earth. Coupling this with leaves to conceal the pin holder, finishes this easy to make and attractive arrangement. Glads are very versatile and are easy to show harmony. The long thin leaves of a glad bent to form circles or knots, can be used as an accent in this type of arrangement. If space is limited and the arrangement is small, you should use miniature glads.

What would a dinner party be without flowers on your table? In the past, the trend was for low full arrangements with candles on the sides, for the dining table. This style will permit viewing across the table for easy conversation. The trend now is high in the air, placing the arrangement atop a thin column. Surround the base with other flowers that lead out and to the ends of table. This style, with the arrangement on a pedestal above seated eye level, permits viewing across the table. Accessories such as gold or silver ribbon for anniversaries or red and green for Christmas, can be entwined with Ivy or greens. Single glad blooms with a small bow and ivy leaf at each place setting will complete your party table. Through the Winter and Spring, you can purchase gladiolus from your local florist, incorporating seasonal greens and spring corms, to brighten your home.

Using teakettles, work bowls, and crocks as containers in kitchen arrangements, add a bit of color and a ray of sunshine. Antiques can be your containers, if it agrees with your space allotted. Coffee cups and mugs filled with blooms, "greet you at morning coffee."

Baths and bedrooms are all in need of gladiolus. Miniatures on the vanity or night stand can brighten your day. Add some greens and you are ready to start your daily routine. Fresh glads can *pick me up* anytime of the year. Keep the principle of design in mind. Balance and visual stability is important.

TIPS FROM BERNIE:

Remove bottom leaves. This increases the time that water in the container will stay fresh. Decaying leaves will clog the stems causing wilted flowers. Before arranging or placing in containers, recut stems and add flower preservative to water. Always clean the container with bleach after discarding arrangement. This will destroy bacteria, which may shorten the life of your next arrangement. When using oasis in our arrangements, tape to the container to hold in place. You can fasten pin holders to your container with floral clay, especially if the arrangement isn't quite balanced. In a bowl or large vase, crossing stems can hold the gladiolus in place.

ALWAYS REMEMBER TO:

Balance an arrangement, so it doesn't look top heavy like it's ready to fall over. Harmonize the arrangement, so it looks like a unified whole. Each arrangement should have a focal point, a cluster of color, a leaf or even a small gap. This focal point gives your eye a place to start when viewing your arrangement. Often, simplicity is a plus, especially in oriental arrangements. Leave space, so flowers do not touch. Creative expression in arrangement is the person's thoughts and ideas. This can show emotion, mood or tell a story, trying to please yourself and others. Work fast and do not remove a stem more than once. Your first thoughts are usually your best. Enjoy the gladiolus that seems to say *pick me*, and plant at intervals for a longer bloom season.

From the hall to the bathroom, you can fill your home with the beauty of gladiolus. Keep in mind that flower arranging is the art of organizing selected elements and principle of design, to obtain beauty, simplicity, expression and harmony. Create a masterpiece for the table or entryway. It will make your day fuller and brighten your home. Gladiolus are a joy to behold.

Updated by: Bernard Jones

ON ARRANGING FLOWERS

First, let me explain how I became interested in this art. You may have already guessed it was all because of those "dern glads!" When one had a husband who came home from work with sacks of what I thought then looked like onion sets, in very shriveled condition, given him by a fellow employee, you either joined him - or stayed home alone when he went off to interesting places for glad shows. The first time I went along, I just looked. But, way back in the dark recesses of my mind, the thoughts were creeping in, "Why, I could do THAT." I really believe this is the basis of LIVING itself. If we really THINK we can, we WILL. So, I began to enter the shows in arrangement classes and my very first entry won a blue ribbon. I'll never forget it, because it was at a Ft. Wayne show and was a very bad corsage. But, it was the only entry in it's class. I think the judge felt sorry for the poor thing! I didn't know then how poorly it was done. It didn't really matter, because I was a BLUE RIBBON WINNER. If my husband could win ribbons, so could I.

Arranging flowers is like most things one tries: It takes practice, practice, practice, even as growing them. I really believe most anyone can, with a little practice, arrange flowers to be pleasing to the eye. Maybe not to pass the all-knowing eyes of a qualified arrangement judge, but well enough to look beautiful somewhere in the home, be it the dining table or the living room coffee table. Here is where I would like to pass on a few things I have gleaned over the past few years, plus a "mini course" in Basic Floral Design.

There are seven basic floral designs. The secret of all seven is to remain within imaginary boundaries.

Design drawings in chapter 15 Addendum.