

# Creative Living with Sheryl Borden

## Miscellaneous

### 7500 Series



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# *Painting with Brenda Pinnick*

## *en plein air*



It's so wonderful when the stars align for a plain air excursion. I had spent an hour looking for a decent place to park in downtown Marietta but to no avail. The public parking has a strictly enforced two hour limit which is insufficient for a painting session. I need 3 hours total to allow for walking and set up, sketching, painting and then breakdown. I was frustrated as the day was going by fast. I headed north on Old Canton Road and came across a wholesale nursery on my right, located on a service road behind the train which sits out of service.

Perfect! I pulled in and was immediately struck by the light hitting the hoop houses from the Southeast. I parked and wandered into the office to ask permission

to paint there. The owner said it would be fine and delightful and encouraging. I'm so grateful for good people like these who are open and sharing with the beauty they are stewards of.

## *Oh the colors!*

Any chance I get to take color and push it to the nth degree, I take! Boats are a great subject matter and these little gems were screaming out to me to paint! I took a lot of pictures since I wasn't painting on location. My husband and I were there to spend time together celebrating our anniversary so I left my paints back in Rome before heading down to France this past June.

Back to the boats... did I mention they looked like gems floating in the water as the sun hit them in the morning hours? The colors shimmered in the reflections and they seemed to sway a bit as though they were teasing me. "c'mon.... "



I painted this piece with a selection of pastels, (I never keep track of the brand when I'm painting...) on U Art 400 Grit paper. First I toned it all over with a soft red using hard pastels and a wee bit of alcohol and a brush. I let it dry for 30 minutes or so and then jumped right in, working through to the finish in one sitting. (actually, I stand to paint.)

I'm very happy with the outcome of this piece and am really looking forward to making a companion painting from the same day and spot.

**COURTESY: Brenda Pinnick**  
**Professional Artist**

<http://brendapinnick.com>

# Bud Vase Tips



**About Hollywood in the 1930s:** Hollywood studios employed their own craftspeople that would make their own artificial flowers out of bamboo, copper, and paper. Less than one tenth of all flowers in Hollywood movies were real!

**Vase Styles:** Bud vases can be many sizes but should always have a narrow opening.

**Design Principles:** After decorating our bud vase with gold tissue, we'll build a simple design using three main flowers (roses) and accent with our greenery.

## Flowers & Greenery used in this floral design:

**Vendela Roses**



Our favorite rose for weddings. Opens into slightly curled petals. Can last up to two weeks in a vase. Has a slight pink tint to the petals.

**Bupleurum**



In the carrot family, also called Thoroughwax. Used in Chinese medicine to cure many ailments from fever, common cold to headache.



## How to Découpage Glass with Tissue

### Glue Recipe:

3 parts Elmer's White Glue (or Craft Glue)  
1 part warm water

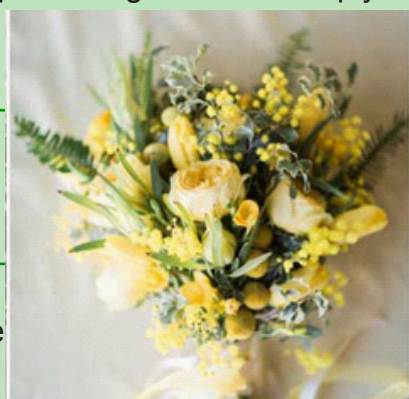
Mix and keep in an airtight jar or container. When using the découpage, brush a thin layer of the glue on the surface of the vase. Place the tissue on the vase. Brush with glue. For glossier finishes, use more coats of paste. There will be a white film when paste is wet, but will show clear once it's dried.

