



Just when you thought it was safe to hang up those pruners for another season – Wait and read below....

We spend so much of our time, energy and money decorating the inside of our homes for the holiday season, why then do so many of us ignore the outside? This is our families and guests first impression, which is often our most lasting one. Sure, some of us hang up a few lights, maybe a wreath on the front door, but is this enough? There is so much more we can do to give our entrance way the WOW factor. Take those extra steps, wrap fragrant fresh garlands around railings, porch banisters, doorways and lampposts. Use wreaths or sprays on garage doors as well as your front. Lights on that Blue Spruce out front, sure, but what about the front porch, garage or even those grapevine deer. Be sure to use energy efficient L.E.D. lights. It will save you tons!

However if you really want to wow them, winter containers are a must! Outdoor arrangements can remain attractive well into early spring, when it's time to switch them over to your spring arrangements.

First we need to consider the container(s) to be used. These can include window boxes, hanging baskets and urns, any of your outside containers that can be viewed from inside or upon entering your home. These containers must be able to withstand our harsh winters so avoid clay and ceramic, which may crack. Instead use frost resistant containers such as cast iron, resin or the newer fibreglass. Fibreglass is lightweight therefore easy to move and will not mark patios or steps as it does not rust. Good, heavy-duty plastic or quality concrete planters are also suitable. Your containers can be filled with a porous potting soil, oasis or sand. For large or heavy containers consider using Styrofoam peanuts in the bottom third to reduce the weight. Another option is to create your arrangement in a slightly smaller fibre container and insert the finished product in your container. We often use this method for our custom arrangements, as they are much easier to carry and transport.

So you've chosen your containers, filled them with potting medium, now what? In order to create long lasting arrangements it is a good idea to give the boughs or branches a fresh angled cut and placing them in water for 12 – 24 hrs before using. Watering and or misting the finished product until freeze-up extends the life as well. An Anti-Transpirant (Wilt Proof) can also be beneficial especially in windy areas. Which greens you use depends a lot on your personal taste and of course the space you have. We recommend using an assortment of at least 3 different types of boughs, for texture, colour and flow. Some evergreen boughs are more upright such as White pine, Boxwood, Oregonia, Balsam, Silver or Frazer fir. Start with these, don't skimp and insert as deeply into the

medium as possible. B.C. or incense cedar will add an arching or trailing look. Next, add your accents with many varieties to choose from including dogwood, curly willow, eucalyptus, salal and magnolia. Huck, rose hips, osage oranges, berried holly, ilex berries and pinecones of various sizes add colour and texture.

To insert osage oranges, pinecones, birds or other more personalized decorations, simply attach them to green bamboo or florist pics first.

Sinamay, a fabulous coloured outdoor netting, adds dramatic appeal. Outdoor lighting (L.E.D.) adds evening interest. Use your imagination and have fun with it.

If you are creating arrangements for indoors there are a few things to keep in mind. They will dry out more readily in the heat so use florist foam, which holds water, or arrange fresh greens in vases. Keep some greens in a cold shady spot to use to freshen up with. Most quality garden centres keep a good inventory of fresh greens for you to choose from well into December.

Still need some help? Come in and talk to one of our professional nursery staff who can help you make your selections or put it together for you. You can also e-mail questions to us at Valerie@glenecho.com Enjoy!

Getting Started

- ✍ Pruners
- ✍ Gloves
- ✍ Florist wire
- ✍ Wire cutters
- ✍ Green bamboo stakes
- ✍ Florist picks
- ✍ Anti-Transpirant
- ✍ Potting medium – sand, porous potting soil or Sahara Oasis Blocks