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## Window Box Basics

Learn how to make a Charleston-style box planter that will spruce up any window with color.

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Window boxes overflowing with flowers are Charleston's signature sign of welcome.

Van Chaplin

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Our March 2010 issue salutes the beauty and grace of [Charleston, South Carolina](#), one of our readers' favorite destinations. Stroll the streets of the Holy City and you'll soon discern the town's signature signs of welcome – window boxes overflowing with flowers, like these designed by Tracee Lund of Holy City Horticulture.

Tracee says Charlestonians favor window boxes for two very practical reasons. One, Charleston is a tourist destination and residents like to dress up for the visitors. Two, many homes in the historic district don't have front yards. Window boxes provide the only gardening space available.

### Tips for Beautiful Window Boxes

#### **Be sure the window boxes have drainage holes.**

Leave at least 1/2-inch between the window box and the side of the house for water to drip through. This is especially important for houses with wood siding.

#### **Make sure the filled window boxes won't be too heavy**

for the support brackets that hold them to the house. You can significantly reduce weight by using fiberglass window boxes and filling them with potting mix, not soil.

One simple rule to make window boxes like these more interesting – **plant a thriller** (something tall), like a spiky cordyline; a **spiller** (something to trail over the sides), like white bacopa; and **colorful fillers**, like yellow million bells, coral twinspur, and orange snapdragons.

**Plant according to the season.** For cool weather, plant million bells, lobelia, bacopa, twinspur, snapdragons, violas, nasturtiums, and flowering kale. For warm weather, switch to lantana, verbena, begonias, angelonia,



impatiens, coleus, sweet potato vine, fanflower, narrowleaf zinnia, and Wave petunia.

**Don't forget to water.** Plants in window boxes dry out faster than those planted in the ground. Fertilize every two weeks with a water soluble fertilizer such as Miracle-Gro. Or incorporate a granular slow-release fertilizer, such as Dynamite, into the potting mix before planting.

**Steve Bender** | *From the March 2010 Magazine Issue*

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