**COURTESY:** Casey Schwartz  
Flower Duet  
[www.flowerduet.com](http://www.flowerduet.com)

# flowerduet

*Our "Classes for Everyone" are designed for beginners. Each technique is taught in a fun and informative way.*

Class	Description
Gather, Drop and Fill	A great head start arrangement. Prepare the container by lining with a ti leaf or bear grass; add water. Clean the stems, gather about 1/2 the flowers in our hand with all the bloom heads at the same level, then cut the stems a little longer than the height of the vase. Drop them in the middle of the container and let them fall where they may. Move them around a bit to position the stems to criss cross; then fill in with the remaining flowers. Use a main face flower, a spray flower and some filler.
Mixing Succulents and Fresh Flowers	Using floral foam, Flower Duet will teach you the method of mixing succulents with fresh flowers, as well as other helpful tips on what to do after the flowers have faded.
Bundle and Place	Using practically invisible bands this techniques gives the designer the control over the placement of the flowers. By bundling mini posies together and simply placing them in the container saves time and is instantly rewarding.
Traditional Dozen Roses Vase	How to arrange one dozen roses with greenery in a tall vase so that #12 rose stands perfectly straight in the middle of the vase.
Pave	Students are taught the low, compact style of arranging in Oasis floral foam as well as the technique of color blocking.
Grid	Students learn this "invisible" architectural technique using floral design tape to help flowers stay in place in vases.
Tropical Arrangement	Learn techniques on how to make fresh-cut tropical flowers such as orchids, ginger, and anthurium last in floral foam, along with helpful tips on where to buy tropical flowers.



*Check out our website for new listings of classes.*

**COURTESY: Casey Schwartz**  
**Flower Duet**  
<https://flowerduet.com/>

# Brooming Unwelcome Wildlife Guests

**T**hanks to advances in home design, animals rarely can enter a house as they once did by coming down through a chimney or up from a basement. Nevertheless, sometimes an unwelcome wild bird, mammal or even a reptile can make its way into one's house. And, never entice an animal to come into your house. They will not recognize your hospitality! Instead, pandemonium will reign!

If an animal does enter your house, they tend to panic and dash or fly about looking for a way out. What can you do? Immediately you need to take charge **and with a calm, clear head**, consider and accommodate who (if anyone), or any pets are with you as you address the issue.

Here is a list of several "dos" and "don'ts" to keep in mind.

Once an animal from the out-of-doors finds itself in a completely different environment (i.e. in a house and confronted with totally unfamiliar sights, sounds and smells), **it usually panics**. Then the home owner panics. Commotion ensues. Immediately there is risk to the animal, the home owner, and anyone else in the vicinity, as well as the possibility of damage to property (i.e. broken lamps, toppled vases, other disasters.) At this time, more than any other time, a plan of action is needed. The following list of instructions is based on protocols taken from zoos, rural farms and basic animal (and human!) behavior.

- Everybody, especially any youngsters, keep calm! Either sit down and watch or go outside, but do not intervene.
- Never try to catch or grab a wild creature! It can bite, peck or scratch and cause needless injury.
- Keep in mind that the animal wants to get out just as badly as you want to see it leave.
- If you know which door the animal entered through, leave that door open so that the animal can exit - unless an unexpected opportunity arises where the animal can exit through a different door.



## Additional Tips:

- Grab your corn broom - this will be your "herding" tool to sweep or nudge the animal out of the house.
- Don't crowd the interloper, and if possible, let it settle down in a corner or under a table. At that point, pause (if circumstances allow). Take stock and do any of the following that require attention before trying to herd the animal out of doors.
- Use the broom to quietly steer the animal toward the doorway it came in through, moving quietly and smoothly.
- Use no fast moves except to block the animal if it tries to get past you. Close a door to keep the animal confined to the room it is in.
- If an animal gets into another room, and as you herd the animal toward the room with the open door, close doors behind you.
- If the interloper is a bird or bat, lower the lid on any commode or close the bathroom door.
- Close any bedroom doors.
- Turn off any burners on the stove and cover any pots with food or water to prevent accidental drowning.
- Empty any water in the sink.
- Like kids, pets want to help. They need to be placed in a separate room and the door closed.
- Be sure an entry door is open so that the interloper can be herded outside, preferably the door it entered through.
- Plan your moves so that you herd or crowd the interloper toward the house exit.
- The animal is afraid of you - use this to your advantage and do not get between the animal and the doorway exit.
- Don't be surprised if the animal misreads your intentions and gets past you and your broom, requiring that you start over. It may happen several times.
- Use a corn broom as a herding device. **DO NOT USE ANY OTHER KIND OF BROOM OR MOP** since these have hard edges of metal or plastic and can cause harm to the animal.
- If the interloper is a skunk, move slowly and quietly. Most times a skunk can be encouraged to exit without spraying.





