

Instant Container Gardens

By Pamela Crawford

24 Sample Pages

Scroll down to see
pages.

PAMELA CRAWFORD'S



INSTANT

CONTAINER GARDENS



Revolutionary NEW Container System

✿ Spectacular Results:

Easy & Instantly!

✿ Follow the Fast

1, 2, 3 System

Front Cover

INSTANT CONTAINER SERIES: VOLUME 1

Planting Sequence



16" single wall basket

1



Step 1: Add soil up to the first hole. Wet the root balls of the plants and squeeze them. Slide the root balls through the holes.

2



Step 2: Plant the centerpiece.

3



Step 3: Plant the edge plants.



Only 2 weeks after planting!

Discover the Secrets of Creating Spectacular Container Gardens...Instantly!

- ✿ Revolutionary Container System
- ✿ Step-by-Step Illustrated Demonstrations
- ✿ Planting & Maintenance Tips
- ✿ 34 Foolproof Plants
- ✿ Design Ideas to Transform your Garden



ABOUT PAMELA CRAWFORD

Pamela Crawford has a BA from Vanderbilt University and a Masters Degree in Landscape Architecture from Florida International University, where she received the prestigious "Torch Award" as an outstanding alumnus from the School of Architecture. She has designed 1500 gardens for residences, businesses, and country clubs. Her container designs have been featured on the cover of *Better Homes and Gardens* publications. She has also appeared on the *Five Living Network* as a container garden expert. This is Pamela's fifth gardening book.



Back Cover



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Choosing Basket Sizes...

They All Grew Bigger than I Anticipated!

Advantages of Baskets with One Side Layer (Single Baskets)



14" Single Side Layer Basket

✱ Single baskets weigh quite a bit less than the doubles. I can easily lift the two baskets shown on this page when they are full. I can't lift the two, larger doubles shown on the opposite page.

✱ Single baskets grow huge if you use great potting mix and fertilizer (see page 26).

✱ These smaller baskets require fewer plants than the larger ones.

Advantages of Baskets with Two Side Layers (Double Baskets)



16" Double Side Layer Basket

✱ Double baskets require water less frequently than the smaller baskets do.

✱ Plants grow larger and live a bit longer in larger baskets.

Why do the plants in these containers grow so large?

✱ The plants don't grow anywhere near as large without the proper potting mix and fertilizer (see page 26).

✱ Horticulturists tell me the holes in the sides of the liners cause an oxygen increase in the potting mix, which encourages larger growth.



16" Single Side Layer Basket



20" Double Side Layer Basket

Easy Color!



This small basket is one of my favorites of all time. It represents simplicity - both in plant choices and arrangement. What could be simpler than coleus, begonias, and salvia? These winners have been tested and proved by generations of gardeners.

This arrangement is the easiest I know: simply choose a centerpiece you like and surround it with three alternating plants.

I chose two colors of salvia for the centerpiece, purple and red. The purple went in and out of bloom while the red bloomed its heart out for the entire lifespan of this container.

This plant mix works well in cool or warm weather - it even took 97 degrees in our trials.



This basket is part of a display of six that I did in my garden. It is front and center! I coordinated the colors of all the pots but varied the plants. The columns start at 36" tall in front, 42" tall in the middle, and 48" tall in back.

See more about this grouping on pages 120 and 121.

Cultural Information

Light: Full sun to light shade. Since wax begonias are sold for sun or shade, be sure to choose those that fit your light situation. Most take sun until the temperatures hit the low 90's. The red-leaved varieties take sun in higher temperatures, along with some of the newer green-leaved types that should be labeled as sun begonias.

Season: Spring through fall for most areas. Also thrives in winter in areas where the temperatures stay above 38 degrees. This plant mix takes temperatures from about 38 degrees to the low-90's in full sun. In light shade, it withstands higher temperatures into the high 90's.

Lifespan: Four to five months in this container.

Care: Fertilize on planting day with a slow-release mix, and repeat every three months. I pinched the coleus back about every three weeks so that it remained compact and didn't outgrow the salvia centerpiece. Remove the dead flowers from the salvia if you feel energetic!

Water: Water when the plants show signs of wilt or the soil feels dry when you push your fingertip up to your second knuckle into the potting mix. I watered this one every day (after it was about a month old) in mid summer and every other day in cooler weather.

