

HOMEMADE: THE HEART AND SCIENCE OF HANDCRAFTS  
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## Bouquets to Carry and to Display

A bouquet can be defined as an arrangement of flowers and foliage that is formed by gathering stems together in a loose free-form arrangement, in a compact mound, or anything in between. A bouquet can be carried in the hand or displayed in a vase or other container. A hand-tied bouquet can be as simple as a small bunch of wildflowers tied with a ribbon or as complex as rows of different flowers organized in a tight mound with stems wrapped in tight bands to form a handle.

The flower stems of formal handheld bouquets for weddings are usually arranged so that they are straight and parallel with one another and evenly trimmed at the bottom. The number of flowers is a feature of the floral design but is often determined with practicality in mind. The bouquet handle must have a small enough circumference to carry comfortably. Wrapping the stems with ribbon holds the stems secure, keeps the fresh plant material from staining the hands, and adds a touch of style. Ribbon wrappings can conceal the entire stem length or a portion of it. One style is to wrap the upper three-quarters of the stems and allow 1½" (3.8 cm) of the cut ends to show at the bottom. Another style is to wrap about half of the stem length and allow ½" (1.3 cm) to show at the bottom. There is no technical reason to choose one approach over the other; it is entirely a matter of personal taste.

### Technique: Making a Handheld Bouquet Using Hand-Tying



This classic bouquet design begins with a central mound of flowers and adds different kinds of flowers in rounds around it. The number of floral rounds can be as few as two and as many as five or six, depending on the size and shape of the flower heads and the overall circumference of the stems, which needs to remain small enough to be comfortable to hold and carry. Fresh flowers can be gathered into this hand-tied bouquet, or you can use silk flowers (as specified below) in kinds that reflect the natural growing season.

### MATERIALS AND TOOLS

- 7 silk open roses on 8" (20.3 cm) stems, in pale pink
- 14 silk tulips on 7" (17.8 cm) stems, in peach
- 18 tulip fronds
- 18 stem wires, medium-gauge, 6" (15.2 cm) long
- Paddle wire, medium-gauge
- Floral tape, in green
- 1 yard (91.4 cm) wire-edged ribbon, 1½" (3.8 cm) wide, in black-and-white plaid
- Wire cutters
- Scissors
- Ruler or tape measure

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Step 1

Prepare the wire for wrapping.

Use a ruler and wire cutters to measure and cut a 24" (40.6 cm) length of paddle wire. Wrap the wire with floral tape. Cut the wrapped wire in thirds.

Step 2

Prepare the roses, tulips, and leaves.

Lay the roses on a flat surface. Working one stem at a time, use your hands to strip off all of the foliage. Lay the tulips on a flat surface. Working one stem at a time, use wire cutters to cut the leaves where they meet the stems. Use stem wire and floral tape to make a false stem on each leaf, extending each existing stem so that it is equal in length to the length of the tulips.

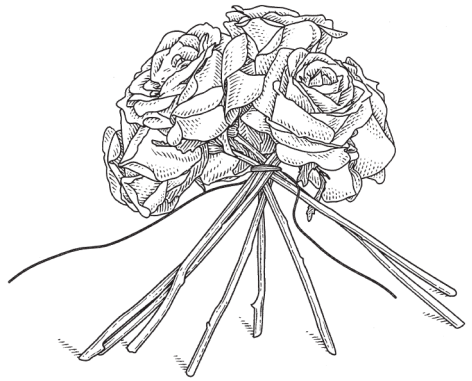
Step 3

Begin to form the central mound.

Hold one rose stem in your hand. Use your other hand to cross a second rose stem over the first, positioning its rose head to the left of the first rose. The crossover point is where the bouquet will be tied. The lower the crossover point on the stems, the greater the circumference of the floral part of the bouquet.

Step 4

Add roses to the central mound.



Continue to add the roses, one stem at a time, to the ones in your hand, placing each new rose head to the left, crossing the stems, and twisting the stems slightly so that the stems splay and the roses form a dome.

Step 5

Bind the stems of the bouquet together.

Hold the stems securely at the crossover point. Use one of the wrapped wires made in step 1 to bind the stems together at that place.

Step 6

Add the tulips to the bouquet.

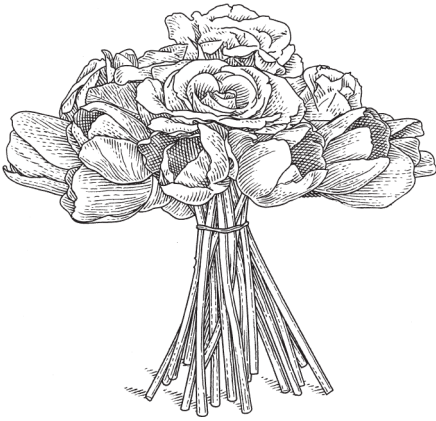


Suggested Flowers for Hand-Tied Bouquets by Season

| Summer        | Fall          | Winter     | Spring     |
|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| Alstroemariam | Chrysanthemum | Calla lily | Delphinium |
| Dahlia        | Cosmos        | Carnation  | Peony      |
| Daisy         | Hydrangea     | Rose       | Ranunculus |
| Rose          |               | Sweet pea  | Tulip      |



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against the floral stems. Use the remaining wrapped wire to secure the leaves, arranging them so the tips of the leaves are on the same line.

**Step 9**

Tie the ribbon bow.

Place the midpoint of the ribbon on the stems, just below the tulips and the leaves. Wrap the ribbon once around the bound stems and tie it into a bow, allowing the streamers to cascade down. Use the wire cutters to trim the center rose slightly shorter than the surrounding tulip and leaf stems for a bouquet that will stand upright.

Repeat steps 3–5 to add the tulips to the bouquet, turning the flower heads outward to form a collar. Use the second length of wrapped wire made in step 1 to bind the tulip stems together at the crossover.

**Step 7**

Assess the bouquet's shape.



Assess the arrangement. Hold the bouquet securely and view it from the top, making sure the flowers form neat rounds and the bouquet is dome-shaped. Adjust the stems to reposition any flower head to maintain uniform rounds.

**Step 8**

Add the leaves to the bouquet.

Position the leaf section of the wired leaves around the central dome of flowers to form a leafy collar, pressing the wire extensions

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