

# beautifully bright

Celebrate the sun with these colorful containers that enjoy basking in plenty of light.

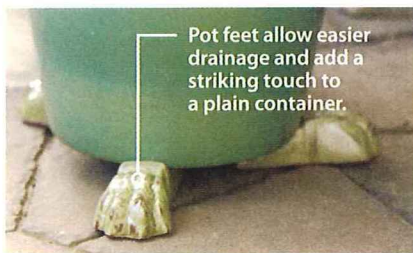


## SIMPLE AND STUNNING



A container doesn't have to be complicated to be pretty! This simple arrangement of easy-to-find plants looks nice early in the season, as you see it here, and it'll be just as pretty as it grows and changes over the summer. Foliage color plays a big role — you can't miss all that purple, chartreuse and burgundy — but take a look at the leaves themselves. They vary in shape and texture, from shiny, pointed leaves of Persian shield, to the simple, burgundy-tinged coleus leaves, to the rounded, fuzzy geranium leaves. This contrast plays off beautifully against the smooth, shiny neutral sage-green of the container.

Although calibrachoa and geraniums are both vigorous plants, they won't be able to compete with the others in this pot. Get an early start on preventing Persian shield and coleus from taking over. Pinch out the new growing tips every couple of weeks so these two exuberant plants don't get out of bounds. And snap out spent geranium blooms to keep it flowering all summer long.

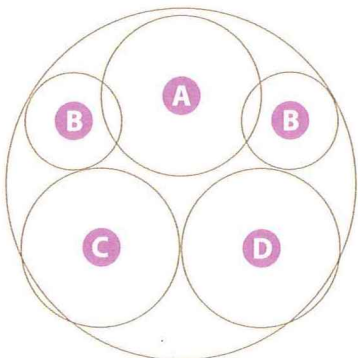


Pot feet allow easier drainage and add a striking touch to a plain container.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A Persian shield** *Strobilanthes dyeriana* (1)
- ★ **B Calibrachoa** *Calibrachoa Superbells*® Pink (2)
- ★ **C Coleus** *Solenostemon* 'Pineapple' (1)
- ★ **D Geranium** *Pelargonium* 'Crystal Palace Gem' (1)

Container is 12 in. in diameter



## LET SPRING PEEK IN YOUR WINDOW

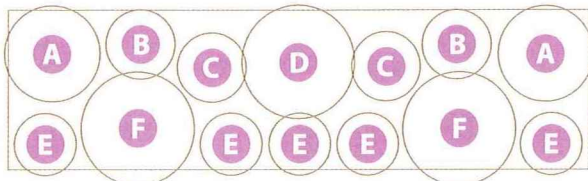


Soft pastels help you ease into spring in this pretty windowbox. Maybe you never really thought about white as a color, but see how the creamy white walls set off white pansies, stock and candytuft? Even the ivy's cream edges help to lighten up the look, spilling down over the edges of the black metal box. Pretty as this is, it's a look for spring. Most gardeners buy pansies, ranunculus and regal geraniums as blooming plants for short-term use in a container. (In fact, the pale-lavender regal geranium here is just tucked into the windowbox in its plastic nursery pot so it's easy to lift in and out.) They'll fade as the weather starts to heat up, so pop them out and pick a heat-loving annual like zonal geranium to keep the ivy company for the summer.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A Stock** *Matthiola incana* 'Hot Cakes White' (2)
- B Ranunculus** *Ranunculus asiaticus* Tecolote hybrids (2)
- C Candytuft** *Iberis sempervirens* (2)
- D Regal geranium** *Pelargonium xdomesticum* (1)
- ★ **E Pansy** *Viola Panola XP*™ Blue True (5)
- F Algerian ivy** *Hedera algeriensis* 'Gloire de Marengo' (2)

Windowbox is 30 in. long x 8 in. wide





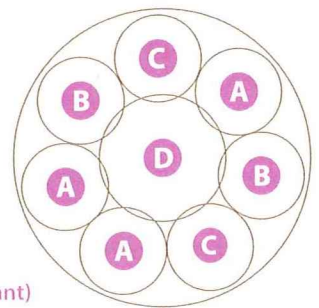


### love this look?

The key to this container's success is picking one stunning flower and choosing foliage to set it off. Other big bold flowers to show off against a backdrop of foliage are celosia, hydrangeas and tulips.

### SHOW-STOPPING SHOWOFFS

Ranunculus are so perfect, they almost don't look real! But real they are, and they're show-stoppers in a spring container. Buy ranunculus from a garden center when the first buds are starting to show hints of color (they're often just sold by color, not as named cultivars), and you'll be able to enjoy them for several weeks. Unfortunately, they don't rebloom, so you'll want to pop them out and replace them with something else for summer. But the rest of this container, with its pretty coral bells, hakonechloa and sweet woodruff foliage, would be a great backup for anything you might like to tuck in — maybe a hot-orange begonia? This container enjoys plenty of sun in cool spring weather, but as it heats up, you may want to move it into afternoon shade.

