

Holiday Decorations from Your Garden (published 11/30/2024)  
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I have some very clever and creative gardening pals. They have inspired me to do something different when it comes to making holiday decorations from my yard. We all know we can create lovely wreaths and swags from evergreen branches. A square wreath form is nice for something a little different.

But there is so much more variety in what we make and how we make decorations. For example, make indoor and/or outdoor holiday planters using something different. You can mix and match wreaths, swags and planters for a stunning display.

### **Ideas for Planters**

A planter pot can serve as the base for an indoor or outdoor decoration.

A log for the base of the design can make a great casual planter. Drill holes to insert branches and decorate away.

Old milk cans or metal buckets can make rustic holders for your creation.

Combine planters or other bases of different sizes for a grouping or use several of the same size together.

A tomato cage can help form a tree-like shape with branches secured on the outside.

Baskets make great containers, too.

An old pair of skis or a sled can be the backdrop for a wreath or swag.

### **Options for Decorations**

Pinecones are a standard and add a lot of texture to an arrangement whether used naturally, painted, whitewashed or bleached.

Bare branches are great and can be painted or used as is.

Birch branches can really make a statement with the pretty white bark.

For indoors, dried fruits, berries and nuts add color and texture. (They might attract critters if used outdoors.)

Dried flowers are great additions to any arrangement. Hydrangeas are fantastic and don't require any special treatment to dry. And groups of smaller flowers can provide additional interest and variety. Lavender holds color well when dry and adds a beautiful touch with its texture.

Lights throughout the arrangement or at the bottom help create a sense of depth.

Ribbons, bows, ornaments or even a colorful scarf or mittens can be accents.

Cuttings of ornamental grasses can be a fantastic textural element.

Magnolia leaves are a dramatic choice for their large size and the glossy dark green top with the velvety brown underside. Magnolia leaves are also long-lasting with minimal effort.

### **But wait, there's more!**

And here's a truly out-of-the-box idea: use branches and vines woven or bundled together to create a swag for over your door or across your fireplace mantel. Ribbons tied at evenly spaced intervals can dress it up or use raffia or twine for a more outdoorsy feel. Adding lights can make for a more dramatic effect. Another way to bundle the branches is to wrap them with vines. If

you have vines in your landscape, they usually need to be trimmed back. Save those nice long pieces to wrap around and through your other trimmings. Or wind vines into ball shapes, add lights and ta-da - A great decoration is born.

Instead of a wreath on the door, evergreen branches can be pulled together and shaped into a candy cane by wrapping in ribbon. Or use a single cutting with several side branches for a streamlined look. A few pinecones and ornaments can add just the right holiday touch.

The ideas go on and on for decorations. Fancy, plain, woodsy, formal – anything goes for your holiday decorations. Let your creativity flow and enjoy your holiday creations.

### **Resources**

Holiday Decorating with Fresh Greenery Factsheet HGIC 1753,  
<https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/holiday-decorating-with-fresh-greenery/>

Holiday Decorating with Fresh Greenery, <https://www.johnson.k-state.edu/programs/lawn-garden/agent-articles-fact-sheets-and-more/agent-articles/miscellaneous/holiday-decorating-with-fresh-greenery.html>

The Do's and Don'ts of Holiday Decorating with Plants, <https://news.vt.edu/articles/2021/12/ext-holiday-wreaths.html>

### **How do I ask a question?**

If you have a question for the Master Gardeners, submit them to us on our website at [www.netmga.net](http://www.netmga.net). Click the link at the top of the page, “ASK A MASTER GARDENER” to send in your question. Questions that are not answered in this column will receive a response from a Master Gardener to the contact information you provide.

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