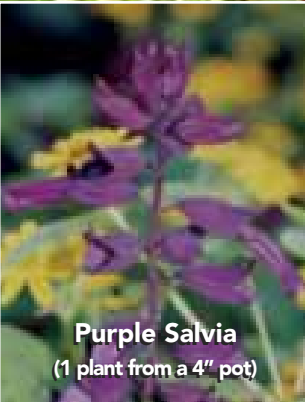
Troubleshooting: I lost one coleus that had been planted in the side. I replaced it, following the instructions on page 27.

Quantity of Plants: Quantities for this pot size are given on the plant photos (opposite page). See page 12, 14, and 15 for quantities needed for other container sizes and shapes.

Planting Plan: The easiest I know! In the side layer, alternate the begonias with the two colors of coleus. Plant the two colors of salvia close together in the center. Repeat the alternating dark coleus, begonia, red/yellow coleus along the top edge. Try to keep the same plant from appearing above itself in the side and edge layers. (For a full planting demo, see page 18-19.)



Red Salvia
(2 plants from 4" pots)



Purple Salvia
(1 plant from a 4" pot)



'Wizard Scarlet' Coleus
(6 plants from 4" pots)

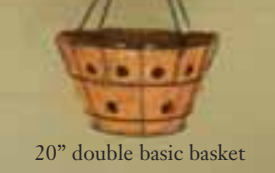


Wax Begonia
(5 plants from 4" pots)



'Dark Star' Coleus
(5 plants from 4" pots)

Summer Pinks



20" double basic basket

What a great combination for hot summer days! The large leaves of the caladium centerpiece stand out well against the other, smaller-leaved plants. And the dragon wing begonias blend beautifully with the two different coleus.

Dragon wing begonias are one of my favorite container plants. They are difficult to find in 4" pots because they don't look too good when they are so small. However, if you see any, I highly recommend trying them. They are showier than the more common wax begonias and unusual as well.



Another similar basket hanging on my gazebo. I like to hang identical baskets on this gazebo because it is rather formal and symmetrical. However, on informal porches or decks, different baskets work well together.

Cultural Information

Light: Light shade is ideal.

Season: Spring through fall for most warmer areas. This plant mix takes temperatures from about 62 degrees to the low 90's. In a bit more shade, it withstands temperatures into the mid 90's.

Lifespan: Three to five months in this container.

Care: Fertilize on planting day with a slow-release mix. Repeat if the leaves look yellowish or washed-out. Pinch the coleus and the begonias to keep them from getting taller than the liriopie centerpiece. Since the centerpiece is so short, you'll need to pinch at least once a month.

Water: Water when the plants show signs of wilt or the soil feels dry when you push your fingertip up to your second knuckle into the potting mix. I watered this one every day (after it was about a month old) in mid summer and every other day in cooler weather.

Troubleshooting: The 'Wizard Rose' coleus has not been doing well in the last year or so. Be sure it has a warranty if you buy it. The torenia started to disappear after a month or so, but I really enjoyed those blue flowers while they lasted!

Quantity of Plants: Quantities for this size pot size are given on the plant photos (opposite page). See pages 12, 14, and 15 for quantities needed for other container sizes and shapes.

Planting Plan: Easy. Alternate the begonias, coleus, and torenia on the side as well as the edge layers. Plant the caladiums in the center. (For full planting demo, see paged 20-21.)



'Florida Fantasy' Caladium
(3 plants from 4.5" pots)



'Painted Pink' Coleus
(8 plants from 4.5" pots)



Upright Torenia
(8 plants from 4.5" pots)



Dragon Wing Begonia
(9 plants from 4.5" pots)



'Wizard Rose' Coleus
(9 plants from 4.5" pots)

Small Window Box, Big Impact



This non-descript window next to my garage came alive with the simple addition of this small window box. The dark colors of the sweet potato vine and the ‘Dark Star’ coleus mirror the dark shutters. The trailing habit of the vine added an additional accent below the edge of the window. Notice how I only used three of these aggressive vines for a big show in this arrangement.

Planting Sequence



Step 1: Alternate the sweet potato, begonia, and *Lysimachia* ‘Outback Sunset’ in the side planting holes. Notice how the sweet potato is planted on each end and in the center. Since it will grow quite long, this even spacing will keep the arrangement even.



Step 2: Plant a grass in the center (See trouble shooting).



Step 3: Alternate the begonia, dark coleus, and *Lysimachia* ‘Outback Sunset’ on the edge. Notice that no sweet potatoes are planted on the edge. (For full planting instructions, see page 23)

Cultural Information

Light: Full sun to light shade. Since wax begonias are sold for sun or shade, be sure to choose those that fit your light situation. Most take sun until the temperatures hit the low 90’s. The red-leaved varieties take sun in higher temperatures, along with some of the newer, green-leaved types that should be labeled as sun begonias.

