

1932

A-Maying We Will Go...

Margaret McDonough
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker>



Part of the [Home Economics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McDonough, Margaret (1932) "A-Maying We Will Go...," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 12 : No. 2 , Article 3.
Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol12/iss2/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *The Iowa Homemaker* by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.



Courtesy Better Homes and Gardens

Straight From the Garden

A-Maying We Will Go . . .

By Margaret McDonough

HAVE you ever spent a dinner hour craning your neck in a frantic effort to peer over, around or between the flowers in a center piece which looked perfectly lovely when you entered the dining room? And undoubtedly you finally gave up in despair and settled yourself to listen to the uninteresting person next to you, when you would much rather exchange remarks with someone across the table.

The hostess who thinks of the comfort of her guests as well as the beauty of her table appointments will be most careful in choosing the flower arrangement. Low bowls which will allow the guests an unobstructed view are the best. The height will be determined in part by the kind of flowers used, for flowers should, in general, be one and one-half times as high as the container.

If you would have an effective arrangement, avoid attracting too much attention to the bowl by using something that is inconspicuous in pattern and neutral in color. Thus it will harmonize with any arrangement you may wish to make and will not detract from the center of interest. Lead-colored vases, pewter bowls and black, green or white are the most serviceable for all-around purposes. It will be easier to make flowers and container harmonize, too.

As in other things, flower arrangement

should be simple. Out of the hodgepodge of flowers which you have cut from your garden, you should be able to make two or three lovely bouquets, rather than bundling them all together in one big vase. Each flower when arranged should show to the best advantage. There should be no crossing of lines, but a rhythmic flow. Occult balance such as the Japanese use is very much better and infinitely more interesting than a bilaterally symmetric arrangement. And in adding small flowers and foliage to the bouquet, be careful to see that they do not detract from the center of interest.

COLOR harmony of arrangement should be planned. Do not combine lighter tints and darker tones. Darker flowers should be placed at the bottom with the light on top.

But where will you get the flowers for your tables? In the spring a young girl's fancy turns to thoughts of childhood trips to the woods for violets, Dutchmen's breeches and wild crab apple blossoms. And for most of us, such familiar, but none the less beautiful things are still near at hand—perhaps in our own back yards. There are cherry and plum blossoms, lilacs, purple ones and white, the kind that always remind you of a trip to grandmother's in the early spring. Columbines, lilies-of-the-valley,

Persian yellow roses make sweet, old-fashioned bouquets. And there are always the perennials, such as primroses, forget-me-nots and double buttercups.

There are some simple rules to follow if you would prolong the life of your cut flowers. If the flowers are susceptible to wilting, cut them in the morning or evening when the stems are filled with sap. And another thing to be considered is to cut them when they are in the proper stage of development. This, of course, varies with the different flowers. Gladiolus should be cut when the first bud opens; peonies as the outer petals unfold; and roses when the buds are as soft as one's finger.

Flowers should be kept in a cool, humid room and should never be set in full sunshine. Though it may look beautiful to see the sunlight streaming through a window directly upon a bowl of daffodils, such treatment will soon cause the jaunty yellow flowers to bow their heads.

Changing the water each day prevents the accumulation of bacteria and keeps foul water from clogging the passage up the stems. Some people put aspirin in the water, but there is some doubt as to the value of such treatment. However, the addition of charcoal or a small quantity of afformation (three drops to a quart of water) will help to keep the water pure.

DIPPING the ends of dahlias, poppies and poinsettias in boiling water as soon as cut, seals them and aids in keeping them for a longer time. The addition of salt, sugar and other chemicals has been tried scientifically, but it is of no value in the preservation of flowers.

Immediately after cutting, if the flowers are plunged in water up to the base of the blooms and no attempt made to arrange them for several hours, the bouquet will retain its beauty for a longer time. Cutting stems daily, preferably under water, will renew wilted flowers.

Appropriate flower arrangements add much to the festive spirit of an occasion. Not only grown-ups, but children as well, take an added interest in the occasion, be it birthday with a birthday cake and all the "fixins" or a holiday. Plants in tiny pots, and small, colorful bouquets are used on the children's tables at the nursery school and the tiny tots ask many questions and manifest a great interest in the centerpieces. Good flower arrangement may help to cultivate that interest in and love of beauty.