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Simple Corsages That You Can Make

by Emogene Olson

Corsages are fun to make. A few flowers, a few ideas, some simple supplies and a knack with a little practice are all you need. Making corsages gives your imagination a chance to really prove itself. The types of arrangements are only as limited as your imagination.

The florist supplies you need are a roll of parafilm or floral tape, florist wire, corsage pins and, if you like, chenille wires, which are simply glorified pipe cleaners in a variety of colors. Utensils necessary include a sharp knife, scissors and ribbon. The supplies you can buy inexpensively and in small quantities at retail florist's shops. They are not available elsewhere because the sources are strictly wholesale.

Two essential tricks you need to master for construction are wiring and taping. You can practice with leftover flowers from bouquets or on spare garden flowers until you have the art perfected. Then you are ready to work with any flower you wish to wear.

Cut Stems

If you are using roses, carnations, marigolds or any flower with a heavy calyx, the first step is to cut the stems quite close to the flowers head. The shorter the stem you leave, the neater the finished product. The wire is pulled through the calyx and twisted once or twice below. The remainder of the stem and wire is covered with the parafilm. Start the tape at the wired calyx by pressing it well with your fingers until it sticks. Twirl the stem with one hand and hold the tape with the other until the length of the wire is covered. With lighter flowers you could leave the wire single, twisting the short end higher up and around the long one.

Flowers with a wide head and a very shallow calyx require a different method of wiring. These flowers include chrysanthemums and daisies. Push the straight wire from the bottom through the head of the flower and bend it into a tiny hook. Gently pull the wire back so that the loop will be hidden among the petals and the head securely attached to the wire.

Tape Flowers

Wire and tape all the blossoms, buds and foliage and then assemble the corsage. Two tight buds with semi-opened blossoms are the usual combination. Tape the flowers you wish to use together after they have been individually taped and arrange them as you wish. Make an interesting, fresh bow with your choice of ribbon and then decide what to do with the protruding ends of wire. They can be clipped, formed into various shapes or taped together. An interesting arrangement can be made with the wire ends by coiling them around a pencil or by giving them a graceful bend.

Experiment with arranging flowers on a comb for your hair or on a ribbon to wear around your wrist or neck. The ribbon arrangement may be worn over one shoulder with a strapless evening gown.

Make a long rope of corn flowers or bachelor buttons to wind around the band on your spring hat. Flowers look perky when fashioned into a small nosegay to pin on a plain colored handbag.

If you're looking for a sparkling accent to your lacy blouse and ballerina skirt combination, try making a sash of satin ribbon and fastening it with a circlet of spring flowers.

Tulips can be made into striking corsages too. They fall in dramatic lines when two or three with fairly long stems are fastened to the brim of a small cloche. They can be used at the waistline, too.

Center interest on the bustle of a formal by shaping a corsage to follow the lines of the bustle. This can be done with many varieties of flowers.

Flowers can be combined with almost anything you choose to wear. But keep in mind the texture of the flower and the intensity of color.

Yin and yang characteristics are part of the flower too. A yin flower, or an especially sweet and small blossom, can be worn with summer cottons that have curved lines and gathers.

Yang flowers can be as dynamic and dramatic as you care to choose. Brilliant Chinese red or intensely shaded purple could add the finishing touch to a smart combination. Flowers have personality; remember that when you choose the flower for the day.

Try having fun with flowers this spring. They're as versatile as your imagination.