

Cut Flowers Properly for Best Results

Cut flowers brighten a home during the summer but if they are not cut properly, the plant's growth and flower yield will be reduced.

Horticulturists at Michigan State University say that flowers should be cut with sharp tools. Breaking or tearing off the flowers injures the remaining wood.

Take care not to cut off more leaves than are absolutely necessary. The plant needs the leaves to change energy from the sun to food material which the plant uses to produce more stems and leaves.

DURING THE FIRST season in bloom, flowers should be cut with very short stems only, advises MSU horticulturists. Even when plants are fully grown, at least two leaves should be left between

the cut and the main stem. If flowers are not cut, it's advisable to remove them after the petals fall. They should be cut above the topmost leaf with sharp scissors or knife. To give other flowers more room to develop, a withered individual flower in a cluster can be removed. After all flowers of a cluster have died, the horticulturists recommend cutting off the entire stem just above the top leaf.

AFTER FLOWERS are cut, they will keep much better if put immediately in warm water, advises Richard F. Skinsone of the MSU horticulture department.

Other tips for longer-lasting cut flowers include cutting one inch off the stem every day, and using commercial flower preservatives. Preservatives, available at flower and garden centers, prolong the life of cut flowers, especially roses.

Paper that has stuck to the polished surface of your furniture can be removed by softening it with olive oil and then rubbing gently with a soft cloth.



Deck and Patio

The deck and patio have achieved a secure place in the American outdoor living scheme of things. An example is this parquetry decking of Western Pine region wood. Lovely and easy to care for, this improvement adds a unique touch to any home.

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How Flowered Is Your Shrubbery?

Flowering evergreen shrubs include the rhododendrons, azaleas, laurels, pieris and many others that can be spectacularly beautiful in flower.

There is a long list of these, particularly in the less severe climates.

Consult a nursery catalogue, or talk over with your nursery-men the different species that will grow in your location.

Either a brush or roller can be used in painting Masonite hardboard panels.

Panels for Privacy

If your outdoor wood deck doesn't have enough privacy, try installing a series of brightly colored wood panels irregularly spaced along the side where you desire more privacy. Half-inch cedar set in frames makes ideal panels and they can be painted any choice of bright colors.

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