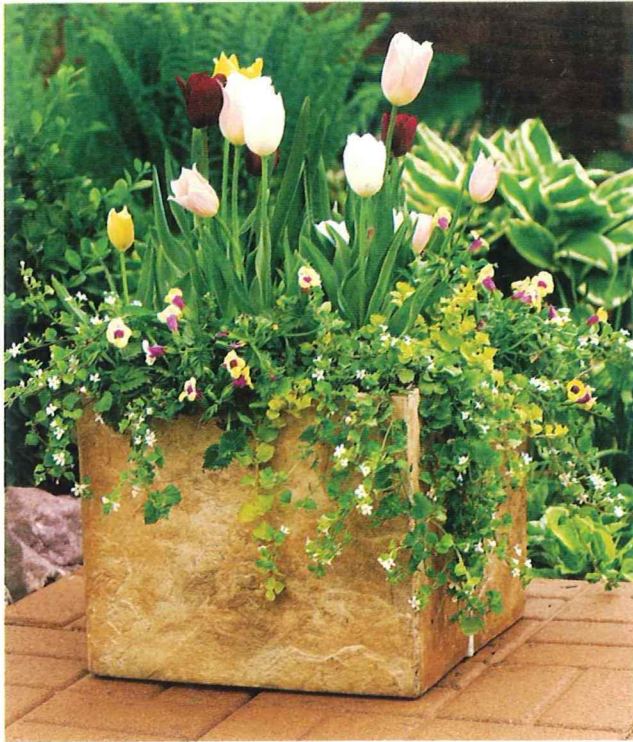


#### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Ranunculus *Ranunculus* hybrid (3)
- B** Sweet woodruff *Galium odoratum* (2)
- ★ **C** Hakonechloa *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' (2)
- ★ **D** Coral bells *Heuchera* 'Dark Secret' (1)

Container is 15 in. in diameter





## COORDINATED COLORS



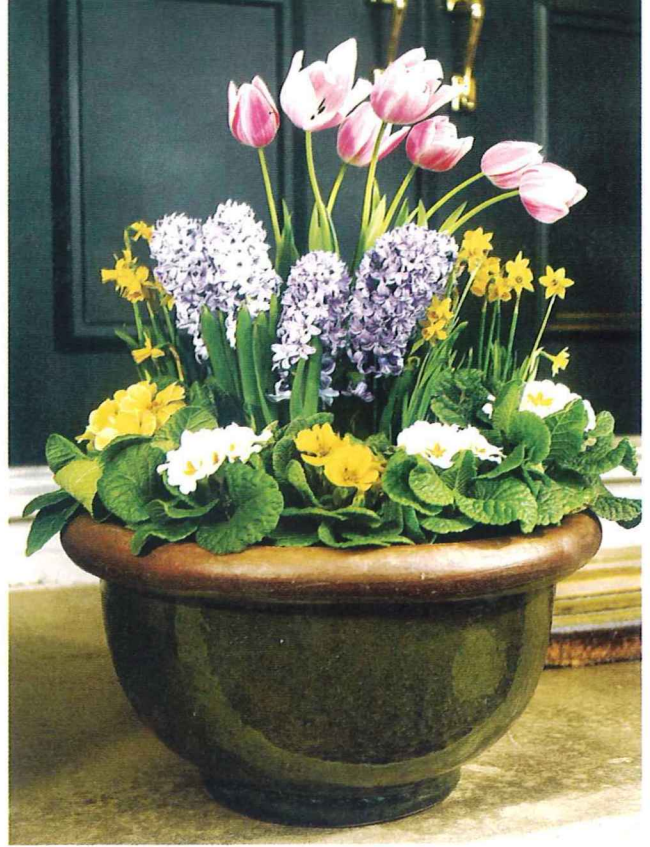
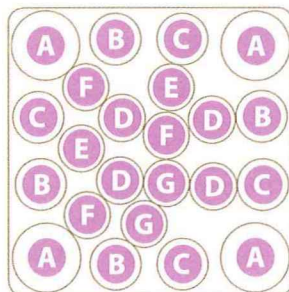
At first glance, it may seem like this pretty spring container color scheme is just random. But take another look and you'll notice that those pink, yellow and burgundy tulips pick up the colors of the wishbone flower, while the white bacopa and white tulips add a refreshing neutral touch.

These tulips are late blooming, so we were able to find big plants of bacopa, wishbone flower and creeping Jenny in a garden center to go with them. But those plants were used to being in a warm greenhouse and couldn't take the cool spring nighttime temperatures as well as the tulips could. So this is a good choice for a sheltered patio, where the temperatures stay a bit warmer.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A Bacopa** *Sutera cordata* Snowstorm® White (4)
- ★ **B Wishbone flower** *Torenia Catalina*® Gilded Grape (4)
- ★ **C Creeping Jenny** *Lysimachia nummularia* 'Aurea' (4)
- ★ **D Tulip** *Tulipa* 'Apricot Beauty' (2)
- ★ **E Tulip** *Tulipa* 'Jan Reus' (2)
- ★ **F Tulip** *Tulipa* 'Golden Apeldoorn' (3)
- ★ **G Tulip** *Tulipa* 'Inzell' (2)

