

INTRODUCTION

Flowers are worn by both men and women on special occasions such as weddings, proms, and holiday celebrations. Flowers worn by women are called **corsages**. A corsage is a cluster of flowers, foliage, and accessories that accents a woman's dress and adds to the theme of the celebration.

Flowers worn by men are called **boutonnieres**. A boutonniere, pinned to the man's lapel, usually consists of a single flower with foliage. There has been a recent trend toward more elaborate boutonnieres consisting of multiple flowers, such as two, or even three, stephanotis blossoms with foliage. The boutonniere adds a touch of color to the man's clothing and is usually coordinated with the theme of the occasion. If it is to be worn to a prom, its flowers should complement the flowers worn or carried by the man's date. For a wedding, the flowers would be selected to echo the overall theme of the event.

BOUTONNIERES

Select flowers for a boutonniere that have been properly conditioned (see Unit 5) and that hold up well out of water. The most popular flowers for boutonnieres are roses and carnations. Other flowers often used are stephanotis, pompon chrysanthemums, lilies of the valley, and alstromeria lilies.

Boutonnieres may be designed in a number of ways, one of which is illustrated in this text.

Constructing a Single-Bloom Carnation Boutonniere

- Step 1. Select materials:
 - one standard carnation
 - one small piece of leatherleaf fern
 - one strand of 24- or 26-gauge wire
 - florist tape
 - boutonniere pin and bag
- Step 2. Cut the stem of the carnation just below the calyx, and wire the carnation using one-half of a 24- or 26-gauge wire. Use the piercing method (refer to Unit 7).
- Step 3. Tape the stem using green floral tape. Begin taping the carnation above the wire high on the calyx of the carnation (Figure 9-1).
- Step 4. Select a tip of leatherleaf fern in proportion to the size of the carnation so that just the tips of the fern extend beyond the carnation. The fern may be wired using the wraparound method; however, many florists skip this step when using leatherleaf fern. Strip the foliage from the bottom inch of the stem.
- Step 5. Place the fern behind the carnation so that the tips of the fern are exposed. Use floral tape to bind the foliage and flower together (Figure 9-2). Use only enough tape to cover the stem smoothly. You do not want the stem to become bulky.
- Step 6. Cut the stem to approximately 2 inches in length. Wrap any exposed wire. The stem may be left straight, curved, or bent to form a small hook at the base (Figure 9-3).

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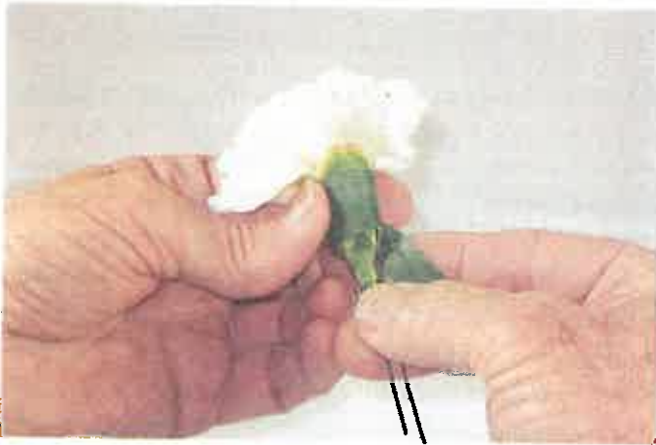


Figure 9-1 Tape the wired carnation.



Figure 9-2 Tape a sprig of foliage to the back of the carnation.

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Figure 9-3 Stem treatment for boutonnieres.



Figure 9-4 Place the completed boutonniere in a bag.

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Step 7. Mist the flower with water and place in a boutonniere bag. Close the bag with a boutonniere pin that later can be used to pin the boutonniere (Figure 9-4). Refrigerate.

Once you have mastered this basic boutonniere construction, you can vary it using different flowers and multiple blooms (Figure 9-5). Use the criteria in Figure 9-6 to evaluate the boutonnieres.

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Figure 9-5 Different styles of boutonnieres.

