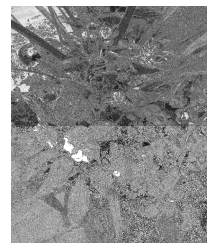**ATLANTIC**
NURSERY · GARDEN SHOP · LANDSCAPING
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Container Gardening

Follow these steps for stunning container gardens:

Container — Select a container that complements your home and garden. Choices include poly-resin, fiberglass, glazed clay and terra cotta. Containers should be cleaned with mild soapy water. Containers should always have drainage holes. (Cover the holes with a rock, so soil doesn't leak out.)

Soil — Use premixed potting soil such as Schultz's Potting Mix, fill the containers to 6" from the top. Replace the soil each year to ensure optimum plant growth.

Plant Selection — When selecting plants for your container garden, consider the final location of the container and the environmental conditions of that area. Use plants with similar light and water requirements. Consider the "look" of the container — is it formal, rustic, modern? Select plants not only for their color, but their growth habit and texture. These basic design principles will help you create beautiful well-designed containers:
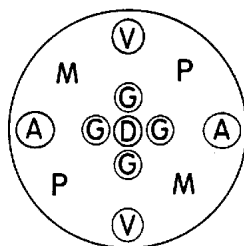
> Color — Use no more than 3 colors in various tones and shades. Light colors look best at night when they really glow; while dark and bright colors "pop" in the daytime.

> Upright/Vertical plants — The first plants placed in your container garden are your vertical plants. They form the shape of the design and the height of your garden. Some great upright plants are Crotons, Hibiscus, Dracaena, Ornamental Grass, Snapdragons and Cannas. If using a plant that will grow very tall, stake it to prevent it from snapping off.

> Focal Point — This is the second type of plant placed in your garden and it is all about the color! Choose plants with large flowers or masses of small flowers that don't grow taller than your vertical plants. Plants with this "wow" factor are Impatiens, Petunias, Geraniums, Dahlias, Flowering Vinca and Daisies.

> Trailing and filler plants — These are the final touches on your planter. They pull the whole container garden together and are usually small leaved foliage plants and tiny flowers that fill in and flow out of your garden. Excellent choices include Million Bells, Alyssum, Lobelia, Diascia, Bidens, Bacopa, Helichrysum, Vinca Vine and Ivy.

Here is a sample diagram to help you with design and placement. Picture a line dividing your container in half. What you plant on one side of your upright-vertical plant, should be planted on the opposite side as well. Container size for this sample is 16" diameter.

D = Dracaena
A = Alyssum
P = Petunia
G = Geranium
V = Vinca Vine
M = Marigolds

When it has to be "Just Right", it has to be from Atlantic!

(over)

Fertilizer — We use *Osmocote* time-release fertilizer in all of our container gardens for maximum flowering and growth. It is placed on top of the soil once the plants are in place. Every time you water, food is released into the soil.

Watering — The best time to water is in the morning so that your plants don't dry out during the hot days of summer**. Water thoroughly until water runs out the bottom of the container. In the months of July and August, your container gardens will require watering at least once a day.** Other conditions that can dry out your containers faster include wind, very hot locations, placement of containers by pools or near bays or canals and on balconies. Containers in shady locations or under overhangs may require less watering.

Hints — Remove dead flowers and groom plants to keep in good condition and to encourage reblooming throughout the season.
Group 3-5 containers together with various heights and sizes for effective "potscaping".
Change your combinations from year to year!
Remember, containers should be emptied in late fall and turned upside down to prevent cracking during the winter months.

Combinations to try:

Monochromatic — The use of one color and all of its tints and shades (such as reds, pinks and burgundies).

Complementary Colors — Colors on opposite sides of the color wheel (such as red/green or purple/yellow).

Bold Colors — Mix hot pink with orange for a dramatic effect.

Herb Garden — Place on a kitchen window sill or on a patio. Harvest as needed.

Evening Garden — Plant with flowers that are fragrant at night (such as Moonflower, *Nicotiana* and Jasmine).

Beach Garden — Fill a container with grasses and sedums. Cover soil with sand.

Foliage — A mix of colorful foliage and textures create a lush, tropical look.

Indoor Garden — Try a mix of houseplants or cactus to bring an "indoor look" to your outdoor garden.