

Flower Arranging 101: The Basics of Bouquet Making

by Caroline Martin

FLOWER TYPES

An ideal bouquet/arrangement contains all or close to all of these flower types. Each plays its own unique role in the composition of the arrangement

Greens: A good starting point for all arrangements. Greenery will help make your bouquet feel more natural. Your greens from your garden, or from any trees or shrubs you have nearby. Some of my favorites include raspberry greens, cerinthe, olive, eucalyptus, and basil (thai or lemon).

Fillers: These flowers take up space in your bouquet (hence the name, filler), they give structure to the bouquet. They aren't necessarily the stars of the show. Some of my favorites include dill, ammi dara, and yarrow.

Focals: These are the stars of your bouquets. They should be the first thing that catches your eye when you look at the bouquet. Some of my go-to focals are roses, dahlias, and zinnias.

Accents: These are smaller flowers, sometimes spikes. They add whimsy, height, and texture. I tend to put accents into my bouquets in smaller clusters (2-3) for a more natural appearance. Some of my favorites include grasses, scabiosa, salvias, and nigella.

COLOR

Having a color scheme is a crucial component of any bouquet. In general, two approaches work best.

Complimentary colors – Choose two colors are opposite each other on the color wheel. Exs: Purple and yellow, orange and blue, red and green.

Analogous/monochromatic – Composed of two or more colors that are next to each other on the color wheel. Exs: blue and purple, yellow and orange, etc.

GENERAL DESIGN TIPS

- 3s and 5s are pleasing on the eyes. Stick to odd numbers, especially for focal flowers.
- Adding too many elements or colors can make any bouquet look too busy and unsettled.
- I use 5–8 ingredients (on average) per bouquet.
- When building a bouquet in your hand, start with 3 stems of a sturdy item.
- Always leave room for the flowers to breathe, it creates a more airy and natural-looking arrangement.