

When it comes to container gardens and custom container design, Al's has some ideas on what looks great together. Here you can learn a few basics of good container design, and learn about plant combinations that are ideal for sun or shade. By balancing color and texture, you can create an eye catching container yourself. Here's how!

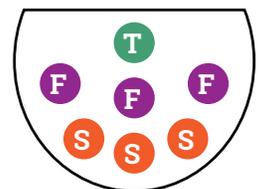
- Step 1** **Determine** your container, and where it's going to live (sun/shade). Also, determine if you are going to build your container to be viewed from all sides, or just one.
- Step 2** **Choose** a bold, beautiful "thriller" that meet your sun/shade requirements. This will be the focal point of your container.
- Step 3** **Select** some complimentary foliage and flowering plants as "fillers", with the same watering requirements.
- Step 4** **Add** "spiller" plants that cascade over the side of your container.
- Step 5** **Arrange** the selected plants in the desired pattern on the table next to your container, remembering your basic round or one-sided preference.
- Step 6** **Fill** your container entirely with *Al's Natural & Organic Potting Soil*. This is also a great time to add *Al's Transplant Fertilizer* to ensure that your plants get off to a great start.
- Step 7** **Slip** plants out of their plastic pots and position in the container as desired.
- Step 8** **Add** additional soil to fill in around positioned plants, ensuring soil is within 1" of the container's lip and covering all plants.
- Step 9** **Water** in your new container garden to remove any air pockets in the soil. This ensures the roots are surrounded by a soil, fertilizer, water mixture that they love.
- Step 10** **Enjoy** your new container!

**T Thrillers** Bold and beautiful with an upright habit. Plant your thriller in the center or back of your container.  
*Examples: Diascia, Nemesia, Cannas, Rhododendron, Impeditum, Lemon Cypress or Dracena.*

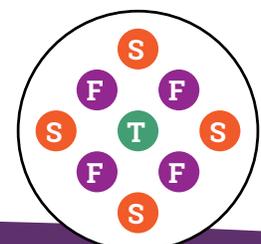
**F Fillers** Complement your thriller with plants with a clumping habit. Add interesting foliage that is unique.  
*Examples: Petunias, Begonias, Lobelia, Heuchera, Fuschia or Geraniums.*

**S Spillers** The trailing habit of these plants cascade over the side of your container, adding another layer of texture, and balance to your thriller.  
*Examples: Bacopa, Ipomea, Setcreasea or Calibrachoa.*

Thriller in the back of the container



Thriller in the center of the container



## Continued Care

### Water

Remember to water your container throughout the summer. During the hot summer, it may be necessary to water everyday. When in doubt, feel the soil on the top of the container, by sticking your finger in the soil. If it is dry, it's time to water. If it's moist, just leave it alone.

### Fertilizer

Fertilize your plant throughout the summer and into early fall, using *Al's Slow Release All Purpose Fertilizer*® approximately every 2 months. In addition, you can add *Al's All Purpose Water Soluble Fertilizer*® with *Micro-Nutrients* every 1-2 weeks.

### Make it Fresh -- Again!

Container Gardens are great because by trading plants in and out, you can freshen up your container and get it ready for the season ahead. Container Gardens are great for all seasons, so try your hand at transitioning them by adding seasonal plants and embellishments. Greet fall by adding mums or millet, and embellish with small gourds or pumpkins. For Christmas, try adding Hellebores, wintergreen, LED lights, outdoor ornaments and floral picks – and don't forget the fresh cut greenery.

### Questions?

Have questions or need inspiration? Stop by any Al's Location, where Al's Experts are on hand to guide you through the process.