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## **Creative Container Gardening**

### **DIY Create your own Color Bowl or Container Garden**

#### **Container Gardening is Easy!**

You can design your color bowl or container garden to be as dramatic or understated as you like. By incorporating blooming annuals, ornamental grasses, specimen plants, perennials, ivies or any of the myriad of interesting and beautiful plants available, you can achieve the effect of a vibrant garden on a smaller scale without the demands of a large garden.

#### **Your Lighting Conditions**

Decide where you want your container garden or color bowl and take note of how many hours of direct sunlight it gets, and at what time of day. If you have an area which receives afternoon sun, or 6 hours or more of full sun, plants which prefer full sun would be appropriate to use. If your area receives morning sun or is deeply shaded, plants which prefer shade would be the appropriate choice for your pot.

#### **Your Container**

What are the dimensions of your container? Does it have adequate drainage? Is it the right color to accent your home? Covington's offers a huge selection of terra-cotta, glazed pottery and faux terra-cotta containers to choose from. Be creative with your choice of containers, but make sure that your container has adequate holes for proper drainage... this is a must for your plants to thrive. In order to ensure healthy roots, soil must drain properly so when choosing your container, it is imperative to look for drainage holes. If they are not present, holes can be easily made in some containers.

Large containers are appropriate for mixed plantings of ornamental grasses, colorful annuals and trailing plants. Small containers are better suited for colorful annuals and trailing plants with smaller more compact habits. Larger containers do not dry out as quickly as small containers. Faux terra-cotta or plastic containers are a good choice because they are light weight and are easier to move if desired or necessary. Some materials used for containers are more porous than others. Materials like terra-cotta and wood allow better air circulation and enable the root system to breathe. However, with a more porous material, the soil may dry out faster and need to be monitored for watering more often.

## Watering and Maintenance

Container gardens and color bowls will require less water in early Spring and Fall, and more water in our Texas summer. **A good rule of thumb to use in our Spring and Fall season is, “If your container is only dry on the surface, do not water, but if it is dry below your first knuckle, water deeply until the water emerges from the container’s drainage holes.”**

**Our Texas summers are another story altogether...Check containers daily for water and water deeply.** By using 1/4 to 1/3 expanded shale in your containers, you will ensure your plantings will have proper drainage and aid the soil in retaining moisture. Adding Soil Moist or Enviro Raindrops to your containers at the time of planting will also help your containers maintain the necessary moisture for your plants to thrive in the Summer.

## Potting Recipe for Ornamental Container Plantings

- Covington’s Potting Soil
- 1/4 to 1/3 Expanded Shale
- Osmocote slow release plant food (at time of planting & re-apply every 3 months)

Fertilize your containers (at full strength once every 2- 3 weeks) with ferti-lome water soluble plant food for blooming/foilage plants.

## Thrill, Fill and Spill

Remember this formula when planting your containers:

- **Thrill-** The tall center or drama of your container
- **Fill-** The filler layer of flowers or plants which are shorter than the “Thrill”, but taller than the “Spill”
- **Spill-**The outer layer of plantings which will trail over your containers edge

## BEST CHOICES FOR SPRING/ SUMMER CONTAINER PLANTINGS FOR AREAS WITH FULL SUN

*A=Annual*

*P=Perennial*

*TP=Tender Perennial*

*TT=Texas Tough (Extreme heat tolerance;  
Low maintenance)*

THRILL	FILL	SPILL
African Bulbine – P,TT	Ageratum – A	Blue Daze – A,TT
Angelonia – TP,TT	Aster – A	Lobelia – A
Artemesia Poms Castle – P	Bronzeleaf Sun Begonia – A	Moss Rose – A,TT
Asiatic Lily – P	Dusty Miller – P	New Gold Trail Lantana-P,TT
Aztec Grass - P	Euphorbia, Diamond Frost - P	Purslane – A,TT
Butterfly Iris – P,TT	Graffiti Penta (dwarf) – A,TT	Rosemary (trailing) – P,TT
Celosia – A	Marigold (short variety) – A	Scaevola – A,TT
Diascia – P	Melampodium – A	Sedum-Dragons Blood – P,TT
Hibiscus (tropical) – A	Petunia – A	Strawberry - P
Lavender – P	Profusion Zinnia – A,TT	Sweet Alyssum – A
Mexican Feathergrass – P,TT	Snapdragon (short) – A	Sweet Potato Vine – A,TT
Penta (tall) – A,TT	Star Zinnia – A,TT	Thyme-Silver Lemon – P,TT
PomPom Marigold (tall) – A	Sun Coleus - A	Verbena (Perennial) – P,TT
Purple Fountaingrass – A,TT	Verbena – A	Wave Petunia – A,TT
Red Flash Caladium – A	Vinca (Periwinkle) – A,TT	
Rosemary (Hardy upright) – P,TT		
Salvia – A		
Scabiosa – P		
Snapdragon (tall) – A		
Society Garlic – P		
Stello D'oro Daylily – P		
Sun Coleus – A		
Victoria Blue Salvia – P,TT		

## BEST CHOICES FOR SPRING/SUMMER CONTAINER PLANTINGS FOR AREAS WITH MORNING SUN OR SHADE

*A=Annual*

*P=Perennial*

*TP=Tender Perennial*

*EP=Evergreen Perennial*

THRILL	FILL	SPILL
Caladiums - A	Ajuga – P	Algerian Ivy - EP
Calla Lilly – P	Coleus – A	Bacopa - A
Coleus (largeleaf) - A	Double Impatiens – A	Creeping Fig - EP
Cordyline - TP	Greenleaf Shade Begonia - A	Lamium - P
Dracena - TP	Heuchera (Coral Bells) - P	Needlepoint Ivy - EP
Fern - P	Impatiens – A	Purple Jew (Hardy) - P
Geranium - A	Lemon Balm – P	Swedish Ivy - TP
Gerber Daisy – P	Splash (Polka dot plant) - A	Trailing Geranium - A
Hosta - P	Torenia - A	Variegated Jew - TP
Nemesia – A	Tuberous Begonia - A	Vinca Minor - EP
New Guinea Impatiens - A		
Yew - EP		