



# Window Box Winners

Wow your neighbors with one of these beautiful displays.



**I**t's no secret that Ree loves flowers. The problem is finding a way to keep them around every day! Window boxes are a perfect solution: They're front and center for all to see, and they're sure to brighten your mood every time you pull into your driveway. The boxes

are also fairly easy to put together—especially when you follow the gardener-approved formulas here. Try one of these pretty combinations of plants and blooms, and pick up some simple tips to help them thrive. You won't even have to get your hands dirty; Ree has some cute gloves for that!

INTRODUCTION AND "TRY 5 FUN STYLES" BY KELSEY HURWITZ. GAP PHOTOS.





# Great Picks

To create eye-catching window boxes, gardeners combine three kinds of plant silhouettes. Landscape designer Daryl Beyers shares his favorites.

## Thrillers

As the name suggests, thrillers are the star of most window boxes. They're meant to rise above the other foliage and grab attention with special features like tall spiky leaves, bold flowers or bright hues. And they set the tone for the whole design, whether you want to be dramatic, whimsical or simple and elegant.



**Calla Lilies**

Known for their delicate shape, the lilies come in a variety of colors—deep purples, yellows and ombré beauties like these.



**Showy Sage**

This wispy plant can grow up to three feet tall over a season. Its blooms attract butterflies and other garden pollinators.



**Elephant Ears**

The oversize leaves on this trendy plant give a window box a tropical feel. They can grow as big as a car tire!

## Fillers

These literally fill in the spaces around the thrillers, adding depth and interest to the design. They also conceal bare stems of tall thrillers. Look for fillers that grow in clusters, with lush foliage and lots of flowers. They're a good way to play with color and texture, so don't shy away from brilliant hues or unusual leaves.



**Begonias**

Some love sun, some love shade: Whatever light your window gets, you can find a begonia that will thrive in it.



**Heliotrope**

These petals usually have contrast, with light centers and dark edges. They're known for their amazing vanilla-ish scent.



**New Guinea Impatiens**

Unlike shade-loving classic impatiens, this variety can typically tolerate up to a half day of sun.

## Spillers

To balance a window box design, you should add plants that grow over the edges and trail down. Whether you go with an all-green vine or choose a fast-growing flower, a spiller helps tie a flower box into surrounding plants and foliage.



**Nasturtiums**

These popular trailing flowers come in bright colors and do well in sunny spots. They're edible, so you can put them in a salad!



**Sweet Potato Vine**

This ornamental vine can cascade up to 10 feet and comes in green, purple and copper. It thrives in the heat.



**Million Bells**

Expect loads of little flowers as promised by the name. They're very low-maintenance: Spent flowers fall right off.



# How to Create a Window Box

1

## Buy the Right Box

A good rule of (green) thumb is one drainage hole per foot of window box. Make sure your box is also at least a foot deep to accommodate roots. To protect wood boxes, add a plastic liner and poke holes in it.

2

## Add Potting Mix

Soil is typically too heavy and dense for window boxes. Potting mix drains well and retains moisture. Leave an inch or two of space below the top so water won't spill over the sides.

3

## Lay Out the Design

Before you plant, put all the flowers into the box—still in their pots—to see how they'll look together. Start with your thriller in the middle, arrange the fillers around it and place spillers along the edges.

4

## Plant with Care

Remove each plant from its pot. Gently scratch the root ball, which helps roots branch out. Make holes in the potting mix with a trowel and press in each plant. Clip off any damaged leaves, then remove faded buds and add water.

## Try 5 Fun Styles



### Go Bigger and Better

This Wisconsin arrangement is seven feet wide—and just about as tall! Casey Lynn Lawrence of The Lawrence Garden Farm channel on YouTube chose purple vertigo grass and red dragon wing begonias for color and petunias as spillers.

### Match the Flower Bed

Charleston is full of amazing window boxes, but this one stands out. "The beautiful border underneath makes it unique," says South Carolina blogger Michelle Moncure (@thecharlestonlens). The design includes New Guinea impatiens, coleus and vinca minor, and a spike plant centers the box.



### Start with Succulents

They're low-maintenance and add nice texture. Garden designer Rebecca Sweet (@harmonyinthegarden) put rosette-like aeoniums into this box in Los Altos, CA, then sprinkled in orange lanterns, red columbine and creeping fuchsia.



### Lean into Green

To add a timeless touch to a colonial house in Brookline, MA, master gardener Kim Hexamer stuck with a green and white palette. Contrasting shades made it come alive: Silver senecio and bright white dipladenia both pop next to the English ivy.



### Create Plant "Bookends"

"I wanted my window box to feel cool and calm," says gardener Putra Bonaccorsi of Sewell, NJ. She surrounded dainty pink Supertunias with bunches of deep purple sweet potato vine, plus creeping Jenny that sways in the wind.

GO BIGGER AND BETTER: COURTESY OF @CASEYLYNNLAWRENCE. MATCH THE FLOWER BED: COURTESY OF @THECHARLESTONLENS. START WITH SUCCULENTS: COURTESY OF REBECCA SWEETHARMONYINTHEGARDEN.COM. LEAN INTO GREEN: COURTESY @PETALSBRANCHES. GREAT PLANT "BOOKENDS": COURTESY OF @GOODPATHGARDENS.





✿  
Metal Watering Can in Folk Geo, half gallon; \$18

All of these are part of The Pioneer Woman line, available at [walmart.com](http://walmart.com).



✿  
Garden Hat in Folk Geo with UPF 30; \$20

# Gear You'll Dig

Gardening is a lot more fun with pretty tools and accessories!

✿  
Aluminum Gardening Tool and Accessory Set in Folk Geo; \$27



✿  
Goatskin Leather Garden Gloves in Folk Geo; \$15



✿  
Garden Apron in Folk Geo; \$18



✿  
Gardening Tool Set with Basket in Breezy Blossom; \$37