



# Container Gardening

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Adapted from presentation  
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Research and Extension

# Container Gardening

Using containers to grow or display plants to:

- Create focal points
- Frame views
- Add color



# Choose the Container

Wide variety of

- Materials
- Sizes
- Styles
- Colors

Must provide for  
drainage



# Choose the Container

**Very large containers – consider using an inner pot**



# Potting Soil

## Soil-less Mixture

- Materials that:
  - Absorb and retain moisture
  - Allow excess water to drain
- Consider inert “filler” to reduce amount and weight



# Container Design

## Use a trio of plants

- **“Thriller”** - upright plant
- **“Filler”** - mounding plant(s)
- **“Spiller”** – trailing plant(s)



# Container Design

## Simple design

- Identify the “front” and place
  - **Thriller** plant in back
  - **Filler** plants in middle
  - **Spiller** plants around edge
- Same process for Thriller in the center



# Container Design

## For interest choose:

- Different leaf textures
- Mixture of colors
- Hot” color combinations
  - Burgundy-leaved plants with silver-, yellow- or chartreuse-leaved plants
  - Yellow flowers mixed with red or orange flowers





# Container Design

Use a permanent specimen as the Thriller:

- Surround with annuals and perennials
- Change out with seasonal plants
- Consider pot in pot



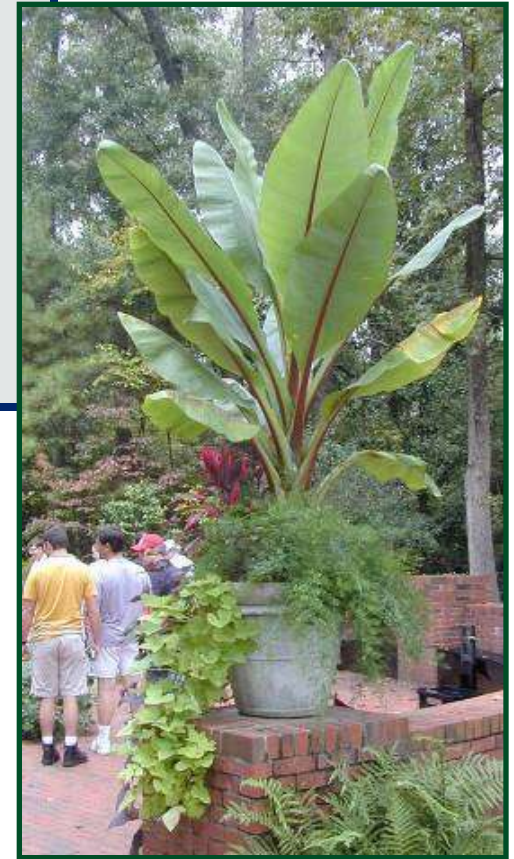
# Container Design

For a “classic” look,  
use a single  
specimen plant



# Container Design

Large-leaved plants provide impact via bold textures and odd shapes



# Plant Selection

- “Right plant, Right place”
- All plants should require similar
  - light
  - water
  - fertilizer
- Pay close attention to plant labels



# Plant Selection

## Plant type affects maintenance:

- Annuals: replace seasonally
- Perennials: keep groomed and replace as needed
- Trees and shrubs: grow more slowly, but eventually the root system dominates the pot
  - Perennials are the best companion plants since they don't need replanting often

# Planting

- Partially fill pot
- Arrange plants
  - Soak root balls to squeeze them smaller
- Water well as you plant
- Continue filling and adjust root ball depth
- Final level 1 to 2 inches below rim
- Provide somewhere for water to drain

# Watering

## Water frequently

- Water needs change with:
  - species of plant
  - season
  - rain
  - plant size
- Consider drip irrigation



# Fertilizing

- Reduced rooting space requires more fertilizer
- Mix slow release fertilizer in potting soil before you plant
  - Reapply to surface every 3 – 6 months
- Use water soluble fertilizer monthly for extra boost





# Maintenance



## Plant “Grooming”

- Deadhead
- Tip-prune
- Rotate out “tired” container gardens to allow plants to recover

## Pest Management

- Stressed plants are more susceptible
- Succulent growth attracts insects, some fungi
- Frequently scout for pests
- Use “least toxic” pest control when necessary



# Be Creative



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*Questions?*

