

## Twelve Tips for Arranging Flowers

**1** A mass of one type of flower in a vase will always look delightful.

**2** If mixing your flowers, always include a flower with a round form.

**3** When placing flowers in a vase, choose a vase that is half the height of the stems you are arranging.

**4** If working with a combination of textures, include one that is smooth — this will unify all the others used.

**5** Bulb flowers with soft stems are not comfortable in foam — arrange in water and use chicken wire, a grid of tape or a pin holder for support if needed.

**6** If using foam, soak by placing it in deep, still water and allow it to sink until level. It turns dark green in about 60 seconds. Never hold foam under a tap or push it under water — it will stay dry inside. Discard foam if it dries out, as it will never take up water efficiently again.

**7** To create excitement and interest in floral designs, use repetition. For large-scale arrangements, place a line along the table keeping a common theme in the size, colour or material of the container, or in the colour and variety of flowers used.

**8** Try to keep flowers in a mixed bouquet in scale. A useful guide — though not infallible — is not to include any flower that is more than twice as large as the next one to it in size.

**9** When creating arrangements with a mass of flowers where the container is part of the overall design, aim for a flower-to-container ratio of 1.5:1, or reverse the proportions if you wish the container to be more dominant. Equal proportions are disconcerting to the eye.

**10** If wiring flowers for bridal work, choose flowers in season so they are stronger. Check their survival rate before the big day — particularly if the weather is going to be warm. Spray them regularly.

**11** Use the smooth stems of bulb flowers such as *Ornithogalum* (chinchinchee), *Tulipa* (tulip) and *Zantedeschia* (calla) as part of the design to create a bigger arrangement and to show off their beauty.

**12** You don't need to spend a fortune. One single flower is beauty in itself.