

Basic Design "At Home With Flowers"

UNIT 1 Line Design, part one class notes, page 1

What to bring to class
click here

Traditional line designs are usually naturalistic and show Oriental influence. Simplicity is achieved by restraint in materials used. The line is the dominant form with little or no additional plant material, resulting in a sharp silhouette, that draws your eye through the design. It has a strong thrust of line material.

Select clean-cut material with similar characteristics. The individual qualities of each piece of plant material should be clearly seen and shown to their best advantage. Branches, leaves and flowers may be pruned to emphasize line.

Lines provide directional movement by forcing the eye to move along its length, thus establishing rhythm within a design. Rhythm is the most important principle in a line design. It is a communicating factor, promoting harmony, unity or contrast and suggest motion.

Principles of Design
Balance
Rhythm
Dominance
Contrast
Proportion
Scale

Elements of Design
Line
Color
Light
Texture
Pattern
Form
Size
Space

Containers

- Shallow and cylindrical containers are suitable for vertical and side triangle line designs.
- A compote, or low bowl is excellent for horizontal and crescent line designs.
- The traditional oriental triangle line design and zig zag designs are complimented by oriental style containers.
- The number of lines used must appear in proportion to the size of the container.

Placement of Plant Material

- The line is established first.
- All stems should be placed as close together as possible and appear to radiate from one point.
- The unity of the design is destroyed by a variation of lines radiating out in different directions.

Some suitable line materials include:

pear branches	yucca	gladiolus
glad leaves	Scotch broom	liatris
bamboo	sanseveria	bare branches w/ interesting side shoots



[Go to Pg 2 Unit 1](#)

[Return to Basic Design Home Page](#)

What to bring to class
click here

[Go to Unit 1 Class Photos - 2005](#)
[Return to Froghaven](#)
[Return to Sope Creek Garden Club](#)

Read through the [Overview of Oriental Design](#)

Basic Design "At Home With Flowers"

**What to
bring to
class**
[click here](#)

UNIT 1 Line Design, part one class notes, page 2

Any line direction within a design may consist of only the chosen linear material or it can be created through the repetition of shapes, forms, textures and color which have been placed in a specific linear direction. The design may have a center of interest if it is needed for strength and stability, but the center of interest must not crowd the design, obscure the line or become a bull's eye.

Using an abundance of plant material at the base of the design will create a collar effect and should be avoided. Linear, oval, pointed flowers or seed pods will reinforce the main line, but round forms hold attention too long unless they have been graduated in size.

Principles
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Balance

Balance in line designs is usually asymmetrical, as varied heights of three branches create a triangle. This balance reflects what we see in nature, thereby giving opportunity for freedom and originality in floral design. Density at the top and outer limits of the design can affect balance, therefore extra leaves or flowers should be removed adding clarity and rhythm and contributing to better balance.

A base, such as wood, mirror, marble, etc. may be used to add visual weight.

Shape

Some plant material may be altered to a desired shape by placing it under water and laying a towel on the plant overnight to acquire a desired shape. Scotch broom works well this way. The direction on many stems, even woody ones, can be changed by careful bending. Rolling a leaf while gently rubbing it, changes its direction. When all else fails, we can resort to wiring a stem, even the underside of a leaf, to form a desired line.

In line designs, two dimensional shapes, particularly those of foliage, give a transition from rounded forms to linear forms. They bridge the gap between bold, round forms and strong, linear forms. As a result, they allow the eye to move in any direction in the design.



[Go to Pg
Unit 1](#)

[Return to
Basic Des
Home Pa](#)

**What to
bring to
class**
[click here](#)

[Go to Unit 1 Class Photos - 2005](#)
[Return to Froghaven](#)
[Return to Sope Creek Garden Club](#)

Basic Design "At Home With Flowers"

UNIT 1 Line-Mass Design, part two class notes, page 3

**What to
bring to
class**
[click here](#)

Mass-line design is of American origin and is probably the most popular and adaptable design for modern homes. A mass-line design is recognized as having an open silhouette, a pleasing outline and organized placement of materials resulting in a predetermined form. Pleasing outline and orderly arrangement of materials, placed to emphasize depth, are typical aspects of mass-line composition.

Principles
Design
Balance
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Placement

Placement of lines and forms control the degree of visual depth found within a design. These structural elements control eye movement in both vertical and horizontal directions, stopping and starting according to placement and physical characteristics of the various lines. They can also be used to direct the eye in and out, back and forth, through the design. In this way, both visual and actual depth perception is controlled.

The lines derive their beauty from the natural characteristics of the plant material and form the overall pattern for the line-mass design. The massed material that forms the focal area provides weight and color, affecting balance, while still maintaining a neat, uncluttered look.

This design is usually asymmetrical allowing smooth movement along the line, into the mass and over the edge of the container, which is necessary for balance and unity. Placing some of the plant material in profile, at the back, in reverse or overlapping, improves the overall depth.



Elements
Design
Line
Color
Light
Texture
Pattern
Form
Size
Space

[Go to Pg
Unit 1](#)

[Return to
Basic Des
Home Pa](#)

[Go to Unit 1 Class Photos - 2005](#)
[Return to Froghaven](#)
[Return to Sope Creek Garden Club](#)

**What to
bring to
class**
[click here](#)

Basic Design "At Home With Flowers"

UNIT 1 Line-Mass Design, part two class notes, page 4

What to
bring to
class
[click here](#)

Since line is the primary foundation of this design, understanding the element of line is essential in achieving a good design. There are three basic geometric shapes that are the basis of all creative combinations in design today. The cube, the sphere and the triangle are ever present as the elements and principles in all floral design.

