

The Spiritual Feng Shui newsletter
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How Does Your Garden Grow? Using Plants and Flowers to Enhance Your Home!

Q&A: Floral Fixes for Fusspots!

Also:

Feng Shui Tip
Inspirational Quotes

Dear Friend,

Welcome to The Spiritual Feng Shui newsletter for July 2012! This month we explore the great outdoors and merge our Feng Shui practices from inside to out. There is a quick Feng Shui tip for gift giving, and inspirational quotes. May peace and harmony reign for you in July!

- 0x How Does Your Garden Grow? Using Plants and Flowers to Enhance Your Home!
- 0x Q&A: Floral Fixes for Fusspots! I'd love to have a garden, but I'm renting a tiny apartment and my landlord is very strict about keeping it orderly. Can you recommend some good ideas that won't upset my landlord?
- 0x Feng Shui Tip
Giving The Gift of Flowers
- 0x Inspirational Quotes

Enjoy!

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Main article: How Does Your Garden Grow? Using Plants and Flowers to Enhance Your Home!

Take a look outside – what can you see? Is your garden a place of calm, or is it an overgrown mess causing stress even thinking about it? It is all well and good to have all the elements of Feng Shui practice working for you inside your home, but you mustn't forget the space outside your front and back doors!

Size Really Doesn't Matter!

An idyllic dream garden with acres of lush green lawn and babbling brooks sounds lovely, but it is hardly practical for most of us. What is more important than the size of your garden is what you do with it and how it is designed. While it shouldn't be too structured, nor too wild, as with all things Feng Shui, the number one priority is balance – the right amount of ying and yang for positive energy.

Know Your Map

Ideally, you should design a garden that reflects the Bagua map – the garden is an extension of your home after all.

- Use the main entrance to the garden to signify the bottom of the Bagua map and use this to guide the remaining layout of the garden.
- Establish which Gua you would like to strengthen and design accordingly.
- For example, plant red roses in the top right corner if you wish to improve the love and marriage Gua.

Design Tips For Your Feng Shui Garden

Variety is the key for the design of your garden – short plants with tall, red plants with white, different textured plants next to each other. You want to aim for a garden that is not too monotonous, with positive energies playing off one another.

- Allow for curved pathways to enable Chi to flow smoothly – it is rare to see straight lines in nature.
- While diversity is important, don't get carried away and have the colors of the rainbow in your plant and flower choices!
- A blend of a few carefully selected flowers and colors will work much better than the distraction of too many.
- Water features can be a welcome element to the garden and obviously very powerful – ensure the water flows in the direction of your home.

Recommended Plants

Flowers, such as pansies, roses, daffodils and tulips are of course the easiest way to introduce color to your garden, however other plants and flowers you can think about are:

- Bamboo representing durability, resilience and good fortune.
- Jasmine signifying relationships with others.
- Water lilies bring strength.
- Peonies embody financial prosperity.
- Orchids indicate patience!

The Benefits of Gardening

The health benefits of gardening have long been promoted and for good reason. It is

also provides a great boost for not only physical energy and well-being, but the emotional and Chi energy of Feng Shui.

- Don't see gardening as a chore; see it as a regular component of your Feng Shui practice!
- Do a little every day or every weekend and it will not build up and seem insurmountable.
- Maintain all aspects of your garden, not just the flowerbeds – mow the lawn regularly, weed the pathways, make sure the mailbox is in good condition.
- If it is not possible to have a water feature in your garden, consider a bird bath as an inexpensive alternative.

Gardening is not just for the experts; it is a pursuit for everyone. So with these simple suggestions you'll be well on your way to a harmonious and well-balanced outdoor garden!

Q&A: Floral Fixes for Fusspots! I'd love to have a garden, but I'm renting a tiny apartment and my landlord is very strict about keeping it orderly. Can you recommend some good ideas that won't upset my landlord?

Don't lament the restrictions of the landlord! On the contrary, embrace your landlord's requirement for order – this is an essential component for the practice of The Spiritual Feng Shui! They are doing you a favor by requesting a neat and tidy home. However this doesn't mean a garden is out of the question – with a small space you'll be able to maintain your garden much more easily than those of us with large yards and your Feng Shui will be all the better because of it!

Balcony Breezes Bring Beautiful Bounty!

There are myriad options available if you have a balcony apartment, you just need to consider how windy it may be and how much sunlight it receives. While as we know wind is an essential element of Feng Shui, care must be taken in balcony gardens as too much wind can not only dry out your plants, but also damage them. Some suggestions to overcome a windy balcony include:

- Have pots of varying heights and sizes to act as a windbreak.
- Be vigilant in maintaining your pots and planters – weed and water regularly. An unkempt garden is as bad as a cluttered room!
- Choose hardy plants that can withstand tough conditions.

Windows To Your Soul and Happiness

Many apartments have a windowsill facing the great outdoors, or if not, there should be enough space and sunlight inside to place some plants. Remember the sun represents health, well being and happiness. The kitchen is often the sunniest aspect in the apartment providing the ideal situation for:

- A small herb garden – you can take some fresh basil for example while cooking up a pasta sauce for your dinner!
- Some flowering annuals or perennials. Think about the color spectrum and choose colors to reflect the energy level you desire – warm colors to boost energy or cool colors to feel soothed and calm.

Bringing The Outdoors Inside

We talk about the benefits of plants inside your home all the time here at The Spiritual Feng Shui! As a reminder:

- Potted plants in a hallway will distribute Chi more evenly throughout your apartment. Or add a plant to a room to boost the energy inside.
- Select lush, healthy indoor plants – avoid cacti or dry looking plants that can seem aggressive and add harsh energy to the space.
- Plants in the kitchen and the center of your apartment will improve the power of the energy already there.

The Earth Outside Your Apartment

Finally, don't feel constricted by the limitations of your apartment – is there a community garden in your neighborhood? What about the sidewalk?

- Community gardens are a fabulous resource for people to gather and garden, grow their own produce and be part of a special community of like-minded individuals. Who knows you might even find some other Feng Shui practitioners there!

- Check with your local authorities to find out whether it is possible to make use of the sidewalk verge – often these are just stretches of lawn or a sad street tree. Imagine the difference it would make if you could plant some colorful flowers for the whole street to enjoy or even better make it an edible garden with herbs and vegetables.

Feng Shui Tip: Giving The Gift of Flowers

While we all want to have positive Chi flowing around us, it can be even better when we share this positive energy with someone else. We often think to buy someone flowers for a birthday, Valentine's Day, an anniversary or to mark a somber occasion such as bereavement, however there doesn't need to be a reason to buy flowers.

When selecting the flowers to give, think about the recipient and the colors that make them happy. Red flowers, especially roses, signify love and passion, but red also means determination, bravery and daring.

And while you might think flowers are only a gift suitable for women, you could give a man (or a woman of course!) a gift of a lush green potted plant or an arrangement of green ferns. Not only does green symbolize nature and healing, it is the color for wealth, life, growth and fertility.

Also consider what's going on in their life and which of their Guas might need a boost. If the recipient is perhaps preparing for a major shift in their career or study pathway, give them hydrangeas, which are the symbol for achieving your goals. How about orchids for someone who needs patience or peonies for that person in your life who is seeking financial prosperity?

You know yourself how wonderful it feels to receive a gift out of the blue. In fact an unexpected gift of flowers will provide so much happiness you'll wonder why you hadn't done it sooner!

Inspirational quotes:

"If you want to be happy for a year, plant a garden; If you want to be happy for life, plant a tree." ~ English Proverb

"The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses." ~ Hanna Rion

"No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden." ~ Thomas Jefferson