LESSON 1.

DESIGN STUDY
VERTICAL LINE DESIGN:

I. NECESSARY PREPARATION.

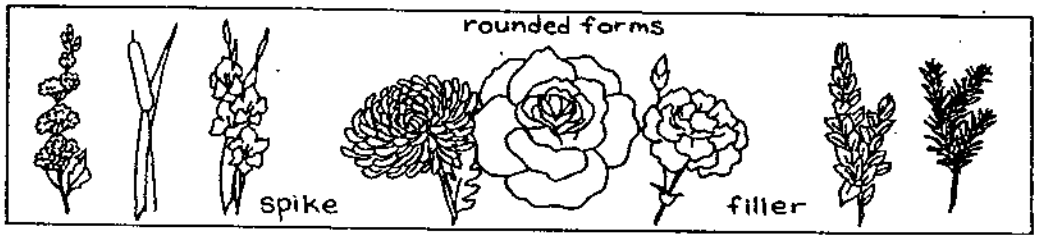
A. Types of plant material needed:

Three (3) types of plant material from the garden or florist.
Select **one** variety of plant material from each of the three basic forms:

1. Spike forms, for **line and to establish skeleton: Ex**. Stock, glads, cattail, umbrella plant,sansevieria, bare/budded branches, delphiniums, iris, podocarpus,etc.
   Needed: three (3) pieces of the same variety for line.

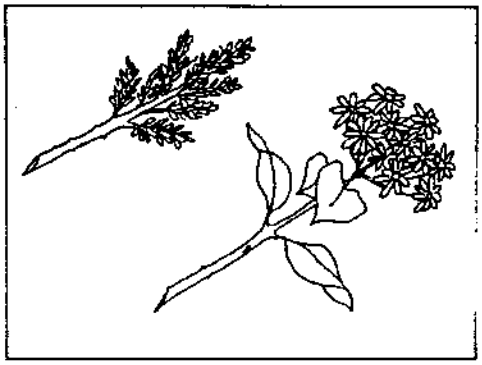
2. Rounded forms, for **emphasis: Ex**. Chrysanthemum, roses, carnation etc.
   Needed: three (3) flowers, preferably bud, half open and fully opened.

3. Filler or transitional forms, to **give contrast of texture, round out design and cover mechanics: Ex.** Leaves, small flowers or small leafed foliage, euonymus, yew, boxwood, begonia, philodendrons, pittosporum, leather leaf fern or hosta. Texture is the surface quality of the plant material, such as rough or smooth, dull or shinny.
   Needed: Three or four pieces depending on size, texture and color selected.



B. Preparation of plant material for design: Conditioning: Conditioning is a process allowing plant material to take on more water than it gives off, putting it into a prime state of freshness for its use .

1. Cut stem on a slant with a sharp instrument. Cut again under water.*
2. Place specimen in luke-warm water up to the neck of the flower.
3. Remove the foliage that will remain under water. Water causes it to deteriorate quickly.
4. Place in a cool, dark room, out of drafts for several hours or overnight.



*Please note. This manual may differ in some way from the videos. Please know there are several methods to reach the same goal!

C. **Special treatment:** Before conditioning in water one of the following treatments may be helpful.

1. Woody stems such as, azalea, should be cut crosswise in an (x) at the base, or peeled back and split for an inch or more.

2. Milky stems, as many types of euphorbias, (poppies, dahlias, poinsettias,etc), must be sealed. Recommended methods are with a flame,or by dipping end momentarily in boiling water each time they are cut. Also stems may be **cut under water** before conditioning in warm water and **cut under water** each time the stem is cut. These type plants require water during arranging as well as after arranging.

3. Most foliage should be immersed completely for several hours in order to absorb adequate moisture.

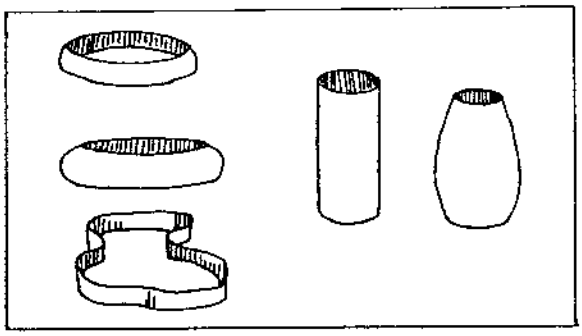
4. Brittle stems, such as stock and chrysanthemums, may be broken for better water intake.