CRITERIA	YES	NO
1. The flowers are wired correctly and tape is smooth and free of wrinkles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Foliage is appropriately sized for flowers and is firmly attached.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Bow is of correct size for the corsage and is firmly attached.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. All wires are wrapped smoothly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Corsage or boutonniere is packaged correctly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Flowers have not been damaged.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Corsage or boutonniere is saleable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 9-6 Evaluating boutonnieres and corsages.

CORSAGES

The principles of design apply to corsages as well as to arrangements (refer to Unit 3). Use these principles as a guide as you learn to construct corsages.

Corsages are commonly worn on the lady's left shoulder. However, if the woman's dress is strapless or if the dress is made of a material that will not support the corsage, the corsage may be modified to be worn on the wrist, in the hair, or on her purse. Band-aids may be glued to the bottom of the corsage and taped to the shoulder (Figure 9-7).

The flowers and colors used for the corsage are dictated by the personal preferences of the wearer, the formality of the occasion, the size of the wearer, and the color and style of the clothing to be worn.

Florists should make an effort to identify the personal preferences of the individual customer. Find out if certain flowers are preferred or disliked. It does not matter how well a corsage is designed if the flowers displease the wearer.

The florist should also find out the occasion for which the corsage is prepared. Knowing the formality of the event helps the designer select flowers and accessories. A formal occasion would call for more expensive flowers with higher quality accessories. The design would also be more stylish.

The size of the wearer is another factor to consider when selecting flowers and styling the design. A small woman looks best with a small corsage, while a large woman needs larger flowers or a larger design. For example, a large cattleya orchid corsage would be unsuitable for a small woman. Likewise, a small carnation corsage would not look appropriate on a large woman.

The designer also needs to know the color of the garment the person will be wearing. The dominant color of the flower should complement the clothing. Use a color wheel to help you select pleasing hues. If the clothing color is not known, select white flowers and accessories. White flowers are considered appropriate for any occasion.

The corsage should be designed so that it is light and easy to wear. A woman does not feel comfortable wearing a corsage that is heavy and pulls on her dress. Removing the stems from flowers helps to keep them light.



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Figure 9-7 Corsage attached to the shoulder with band-aids.



S-Curve



Straight Line



Round



Triangular



Crescent

Figure 9-8 Corsage designs.

Also, space the flowers so that each can be seen separately. The designer does not want to make the corsage look skimpy, but the flowers should not be tightly concentrated either.

One of the most important factors to consider in designing flowers is good workmanship and good-quality flowers. All wires should be covered. This is crucial to the professional appearance of the corsage and also prevents the wearer from being pricked by an uncovered wire. Good workmanship or mechanics means that the corsage will not come apart or be misshapen.

Corsage Design

Once the colors and flowers have been selected, the designer may choose from a number of styles or designs of corsages (Figure 9-8). Which style the designer selects will depend upon the kind of flowers being used and the personal preference of the wearer.

Constructing a Single-Bloom Carnation Corsage

- Step 1. Select materials:
 - one standard carnation
 - one stem of leatherleaf fern
 - 1-1/2 yards of number 3 satin ribbon
 - one 24- or 26-gauge wire
 - stem wrap or floral tape
 - corsage bag and pins
- Step 2. Using the piercing method, wire and tape a standard carnation using half the length of a 24-gauge wire. This step is the same as that used in wiring and taping boutonnieres.
- Step 3. Select a piece of leatherleaf fern for the backing of the corsage. Sprengeri fern or other foliage may be substituted. A tip 3 to 4 inches long will be needed. Strip the foliage off the bottom inch of the stem. This foliage may or may not be wired depending upon the designer. Beginning just below the calyx of the carnation, tape the foliage securely to the back of the carnation (Figure 9-9).
- Step 4. Make a bow using number 3 or 1-1/2 satin of the same width as the fullest part of the carnation (refer to Unit 8). Tie it so that it is in proportion to the flower.



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Figure 9-9 Tape a sprig of leatherleaf fern to the back of the corsage.



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Figure 9-10 Attach the bow to the corsage stem.

