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Hanging Baskets

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# Hanging Baskets

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## PLANT SELECTION

Hanging baskets can add a new dimension to your gardening when used to decorate indoor gardens, terraces, patios and greenhouses. Before selecting plants for hanging baskets, study their cultural requirements (sun, shade, high or low temperature). Baskets may be planted with all the same species, or two or more species. When using two species, place one rather upright species in the center and trail the other around the edge of the basket. Usually several rooted cuttings or small plants are used, with one to three placed in the center and several around the edge. The number of plants you use will depend on their size and that of the container.

## TYPES OF HANGING BASKETS

Hanging baskets can be made from most any object that will hold soil and allow proper drainage — a wire frame lined with spagnum moss, a wooden or plastic basket, a hollowed coconut shell, an old shoe or kitchen colander, a clay pot.

## BASKET ASSEMBLY

Mix equal parts soil, sand (perlite or vermiculite) and peat moss with  $\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. of superphosphate (0-20-0) for every bushel of soil mix. Then fill the basket with the mixture.

For an 8- to 10-in. diameter pot, use two plants in the center and three or four trailing plants on the outside. The outside plants may be slanted for projection of the tops beyond the rim of the container.

## DRAINAGE

Internal drainage is essential for indoor containers. Drainage material (small pebbles, pieces of broken pots, coarse sand or ground charcoal) will prevent the soil from becoming waterlogged.

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## WATERING

Water the basket thoroughly immediately after planting. Outdoor baskets will dry out quickly on hot, sunny, breezy days when the relative humidity is low and may need watering more than once daily. However, indoor baskets that receive low amounts of light and are poorly drained may only need weekly watering. As a rule of thumb, water your hanging basket thoroughly if the topsoil is dry and wilting is beginning to occur. Then wait until this condition is reached again to water.

## FERTILIZATION

All plants need nutrients to grow and most materials and nutrients are provided in the soil mix discussed previously. However, plants require additional nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium. If the lower foliage becomes yellow, nitrogen may be deficient. If leaves turn purple and become stunted, phosphorous may be deficient. Leaves that have burned or browned edges (not caused by the sun), may lack potassium.

The amount and frequency of fertilization depends on the amount and frequency of watering. That is, the more you water the more nutrient leaching will occur. For outdoor baskets with good drainage, use 5-10-10 or a 10-10-10 fertilizer applied monthly at the rate of 1 teaspoon/pot and the same to indoor baskets every 2 to 3 months. Or use a house plant fertilizer at the rate recommended on the label. **DO NOT OVER FERTILIZE.**

## CULTURAL PRACTICES

You can shape plants in hanging baskets by removing several inches of terminal growth (pinching). Remove old flowers, seed pods and dead material which encourages insects and disease. Some plants benefit if they are cut back occasionally. Cutting back in late July or early August will provide showy baskets in the fall.

## WINTER CARE

Bring outdoor baskets inside before the first frost and place in a South or East window. If there is no place for them indoors, they may be cleaned out, washed and stored until the following spring. **DO NOT** leave plastic containers in cold areas as they may crack when frozen.

## BASKET EXAMPLES

- Shade:**
1. Asparagus fern in the center and fibrous rooted begonias on the outside.
  2. Asparagus fern in the center and impatiens toward the outside.
- Sun:**
1. Asparagus fern in center and petunias on the outside.
  2. Coleus in center and ivy geranium on the outside.

The following list of plants can be used:

### SHADE HANGING BASKETS

Asparagus Fern	Lobelia
Artillery Plant	Pansy & Viola
Boston Fern	Pellionia
Browallia	Pepper
Caladium	Periwinkle
Christmas Cactus	Philodendron
Creeping Fig	Pick-A-Back
English Ivy	Plectranthus
Fuchsia	Pothos
German Ivy	Schizanthus
Grape Ivy	Staghorn Fern
Hemigraphis	Torenia
Impatiens	Tradescantia
Japanese Honeysuckle	Tuberous Begonia
Kangaroo Vine	Zebrina

### SUN HANGING BASKETS

Ageratum	Morning Glory
Asparagus Fern	Marigold
Cherry Tomato	Nasturtium
Cigar Plant	Petunia
Coleus	Portulaca
Dianthus	Salvia
Dusty Miller	Shrimp Plant
Dwarf Marigold	Strawberry Begonia
English Ivy	Sweet Potato
Geranium	Telanthera
Ivy Geranium	Trailing Lantana
Iresine	Verbena
Lantana	Wax Begonia
Linaria	Zinnia