Container is 15 in. square



## THE SCENT OF SPRING

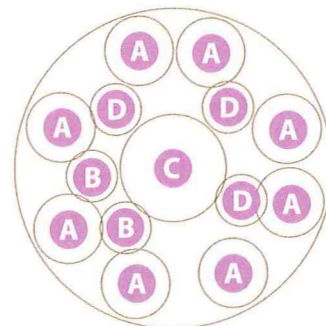


Ah, the sweet smell of hyacinths! This colorful container will perfume a front entryway or sweeten the corner of a deck. In fact, that scent is so powerful that you may not want these hyacinths too close to the front door! It's easy to get early spring off to a good start if you use already-blooming plants, like the primroses and bulbs here. You can often find prechilled tulips, hyacinths and daffodils ready to bloom at a florist, or start your own the previous fall. Just put them in a plastic nursery pot and "plant" the pot at the right depth for the bulbs. In spring, lift the pot and tuck it into a decorative container.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A Primrose** *Primula polyanthus* 'Pacific Giants' (8)
- ★ **B Hyacinth** *Hyacinthus orientalis* 'Delft Blue' (2 pots, 2 bulbs each)
- ★ **C Tulip** *Tulipa* 'Gabiella' (1 pot, 7 bulbs)
- ★ **D Daffodil** *Narcissus* 'Tête à Tête' (3 pots, 5 bulbs each)

Container is 17 in. in diameter



B, C and D circles represent single pots with multiple bulbs.





## MERRY SUNSHINE



Brighten any garden with these sunny shades of yellow! When you're using a bold container color, it's a great idea to echo that color in the plants — that way, the container doesn't upstage them. And yellow doesn't have to mean flowers: The Marguerite daisies are gorgeous, but check out the variegated Swedish ivy. Those gold-edged leaves will be beautiful all summer.

Speaking of leaves, there's another star in this container. Striking 'Black Coffee' begonia can be a difficult plant to work with, because the dark color often blends into the background. Not so with this yellow container — it keeps the begonia leaves front and center, where they belong.

Deadhead the Marguerite daisy to keep it blooming all summer (snip back individual flowers or shear the whole thing periodically, whichever is easier for you). Full sun will prevent it from getting leggy, too. This begonia likes a little shade in the heat of the day, but the taller plants behind it shade it a bit. And you can turn the container so the begonia faces north or east during the afternoon — just a little extra protection will do the trick.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A Begonia** *Begonia* 'Black Coffee' (1)
- B Variegated Swedish ivy** *Plectranthus ciliatus* 'Troy's Gold' (1)
- ★ **C Marguerite daisy** *Argyranthemum* Butterfly ('Ulyssis') (1)
- D Tufted hair grass** *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Northern Lights' (1)

Container is 12 in. in diameter

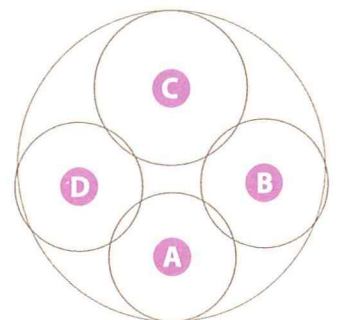


PHOTO: Brent Isenberger

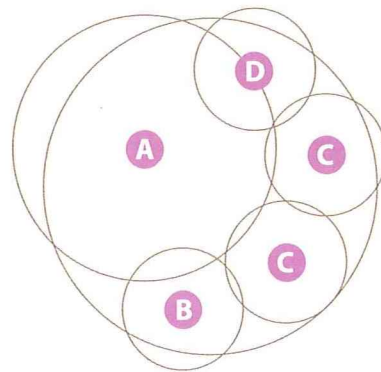




## CASUAL CLASSIC

Lady's mantle and roses are cottage garden staples, and they're a great pairing in a container, too. The chartreuse flowers of lady's mantle show up in early summer, but they'll look good for several weeks. And even when you cut them back, the soft, fuzzy leaves are a delight to the eye (and to the touch!). Many shrub roses share a great trait with most flowering annuals — they'll bloom all summer, especially if you keep them dead-headed. The simple shape and dark color of this container show off the trailing stems and cascading hakonechloa grass to perfection, too. Buy these plants big enough to make a splash in the container right away — they don't grow quickly.

These plants like lots of sun, but that'll cause the dark-colored container to absorb heat. And that will make the soil inside dry out quickly, so plan to visit this planting with the hose or watering can at least once a day. These plants don't want to sit in soggy soil, but lady's mantle and hakonechloa will scorch if they get too dry. And roses are more susceptible to pests like spider mite (see page 97 for more information) if they get too thirsty.



### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A** Rose *Rosa* Flower Carpet® Yellow ('Noalesa') (1)
- ★ **B** Hakonechloa *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' (1)
- ★ **C** Lady's mantle *Alchemilla mollis* (2)
- ★ **D** Astilbe *Astilbe xarendsii* 'Flamingo' (1)

Container is 18 in. in diameter

PHOTO: © Rob Cardillo



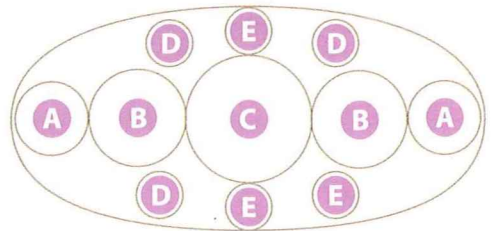


## ROMANTIC TROUGH GARDEN



Container classics like geraniums and petunias are great, but why not punch things up with some miniature evergreens? They'll add form and structure to your container, and you can plant them in your garden in fall. There's something else unusual about these false cypresses, too. Using just one as a tall centerpiece plant would be a more traditional approach. But planting two, spaced a little bit apart, emphasizes the shape and length of this carved sandstone trough planter. And the asparagus fern, with its similar texture, spills out the ends, adding even more length to the planting.

Pinch back the petunias as they start to stretch so they won't overgrow the details on the container. And if you want to replant the false cypresses in your garden come fall, snip petunia stems and geraniums back a little bit as needed so they don't shade the evergreens too much. That'll prevent brown, dead patches of foliage from forming on the false cypresses.



### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Asparagus fern *Asparagus densiflorus* Sprengeri Group (2)
- B** Sawara false cypress *Chamaecyparis pisifera* (2)
- ★ **C** Geranium *Pelargonium* 'Crystal Palace Gem' (1)
- ★ **D** Petunia *Petunia* Double Wave™ Pink (3)
- ★ **E** Petunia *Petunia* 'Celebrity Chiffon Morn' (3)

Container is 32 in. long x 15 in. wide oval



## PINK PERFECTION



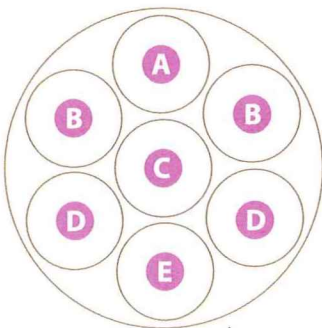
Sometimes you see a plant that's so stunning, you just have to build a whole container around it! A gorgeous 'Stargazer' lily was the starting point for this eye-popping combination. Contrasting colors like yellow or blue would have been nice, but that pink is so gorgeous, why not just run with it? Most of the flowers are the same color, but there's still plenty of interest, because all the blooms are different shapes, from the trumpets of the lilies to flat clusters of starflowers to bell-shaped calibrachoa.

Snip off the lily blooms as they fade to make the plant look tidy — it'll bloom for several weeks if you keep it deadheaded and watered. Later, when it's finished for the season, just cut the stalks off below the tops of the starflowers. The lilies will still have some foliage to nourish the bulbs for next year, and the starflower will keep going all summer, hiding the lily stems. Starflower is a heavy feeder, so it's a good idea to use a quarter-strength solution of water-soluble fertilizer every time you water. Once the lilies are gone, the starflower is the "star" of the show, so you want it to look good!

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Oriental lily *Lilium* 'Star Gazer' (1)
- B** Salvia *Salvia farinacea* 'Victoria' (2)
- ★ **C** Starflower *Pentas lanceolata* 'Lipstick Hot Pink' (1)
- ★ **D** Creeping Jenny *Lysimachia nummularia* 'Goldilocks' (2)
- ★ **E** Calibrachoa *Calibrachoa Superbells*® Cherry Red (1)

Container is 16 in. in diameter





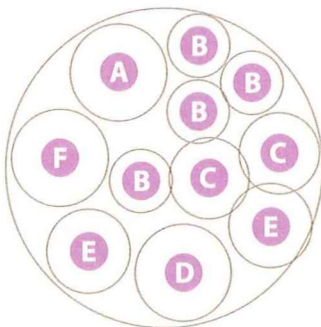
## BUTTERFLY MAGNET



You don't need a huge garden to attract butterflies. In fact, this container is only 15 in. across, and it's packed with plants that'll have winged visitors fluttering around most of the summer. Late summer is its peak, as you can see here, but those salvias, coreopsis and lantanas will have attracted butterflies ever since they were planted. And it'll finish up with sedum in the fall, as a final flourish. A word to the wise: These pretty flowers will attract butterflies, but they'll attract a few bees, too. Bees are good for your garden, but you probably don't want this container right next to your favorite garden chair or where you have to brush past it on a path.

Ever had problems getting a multicolored container like this one to look just right? The key is to pick one main color, like the yellow in this container, and make sure that at least two plants are displaying that color all the time. Then pick some accent colors, like the pink and blue here. Cluster those accent plants together, or pick some with big flowers — that way, the accent colors don't get lost or look like a mistake.

For immediate impact, you're going to want to start with good-sized plants. In this container, we started with most of the perennials in 6-in. square or 1-gal. nursery pots. To get everything to fit, you'll need to do a little squeezing. Wiggle the plants out of their original containers, and gently press the root balls to flatten them a little as necessary. As long as you don't break roots away from the crown, most plants don't mind this at all, especially if you give them a good drink of water right away!



### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A Dwarf goldenrod *Solidago* 'Baby Gold' ('Goldkind') (1)
- B Salvia *Salvia farinacea* 'Victoria' (4)
- C Coneflower *Echinacea purpurea* 'Ruby Star' ('Rubinstern') (2)
- D Sedum *Sedum spectabile* 'Hot Stuff' (1)
- ★ E Lantana *Lantana camara* 'Goldsonne' (2)
- ★ F Coreopsis *Coreopsis verticillata* 'Zagreb' (1)

Container is 15 in. in diameter

**tip** Love terra-cotta but not its breakable quality? This composite container gives you the look without the worry. And from a distance, you won't be able to tell the difference.





## MAGNIFICENT METALLICS

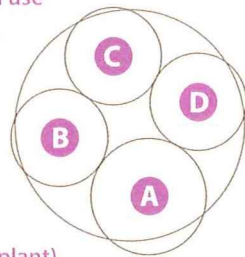
Who needs flowers when you have plants that look like this? There's so much leaf texture and color, and such interesting growth habits, this container doesn't need a lot of flashy blooms to be appealing.

Here's a handy tip for planning an all-foliage container: Variegated foliage is lovely, but too much of it can be overpowering. Choose one variegated plant, like the green, silver and burgundy begonia here, then choose solid-colored plants to pick up on the colors of the variegation. That lets one plant be the star, and your container doesn't look too busy.

This metal container is perfect with these plants, as it picks up the faint metallic sheen of the begonia. And it's simple, so it doesn't distract from the unusual planting. But you may want to move it to a spot where there's a little shade in the afternoon during the heat of summer. Metal containers heat up and that can be hard on plant roots, even those that are at ease in dry conditions.

## love this look?

Did you know that it's easy to paint a galvanized metal container? Scrub it clean with detergent first, then use a solution of 1 part latex paint to 1 part water. The green-tinted top of this container is the perfect complement to the begonia leaves.



### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A** Begonia *Begonia* 'Silver Splendor' (1)
- B** Gasteraloe *Gasteraloe* 'Midnight' (1)
- C** Echeveria *Echeveria nodulosa* (1)
- D** Paddle plant *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* (1)

Container is 12 in. in diameter





## love this look?

The calibrachoa, petunias and zonal geraniums in this container will bloom all summer without a break. Here are 10 more plants that will give you that same season-long color:

- Angelonia
- Celosia
- Coreopsis
- Euphorbia
- Fanflower
- Marguerite daisy
- Rose
- Starflower
- Winged begonia
- Wishbone flower

You'll find these plants and more in *Star Plants*, beginning on page 24.

## FOCUS ON FOCAL POINTS



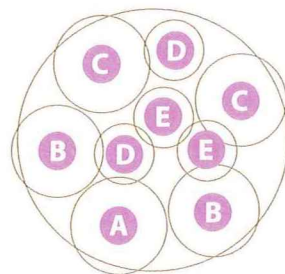
With its bulk, height and beautiful details, this container would be eye-catching even if it was empty. With colorful summer blooms, it's absolutely outstanding! Although many container-design pointers suggest adding tall or spiky plants for height, that isn't really necessary for a container on a pedestal. In fact, tall, vertical plants would make it a little overwhelming. But these low-growing, soft-colored plants make it look welcoming instead. Speaking of soft colors, notice how the container plants echo the pinks of the garden border? That's a great way to tie an important container in with the rest of the garden.

Shallow basin-shaped containers like this don't have a lot of room for soil and roots. They dry out quickly, so check the soil moisture often. Located in the center of a sidewalk, this container is pretty prominent. You don't want to call attention to drooping flowers or scorched foliage.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A** **Calibrachoa** *Calibrachoa* Superbells® 'Cherry Blossom' (1)
- ★ **B** **Petunia** *Petunia* 'Dreams Appleblossom' (2)
- ★ **C** **Petunia** *Petunia* 'Dolcissima Flambe' (2)
- ★ **D** **Geranium** *Pelargonium* 'Tango Neon Purple' (2)
- ★ **E** **Geranium** *Pelargonium* 'Maestro Cherry' (2)