- Step 5.** Separate the two wires holding the bow and slip one on each side of the carnation stem. Twist the wires twice at the stem base of the carnation to attach the bow to the stem (Figure 9-10). Cut the wires to less than an inch in length. Lay the wires against the stem and completely cover them by taping. Shape the bow and, if necessary, bend the carnation slightly forward so that the flower is facing the viewer.
- Step 6.** The base of the corsage may be finished in one of several ways. Cut it short and place a small hook at the bottom, curl it around a pencil or shape into a single curve (Figure 9-11).
- Step 7.** Mist the flower with water, place it into a corsage bag, and close the bag with a corsage pin. Place the corsage in the refrigerator.
- Step 8.** Clean the work area, and evaluate the corsage using the criteria in Figure 9-6.



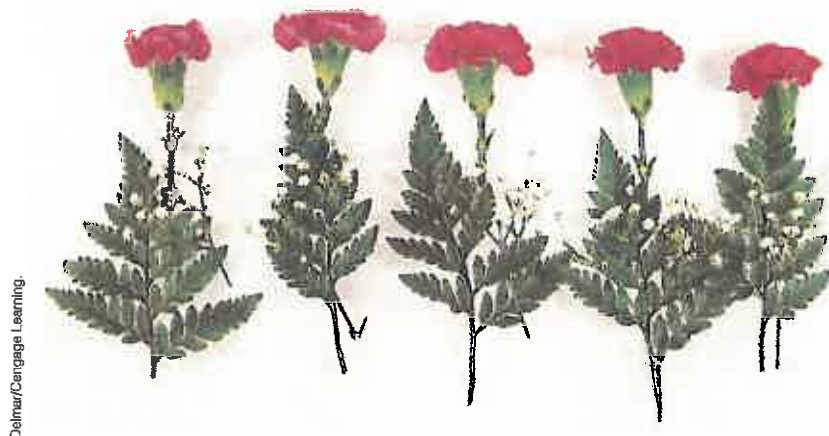
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Figure 9-11 Corsage stem treatments.



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Figure 9-12 The corsage may be enhanced with the addition of a sprig of baby's breath.



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Figure 9-13 Select materials for a single-spray mini-carnation corsage.

The boutonniere and the single-bloom carnation corsage can be enhanced by taping a sprig of baby's breath to the flower before the foliage and bow are added (Figure 9-12).

Constructing a Single-Spray Miniature Carnation Corsage

Step 1. Select materials (Figure 9-13):

- five mini-carnations (pompon chrysanthemums may be substituted)
- five small sprigs of leatherleaf, ming, or other foliage
- five small sprigs of baby's breath
- 1-1/2 yards of number 3 or 1-1/2 satin ribbon 22- or 24-gauge wire
- stem wrap
- corsage bag and pin

Step 2. Wire each mini-carnation using the piercing method.

Step 3. Tape a small piece of baby's breath and leatherleaf to each of the mini-carnations (Figure 9-14).

Step 4. Select the smallest carnation as the beginning flower. Attach a second carnation to the first with a couple of twists of tape (Figure 9-15). The distance between these two flowers should be greater than the distance between other flowers. As you approach the focal point, the distance between flowers will be less.

Step 5. Add a third carnation in a staggered pattern. Secure with tape (Figure 9-16).

Step 6. Tie a bow using satin ribbon, and add the bow below the third carnation (Figure 9-17). Cut the wire to 1/2 inch in length and cover it with floral tape.

Step 7. Add a fourth carnation near the center of the bow, and tape it in place (Figure 9-18).

Step 8. Bend the fifth carnation as shown in Figure 9-19. Add this carnation among the bow loops, facing downward (Figure 9-20). Adjust the flowers and loops.



Figure 9-14 Tape baby's breath and greenery to each carnation.



Figure 9-15 Tape two carnations together.



Figure 9-16 Add a third carnation.



Figure 9-17 Attach the corsage bow.



Figure 9-18 Add a fourth carnation near the center of the bow.



Figure 9-19 Bend the stem of the fifth carnation at a sharp angle.

- Step 9.** Wrap the stem of the corsage so that it is smooth from top to bottom. Cut the stem to about 3 inches in length and bend into a loop as shown in Figure 9-21.
- Step 10.** Mist the corsage with water and place in a corsage bag. Close the bag with a corsage pin. Refrigerate.
- Step 11.** Clean the work area, and evaluate the corsage using the criteria in Figure 9-6.