- As the animal is moved toward the exit door, close doors behind you to prevent its gaining access to the larger portion of the house if it eludes you.



- If the animal crawls under a bed or refrigerator, use the broom handle to gently nudge it out from under.
- Do not yell at the animal! Speak softly or not at all.
- In the very unlikely event that the animal dashes at you, the broom makes an excellent blocking device.
- Mammals, snakes and ground birds, like chickens, tend to stay next to a wall.
- Birds on the other hand, fly toward light, such as a window. Blinds may need to be drawn so that the brightest light is the open door. If a bird flies into a window, it may stun itself. If unconscious, it should be taken outside, placed on an elevated recovery site (table, chair) in the shade, and watched to be sure it regains consciousness. Some time, even an hour, may elapse before the bird takes off.
- Stay calm - flapping wings or running legs by either party are counter-productive and can cause breakables.
- Bat behavior is different than other animals. By holding a broom elevated and still, a bat may fly onto and cling to it, allowing the evictor to take it outside and shake it free.

**COURTESY: Ray Pawley**

Former curator at Chicago Zoological Parks

## Essential Color Wheel Companion

**Choose Perfect Colors with Confidence**



Selecting perfect color combinations has never been easier! By popular demand, Joen Wolfrom has designed a durable, color-accurate, double-sided, multi-purpose color wheel that is perfectly sized for use in your studio, workroom, office, or sewing room. It's easily transportable! One side of the wheel features 24 pure colors with 4 essential color-plan wheels for each color.

The opposite side shows a range of each pure color's tints, shades, and tones. Pure-color wedges are slotted so you can audition colors (fabrics, paint swatches, etc.) alongside them to ensure a perfect match.

- Beautiful color reference based on the Ives scientific color theory - the definitive color source for nearly a century
- Perfect companion to our Ultimate 3-in-1 Color Tool and Studio Color Wheel
- Includes instructions for choosing colors that work together, taking the mystery out of working with tints, tones and shades

**COURTESY: Roxane Cerda  
C & T Publishing**

[www.ctpub.com](http://www.ctpub.com)



## What Can You Grow in a Smart Pot?

The short answer: anything with roots... But start with something good to eat! You can grow almost anything in a Smart Pot! Vegetables, herbs, flowers, and more. You don't need a green thumb to have a thriving container garden. All you need are the right tools. Your #1 tool is the Smart Pot.

### Better Than Traditional Plastic Containers

Smart Pots utilize a patented fabric design to produce a healthier plant. Before Smart Pots became a household name, professional tree growers were using them for over 25 years and found their trees grew better in these fabric containers.

Almost all plants grow better in the Smart Pot fabric containers because Smart Pots support healthy root growth. And strong roots means a stronger plant. Compared to plastic containers, Smart Pots stay cooler on hot days because it allows air to flow through the sides of the fabric. Roots can't grow and are stressed when plastic containers get hot.

Smart Pots also root-prunes. When a root tip reaches the side of the fabric container, it stops in place, and initiates lateral, or side branching. As this process repeats, the entire area of the container is filled with fibrous root growth, allowing more surface area for mineral and water absorption. A recent study at Texas A&M University showed double the root mass compared to a traditional plastic container. In a plastic container, roots circle around the side and rarely initiate fibrous growth.

The biggest headache of gardening is digging up and placing the garden, and turning your compressed, backyard clay soil into something that will grow a plant. And it has to drain well. With the Smart Pot, you can be set up in a performance garden in minutes.

The healthier root structure that develops allows the plant to grow faster than it would in the ground. And a stronger plant is more resistant to insects, illness, weather fluctuation and is easier to care for overall.

Smart Pots are BPA-free. So you can be 100% organic without worrying about dangerous chemicals leeching into your soil. The same can't be said for other fabric containers and raised beds built with railroad ties or other treated lumber.