D. **Containers :** A container is a receptacle for the display of plant material. It should be selected to act as visual and sometimes physical support of the plant material. It must hold sufficient water for the plant material and be compatible in size, color and texture with the plant material.

Two types of containers are used in the Design Study Lessons:

1. Vertical (upright)

2. Horizontal (low & flat).



E. **Mechanics:** Mechanics are contrivances to hold plant or control plant material. The most common are:

1. Needleholder , sometimes called needlepoint or pin holder, made of lead and sharp pins.

2. Floral foam (Oasis) for fresh flowers. Green in color.Must be soaked in water until it is saturated prior to use. It is not biodegradable. Also Oasis will not absorb water if it drys out completely.

F. **Other Mechanics:** Also sometimes referred to as mechanics or tools.

1. Receptacle for mechanics, ex: basket, tool or fishing box.

2. Sharp scissor type clippers for stems and heavy clippers for branches. Also a knife, rubber bands, a glue gun, and wire may be useful.

3. Oasis. Oasis must be soaked in water until saturated prior to use.

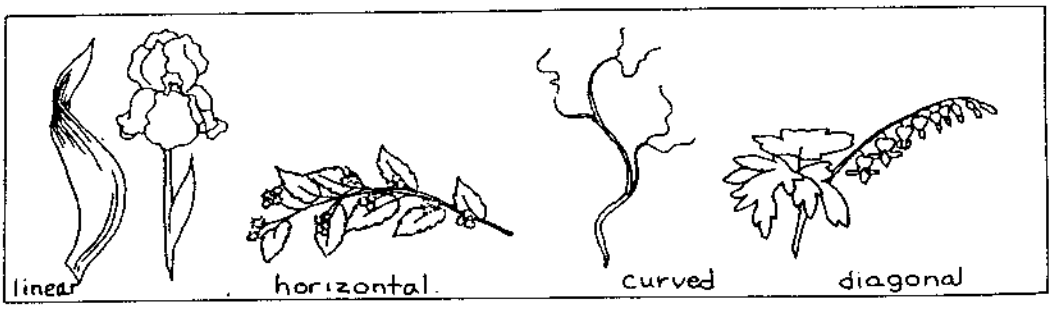
4. Florist clay called "Cling", "Tacky clay" or "Handi-tac" to anchor pin holder. Sometimes available in craft dapartmants.

5. Floral tape (corsage type) a waxed paper tape. The tape must be stretched to stick to stems.

6. Waterproof floral tape used to strap Oasis into a container. This tape is dark green in color.

II. **LINE DESIGN:** A line design is characterized by restraint in the quantity of plant material used and an open silhouette. Line is the **foundation** of all design. Line is one of the elements of design. An element is a working ingredient used to achieve the principles of design.. Line creates a visual path through the design. The line determines the linear direction and the form the design will achieve. It may be vertical, horizontal, curved, diagonal, or zigzag. Lines may be long, short, thick, thin, etc. **Linear pattern should dominate.**

III. **VERTICAL LINE DESIGN:** The vertical design made in this class should have greater height than width. A vertical thrust with restraint in the amount of plant material and an open silhouette is desired.

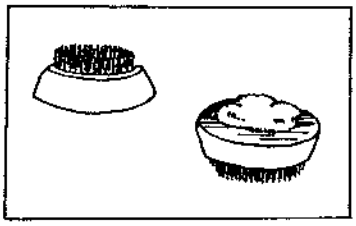


A. Materials needed.

1. Shallow, flat, container or bowl.
2. Needleholder (pin holder), clippers, and florist clay.
3. Three pieces of **line** material (see page 1, #1 spike forms).
4. Three **round forms** (page 1 #2 flowers).
5. Three or four pieces of **transitional/filler** material (page 1 #3).
   Each type of plant material may be alike, but use a variety of sizes and length.

