

## Garden in the Sky: The Allure of Hanging Baskets and Window Boxes

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### SUMMARY

Hanging baskets and window boxes are one of the best solutions for both indoors and outdoors in terms of enhancing with greens and flowers. With the help of these planters, the vertical space is utilized and helps in making any constricted area into a beautiful display which aims out to any surrounding. This article focuses on the basics of choosing, filling these containers as well as caring for them, from plants with blooming and draping tendencies through to tropicals or succulents that require little care. General information touches on such aspects as container choice, filling material and different watering systems for plants with different requirements. It will also touch on some popular plants with features like focal points and spilling plants to motivate the readers in enhancing stunning arrangements with the figures of nature in them.

### INTRODUCTION

Hanging baskets and window boxes are more than just decorative elements; they are powerful tools for transforming any outdoor or indoor space into a vibrant oasis of color and fragrance. With their ability to maximize vertical space and bring lush greenery to even the smallest of areas, these versatile planters offer a unique way to enhance the aesthetics of homes, balconies, patios, and gardens. From cascading floral arrangements to lush foliage, the right combination of plants can create a stunning visual impact that not only beautifies your surroundings but also improves your overall well-being. In this exploration, we will delve into the art of selecting, planting, and maintaining hanging baskets and window boxes, empowering you to unleash your creativity and elevate your space with blossoming beauty.

### Hanging Basket

A collection of well-placed indoor plants within a hanging basket can be visually breathtaking. A conventional hanging basket is nothing but a wire mesh fruit basket turned downwards and lined with enough growing material to hold several plants. Other forms of suspended vessels whether bought or fashioned can be used straight like hanging baskets. These vessels often those corset type baskets are planted with an aim that the whole basket will be covered by the plants in use along with their droopy overhangs. The resolved form in this case is the resolved form while plants with such growth patterns, would ideally create a round container, its contents would be concealed completely. One of the ways to create such a composition is to put a dome of vertical, more or less rounded plants in the Centre and let trailing or spread plants grow on the rim. Pelargoniums and *Verbena × hybrida* upright cultivars can serve to illustrate the above. Another kind of planting system would be the one made of ornamental containers in which certain parts would be screen at times even when the plants are in full growth.



Hanging baskets are frequently displayed as standalone features, often making use of an available support. They can range from simple and unobtrusive designs to more decorative styles that complement the surroundings. A hanging basket can serve as a striking focal point, adding interest to an otherwise plain wall, especially when visible from a window or doorway. They also draw attention when hung from the corner of a building, but it's important to ensure they are positioned high enough to avoid obstructing people passing underneath.

### Elevated Eye Catcher

Many multi-basket arrangements involve pairs of baskets, often placed on either side of a doorway or paired with other containers. A striking design can be achieved by positioning a large container, such as an urn, at ground level against a wall, with hanging baskets placed above and to the sides. The plants in the baskets can either complement or contrast with those in the larger container. For a more elaborate display, hanging baskets can be arranged in rows along a series of arches or brackets on a wall. For added effect, smaller baskets can be positioned on either side of a larger one, or the baskets can be suspended at varying heights to create visual interest.



### Containers & Medium

When selecting a container for indoor use, it's important to choose one that suits the environment. While a standard wire basket lined with sphagnum moss works well for outdoor settings, it can lead to water dripping onto the floor indoors. Lining the basket with a polythene sheet can help, but this may cause waterlogging issues. A more effective solution is to place the plant pots inside a larger waterproof container that supports the wires, chains, or cords used for hanging. Fill the space between the pots and the hanging container with moist peat. Alternatively, you could use a plastic hanging pot that includes a built-in drip tray. It's also advisable to opt for a peat-based potting mix instead of soil, as excess weight can be problematic.

### Watering

To simplify the process of watering and misting, position the display at eye level. If it needs to be hung above head height, consider using a pulley system instead of a regular hook. If the display can't be lowered, a pump-action watering can is a good alternative. Make sure the hook is securely attached to a ceiling joist or that the bracket is firmly mounted to the wall. Additionally, ensure that the selected plants are appropriate for the available light conditions.

### Popular choices for Hanging basket include:

#### Delicate Beauties

*Soleirolia soleirolii* (Baby's Tears): A fine-leaved plant forming a lush mat, ideal for shaded, moist areas.

*Sedum morganianum* (Burro's Tail): A succulent with rope-like stems and bluish-green leaves, perfect for dry environments.

*Chlorophytum comosum* (Spider Plant): Known for its arching foliage and baby offshoots, it adds a jungle vibe to bright spaces.

#### Humidity Lovers

*Syngonium podophyllum* (Arrowhead Vine): Thrives in humid areas like bathrooms but can be toxic to pets.

*Nephrolepis exaltata* (Boston Fern): Features feathery fronds that require frequent misting, especially in winter.

*Asplenium nidus* (Bird's Nest Fern): Adapts to various light conditions but prefers indirect sunlight to maintain its curvy leaves.

### Low-Maintenance Options

*Epipremnum aureum* (Pothos): An easy-care plant with long trailing stems, available in various foliage colors.

Philodendron: Resilient and forgiving, it can tolerate lower light and occasional neglect.

### Flowering Varieties

*Acalypha hispida* (Chenille Plant): Known for its fuzzy red flowers, it needs bright light and regular pruning.

*Viola × wittrockiana* (Pansy): Offers vibrant, heart-shaped petals but requires more care and frequent replacement.

