



Notes: How To Create A Waterfall Vase Arrangement

**Rittners Floral School
Boston, Ma.**



The waterfall style vase arrangement is one of those designs that will really impress your family and friends!

Hi, Welcome to The Rittners School of Floral Design in Boston. It's a pleasure welcoming you to this distance education workshop "How To Create A Waterfall Vase Arrangement." We think you'll really enjoy this lesson!

This arrangement is fun to do and people love it when they see it. (I know I say that about most of these designs, but **I mean it!** This one is really cool!)

This is not a table centerpiece meant to be viewed all the way around.... It has very specific angles at which it is best displayed. But I am getting a little ahead of myself.....



Contents That You Will Need To Create This Arrangement:

- °A Tall Container
- °Foam
- °Roses (8-10 flowers depending upon the size of the roses and your container)
- °Mini Sunflowers (at least 5 stems)
- °Lilies (We used 1-2 stems. Your mileage may vary)
- °Carnations (4-6 flowers)
- °Baker fern
- °Seeded Eucalyptus (1/2 to 1 bunch)
- °Miniature Carnations (1/2 to 1 bunch)
- °Vines, ivy, branchy stuff or grasses.

The contents are approximate depending upon the size of your container, what materials are available to you, their level of development, how dense you like your design, and your own specific tastes.

Background on The Waterfall Style Vase Arrangement

The waterfall style vase arrangement as its name implies, simulates the effect of a waterfall. It is an arrangement that cascades downwards like water off of a cliff. Instead of water, flowers and foliage flow downwards. Think of a cascading bouquet but in a container.



We often call the waterfall design an architectural arrangement. That is because this design has very specific and unique architectural applications.

It can be created on top of a very large container (eg. flowing out of a tall three or four foot container.) In a shorter vessel it can be placed on a very secure pedestal or table. It would be a great point of interest in a modern home.

It also works nicely in a niche in the wall in a stately historical mansion.



These arrangements look complex, but I am going to teach you some very neat trade secrets that will enable you to create designs like this one, quickly and very easily!



Start With Your Container:



Containers are among the floral designer's best friends. Like your live friends, each container has its own unique qualities.

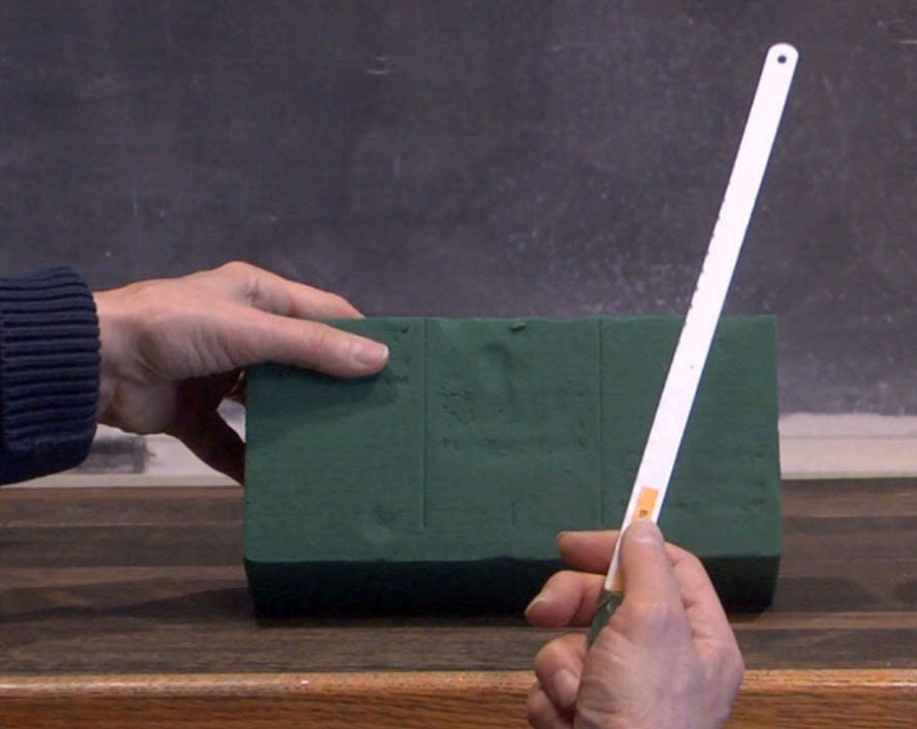
The choice of a container is critical for the success of this arrangement. This arrangement requires a tall vessel. We are using a ceramic base that's around 16" tall.

We picked this base because most people are able to source a container that is around a foot and a half to two feet tall. That is the size vessel that we would consider to be the minimum height appropriate for use in a waterfall design.



These designs are usually quite tall. The container we are using here (around 16" tall) works, but you could get even more amazing results with one twice that height or even more than twice that height. The height adds to the dramatic impact.





Fill the container with foam scraps left over from making other designs. Use a hacksaw blade to cut a piece of foam already saturated with water. Wedge it into the top of the container on top of the foam already inserted. If you need to do so, add oasis tape across the top for greater stability.





Let's establish the shape of this arrangement with foliage. Start with Baker fern.





This arrangement definitely has a cascading waterfall shape. Add some foliage down towards the floor reflecting that cascading effect.



