

Hanging Baskets

Overview

Hanging baskets, overflowing with colorful flowers, are a highly valued summer-time feature in many cities and gardens. But, because dangling in the breeze isn't an ideal situation for a plant, extra care must be taken to meet the plant's needs.

Sun/Shade

Placing your baskets with the proper sun/shade exposure is extremely important.

Among the plants that do well in sun are sedum, verbena, geraniums, petunias, ivy, *Scaevola*, sweet potato vine, diascia, and tomato 'Tumbler.' Among the plants you might choose for shade are begonias, fuchsia, impatiens, and lobelia.

Most plants do well with morning sun and afternoon shade.

In order to maintain a well-rounded appearance to your planting, it's a good idea to turn the basket 180° every two weeks or so.

Fertilizing

Many growers put a time-release fertilizer in the potting soil when the baskets are first planted. But after repeated watering and exposure to heat, the fertilizer is quickly used up.

So, fertilize every two weeks with a water-soluble product such as 20-20-20, mixed at half strength, to keep your hanging basket of plants in top condition.

Additional Information

Oregon State University doesn't currently have any publications about growing and/or using hanging baskets.

However, OSU Master Gardeners at your county's Extension Service office are available to answer your questions. See phone numbers below.

Hanging Baskets: A Practical Step-By-Step Guide by Jenny Hendy

Year-Round Containers, Baskets & Boxes by Graham Strong and Claire Phoenix

The Hanging Garden by Sue Fisher

Watering

Regular watering is a must. Fill the pot to the rim with water, let it drain, then refill. You may have to repeat three or four times to be sure the root zone is thoroughly saturated, especially if the plant is hanging in a breezy location or if the potting mix has dried out.

Never allow a hanging basket to dry out completely because it is difficult to re-hydrate the soil and the plants will suffer. If the potting mix does dry out, you can remoisten it by submerging the container in a water-filled tub or large bucket for a maximum of 20 minutes.

Grooming

It is very important to deadhead your plant. In other words, remove the spent blooms.

In addition, groom your plants by removing leaves that have turned brown. And shorten any stems that have had sudden spurts of growth and look awkward or out of place. Grooming will promote more blooms, new growth, and healthier plants.

Fixing a bare spot

If, after all this good care, the planted basket has a bare spot, or one of the plants in the basket just plain gives up, tuck in a 4" replacement plant.

To obtain more gardening information, contact your local OSU Extension Office.

Or go to the OSU Extension's Gardening Encyclopedia at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening>.

Clackamas County Master Gardeners 503-655-8631

Washington County Master Gardeners 503-725-2300

Also look for OSU Master Gardeners at Farmer's Markets and County Fairs.