**Unique Foliage**

*Adiantum* (Maidenhair Fern): Features delicate, arching fronds that thrive in humid conditions.

*Senecio rowleyanus* (String of Pearls): A succulent with bead-like leaves along string-like stems.

*Peperomia*: Prized for its textured, colorful leaves, particularly the Ripple *Peperomia*.

**Exotic Choices**

*Phalaenopsis* (Moth Orchids): Elegant flowers that can be adapted for hanging displays.

*Platycerium* (Staghorn Fern): Makes a bold statement with its wide, distinctive leaves.

*Tillandsia* (Air Plant): Soil-free plants that absorb nutrients from the air, easy to hang and maintain.

**Carnivorous and Unusual**

*Nepenthes* (Pitcher Plant): Carnivorous plants with colorful pitchers, helpful for natural pest control.

*Dischidia nummularia* (String of Nickels): Features unique, water-storing "nickels" along its stems.

**Compact Trailers**

*Peperomia rotundifolia* (Trailing Jade): A small plant with round leaves, perfect for those who prefer shorter vines.

*Ceropegia woodii* (String of Hearts): Displays heart-shaped leaves with attractive mottling.

**Statement Pieces**

*Monstera adansonii* (Swiss Cheese Plant): Known for its perforated leaves, it adds a tropical touch.

*Maranta leuconeura* (Prayer Plant): Features long stems and leaves that move throughout the day.

*Lepismium bolivianum* (Forest Cactus): An unusual cactus with flat, fleshy strands that occasionally bloom.

**Colorful Additions**

*Lobelia erinus*: Offers vibrant blooms in various colors, ideal for cascading displays.

*Hypoestes phyllostachya* (Polka Dot Plant): Adds a splash of color with its brightly variegated leaves.

**Window Boxes**

A window box, also known as a window flower box or window box planter, is a flower container designed to hold live flowers or plants. It typically takes the form of a box that is attached to or positioned just below a window sill. Window boxes can also be used to grow herbs or other edible plants. Generally, they are placed on a window sill or mounted to the wall directly underneath it, allowing for easy access to the plants. When installed beneath a window, they are usually supported by brackets affixed to the wall below.

**How To Plant Window Boxes**

To start building a flower box, first select your container and decide where to place it. There are various materials to choose from, such as PVC, fiberglass, wood, brick, terracotta, metal, and vinyl. Some boxes can be mounted using a concealed system, while others may be directly attached to the building. Typically, wooden boxes last 3-5 years before they begin to deteriorate, but with regular maintenance, they can last up to 10-15 years. Window boxes are usually accessed from indoors, making them a favoured option for residents on upper floors without garden access, allowing enjoyment of plants from both inside and outside. For more planting options, consider larger boxes that are approximately 10-12 inches deep. This added depth accommodates plants with deeper root systems and allows for multiple rows of planting. Make sure your chosen box has proper drainage. To enhance drainage, place a layer of non-biodegradable materials such as packing peanuts or wine corks at the bottom, covered with landscape fabric to keep the soil in place. Fill the container halfway with potting mix before introducing your plants. Space the plants a few inches apart to allow for growth. If you want a fuller look from the start, you can plant them closer together, but be ready to trim them to prevent overcrowding. When choosing



plants, group those with similar light and water requirements. Keep in mind that container plants typically need more frequent watering than those in the ground. Water thoroughly when the soil feels dry to the touch.



### Window boxes typically feature a combination of three plant types:

- Focal points: Eye-catching plants that anchor the design, like African Iris or Alocasia.
- Cascading varieties: Plants that drape over the edges, such as Pothos or Sedum.
- Intermediate plants: Medium-sized options that fill gaps, including Caladium or Impatiens.

### Popular choices for window boxes include:

**Sweet Potato Vine:** Offers lush, colorful foliage that complements various home styles.

**Coleus:** Known for vibrant leaves, available in sun and shade varieties. Works well as a filler or centerpiece.

**Petunia:** Heat-resistant summer bloomers in a wide range of colors and patterns.

**Creeping Jenny:** A vigorous spreader with round leaves, ideal for creating a cascading effect.

**Impatiens:** Perfect for shaded boxes, providing rich colors in various hues.

**Snapdragon:** Tall, showy spikes of flowers that add vertical interest.

**Verbena:** Sun-loving plants that spill over edges, available in diverse colors.

**Variegated Ivy:** Adaptable to different light conditions, offering an elegant trailing effect.

**Licorice Plant:** Chosen for its unique fuzzy foliage texture.

**Zinnia:** Attracts pollinators and comes in vibrant colors like Purple Prince.

**Salvia:** Low-maintenance, drought-resistant perennial that appeals to beneficial insects.

**Periwinkle:** Traditionally a ground cover, this plant also thrives in contained spaces, adding a lush, trailing element to window boxes.

## CONCLUSION

Incorporating hanging baskets and window boxes into your living space is an accessible and rewarding way to introduce nature's beauty into your daily life. Whether you opt for vibrant flowers that bloom throughout the season or lush greenery that adds a touch of tranquility, these planters can be tailored to reflect your personal style and enhance your environment. With a bit of planning, creativity, and care, you can create breathtaking arrangements that breathe life into your home. So, embrace the joy of gardening at any scale and let the enchanting allure of hanging baskets and window boxes transform your space into a blooming sanctuary.

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