Those chemicals get into your soil and will be absorbed by the roots of plants. This is an issue because non-treated wood will rot, whereas treated wood can contain hundreds of chemicals. With Smart Pots, our focus is on growing edibles – don't grow your edibles in treated wood such as railroad ties.

The Smart Pot design has been perfected through 30 years of real-life usage. What you're getting is optimal fabric thickness and texture. For maximum airflow and product longevity.

For most urban residents, growing in a container is the only viable solution. Container gardening

means plants can be strategically placed on patios, walkways, steps, or balconies. They can be moved to avoid a hailstorm, or even travel with you in a trailer.



**COURTESY: Curt Jaynes**  
GardenSource Nursery & Landscaping



# How to Make Soap From Scratch Using the Cold Process Method

## 1. Gather the Ingredients and Equipment

Making soap is a straightforward process that uses ingredients and tools you may already have in your kitchen. The ones you don't have are available from soap making suppliers online. The basic method of making soap from scratch is called cold process.

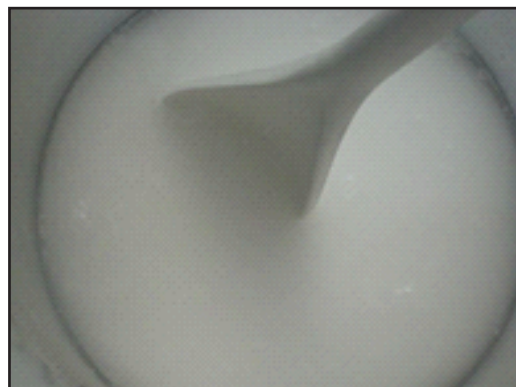
You'll need a recipe for making soap. Although there are many recipes online and in books, a basic soap recipe requires the following ingredients and equipment:



- lye flakes
- distilled water
- oils (types specified in your recipe)
- fragrance (optional)
- color (optional)
- additives such as flower petals, natural exfoliants and spices (optional)

Necessary equipment includes:

- safety gloves and goggles
- soap pot
- kitchen scale
- glass pitcher
- mason jar with lid
- plastic pitcher with lid
- thermometer
- measuring cups
- spoons, spatula
- stick blender
- molds



## 2. Make the Lye-Water Solution

Start by putting on the safety goggles and rubber gloves. Lye is a caustic and dangerous chemical that can cause serious burns.

- Place a pitcher on the scale and zero out the weight. Add distilled water to the pitcher until it weighs the amount called for in your specific recipe.
- Place a mason jar or plastic pitcher on the scale and zero out the weight. Add the amount of lye called for in your specific recipe. Close the lid tightly and set it in a safe place. **CAUTION:** Static cling can cause lye flakes to fly up and stick to your gloves or shirt sleeves. If this happens, remove the flakes immediately.
- Slowly add the lye to the pitcher of water—not the other way around—and don't make any splashes.
- Stir the mixture gently until the lye is dissolved. The mixture will heat up, which is expected. Rinse the spoon you used immediately.
- Put the lid on the lye-water pitcher and set it in a **SAFE** place, away from children, pets and other adults.

### 3. Weigh the Soap Making Oils

It is time to weigh the oils called for in your specific recipe.

- Put the soap pot or a glass pitcher onto the scale and zero out the weight.
- Following your recipe, weigh the oils one by one into the pot or pitcher. Zero out the weight after you measure each oil.
- Pour slowly. You can always add more, but once the oil has been added, it's part of the mix.



**Tip:** Weigh the solid soap making oils like coconut, palm, cocoa butter or shortening in the soap pot. Weigh the liquid oils like olive, sunflower, canola or castor separately in the glass pitcher and set aside.

### 4. Heat and Melt the Soap Making Oils

- Place the soap making pot with the solid oils on the stove over medium-low heat. Slowly melt the oils while stirring gently. Monitor the temperature with a thermometer. Turn off the heat when the oils get to about 110 degrees Fahrenheit. Keep stirring until all the solid oils are melted.
- When the solid oils are melted, add the room temperature liquid oils to the soap pot. This brings down the overall temperature. You want the oil mixture to be at about 100 degrees when you add the lye-water.



