

Extend the Life Of Your Flowers By Steaming Them

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By Gerry Belvedere

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This method of extending cut flower life may sound a bit drastic but it is quite effective.

1. Have two clean buckets ready. Rinse them out with some bleach solution first.
2. Boil some water in a kettle and fill bucket No.1 with 2 inches of the boiled water.
3. Fill bucket No. 2 with 4 inches of cool water.
4. Cut a half inch or so from the stems of your flowers or foliage and put them in the hot water for 20 seconds, no longer.
5. Take them out and put them in the cool water.
6. You should add 2 teaspoons of household bleach and a pinch of citric acid to each bucket to inhibit any further bacterial growth.

The steaming induces a rush of natural sugars to the flower heads and gets the stems "drinking". Steaming is beneficial to flowers that may have been out of water for a length of time.

Enjoy your flowers!

Gerry Belvedere is a former artist who now runs her own online florist service at <http://www.rosaflora-flowers.com>. Rosaflora delivers flowers Australia wide and overseas and offers tips on getting the most out of your cut flowers.

Tips On Caring For Your Valentine's Day Flowers

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With Valentine's Day just around the corner, we thought this would be a great time to share a few tips on caring for cut flowers.

Imagine it's Valentine's Day and you've just received a glorious bunch of roses. You put them in your best vase and you stand back to admire them. You'd love to make them last as long as you possibly can, but other than keeping them out of direct sunlight, you're not sure what to do.

Here are some tips on how to extend the shelf life of your roses:

1. Remove the roses from the vase and put them in a temporary container.
2. Clean the vase by washing it thoroughly in water with household bleach.
3. Fill the vase with fresh water and add a half teaspoon of household bleach for each litre (16 fluid ounces) of water.
4. Remove your roses from their temporary container and lay them flat on a counter top.
5. Remove any leaves which will show below the waterline in the vase.
6. Cut about 20 mm (3/4 inch) from the base of each stem immediately before placing it in the vase. This removes any air bubbles.
7. Don't place roses in drafts or direct sunlight, or near fruit, heaters, TVs or refrigerators.
8. Change the water daily to extend the vase life of your roses.

Freshly picked roses can last up to two weeks with a little extra care.

Enjoy!

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