Season: Spring through fall for most areas. Also thrives in winter in areas where the temperatures stay above 38 degrees. This plant mix takes temperatures from about 38 degrees to the low-90’s in full sun. In light shade, it withstands higher temperatures, into the high 90’s.

Lifespan: Three to four months in this container.

Care: Fertilize on planting day with a slow-release mix and repeat every three months. Pinch the coleus to keep it from getting leggy. Trim the sweet potato as needed to keep it from taking over your house!

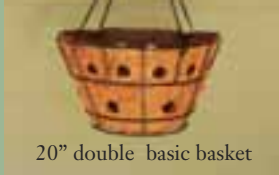
Water: Water when the plants show signs of wilt or the soil feels dry when you push your fingertip up to your second knuckle into the potting mix. I watered this one every day in mid summer and every other day in cooler weather.

Troubleshooting: Notice that the centerpiece in the photos shown left is different from the photo shown right. I tried an experiment on the original centerpiece and killed it. It was a very full grass in a 3-gallon pot. I took a sharp saw and cut it in two in an attempt to fit it into this box. It died, and I replaced it with the *Juncus* grass shown to the right. How will I learn unless I experiment?

Quantity of Plants: Quantities for this pot size are given on the plant photos (opposite page). See pages 12, 14, and 15 for quantities needed for other container sizes and shapes.

Planting Plan: Usually, I plant the same plants in the sides as around the edge. This time, I changed. The side layer includes the dark sweet potato, and the edge layer includes dark coleus instead. I was concerned that planting sweet potatoes on the edge would smother the plants below.





I didn't expect to like this arrangement when I planted it, but I couldn't resist trying these glamorous cabbages in the side of a basket. I thought they would get too big and hide the pansies planted along the top edge.

Was I ever wrong! The cabbages love being planted in the sides, and grew quite politely, leaving the pansies lots of space.

They call the purple one 'Dynasty Red.' I don't know why, when it looks more purple than red. Regardless, it looks terrific alternated with the 'Dynasty White' flowering cabbage.

And talk about easy! I very seldom had to do anything to this basket - not even water it! Imagine having this gorgeous arrangement outside all winter (or at least until the temperatures drop below 25 degrees) - and doing very little to keep it alive!

Cultural Information

- Light:** Light shade to full sun.
- Season:** Winter in most areas. These cabbages took temperatures down to the mid-20's. The pansies took a bit more cold.
- Lifespan:** Five to six months in this container.
- Care:** Fertilize on planting day with a slow-release mix. Repeat if the leaves look yellowish or washed-out.
- Water:** Water when the plants show signs of wilt or the soil feels dry when you push your fingertip up to your second knuckle into the potting mix. You shouldn't need to water much in the cool weather if you have occasional rains. But watch closely because if you water too much, it might die. Conversely, very cold weather dries it out, so be sure it's watered before a real cold spell arrives.
- Troubleshooting:** The pansies went through periods of looking scraggly after really cold weather. They recovered quickly when the temperatures went up.
- Quantity of Plants:** Quantities for this pot size are given on the plant photos (opposite page). See pages 12, 14, and 15 for quantities needed for other container sizes and shapes.
- Planting Plan:** Easy. Alternate the two colors of cabbages for both side layers. Plant the *Juncus* grass in the center. Surround it with pansies. (For full planting demo, see pages 20-21.)



Juncus Grass
(1 plant from a 1-gallon pot)



'Dynasty Red' Flowering Cabbage
(10 plants from 4.5" pots)



'Dynasty White' Flowering Cabbage
(11 plants from 4.5" pots)



Pansies
(14 plants from 4.5" pots)

Choosing Column Height

If your basket grouping includes both mounding and trailing plants, stick to columns measuring at least 36" tall. This grouping, photographed from both sides, features columns of 36", 42", and 48".

This is the largest grouping I have ever done, totalling six columns.



Above: Notice how the plants in the containers are different but stick to the same color scheme of lime, red, and purple. The flowers planted in the ground repeat the color theme. They include red and blue salvia, yellow marigolds, hot pink periwinkles, and 'Gold Mound' duranta.

Right: The front basket is a 14" single. The middle row are 16" singles. The center basket in the back (tallest) row is a 20" double, with a 16" double on each side.