### 5. Add the Lye Solution to the Soap Making Pot

Make sure all the soap additives that your recipe calls for, such as color and fragrance, are ready to go and are at hand. Place all the spoons, measuring cups, spatulas and whisks you're going to need nearby. Once you begin, you need to move steadily.



- Grab your handy stick blender but don't turn it on.
- Slowly add the lye-water mixture to the soap pot. The oils immediately start to turn cloudy. Using the stick blender as a spoon - not turning it on - to blend the lye-water into the oils. This is the beginning of the saponification process - the chemical reaction that turns your mixture into soap.

Set the lye pitcher aside in a safe place.

### 6. Mix the Oils and Lye Together Completely

While stirring the lye water and oil mixture with the stick blender, turn on the blender in short bursts. To start with, blend for 3 to 5 seconds. Then, turn it off and stir some more.



Repeat this process and keep blending in short bursts until the oils and lye-water are completely mixed. At this point, it is nearing trace, the indication that emulsification has occurred.

To test if the mixture has reached trace, dip a spoon into the mixture and let it dribble back into the pot. If this process leaves a track on the spoon, the mixture is ready, even if it isn't thick yet. It just must be well mixed.

If you were to hand-stir the pot of soap, like soap makers used to do, it might take up to an hour to reach trace. With the introduction of stick blenders to soap making, the trace can be reached in a few minutes.

### 7. Add Fragrance or Essential Oils to the Soap Mix

After the soap, mixture is completely blended, but before it gets too thick, slowly add any fragrance or essential oils called for in your recipe to the mixture. Stop stick blending the mixture and just use the end of the stick blender like a spoon.



## 8. Add Additives or Extras to the Soap

If your soap making recipe calls for additives such as spices, natural exfoliants, flower petals, herbs or special moisturizing oils, now is the time to add them.



As you did with the fragrance, gently stir them into the pot using the stick blender as a spoon.

Before you move on to adding the colorant, give the mixture a brief blend with the stick blender to make sure that the fragrance oil and additives are well blended in.

## 9. Add Color to the Soap

Next, add color to the soap. If you want the soap to be one single color, add the colorant to the pot and stir. If you want to achieve a swirl effect:



- Ladle about 1/2 to 1 cup of the soap mixture into a measuring cup
- Add the colorant to that bit of soap.
- Hold the measuring cup several inches above the pot and slowly pour the colored soap into one corner of the soap pot.
- Using a rubber spatula, swirl the colored soap through the pot. Don't stir too much or you'll end up just blending the color in with the entire batch.

The color is one of those variations where soap making becomes an art, and where you can create your custom soap masterpieces.

## 10. Pour the Soap Into the Mold

- By now the soap has thickened. Pour the raw soap into a mold using a back and forth motion to make sure that the soap spreads out evenly. Scrape the last thick bits of soap out of the



pot with a rubber spatula.

- If the top of the soap in the mold is uneven, smooth it out with the spatula.
- Pick the mold up and gently tap it on the countertop to dislodge air bubbles that may have been trapped in the mixture.
- Set the soap in a warm, safe place to set up and begin curing.

The soap mixture heats up as the saponification process starts. If the temperature of the room is chilly, lay a towel around or over the mold to keep it warm and keep the reaction going strong.

## 11. Clean Up and Let the Soap Saponify

Set the soap in a safe place and leave it alone until tomorrow. It takes about 24 hours for the soap to harden enough to take it out of the mold and slice it.



While still wearing your gloves and safety goggles, wash all the utensils and soap pots with hot, soapy water. The oily raw soap residue that's left in the pan is caustic and can cause irritation and burns. After everything is clean, put all the ingredients and equipment away.

After the soap has set for about 24 hours, it should be hard enough to unmold and slice. Pop or slide the soap out of the mold. Slice it into the size bars you like and set it aside to cure. When the saponification process stops in several days. The soap is technically safe to use, but it is best to cure it for about four weeks before use.

For David's instructions on How To Make Melt and Pour Soap, go to the following website:

[www.thespruce.com/how-to-make-melt-and-pour-soap-517100](http://www.thespruce.com/how-to-make-melt-and-pour-soap-517100).

**COURTESY: David Fisher**  
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