

## **Making Gourd Flower Containers**

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The best gourds to use are: hand-trained short and long handle dippers, and marankas. The more contorted and twisted the necks are, the better they will look. Other types of gourds will work also. Hold the gourd in position that will be the finished product. With a pencil or awl, mark where the large hole for flowers will be cut or drilled. It is best to use a hole saw, 3 to 4 inches in diameter. Next, clean the inside of the gourd out real good. If possible, always use a thick shell piece of a gourd for the container base. You may also use wood for the base if show schedule rules permit usage.

When the containers and bases are cleaned and ready to use, place the container on the base in the exact position you desire. Use floral adhesive to hold the container in position. Drill a hole thru the base and the container about the diameter of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $\frac{3}{8}$ " in the center, and remove the floral adhesive with lighter fluid or something equal.

Now, bolt the container and base together allowing the bolt to protrude into the container  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2". Be sure not to over tighten the bolts so the gourds will not crack. Now, pour enough sand/cement mix into the container to make it stable. Use a wire clothes hanger to protrude about 1  $\frac{1}{2}$ " above cement to keep the oasis in place. The cement needs to be thoroughly dry before painting or finishing with a clear coat. A fan will hasten the cement drying process. Gourds should have stems, and cut at a slant or an angle to enhance the handle.

The hole in the handle should be plugged with a cork or some other device to seal it closed. After the painting process is complete, melt paraffin or candle wax, and swirl it around to coat the inside of container. Use a paint brush to get up to the edge of the hole. This will make the container water proof. Your gourd container is now ready to use!