Container is 21 in. in diameter





## AIRY DOES IT

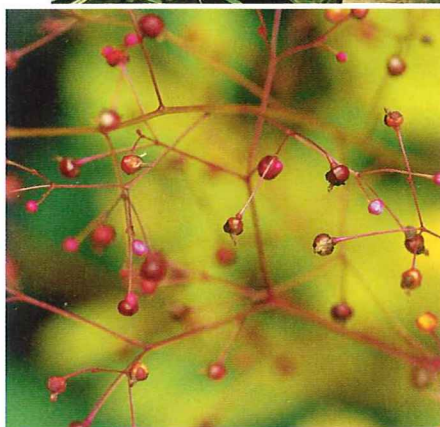
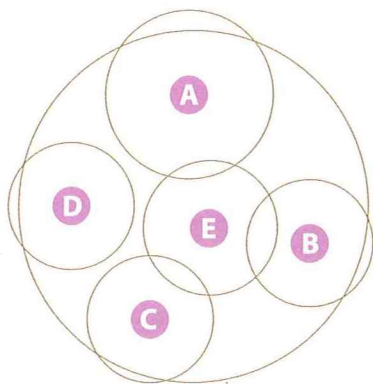
There's a lot of fine, airy texture going on in this container. Sometimes that can look untidy, but in this case, it works. Let's take a look at why! For one thing, a simple rule of container design has been followed here. There's a vertical accent (the variegated jewels of Opar) and a "spiller" that drapes down the side (the pink fan flower). A couple of dark-colored plants (black mondo grass and a burgundy begonia) fill in the middle, giving the whole composition weight, so it doesn't look too flyaway. And the dark-teal pot, with its strong, simple lines helps anchor the airy planting as well. Think about placement with a loose, casual container like this, too. In front of the cottage-feeling garden in the photo, it's right at home, while it might look a little too unkempt for a more formal planting.

The only regular maintenance this container needs is snipping back the spent heads of the jewels of Opar. After the tiny flowers have faded, the seedheads are red and glossy — like jewels! — as you can see in the inset. But eventually they'll drop off and the fragile stems will bend or flop, and that's when it's time to start snipping. It'll tidy up the plant and you'll get more of those adorable little blooms.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

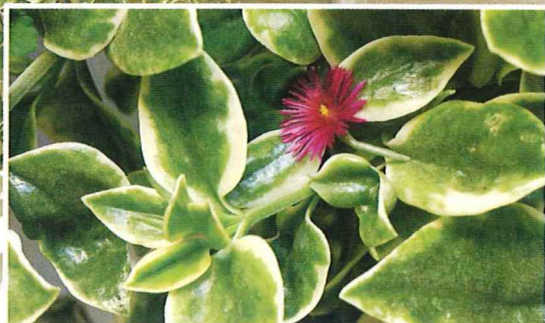
- A** Variegated jewels of Opar *Talinum paniculatum* 'Variegatum' (1)
- B** Black mondo grass *Ophiopogon planiscapus* (1)
- ★ **C** Fanflower *Scaevola aemula* 'Bombay Pink' (1)
- D** Sedge *Carex pendula* 'Fresh Look' (1)
- ★ **E** Rex begonia *Begonia rex* Great American Cities™ Chicago Fire (1)

Container is 15 in. in diameter



**tip** Jewels of Opar can reseed in the garden around your container. But don't worry — it's not so much that it'll be a pest next summer.





## BURSTING WITH COLOR



It's amazing how much impact you can get from a small, simple windowbox! With a box this size, only the width of a narrow window, it would be tempting to go with a mass planting of just one kind of plant. That would be pretty, too, but why not have some fun with a mixed planting? Most of the plants here have small flowers and leaves, so the big, bold begonia is crucial to anchor the whole planting. And it adds a little height to the grouping so it doesn't look too droopy. Big chartreuse sweet potato vine leaves offer some contrast to all the fine textures, too. Although the lobelia has small leaves and flowers, it grows in such a dense mass that it also adds a bit of bulk to the planting.

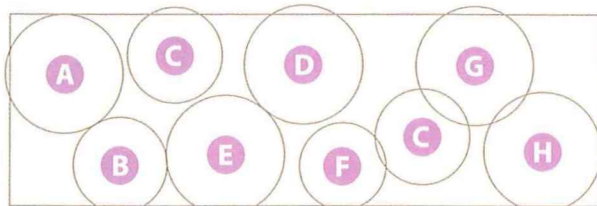
With this many plants in a small container, you'll need to be meticulous about watering and fertilizing. (Check out page 94 for our recommendations for feeding your plants.) Just one plant that looks a little off-color will stand out like a sore thumb. The lobelia may conk out as summer heats up — if it does, cut it back to the soil line, and let the twinspur and euphorbia take over that corner.

**tip** You may find Livingstone daisy in a tiny 2-in. pot at the garden center but it gets off to a fast start. Although the tag will probably say it needs full sun, it's also fine in part shade.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A** Sweet potato vine *Ipomoea batatas* 'Margarita' (1)
- B** Bacopa *Sutera cordata* Snowstorm® White (1)
- C** Twinspur *Diascia* Sun Chimes™ Rose (2)
- ★ **D** Begonia *Begonia* Dragon Wing™ Red ('Bepared') (1)
- E** Livingstone daisy *Dorotheanthus* Mezoo™ Trailing Red (1)
- ★ **F** Calibrachoa *Calibrachoa* Million Bells® Trailing Blue (1)
- ★ **G** Euphorbia *Euphorbia hypericifolia* Diamond Frost® ('Inneuphe') (1)
- H** Lobelia *Lobelia* Laguna™ Sky Blue (1)

Windowbox is 36 in. long x 8 in. wide





**tip** Have trouble tying pretty bows? Look for wire-edged ribbon at florists and craft stores. It's easy to tweak the bow until it looks perfect.

