

Title A porcupine style floral support

Short description

A means of supporting plant material by using thick gauge wire to create a 'porcupine' or a modern style pin holder. A very versatile means of supporting plant material which can be used over and over again at any time of the year.

Plant material

- Any foliage and flowers you have access to
- Woody stemmed material is idea, this can help support finer stemmed flowers
- A selection of heights with some about 2 to 3 times the height of your container

Mechanics and sundries

- A water retaining container – a bowl, or a pot, or a mantle vase or similar to display your finished design
- 40 to 50 long thick gauged wire – the thicker the better and about twice the height of your container
- 20 small cable ties
- A metal or wooden cylinder, such as a broom handle to bend the wire around

Method

1. Roll a piece of wire once around the thin cylinder to create a circle in the middle with 2 long tails – photo 1 and photo 2
2. Create 6 of these centre looped pieces of wire
3. Cable tie the 6 looped wires together – place the cable tie through one side of the loop and pull the cable tie tight. You have now formed the centre of the 'porcupine'.
4. Spread out the 6 looped wires to form a hexagon shape
5. Continue to create more wire circles with tails until you have sufficient to fill your container
6. Place them in groups of 6 and leave some ungrouped
7. Group 3 loops together and loosely tie together with a cable tie to form a triangle
8. Insert the next wire loop into the centre of the cable tie
9. Fit the loops together in a lattice pattern and loosely tie with a cable tie
10. Keep adding more wire loops to create triangles (3) and hexagons (6)
11. Build up the structure to the size to fit in your container – it can be circular or an oblong shape
12. The 'porcupine' can be placed wires up or loops up in your container which every is most stable and supportive for your plant material
13. Half fill your container with fresh water

14. Almost any shape of floral design is possible using the 'porcupine' structure
15. In this example a mixture of garden foliage and a few spring flower have been used
16. Use a mixture of foliage with different forms, textures, size and colours to create a balance and interest
17. Start by using thicker woody stems to create an outline, with taller stems towards the back and short stems at the front
18. Use a few flowers to create a focal point
19. Add additional foliage to cover the 'porcupine' structure
20. Woody stemmed plant material will add stability to your design
21. Add more fresh water to your container if required

Tips/seasonal modifications

- Don't tie the cable ties too tight to begin with until you have 6 wired loops
- Pot tape may help to secure the structure to your container to give extra stability
- Woody stemmed foliage may need to be pushed a little harder into the wire structure as the design fills up with plant material
- Finer wire can be used to make the 'porcupine' which may be more suitable for delicate plant material and smaller containers

Design by: Eileen Fantom

Acknowledgement: The 'porcupine' is based on an original idea of a bespoke pinholder Julie Pearson