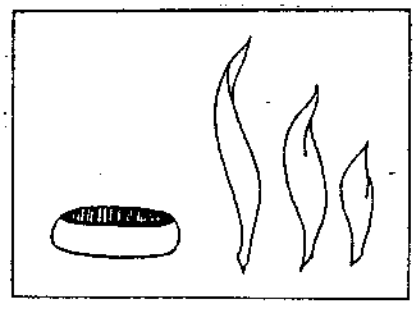
B. Construction:

1. Take a small amount of florist clay or "cling", roll it to form a long narrow piece.
2. Place it firmly around the edges of the bottom of a dry needleholder.
3. Press on center bottom of the dry container. Twist slightly. Carefully test by lifting the needleholder, while supporting the container with your other hand. If it adheres to the container,it will hold the design.

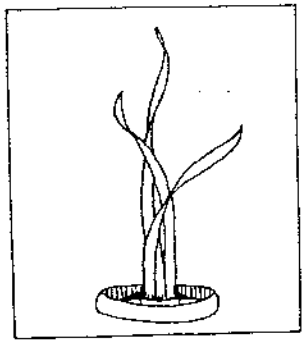


C. Measurements: Line material. Three pieces of line material.
The following guidelines are not rules, but a good method to obtain proper height, width and depth .

1. First line: Cut a minimum of 1 1/2 times the length or diameter of container, plus the depth of the container. This line becomes the main line of the design.
2. Second line: Cut about 3/4 the length of the first piece.
3. Third line. Cut about 3/4 the length of the second piece.



D. Placement of line material: (This composes the outline of the design)



1. First stem: Insert upright in center slightly to the back of needleholder. This becomes the **main line.**

2. Second stem: Place in front of main line and to the left. Let the top flair out and away from the first stem.

3. Third stem: Insert just in front of the other two and let it flow to the **right** of center. Seek to maintain a vertical movement.

E. Selection of flowers and placement: Select 3 flowers.

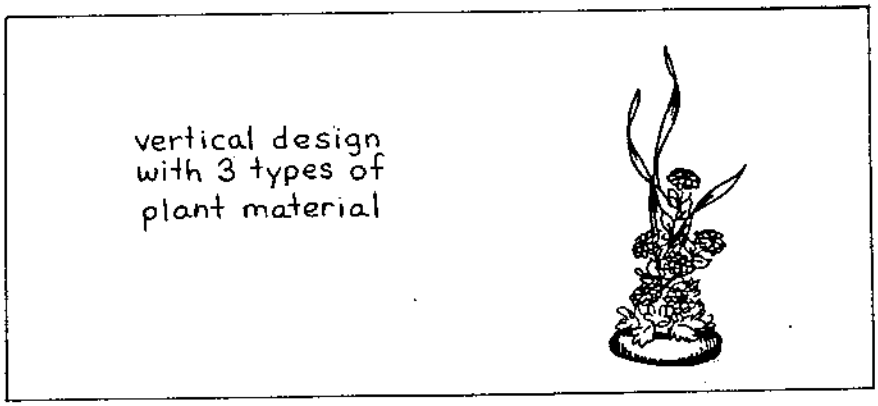
1. Selection.

a. Longest should be least open.
b. Second longest more open.
c. Shortest, fully opened and largest flower.

2. Placement: Try to prevent two stems from being the same height of another flower or the line material. This will achieve greater depth and permit the eye to move easily throughout the design. Flowers should be in the lower 2/3 of the design and placed within the structure of the line material. Each placement should follow the general pattern down towards the top of the container to create a center of interest with the largest flower placed at or near the base of the main line.

a. Insert longest, least opened flower in front of the **main line** (longest spike form). It should be about 2/3 the length of the main line.
b. Insert second more open flower in front of the second line (spike form). Turn it to the left.
c. Insert the largest flower toward the front of the container at the base of the main line, but slightly to the right.

F. Completing the design with transitional/filler material. Insert the third type of plant material, using it to round out the design. Place some over the rim of the container. Insert one to the back of the design. Insert these stems close to the other stems at the base allowing the foliage to flow out over the container and up into the design. Depth may be aided by completing all around.



IV. APPRECIATION TIME! Focus on the beauty that has been achieved. Stand at a distance and check it overall. It should be tall and slender in width. A strong vertical placement is needed. Does the design have an open silhouette and restraint? Each stem should be a different length than the lines and flowers (plant material) already placed in the design. Does the design appear crowded or stuffed? Skill as a designer comes with **practice** and **study.**