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**[100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment](#)
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**

How To Check If Cut Flowers Are Fresh

By Gerry Belvedere

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Fresh flowers should feel crisp or firm. Before you buy, run your hand under the flower heads from stem to petal tip. Proceed gently under the petals so as not to bruise them.

If the flower vendor objects, give them a withering look and enquire in a loud voice, "Are these flowers fresh?"

If the flowers feel soft, cool or damp, don't buy them.

Keep testing the other bunches until you find a good one. Often there are only one or two bunches older than the others. Look and listen. Really fresh flowers will make a soft rustling sound as you stroke them.

As flowers age:

- the foliage will start to yellow from the bottom upwards
- the stems will discolor from the bottom up as bacteria spreads from the cut
- seeds or pollen on the flower head will open and shed spores
- the petals will fade in colour, lose moisture, dehydrate and eventually collapse

Remember:

Change the water daily, recut the stems often and enjoy your flowers longer.

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.

Using Silk Flowers – Should I?

By Ginger Ruoff

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Many of the silk flowers available for bridal bouquets today look so real only the bride knows for sure whether they are. Using silk flowers in the bridal bouquet may not be for every bride, but many are taking a second look at the advantages.

One of the best reasons for choosing silk flowers for the wedding bouquet is that the beauty of the flowers will remain the same for many tomorrows as it looks today. Too often with a fresh cut bouquet, saving it means drying the bouquet. If you are not adept at drying flowers, they may even end up with mold spots. Even if they are dried appropriately, the colors will be faded. You can get a fresh cut bouquet freeze dried to perpetuate the true colors, but it must be done by a professional and can be expensive. Silk flowers will not wilt, mold, or fade on your wedding day or over the years that pass.

If you choose to have a silk flower wedding, you can plan and order your bouquets far in advance of the wedding. Most brides are very busy in the month before the wedding. Having to coordinate with a florist to have fresh cut flowers delivered to the wedding venue is just one more pressure point on the countdown. Also, if the fresh cut flowers do not look like you envisioned, when you get them it is often too late to change anything. When you order your silk flower bouquets as far in advance as six months before the wedding, you have plenty of time to ask for changes or to order extra pieces if other honored guests appear on your list.

Finally, in terms of the wedding budget, a silk flower wedding can be more economical than fresh cut flowers. The flowers you like are always "in season." Prices are not bumped by seasonal changes. Also, because you will be able to order at a time that you wish to, you can pay for the flower expense months ahead of other expenses that will necessarily come right before the wedding.

Whatever choices you make about your wedding flowers – silk flower or fresh cut – a good wedding flower designer will help you create beauty in your wedding bouquet.

Ginger designs custom–styled bridal bouquets and wedding packages for brides. Visit her website <http://www.bridalsilkbouquets.homestead.com> for ideas.



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