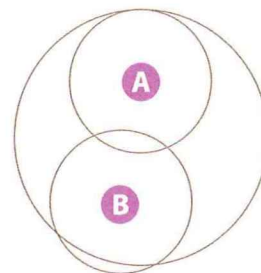


### SIMPLY SWEET



Sure, a container with five or six kinds of plants in it can look well-designed and stunning. But why not make it easy on yourself and pick a couple of plants that look great together... then dress it up just a bit for that special finishing touch? Red calibrachoa and white Diamond Frost euphorbia make a great pair. But pretty as these plants are together, it's the basket and ribbon that make this container memorable, highlighting the crisp color combination. It's a fun way to dress up your garden for a party or cookout. Just pot the plants up in plastic nursery pots, and you can slip them into any basket or container.

Calibrachoa is easy-going, but you may find, midway through the summer, that the leaves are starting to yellow. That's called chlorosis, and it's often a sign that the plant needs iron. You can buy iron sulfate fertilizer at any garden center — just mix it up according to directions and pour it on. One application is usually enough to perk that calibrachoa right up, and it won't hurt other plants in the container, either.



#### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- ★ **A Euphorbia** *Euphorbia hypericifolia* Diamond Frost® ('Inneuphe') (1)
  - ★ **B Calibrachoa** *Calibrachoa* Million Bells® Red (1)
- Container is 8 in. in diameter





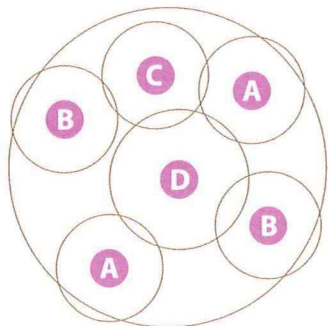
**HANG IT UP** ☀️💧

A tangle of pink and purple makes these matching baskets a cool touch on a hot, sultry summer day. When you're planting hanging baskets, it's easy to get "hung up" on trailing plants, like the purple calibrachoa or pale-lilac petunias here. And those trailers are important — they cascade down, hiding the sides of the basket for a graceful effect. But don't stop with trailers! Mounding plants, like the pink vinca, give the baskets some height, so they don't look flat on top. Instead, they look full and lush, just the way you'd want a hanging basket to appear.

Choose easy-care plants for hanging baskets, because they have to cope with some tough growing conditions. Plants are at the mercy of wind, and hanging baskets tend to dry out quickly. These pink and purple beauties are tough, so you won't have to spend a lot of time fussing over them.

**PLANT LIST (number to plant)**

- ★ **A** *Petunia* *Petunia* Cascadias™ Great Spark (2)
  - ★ **B** *Calibrachoa* *Calibrachoa* MiniFamous™ Dark Blue Evolution® (2)
  - ★ **C** *Alternanthera* *Alternanthera* dentata 'Purple Knight' (1)
  - ★ **D** *Vinca* *Catharanthus roseus* Cora™ Lavender (1)
- Hanging basket is 16 in. in diameter



**WARM AND BRIGHT** ☀️💧

Those warm, sunny blooms of the gloriosa daisy and celosia were too tempting to resist! And we knew they'd look great with the earth tones of this terra-cotta container. But what to combine with them? They both have big, bold flowers, so some smaller, finer-textured blooms to fill in around them would offer great contrast. Coral-pink calibrachoa kept the warm theme going, while some purple angelonia added a cooler note. That's a lot of flowers in one container, so we chose a glossy brown sedge, with its fine texture and strong vertical lines, to back the whole thing up. And a bronze-green sweet potato vine is the perfect finishing touch, with its bold foliage and the warm tones of the leaves. (The Sweet Caroline series of sweet potato vines are compact varieties that won't take over a container.)

Leatherleaf sedge looks gorgeous backing up all these blooms. But it grows slowly, so make sure you choose a big plant or it'll be swallowed up by faster-growing companions. And speaking of fast growth, we kept the sweet potato vine trimmed up during the summer — the raised pattern on this container is so pretty, we wanted to make it part of the presentation, not have it hidden behind waves of plants!

**PLANT LIST (number to plant)**

- ★ **A** *Leatherleaf sedge* *Carex* *buchananii* 'Red Rooster' (1)
  - ★ **B** *Sweet potato vine* *Ipomoea* *batatas* 'Sweet Caroline Bronze' (2)
  - ★ **C** *Calibrachoa* *Calibrachoa* Starlette™ Sunset (4)
  - ★ **D** *Gloriosa daisy* *Rudbeckia* *hirta* 'Cappuccino' (1)
  - ★ **E** *Celosia* *Celosia* *plumosa* 'Fresh Look Yellow' (1)
  - ★ **F** *Angelonia* *Angelonia* *angustifolia* Serena™ Purple (2)
- Container is 19 in. in diameter

