# Arranging in Kenzans

## From Mechanics of Design by Phyllis Danielson

If desired, kenzans (pinholders) may be attached to the container with stickum (I seldom do). Be sure you have a complete seal all the way around the kenzan, as it is water seeping underneath that causes the stickum to fail. Note from Eva: Before putting in stems, stretch an old nylon over the pins and push down to the bottom. Leave nylon around the edges. When finished, to clean pull off the nylon.

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| round pin frog Thick branches, or ones of very hard wood may first need to be split once or twice. | 1. WOODY BRANCHES – cut the stem on a slant and insert it straight up and down, then pull it over to the correct position – OR (better) – hold the branch at the angle you wish it to have, then cut it straight up – insert it at the desired angle.

http://www.ars.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Best-Kept-Secrets-of-Floral-Foam4.jpg |
| http://annmacmullan.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/img_1460.jpg | 1. FLOWERS and NON-WOODY STEMS – cut the stem straight across unless more open surface is needed to allow the stem to take up water (this depends on the material) – insert straight, then pull it to the proper angle.
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| 1. LARGE, HOLLOW STEMS (i.e. Cow Parsnip, Allium) – Prepare a short, strong, smooth stem of the correct diameter to FILL your hollow stem (fresh cattail stems are very good, as they can be “peeled” down to the correct diameter). Impale this firmly in the kenzan at the desired angle – slip the hollow stem over this & impale it GENTLY on the kenzan – the inside stem will hold it in place.
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| 1. VERY SMALL STEMS
2. Insert stem(s) into a short length of a hollow or pithy larger stem, such as a “mum” stem, and place this in the kenzan.
3. Bend the end of the stem back up before inserting it – the end of the stem should be on the side AWAY from the direction you wish the stem to slant.
4. If using several stems together, you may bunch them and tie them with plastic raffia – tie firmly but not tightly, as you will want to be able to turn each individual stem to the desired direction – then insert the bundle into the kenzan (if you tie it too tightly, or if you use floral tape, you will not be able to position each stem as you wish to – if that is not an issue, then use floral tape – it’s easier.)
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| 1. GROUNDCOVER (for landscapes, etc. ) – Make small bunches of your material (ground pine is best, but hard to get – try short lengths of Juniper or parsley). Tie the bunches with plastic raffia, fly-tying thread or wire, and insert them into kenzans. If you use wire, don’t leave the bunches in the arrangement too long, as the wire will rust and stain your container.

 If the area to be covered is large, place stems between the kenzans (make a triangle with the kenzans), and fill the space inside with the bunches, crowding tightly. Make sure the material covers and hides these stems; trim the top of the groundcover so all is the same height, if necessary. |
| http://www.menloparklibrary.org/images/ying-yang.gif | NOTE: For an Ikebana landscape, the preferred shape of the “ground” is shown at the left – in Summer, more water should show (it is cooling), & in Winter be sure that only a little water shows. Trees, shrubs & land flowers should be placed into the groundcover area, while water plants such as iris, cattails, calla, water lilies, etc. should be placed in the water area. |

## Creativity!

This same treatment may be used to fill openings in creative containers, or to create color masses (you may use two or more colors, making grids, spirals, waves, etc.) Heights of areas may be varied, openings may be left unfilled, etc. – this could be VERY effective when placed where you will be looking down on the design. Also, you may use stepped-up containers (stacked, raised) or, for a short time, (or if material doesn’t need water) the container could be placed on its side.

1. DECORATIVE WOOD IN KENZANS –
2. Drill into the bottom of the wood – insert one or more lengths of ¼” to 3/8” dowel which extend out about ¾” – long enough for the dowel(s) to be inserted into the kenzan without letting the wood get into the water. Place the wood into the kenzan.
3. Drill into the bottom of your wood and screw on the special kenzan with the screw hole in the center, then mesh this into the kenzan in the container. For this to work the spacing of the needles in the two kenzans must match, and the wood MUST be well-balanced.
4. When using a branch, wrap the end of it with a strip of hardware cloth to make a cylinder extending about ¾” beyond it – the hardware cloth will hold the wood in the kenzan quite well. For candles, use this same method – or, alternatively, lay a strip of Scotch tape, sticky side up, on the table – place toothpicks into the kenzan (or into Oasis, if that’s what you’re using).
5. OASIS ® or Floral Foam – be sure it is wet CLEAR THROUGH. Adding preservative to the water helps to counteract possible problems from foam-clogged pores. Use either plain tap water or a Listerine® antiseptic solution (3 to 4 TBS in 1 gallon of distilled water) to soak the block. Do not use the floral plant food (clogs up pores).

NOTE: **Wetting the Foam**

Floral foam is a very light and fragile open-celled material. It should be handled very gently when dry to avoid crushing those tiny cells. The cells (which contain air when the foam is dry) are designed to pull water through the foam via capillary action. As water is pulled in,air is pushed out the other side. In wetting the foam, it is absolutely essential that air not be trapped inside any of the cells! The best way to wet a foam block is to let it do what comes naturally let it pull in the water. Just set the dry foam block on the surface of a basin of water, with the water at least as deep as the thickness of the block. The foam block will slowly sink as it pulls in water from the bottom and pushes air out through the top. This takes a minute or two, so be patient!

1. If using large, heavy branches, use a kenzan under the foam to add weight – branch MAY go clear through to the kenzan if necessary to secure. To save time later, stretch a piece of nylon stocking over the kenzan first, pressing it down with the point of your scissors or with some other instrument – then impale Oasis. For cleanup, pull up on the nylon to clear kenzan of foam.
2. Always be VERY sure of stem placement BEFORE inserting, as reinserting clogs pores and creates air pockets. If you DO pull out a stem, be sure to recut it to clear the pores before reinserting. Be sure to cut all stems on a VERY SHARP angle so they will pierce the Oasis easily.
3. Oasis may be wrapped with foil or plastic wrap before placing in the container – use a pick or awl to pierce the covering when inserting soft stems.
4. Oasis (or dry foam for dry arrangements) should be attached to the container with 1/8” to ¼” waterproof tape, taping across the container – be sure the Oasis (or dry foam) extends at least 1” ABOVE the edge of the container.



Foam should extend AT LEAST 1” above and slightly BEYOND the rim of the container. Shave off the corners.

Tape the foam into the container with narrow, waterproof tap, being careful not to tape across the center as you will usually wish to place plant material there.

Constructing an Asymmetrical Triangle with floral foam: http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=5&ved=0CDwQFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.gaaged.org%2FBrowseable\_Folders%2FPower\_Points%2FHorticulture%2FFloral\_Design%2FFloralDes\_Contructing\_an\_Asymmetrical\_Triangle\_Arrangement\_Sept\_2005.ppt&ei=syZ-UNqzPMTbyQH-5oGABA&usg=AFQjCNEF05-oLkkb6wUoaRwawbtmQmyflw&cad=rja