

Grow Your Own Bouquet.

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## The joys of a cut garden.

**There was a time when one of the most important areas of any garden was the cutting garden, where flowers were planted to be harvested, like a crop, taken inside to be enjoyed, or shared with friends.**

You can have a cutting garden in a space as small as 3 × 5 feet, as long as it is appropriately planted for the light and soil conditions. The ideal scenario is have plants in bloom constantly, so you can always make up a fresh bunch of flowers for yourself or as a gift.

It's best to use a mix of annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees and herbs so as to keep producing ornamental foliage, flowers and stems all season long.

A cutting garden doesn't require a formal landscape plan, so they are easy to start. Of course, they can be beautiful, if you want to put the time into it, but it can also be hidden behind a fence, too. You can even cover the fence with native vines, like Clematis, Honeysuckle or Trumpetvine.

The best cutting flowers are strong, easy growing, taller varieties that are long blooming with a wide range of colors. The following lists are just a starting point. Although, anything with a stem may be used.

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## Suggested plants.

### Annuals

- Amaranthus
- Baby's Breath
- Bells of Ireland
- Canna
- Carnation
- Celosia
- Cleome
- Cosmos
- Dahlias
- Gerbera
- Gomphrena
- Marigolds
- Petunia
- Salvia
- Strawflower
- Sunflower
- Zinnia

### Perennials

- Achillea
- Anise Hyssop
- Artemisia
- Aster

- Aquilegia
- Asclepias
- Baptisia
- Coreopsis
- Crocosmia
- Dianthus
- Echinacea
- Eupatorium
- Ferns
- Helianthus
- Iris
- Kniphofia
- Leucanthemum
- Liatris
- Lilium
- Monarda
- Ornamental Grass
- Peony
- Penstemon
- Phlox
- Pycnanthemum
- Rudbeckia
- Salvia
- Solidago

### Bulbs

- Allium
- Asiatic Lily
- Daffodil
- Gladiola
- Hyacinth
- Oriental Lily
- Tulip

### Herbs

- Any work, especially great with foliage

### Trees & Shrubs

- Crab Apple
  - Cherry
  - Dogwood
  - Forsythia
  - Hydrangea
  - Lilac
  - Magnolia
  - Pussy Willow
  - Redbud
  - Redtwig Dogwood
  - Roses
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# Cut Flower Gardening

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## When to cut.

- Look for buds that are just beginning to open. Green buds that are too tight will droop rather than open.
  - Avoid cutting fully open blooms unless you need instant color.
  - Cut flowers early in the morning and put in water immediately.
  - Healthy, dark green stems and leaves are signs of flowers with lasting power.
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## How to cut.

- Most stems should be cut at an angle, preferably under water. This prevents air bubbles which could impede water intake.
  - For tubular stems, like daffodils and tulips, cut straight across.
  - Score the bark on woody stems.
  - Burn the ends of sappy stems, such as poppies and dahlias, with a match or candle to seal the stem and prevent sap from clouding the water.
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## Rule to remember.

- Use sharp cutting tools for a clean cut.
- Remove lower foliage that would remain underwater.
- Carry a bucket of water with you to the garden and place cut flowers in immediately. Keep material in water when designing.
- Clean vases after each use with soapy water to kill bacteria.
- Use a floral preservative to provide nutrients and prevent bacterial growth.
- Re-cut stems every day or so to prolong the life of cut flowers.
- Replenish the water daily with preservative.

