THE EARLY ITALIANS were the first to have arranged flowers in vases. They harvested flowers from their gardens to create the displays. Vase arrangements are a relatively easy way to add a splash of color to just about any area of a house.

Objective:

Design bud-vase and vase arrangements.

Key Terms:

bud vase
grid
tape grid
vase

Vase Arrangements

Vase arrangements are a traditional way for gardeners to display their garden flowers. A vase is an open container designed to hold flowers. Vases may be glass, plastic, porcelain, ceramic, or pottery of various shapes. Containers with narrow mouths hold flowers upright, whereas containers with wide mouths may allow flowers to fall over. A vase arrangement may be designed for viewing from one side or from all angles.

BUD-VALE ARRANGEMENT DESIGN

One type of vase arrangement involves the bud vase. A bud vase is a small vase typically used to hold one to three flowers. Bud-vase arrangements are simple designs that have many uses. Usually the arrangements are designed for viewing from one side.
Containers used as bud vases are commonly found in 6- and 9-inch heights. Smaller vases are sometimes used, and taller vases can be used for dramatic effect. Flowers for a bud-vase arrangement should be at least 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) times the height of the vase. If the arrangement is to be used on a dining table, the flowers or both the flowers and the vase can be shorter to allow the diners to see one another.

Small to medium-sized flowers are most fitting for bud vases. Roses, carnations, mums, irises, tulips, daffodils, alstroemerias, small anthuriums, and filler flowers are commonly used. Ferns, galax leaves, myrtle, ivy, pittosporum, ruscus, small-leaved eucalyptus, and evergreens are examples of foliage acceptable for use in bud-vase arrangements.

A bud-vase arrangement usually includes a bow for added color. The bow is located at the lower part of the design. Often the bow is placed at the rim of the vase. Since the bow wires are placed in the vase, green enamel wire that resists rusting should be used. For more security, the wires can be wrapped around the floral stems.

**Single-Flower Bud Vase**

Single-flower bud vases are simple in appearance but can be classy. Steps to making a single-flower bud vase follow.

1. Select a flower that is proportionate to the vase.
2. Fill the vase to within an inch of the rim with a floral preservative solution.
3. Use foliage to form a framework for the flower. The foliage should be from 1 to 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) times the height of the vase.
4. Center the flower.
5. Add additional foliage near the vase rim to give more stability.
6. Add filler flowers, such as baby’s breath.
7. Place a bow at the center beneath the flower.
8. Remove any leaves or debris from the water.
Three-Flower Bud Vase

The three-flower bud-vase arrangement is a time-honored favorite. Usually, all three flowers are the same kind. Follow these steps to make a three-flower bud vase.

1. Select three flowers.
2. Fill the vase to within an inch of the rim with a floral preservative solution.
3. Center the tallest flower at the proper height—1 to 1 1/2 times the height of the vase.
4. Use foliage to form a framework for the flower. The foliage should be from 1 to 1 1/2 times the height of the vase.
5. Arrange the other two flowers at different heights in a zig-zag manner.
6. Add additional foliage near the vase rim to give more stability.
7. Add filler flowers, such as baby’s breath.
8. Place a bow at the center beneath the flowers.
9. Remove any leaves or debris from the water.

VASE ARRANGEMENT DESIGN

Large vase arrangements are an excellent way to display garden flowers or floral bouquets purchased at the market. They are fairly simple to make, and the necessary supplies are minimal.

Grids

Containers for vase arrangements come in many different sizes. A vase with a large opening presents greater challenges in keeping the flowers in place. Use of a grid helps to solve the problem. A grid is a framework of materials at the top of a vase to provide support for the flowers. Three ways to create grids for support are with foliage, tape, and wire mesh.

The designer can use foliage to make a grid. The advantage of a foliage grid is additional materials are not required. Stems of foliage, such as leatherleaf, are placed at angles to create a radiated pattern. The overlap of the stems creates the natural framework.

