



# ART OF CONTAINER GARDENING



ALABAMA 4-H  
Alabama Cooperative  
Extension System

Learn to evaluate plants based on a variety of criteria such as color, height, width, blooming period, and needs (water, sunlight, and nutrients). Learn about proper care so they are growing to their fullest potential. Create a container garden that is also a piece of living art.

From clay pots to hanging baskets, from wooden barrels to wooden crates—anything that will hold growing media and allow proper drainage can be used for your container garden.

Gardening in containers is one of the most compact, versatile, and creative forms of garden design. Planning and planting a container garden is a lot like making a floral arrangement. You have to think about height, color, and care while selecting the proper plants for the container.

The big difference is that live plants are enjoyed for weeks, if not for the whole growing season, while cut flowers are only enjoyed for a couple of days.

## What You Will Do

- Select a container for your project. It can be anything from a decorative planter, recycled container, or a rustic repurposed item (be creative). It must assemble into a single container and be transported by one person.
- When selecting plants, choose a combination that helps you make a statement and that grows well together.
- The cost for the complete container garden, including plants, must not exceed \$75.
- Keep a journal.
- On Competitive Events Day, it will be judged on how it looks, not on photos.

Refer to Alabama 4-H Competitive Events on the Alabama Extension website ([www.aces.edu](http://www.aces.edu)) to review the [Competitive Events General Policy](#) and the [Age & Eligibility Chart](#).

## LEVELS OF COMPETITION

### Junior Level I:

9 to 11 years old on December 31 of the current calendar year (compete only at local and regional levels).

### Intermediate:

12 to 13 years old on December 31 of the current calendar year (compete only at local and regional levels).

### Senior Level I:

14 to 15 years old on December 31 of the current calendar year.

### Senior Level II:

16 to 18 years old on December 31 of the current calendar year.

## Rules for the Art of Container Gardening Project

- Container can be anything as long as it meets the other rules.
- Container must be assembled into a single container and transportable by one person (adult or youth) with the help of a hand-truck if necessary.
- No artificial floral, plant, or foliage may be used in the container.
- All plants in the container must be growing in the container for at least six weeks.
- Homegrown plants and commercially grown plants are allowed.
- No artificial leaf polishes may be used.
- Total cost for the entire container garden may not exceed \$75. Receipts must be kept for documentation. If an object is donated or is recycled, a fair value must be placed on it and included in the total expenses.
- Containers need to be viewable from all sides.
- A journal must be kept documenting the total process of the planning, planting, and growing of the container garden.
- The container must be the exhibitor's own efforts.
- Senior Level 4-H members must submit a community service report. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.





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## Score Sheet

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: \_\_\_ Junior (Age 9–11) \_\_\_ Intermediate (Age 12–13) \_\_\_ Senior I (Age 14–15) \_\_\_ Senior II (Age 16–18)

Description of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Minds On Learning (3-minute discussion)

Knowledge and Skills (Check One)	Excellent	Good	Could Improve	Points Received	Comments
<b>Time &amp; Effort (5 points)</b> Time spent in learning new skills					
<b>Knowledge (10 points)</b> Demonstrated full knowledge of subject with explanations and elaboration					
<b>Problems Solved &amp; Decisions Made (10 points)</b> Learning by trial and error has taught you important skills and made you independent.					
<b>Future Learning (5 points)</b> Your detailed plans for continued learning will make you successful.					
<b>Standard of Quality (10 points)</b> You have full knowledge of quality standards pertaining to your entry and have used accurate sources of information.					

## ART OF CONTAINER GARDENING

Knowledge and Skills (Check One)	Excellent	Good	Could Improve	Points Received	Comments
<b>Self Assessment (5 points)</b> You told me your workmanship was excellent.					
<b>Workmanship (10 points)</b> Excellent workmanship					
<b>Suitable for Use (10 points)</b> It is designed well for intended use.					
<b>Content (10 points)</b> By looking at your entry I can see how you have made the various plants work together.					
<b>Organization (5 points)</b> The design flows together and helps the plants to complement each other.					
<b>Creativity (10 points)</b> Your entry has lots of appeal and is an original idea.					
<b>Dimensions (10 points)</b> Single container, is transportable, and meets other requirements listed in instructions					

Hands On Learning (3-minute discussion)