Principles
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1. Vertical Suitable for hallways, foyers and bathrooms, as they can be tall and narrow. Most effective as a line or line-mass design. It reflects dignity and is inspirational.

2. Horizontal Excellent for tables as they are usually viewed from all sides. A mass-line is perfect for this placement and reflects calm, tranquility and rest.

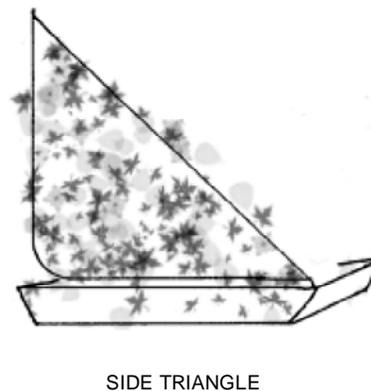
3. Crescent Works well as a mass-line and is exciting and versatile. Gradation is essential with heavier material near the central axis and graduated out to show tips of the crescent. Suggests a smile and happiness.

4. Spiral The contrast of a square container with the rounded mass-line is more creative with vines carrying out the line of the design. Interesting and reflective design.

5. Triangle Suitable for many occasions, it can be a traditional oriental design or a modern symmetrical placement of uneven lines.

6. Side Triangle Very versatile for the home and many other occasions as a mass-line design. The center of interest depends on either left or right handed placement in the low container and will be at the base with lines projecting up and at a 90-degree angle to the container.

7. Zig Zag Striking and restless, it is a "show off" design placed for viewing briefly as one passes through a hallway or foyer. The correct container with appropriate plant material challenge the designer to creative ideas in design.



Elements
Design
Line
Color
Light
Texture
Pattern
Form
Size
Space

Go to
[Principles](#)
[Design](#)

[Return to](#)
[Basic Design](#)
[Home Page](#)

What to
bring to
class
[click here](#)

[Go to Unit 1 Class Photos - 2005](#)
[Return to Froghaven](#)
[Return to Sope Creek Garden Club](#)

Basic Design "At Home With Flowers"

What to Bring to Class for Unit 1 Line and Line-Mass Design

**containers, plant material, floral foam, needlepoint
notebook and pencil, camera to record your achievements**

Suggested General Supplies

small plant
clippers,
needlepoints,
scissors,
a few wired
picks, 4-6"
floral putty,
floral tape,
a knife to cut
floral foam,
a bit of nylon
stocking.
floral foam,
floral wire

Containers - low or tall. The neck should be no more than about 4 inches. Of course, a flat, open container will not have a neck but may be used with a needlepoint (floral frog). Your container may be a large ash tray that will hold some water (at least 2"), or a painted or covered tuna can. Bring at least two different containers.

Bring one low container, 10-14 inches in diameter. If you don't have one, look in the kitchen for a casserole dish or even a cake pan. For the Line-Mass, a round, oblong or cylinder type, the size of a large juice can, or something more slender, may be used. Compotes are also good.

Plant Material - Designs may be all foliage is you wish. Bring material, well conditioned*, from your garden, or purchase appropriate material. Bring about 5 branches of small leaves and 8 to 10 blooms of whatever you choose to go with your linear material. For this class, suggested plant materials include:

- branches without heavy leaves (slender), 24-36" long, with or w/o blooms
- sanseveria
- scotch broom
- curly willow, euonymous, yew
- grasses
- cattails
- dock
- wheat
- yucca or very thin leaves
- very thin sprigs of pampas grass
- azalea or camellia branches with flowing, interesting shape

FLOWERS

- liatris
- larkspur
- tritome
- salvia 'May Night'
- gladiolus, in several stages of bloom
- any spike type

FILLER

- small leaf branches
- buds, clusters
- leaves such as holly, boxwood, camellia, nandina, euonymous

To add to mass, small round flowers of any kind or foliage with rosette shapes. Mums or carnations work well.

You may bring some pebbles or small rocks, small amount of moss or ground bark to cover needlepoints if desired.

Extra foliage of various texture, form and size may prove helpful.

Conditioning*

Plants cut from your garden should be cut with a knife or sharp pruners and immediately placed in warm water.

All foliage beneath the water line should be removed.

Cut the night before class or early in the

Floral Foam - If using a tall container for line-mass, floral foam (often referred to by the brand name of OASIS®) will be suitable. It must be new. Old foam will be broken down and contain harmful bacteria. Styrofoam® is not suitable for fresh materials. Floral tape may be needed to secure foam in container. Foam may need to extend an inch or two above the lip of the container and may be raised on sand or other filler in a tall container. A bit of foam on a needlepoint, separated by a small scrap of stocking material, will help secure small stems. The nylon stocking material will assist in removing the foam after use.



Needlepoint - Also called a frog, or a pin cup (a needled round in a small cup). This is essential for a line design and should be no less than 2.5" in diameter.

morning when the plants are more fully hydrated.

[Go to Unit 1 Class Photos - 2005](#)
[Return to Froghaven](#)
[Return to Sope Creek Garden Club](#)

[Return to Basic Design Home Page](#)