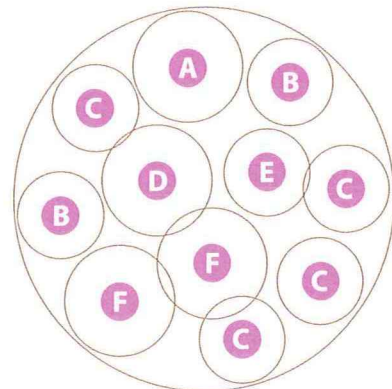










PHOTO: Brent Isenberger

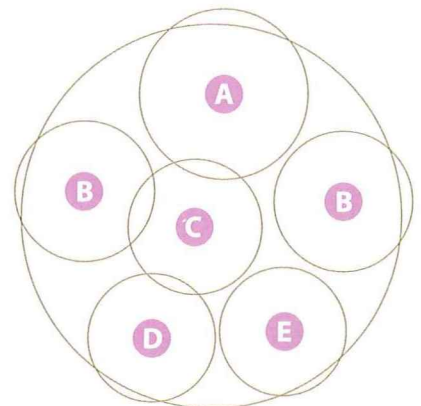
TREMENDOUS TEXTURE 

Warm rusty-red chrysanthemums are the stars in this container...or are they? That's a tough call! You could make a pretty good argument that foliage rules the roost here, too! But while you're deciding whether it's flowers or foliage that's at the top of the list, take a look at how well they work together. Bronze switchgrass and the red tips on the euphorbia echo the color of the mums (and the container!), while the lilyturf shares the same variegated edges as the euphorbia. And this gathering of plants will look great in your late summer or fall garden for weeks.

There are a couple of ways to approach this container. You may decide to plant it in late summer, just in time for fall. If that's the case, for the longest bloom time, choose chrysanthemums with lots of buds that haven't opened yet. You won't have to worry much about how much sun or fertilizer it gets if you use this approach — those plants won't be in their container long enough for it to matter. Or, try the old plant-swap technique: Plant this container up in spring, and include summer-flowering beauties like starflower, marigolds or even miniature roses. When they start to fade, pull them out and tuck mums and the kale in their place, to keep your container going even longer.

PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A Switchgrass *Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal' (1)
  - ★ B Chrysanthemum *Chrysanthemum* 'Helen' (2)
  - C Euphorbia *Euphorbia xmartini* Helena's Blush ('Inneuphel') (1)
  - D Ornamental kale *Brassica oleracea acephala* (1)
  - E Lilyturf *Liriope spicata* 'Silver Dragon' (1)
- Container is 14 in. in diameter





## DOORWAY DRAMA



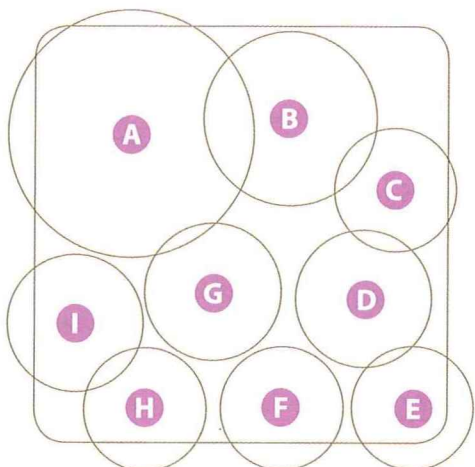
Draw attention to a doorway — or break up a big expanse of blank wall — with a super-tall container. You've probably read all kinds of great design tips about having the tallest plants half the height of the container...and those *are* great starting points. But sometimes rules are meant to be broken. This canna is quite a bit taller than the container. But it doesn't look top-heavy because the tall Napier grass and spidery umbrella grass fill in around the base. Tall, bare stems would appear spindly; lots of bulk in the center keeps this container looking sturdy and stable. And the canna's burgundy leaves pick up the dark-red of the container, pulling the top and bottom of this planting together.

Speaking of top-heavy, that can be a problem with tall, narrow containers like this. We usually recommend putting a couple of bricks or other weight in the bottom for extra stability, but try this handy tip from the homeowner: Buy bags of children's play sand and fill tall containers about half-way with it. (A pot shard over the drainage hole will keep the sand in place while allowing water to drain normally.) You don't even have to replace the sand. Just leave it in place and scoop out the soil every year to refresh it. The extra weight at the bottom of the container will keep it from tipping.

### PLANT LIST (number to plant)

- A** Napier grass *Pennisetum purpureum* 'Prince' (1)
- B** Canna *Canna Tropicanna*® Black (1)
- C** Sedge *Carex* 'Red Rooster' (1)
- D** Jewels of Opar *Talinum paniculatum* 'Variegatum' (1)
- ★ **E** Creeping Jenny *Lysimachia nummularia* 'Aurea' (1)
- ★ **F** Geranium *Pelargonium* 'Vancouver Centennial' (1)
- G** Umbrella grass *Cyperus involucratus* Graceful Grasses™ Baby Tut™ (1)
- H** Verbena *Verbena* Babylon® Red ('Oxena') (1)
- ★ **I** Coleus *Solenostemon* 'Inky Fingers' (1)

Container is 18 in. square



**tip** Tuck some bamboo stakes into this container when you're planting it. They'll add height until the canna and the grass are full-size, then they'll help support the canna's big leaves on a windy day.

DESIGN: Daren Jensen