I placed the baskets with trailing plants on the largest 48" columns. Although the sweet potato vines trail well on these tall columns, they tend to take over the other plants in the baskets. Some signs of coleus that are almost smothered by the vines are shown in the baskets on the tallest columns.



Coordinate the Garden

Plants under your baskets don't need to be an exact match to the plants in the baskets, but they need to coordinate. I first planted rust coleus under these pastel baskets and it looked awful! I replaced them with the salvia, pentas, and torenia you see here. This plant group, along with the plants in the baskets, took the summer heat really well.

These baskets are a full 4' apart. The posts measure 36", 42", and 48" high.



Above: The left basket is a 16" double (profile on page 53); the center, a 16" single (profile, page 111), while the basket to the right is a 20" double.



Porch Makeover



Hanging baskets, window boxes, and baskets on columns - along with annual plantings in the ground - completely transformed my porch.

Window boxes are ideal for railings. These are planted with dracaena 'Lemon Lime' as centerpieces and impatiens, creeping Jenny, and coleus as side and edge plantings.

The basket on a column next to the steps is planted with a caladium centerpiece along with begonias and New Guinea impatiens along the edge and in the sides.

Look at the photo to the left. See the three hooks installed in the top beam for hanging baskets? With 70 inches in between the columns, I planned for three baskets of staggered heights. But, they quickly grew together. One basket - and only a



Choosing Basket Sizes...

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14" Single Side Layer Basket

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✱ Single baskets grow huge if you use great potting mix and fertilizer (see page 26).

✱ These smaller baskets require fewer plants than the larger ones.

Advantages of Baskets with Two Side Layers (Double Baskets)



16" Double Side Layer Basket

✱ Double baskets require water less frequently than the smaller baskets do.

✱ Plants grow larger and live a bit longer in larger baskets.

Why do the plants in these containers grow so large?

✱ The plants don't grow anywhere near as large without the proper potting mix and fertilizer (see page 26).

✱ Horticulturists tell me the holes in the sides of the liners cause an oxygen increase in the potting mix, which encourages larger growth.



16" Single Side Layer Basket





20" Double Side Layer Basket

Basic Baskets

Basic Basket Planters WITH ATTACHED LINERS* For use as Hanging Planters or on Columns

Basic Basket Planters are constructed from heavy gauge steel wire coated in black plastic and are supplied with removable clip-on chains.

	14" SINGLE BASKET PLANTER 14" diameter x 7" deep holds eight side plants, eight top edging plants and one 6" or three 4.5" centerpiece plants Item #ZGBS14 Replacement Liners (Available separately)
	16" SINGLE BASKET PLANTER 16" diameter x 7" deep holds twelve side plants, twelve top edging plants and one 6" or gallon size centerpiece plant Item #ZGBS16 Replacement Liners (Available separately)
	16" DOUBLE BASKET PLANTER 16" diameter x 11" deep holds eighteen side plants, twelve top edging plants and from one to three 6" or gallon size centerpiece plants Item #ZGBD16 Replacement Liners (Available separately)
	16" DOUBLE IMPERIAL PLANTER 16" diameter x 11" deep x 27" overall height holds eighteen side plants, twelve top edging plants and from one to three 6" or gallon size centerpiece plants Available mid to late 2007 Item #ZGBD20 Replacement Liners (Available separately)
	20" DOUBLE BASKET PLANTER 20" diameter x 11" deep holds twenty-one side plants, fourteen top edging plants and three 6" or gallon size centerpiece plants Item #ZGBD20 Replacement Liners (Available separately)

* Patent pending

NOTE: Use plants with rootballs that measure from 3" to 4.5" wide for the sides and edge.

Swivlit Basket Ring For use on Small, Single Basket Planters

Nylon hanging basket swivel joint lets you rotate your hanging baskets easily for even growth, without taking them off the hook. Heavy duty, can take loads up to 55 lbs. which works for the 14 and 16 inch single basket planters but none of the double basket planters.
Item #SW1V-2 (2 per pack)



Swivel Hook For use on Large, Double Basket Planters

This hook is ideal for the large, 16" and 20" double baskets, including the Imperial planter. Look for it at your local home improvement store.