A tape grid is used to achieve an artificial framework at the opening of a vase. By placing tape at 90-degree angles, a support grid can be created. The tape color is usually matched to the container color to hide the mechanical system.
Marbles, gemstones, or decorative rocks can be placed in the bottom of a container to provide a support system. They also add color and texture to the arrangement.

Once the framework is in place, adding the foliage and flowers will allow the designer to create either a one-sided design or an all-around design in any type of vase.

**One-Sided Vase Arrangement**

The dozen-rose one-sided vase arrangement is a traditional piece in the floral industry. Steps to designing a one-sided vase arrangement with a dozen roses follow.

1. Select a vase.
2. Make a tape grid.
3. Fill the vase to within an inch of the rim with preservative solution.
4. Place 8 to 10 stems of leatherleaf in a radiating pattern.
5. Clean the roses by removing thorns, leaves that would be below the waterline, and bruised or discolored flower petals.
6. Center the tallest rose toward the back of the vase. The height of the tallest rose should be about 1 1/2 times the height of the vase.
7. Place a rose to the right and a rose to the left of the first rose. These should be about 1/2 inch shorter than the first rose.
8. Place another pair of roses to the outside of the first pair. These should be another 1/2 inch shorter.
9. Cut a third pair 1/2 inch shorter and place them as the outermost flowers on the right and left. When viewed from above, these first seven roses should form a “V.”
10. Place the last five roses in front of the “V.” Center one rose in front of the first rose and lower than the first rose. Use the other four to fill the open area.
11. Add a bow made with #9 ribbon to the arrangement.

**All-Around Vase Arrangement**

An all-around arrangement of a dozen roses is the best choice if the piece is to be seen from many different angles.

1. Select a vase.
2. Make a foliage grid or a tape grid.
3. Fill the vase to within an inch of the rim with preservative solution.
4. Clean the roses by removing thorns, leaves that would be below the waterline, and bruised or discolored flower petals.
5. Select the tallest, straightest, and best-looking rose. It should be 1½ times the height of the vase.
6. Trim four roses to be ½ inch shorter than the tallest one, and trim seven roses to be about 1 inch shorter than the tallest one.
7. Start by placing the seven roses so they form an outer ring. Their stems should angle outward.
8. Place the next four roses so that they form an inner ring. These four roses should stand a bit more vertically than the first seven roses.
9. Position the tallest rose in the center of the arrangement, where it should stand vertically.
10. Add foliage as needed, filler flowers, and a bow if desired.
11. Be sure to remove any debris from the solution.

**Summary:**

A vase is an open container designed to hold flowers. A vase arrangement may be designed for viewing from one side or from all angles.
A bud vase is a small vase typically used to hold one to three flowers. Usually bud-vase arrangements are designed for viewing from one side. Bud-vase containers are commonly 6 or 9 inches tall. Flowers for a bud-vase arrangement should be at least 1 1/2 times the height of the vase. The flowers can be shorter if the arrangement is to be used on a dining table.

Containers for vase arrangements come in many different sizes. A grid is a framework of materials at the top of a vase to provide support for the flowers. Three ways to create grids are with foliage, tape, and wire mesh. A one-sided design or an all-around design can be made in any type of vase.

Checking Your Knowledge:

1. What is a vase?
2. What is a bud vase?
3. How are one-flower and three-flower bud vases designed?
4. How are grids made?
5. How are large one-sided and all-around vase arrangements made using a dozen roses?

Expanding Your Knowledge:

Practice the techniques discussed in this unit by making bud-vase and large vase arrangements in your home. Use garden flowers or flowers purchased from a florist.

Web Links:

Seven Steps from Floral Experts for Making Vase Arrangements
http://flowerscanada.org/content/en/7_steps_for_making_a_vase_arrangement.htm

How to Arrange Flowers in Water
http://www.floralschool.com/Glass.HowTo.htm

Bud-Vase and Vase Arrangements
http://www.hort.vt.edu/faculty/McDaniel/hort2164/Lab9Vase.htm

Simple Flower Arranging
http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/kobayashik/Flowerarr.html