

Hanging Baskets

Containers: Use anything from an old wicker basket to a newly-purchased plastic hanging basket. Remember that hanging baskets dry out quickly, so use a 12"+ pot for baskets that will hang in the sun. The larger soil volume in these bigger baskets mean the plants have a greater store of moisture to draw from. Baskets placed in the shade can be smaller since they do not dry out as quickly.

Preparing the basket: An old wicker basket will need a plastic liner with drainage holes poked into the bottom. A wire basket needs a liner like moss to hold the soil. Prior to adding soil, you can put a saucer at the bottom of the basket to retain water.



Soil: Never use field or garden soil as it may have inadequate drainage and may carry insects, disease and weed seeds.

Planting: Remember when buying plants for your hanging basket that plants grown in small pots or packs dry out and wilt easily. Plant them as soon as possible, otherwise, water

well and leave them in the shade.

Remove each plant, root ball intact, and set into the soil. Leave room for each plant's root ball with a bit of extra room left for the growth of new roots. Make sure all the roots are covered and that each plant is sitting securely in the basket. The soil surface should be about ½" below the rim of the pot so that there is no run-off during watering.

The best time to plant is in the evening or on a cloudy day. If you plant on a hot, sunny day, water the basket immediately after planting and hang it in a shady area for a day or two to establish.

Watering: Water thoroughly right after planting and whenever the soil begins to dry out. Hanging baskets tend to dry out quickly because of the large volume of roots drinking moisture from a relatively small soil volume, and also because most soil mixes for hanging baskets are designed for good drainage, which means they don't retain water that well. Therefore they need to be checked frequently to guard against wilting.



Fertilizing: Most flowering baskets perform better if they are fertilized regularly. Water with a solution of 1

Tbsp. of water soluble fertilizer added to 1 gallon of water every 10 - 14 days. Slow release fertilizer pellets can also be added to the soil prior to planting to feed your basket.



Placement: Place hanging baskets anywhere you need a splash of colour - a lamppost, tree limb, fence, gazebo, balcony, etc. Wherever they hang, be sure that they are hung securely enough to withstand strong winds and the weight of wet soil.

Shade: Most baskets require a sunny position. If you need a hanging basket for a shady area, plant with shade-loving plants such as begonias, ferns, impatiens, fuchsias and primroses.

Variation: Try including a few vegetables, herbs, cherry tomatoes or strawberries in your hanging basket for added interest. Place these baskets in full sun and water and feed regularly for the best results.

Lighten the look: Compose your mixed basket with a variety of broad-leaf and fine-leaf plants to give it a balanced look.