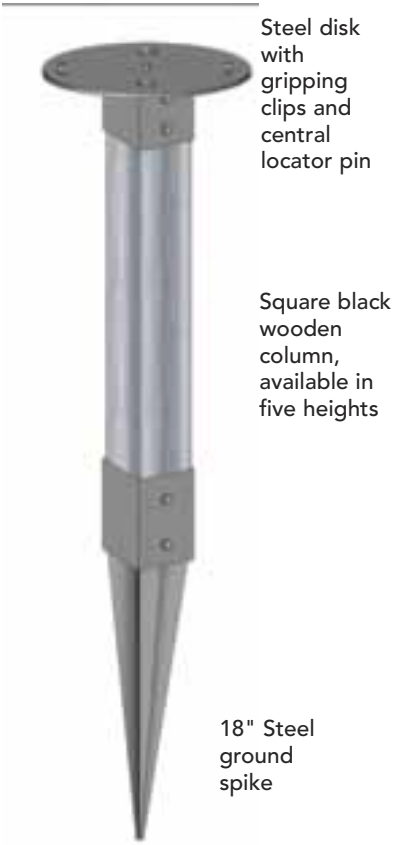
Columns and Components

Buy as Kits or Separate Components.

Border Columns For use in Borders, Lawns, and Flower Beds

Border Column Kits include 18" ground spike, 9" dia. steel disk and choice of 24", 30", 36", 42" or 48" height column.

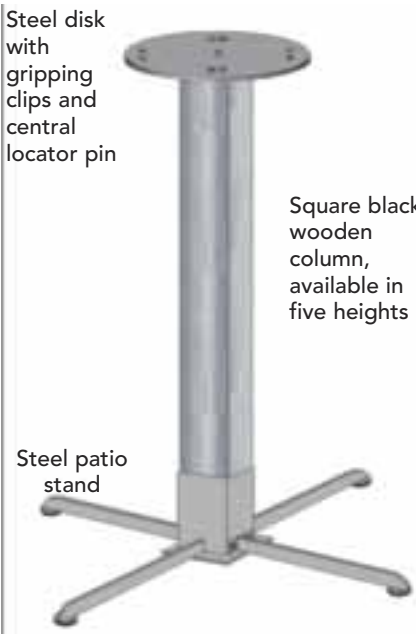
- 24" Border Column Kit Item #ZGBC24
 - 30" Border Column Kit Item #ZGBC30
 - 36" Border Column Kit Item #ZGBC36
 - 42" Border Column Kit Item #ZGBC42
 - 48" Border Column Kit Item #ZGBC48
- Individual components are available separately.



Patio Columns For use on Patios, Decks, Porches and Pool Surrounds

Patio Column Kits include steel stand, 9" dia. steel disk and choice of 24", 30", 36", 42" or 48" height column.

- 24" Patio Column Kit
Base 18" across Item #ZFPS24
 - 30" Patio Column Kit
Base 18" across Item #ZFPS30
 - 36" Patio Column Kit
Base 24" across Item #ZFPS36
 - 42" Patio Column Kit
Base 24" across Item #ZFPS42
 - 48" Patio Column Kit
Base 30" across Item #ZFPS48
- Individual components are available separately.



Components for Border and Patio Columns

The separate availability of these components means you can purchase 4" by 4" columns of any desired lengths and paint or stain them any color.

- 9" Disk with Gripping Clips
Item #Z9DISK
- 18" Ground Spike
Item #Z18GSP
- 18" Patio Base
Supports columns up to 30" tall
Item #Z18BAS
- 24" Patio Base
Supports columns 36-42" tall
Item #Z24BAS
- 30" Patio Base
Supports columns up to 48" tall
Item #Z30BAS

Where to buy "Instant Container" products

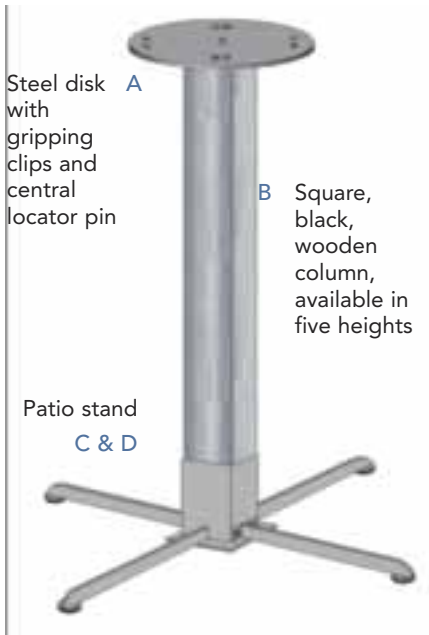
- From garden centers
Go to www.sideplanting.com to find a list of garden centers near you. This is a great choice because you can pick up the plants and potting mix at the same time.
- Online
Go to www.kinsmangarden.com for retail and www.kinsmanwholesale.com for wholesale.
- Phone
1-800-733-4146 for retail orders or 1-800-733-5613 for wholesale orders.