The foliage will define the overall shape and dimensions of the arrangement. After your foliage is placed, it simply becomes a matter of filling in with your flowers.





Start creating the cascading effect with flowers. You can never go wrong with roses.





Don't worry about the cascading area feeling "empty" in some places. We will be adding other flowers besides roses as we go along.



After defining the cascade section with three roses lets add three more roses to the top of the design and one to connect the three on top to the cascade. You can now see the cascading effect of the foliage repeated by the roses.

You may choose to add several roses to the side of the arrangement facing away from the camera.





The roses followed the baker fern to define the cascading effect.

Let's start filling in with another flower.

Mini sunflowers fill the space quickly. Depending upon availability, any larger flower like fuji mums, cremons, etc will also work nicely.

Note the nice contrast between the pink and the yellow.

Continue to fill in with more sunflowers. The exact position of the sunflower placement is not important. What is important is that we are filling in between the roses with a number of sunflowers.

Now the design is starting to feel more substantial.



Sunflowers and roses provide contrast in color. To provide a little more contrast in shape and texture let's add some lilies. Lilies often have multiple flowers on a stem. That means that you can cut them off the stem & get greater coverage as you mix these flowers in the design. (Be sure to remove the pollen from the lilies if possible before using them in the design. Pollen can get on clothing etc.)







If you looked closely at the photograph on the prior page (repeated here) you will also see the placement of an additional flower. It is not a lily.

Do you see it?

It is a carnation. This flower gives amazing value, lasts well and is available in a wide range of colors. It is an exceptional value.



Consider if you will. Up until now we used roses, sunflowers and lilies. These are all upscale flowers. I call these, “the prestige.”

The design is loaded with them.

By adding a more common everyday flower like a carnation we can provide additional contrast in shape, texture and color at very little extra expense. The carnations bring something very special to the design table.

Carnations have a presence, yet the viewer still sees lots of roses, and plenty of yellow lilies and sunflowers.

Never underestimate the usefulness of adding a few everyday or common flower varieties to a design that already displays upscale materials.





We can reinforce the waterfall effect with additional foliage. Some of the various eucalyptus varieties like this seeded eucalyptus can certainly help.





Continue to place small pieces of seeded eucalyptus throughout the design to integrate the cascading section with the rest of the arrangement. It makes the design feel a little less formal.

Add some clusters of a small flower like miniature carnations here and there to fill in any gaps or holes in the arrangement. (In the video we added the minis first, and followed them with the eucalyptus. In this study guide we reversed the sequence. The results are the same.)

The design no longer feels as empty as it did a few steps back.



The design is gorgeous and we could consider this a natural stopping point. There is, however something we need to talk about and that is the angle of viewing.

Angle of Viewing for a Waterfall Design:

Just as you can view a real waterfall like Niagara Falls from different angles, there are multiple options to display (and view) a waterfall vase arrangement.



You can look at this design with the cascading section going off to one side. Alternatively, you can view the waterfall design from the front. I think that a front view can be more effective if the container used is very tall.

When creating one of these designs it is a good idea to design it so that it looks good from either angle.

Additional Stuff You May Add:



The floral interpretation of a waterfall allows further expression where we can create the feeling of depth.



In this case I've added some ivy vines, intertwining them over, around and between the larger flowers.

Other alternatives? Well if you consider it the seeded eucalyptus that we added contributes to a "layered" look. Ethereal foliage like sprengeri, or plumosa, grasses like bear grass, mosses (eg. spanish moss), wool and even straw-like raffia could be incorporated to create even more layers. (as many or as few as you desire.)

Veiling Technique

You are not required to do this layering process but many designers love to do it.

There is a fancy term we give to this process of creating additional layers. It is called "veiling."

Want to show off to your family and friends? Tell them you've created a waterfall design and incorporated veiling technique. They will look at you in awe!!!!





Some Questions To Consider:

- 1. What is a waterfall style floral design?**
- 2. Why do we refer to a waterfall style design as an architectural floral piece?**
- 3. What are some specific ways that a waterfall design can be displayed?**
- 4. Waterfall designs can only be displayed in contemporary homes. True or false and why?**
- 5. The choice of a vessel is not all that important for waterfall designs. True or false and why?**
- 6. What is the minimum size vessel that is appropriate for a waterfall floral design?**
- 7. Taller containers are not necessarily better for waterfall arrangements. Is this true or false? Why?**
- 8. Describe the angle of viewing that is appropriate for waterfall arrangements.**
- 9. Would waterfall arrangements work well as centerpieces on dining room tables? How about used on a side table or mantel?**
- 10. What is veiling technique?**
- 11. Is veiling technique a requirement for a waterfall vase arrangement?**
- 12. Could waterfall design technique be used in an arrangement of permanent botanicals? Explain.**



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Waterfall style floral designing is another amazing technique/approach that will impress people and increase your floral designing options.

Please remember to add some water to the design every couple of days. The flowers (and the foam) like that!

We hope you enjoyed this online lesson. We certainly enjoyed presenting it to you.

At Rittners Floral School in Boston we provide floral design instruction that includes a wide range of different styles and techniques.

Folks from all over the US as well as abroad, learn floral art skills from Rittners Floral School because we are great floral designers, and just as importantly because, as you can see, we are outstanding teachers!!