

HOW TO CREATE A HANDTIED BOUQUET

Handtied bouquets are easy to create and fun to give. Your host will appreciate having the bouquet you bring ready to pop into a vase. You will find a way that works best for you as you create more bouquets.

Assemble your flowers: any combination of stems, but you should include round flowers, (roses, carnations) line material, (ruscus or other foliage stem) and transitional material (hypericum berries, statice). Anything that pleases your eye is appropriate, but don't use "spray flowers" like a spray of roses or carnations or chrysanthemums.

1. Cut an 18-inch long piece of waterproof green tape and have it ready.
2. Clean the stems of all plant material by removing all leaves (except the very top leaves surrounding the flower). Make sure the stems are very clean. Compost the removed leaves, or make a potpourri of the fragrant ones!
3. Arrange flowers and foliage in groups on table.
4. If you are right-handed, open your left hand in front of you. Vice versa for left-handers. Place one stem between your thumb and your hand.
5. Place each stem across the previous one in a radial pattern around a central stem. Turn the stems after every 3 placements, with a $\frac{1}{4}$ turn of the bundle in your hand. Some people place 5 stems and then turn, some people turn after every placement, some people never turn, they just place each stem so it is angled. If you want to get really technical, a 35° angled placement is recommended for each stem.
6. Keep adding stems one at a time at an angle and holding it at the binding point.
7. Check the composition from the top for appearance. You may loosen your grip and adjust the flowers or add a stem from behind. The bouquet should be as wide or wider at the top as it is high, and have a nicely rounded profile seen from the side.
8. When you have included all your stems in the bouquet, hold it tightly with one hand and wrap the tape around it at the binding point. Enlist a friend at this stage if you need to. Tie it high for a compact bouquet or looser for a more relaxed look, but avoid tying over any leaves or flowers. Lynda added kiwi vine for drama. It also helps to hold up the bouquet in the container.
9. Cut the stems at the bottom all the same length. The bouquet should be able to stand on its stems on a hard surface. You can cover the tape with a ribbon.