Assembling and Installing Border Columns



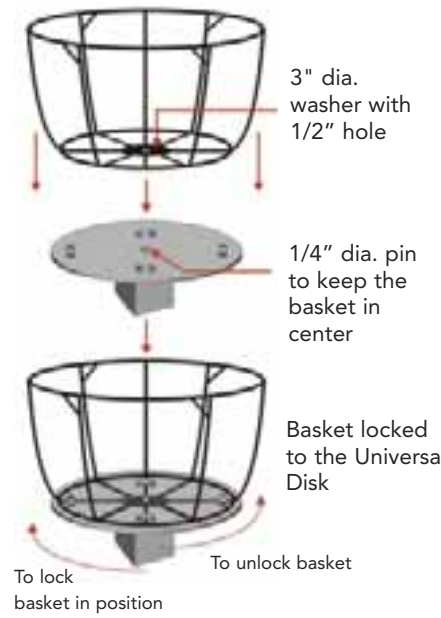
- Tools needed:**
Screwdriver, electric drill, sledge hammer, small level, flat piece of scrap wood (a 6" x 6" piece of a 2" x 6" board works fine; it's easy to find one at your local home improvement store.)
- Check to be sure you have all the components:**
- A. Steel disk assembly for top of column
 - B. Black wooden column
 - C. Steel ground spike
 - D. Bag of hardware (not shown)
- To assemble and install:**
1. Put the piece of scrap wood on top of the square column so the sledge hammer doesn't damage the metal column. Drive the ground spike into the earth with a sledge hammer until only the square column holder is above the surface. Check to be sure it is level after each few hits with the hammer both vertically and horizontally. This keeps the column from being crooked.
 2. Place the wooden column into the top of the ground spike.
 3. Drill starter holes into the column through the holes in the ground spike.
 4. Insert wood screws and tighten.
 6. Place steel disk assembly on top of the column.
 7. Insert wood screws, and tighten.

Assembling and Installing Patio Columns



- Tools needed:**
Screwdriver, electric drill, adjustable wrench
- Check to be sure you have all the components:**
- A. Steel disk assembly for top of column
 - B. Black wooden column
 - C. 4 black leg extensions
 - D. Base assembly with 4 leg holders
 - E. Bag of hardware (not shown)
- To assemble:**
1. Push leg extensions into the leg holders, and align holes. Push bolts through holes. Fasten with nuts, and tighten with wrench.
 2. Place wood column into base holder, and drill pilot holes for screws.
 3. Insert wood screws, and tighten.
 4. Place steel disk assembly on top of column.
 5. Drill pilot holes through holes in disk assembly.
 6. Insert wood screws, and tighten.

Placing the Basket on Top of the Column



1. Place any of the four Basic Basket Planters onto the disk, so the center locator pin fits into center hole of basket bottom.
2. The baskets can be empty or filled with plants. That is your choice.
3. Rotate basket clockwise until disk grips wires.
4. **Very important!** It is easy to see if the four holders on the disk are firmly attached to the wires if the basket is empty (minus the liner) because you can see the attachments. Not so if it is full. If this is the case, look in between the basket and the metal assembly. If you see light, at least one of the holders is not attached. Remove it, and repeat. **If the basket is not firmly attached to all four holders, it will fall off! This happened to me, and my lovely basket toppled over in the first breeze. I will never make that mistake again!**
4. You can turn the basket every week or so to achieve even growth. Just rotate counter-clockwise until the back is at the front; then, turn clockwise to lock again. Or you can lift off the basket and replace it with another freshly planted basket at any time.

Installing Window Boxes and Wall Planters



- Hardware to use:**
Fasteners for the window boxes and wall planters are not included in the box since different uses require different types of fasteners.
- Wood siding and railings:** Hold empty container in place, and drill pilot holes at the bumps in the top rear bar. Then install J-hooks (shown left). If you prefer to use screws to hold up your container, place one every 12 inches. Wall planters hold well with simple screws at the bumps, but some people prefer the look of J-hooks. See page 14 for buying information.
- Masonry:** Same as wood siding, but make holes in masonry (with a masonry drill bit) large enough to install plastic anchors for J-hooks. Alternatively, bolts with washers may be used to grip the 'bumps' in the containers.
- Alternative for railings for window boxes:** Brackets (shown below) can be used to hold any size window box. See page 15 for more information on the brackets.

