



FACEBOOK LIVE SEMINAR

Ways to Use Hanging Baskets

Hanging baskets are a great way to add interest and height to any area, both outdoors and in. But, there's more to hanging baskets than meets the eye. Our Garden Guru, Mike Westphal has a few tricks up his sleeve that will have you "hanging" on the edge of your seat as he shares his design tips and tricks that will maximize your bloom potential in shade or sun.

KEEP YOUR BASKETS BLOOMING

The first step in hanging baskets is, of course, picking out your basket. However, once you bring your blooming beauty home, you may notice the occasional expired flower or lack of new blooms altogether. After making sure your light and water requirements are met, what are the next steps? Mike, the Garden Guru, suggests the following four processes to keep your baskets beautiful all season long:

- **Deadheading** – The process of deadheading blooms is very simple. Once a bloom has expired, you can simply pick it off with your hands or use pruners. This helps the plant spend more energy pushing out new blooms versus taking care of old ones.
- **Feeding** – Plants need to eat too! And in hanging baskets especially, nutrients from the soil tend to drain out of the pot quickly. Use our McDonald Garden Center Greenleaf granular plant food for easy feeding.

- **Pruning** – This is important to all plant care, but with hanging baskets, it is essential to keep your blooms bright all throughout the summer into the fall. Occasionally, hanging basket blooms can get "leggy" or elongated from lack of nutrients, light, water or just needing a good pruning. Once you cut your plant back to about the shape you bought it at, the plant will be able to grow new, fuller blooms throughout the season.
- **Watering** – Following their namesake, hanging baskets are usually hanging, which in some cases makes it harder to water them. Try using the Dramm watering wand to reach those high, awkward angles. This tool is great for making sure you are watering the soil of the plant and not the foliage or blooms. Try to avoid "soil cakes" or letting your hanging baskets get too dry or too wet, as this does affect the growth of the plant. To inquire about the Dramm watering wand, ask one of our Green Team experts.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

From petunias to pickling cucumbers, you can really plant anything that you put your mind to in a hanging basket. Sticking to plants that like to droop over is usually best because the hook of the pot may start hindering plant growth. Some great suggestions are strawberries, cucumbers, herbs, coleus, petunias, begonias, and more. You can even try some perennials or bulbs in hanging baskets!

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UPGRADE YOUR HANGING BASKETS

Upgrading your hanging baskets is not only fun, but easy as well. Stepping away from the usual plastic hanging basket may be the perfect decorating opportunity!

- **Coco Liners and Cast Iron** – This iconic combo is a great way to upgrade your average hanging basket. Coco liners hold the plant and the soil together in a “nest-like” container. The cast iron supports the coco liner and adds a dramatic decorative element. These type of baskets are reusable and when your coco liner starts to degrade, you can also use it as a soil amendment. For more information on decorating with hanging baskets, check out our blog [here](#).

HANG THEM INDOORS

Hanging baskets are not exclusive to your patio! Bring the outdoors in with hanging houseplants. There are many options for indoor vertical gardens no matter what light situation you may have in your home. Some suggestions may be pothos, philodendrons, orchids, succulents, and more.

USE IN A CONTAINER

Hanging baskets can be used for more than hanging up your plants. In many cases, there are multiple plants in one hanging basket, so they are great for building or adding to containers. Try one of the following two suggestions from Mike, the Garden Guru, for easy container gardening with hanging baskets:

- **Drop In** – Simply take the hook off of your hanging basket and drop it into your container of choice. You may need to add bricks or a overturned pot as riser within the container to keep the hanging basket at the desired height. This is great if you are looking for an instant way to spruce up your space.
- **Pot Up** – Alternatively, you can plant your hanging basket directly into a container to make a custom combo.

PUT THEM IN THE LANDSCAPE

If you want to add some pizzazz to your garden beds, use hanging basket blooms in your landscape! Hanging basket blooms are usually very full. When you plant them in beds, it looks like you have had them planted all season, creating a extremely lush flower bed instantly.

MAKE A CUSTOM COMBO

Custom combos are one of our favorite things to do here at McDonald Garden Center. Hanging baskets often provide a great “filler” to our “Filler, Thriller, Spiller” method. Watch Mike, the Garden Guru pot up a custom combo with hanging baskets [here](#).

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