

Condition Your Fresh Flowers and Foliages

Flower Care

To get as much from each bloom as possible pick flowers in an early budding stage. They can last up to 2 weeks with proper care. Your flowers will appear dramatically different after a few hours of hydration, if you follow the instructions below.

Hydrate flowers for 24 hours using clean vases or Pre-measured Packages of Chrysal Flower Food containers, washing in bleach is best. Add floral food to the water to protect against bacteria and provide additional nutrients to the flower.

Carefully follow the directions on the floral food label. Incorrect mixtures may reduce the life of the flower.

1. Remove all leaves which will be below water in the vase. Leaves in the water will rot and create bacteria that will shorten the life of the flowers.
2. Cut stems at an angle at least 1 inch off the base of each flower using a sharp knife or scissors or greater water uptake.
3. Place flowers in water with correct amount of flower food.
4. Keep flowers in a cool, well ventilated place out of direct sunlight, not too close to heating or cooling vents, and never on the top of televisions or radiators to avoid dehydration.
5. Avoid placing flowers near fruits and vegetables as they give off an ethylene gas that will shorten the life of flowers.
6. Change the water every two to three days. When changing the water, clean the vase, add flower food, and re-cut the stems.

Microwave Pressing - For best results you can use a microwave flower press that has been designed specifically for the purpose. I prefer this press because it allows greater air circulation.

When pressing in the microwave, be careful not to over do it. Start out with short bursts at a medium setting, perhaps 30-60 seconds, then experiment with the timing. Let the plant material cool between zaps. I open the press to let the steam escape while cooling, then repeat until almost dry. To save time, consider working with 2 presses, just zap one while the other cools and alternate.

While still in the paper, place your flowers in a book or flower press to finish pressing. This normally takes anywhere from a few hours to a day depending on the particular flower.

The Microfleur press is very good too, especially for very thin flowers; you can get one from Pat Smith at Sunshine Crafts...email her for details.

To make a simple microwave press: Use regular ceramic tiles, with rubber bands to keep the whole thing together. I've tried a lot of materials for the padding and what worked best for me is plain old paper toweling as padding, with the flowers placed between two pieces of regular paper, like you'd use in a printer. It's important to put the flowers between printer paper so they don't pick up any texture your paper toweling may have.

I've also substituted coffee filters for the paper with very good results, especially when the flower isn't completely flat, such as roses. The coffee filters aren't as stiff as computer paper so the flowers come out much nicer.

An even simpler way to press in the microwave is to substitute corrugated cardboard for the ceramic tiles in the instructions above. Try it! It works and will give you a feel for if you like like using the microwave before you spend the time and money for a more permanent microwave press.