Floral Design Basics: Techniques

Line
visual path the eye is drawn or attracted as it proceeds through the arrangement; curves or directional movement of the arrangement; static/dynamic

Form
three dimensional configuration or shape; describes the length, width and height of an object; also known as shape

Space
total area a person can see; can be broken up by shapes and forms; positive/negative; draws attention to a certain area; emphasize importance

Texture
visual or tactile feel of an item; surface quality; is known as pattern when enlarged

Pattern
created by repeating lines, shapes and forms; also referred to as repetition

Color
light reflected off an object; also referred to as hue

Size
amount of space a component occupies in a composition

Fragrance
appealing odor emanating from a specific item

Balance
equality of distribution throughout an arrangement

Proportion
relationship in units/elements within a design in shape, size, quantity and degree of emphasis

Scale
size of a composition in relation to its surroundings

Harmony
achieved when all the elements, flowers, foliage and container, complement one another; describes tangible and intangible
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Unity
organization of components into a whole resulting in a cohesive relationship of all parts; oneness of purpose

Dominance
area of authority in a design

Focal Point
location within a design attracting the most attention; center of interest in a design

Emphasis
area which stands out in a design

Accent
enhances or adds interest to a design

Rhythm
visual movement throughout a design; usually achieved by means of repetition

Depth
dimension in a design achieved through the placement of materials; placing materials at different levels in a design

Repetition
repeating “like” material within a composition

Transition
use of material in a composition to connect two things which are opposite; visual movement from gradual degrees of change

Contrast
striking difference between two elements

Variation
used to break the similarity of an arrangement

Opposition
used to create a higher interest

Tension
creating contrast by using two conflicting elements; dynamic aesthetic quality which requires the skillful use of contrast; expresses action or energy; principle of contrast
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Line Flower
primary flowers used to establish the skeleton outline height or width of an arrangement; stem with several blooms and buds along the stem which create a line

Skeleton of a Design
first stem placements establishing the shape of a design

Mass Flower
usually a single stem with large rounded heads used inside or along the line of the arrangement to fill in; solid head at the end of a stem

Form Flower
used to create a focal point with unusual and distinctive shapes; any flower whose shape would be its most dramatic feature

Filler Flower
type of flower used to complete a design

Foliage
green materials in an arrangement; commonly stems with many leaves

Floral Foam
used as a stem support device

Floral Container
containers which hold floral foam with multiple prongs and have a water reservoir to keep foam saturated

Floral Stem Tape
stretchable tape which adheres to itself; used to lengthen and strengthen stems

Clear Tape
adheres to dry surfaces and can be used to make grids for flowers in vases

Anchor Tape
waterproof, all-purpose tape used to hold floral foam in place

Mechanics
supplies, methods and materials which designers use to place and hold flowers and foliage in an arrangement
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Floral Wire
thin, green wire used to strengthen and lengthen stems

Gauge
unit of measurement for the diameter of wire; as the gauge number increases, the diameter of the wire decreases; for example, 28 gauge wire is finer than 16 gauge wire

Aluminum Wire
strong, malleable wire used to add decoration and support to designs; available in many different colors

Bullion Wire
used to add sparkle and shine to bouquets and arrangements

Piercing Method
corsage wiring technique in which a wire is inserted through the calyx and bent downward parallel to the stem

Hairpin Method
corsage wiring technique in which the wire is shaped into a hairpin or large V-shape

Stitching
method of wiring leaves to strengthen and support individual leaves

Midrib
central vein of the leaf

Feathering
cutting a large flower into several small pieces and rewiring those pieces to create a smaller flower

Sepals
separate part forming the calyx; usually green

Ovary
female reproductive organ in flowers; where seeds are formed and produced

Hook Method
wiring technique in which the wire is inserted through the flower head and a small hook is formed in the wire before it is pulled back into the flower
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Radial Stem Placement
stems originating from a central point