



STEPHEN PROCTER

SCULPTURAL CERAMIC VESSELS

PLACING POTS AND GARDEN ORNAMENTS

A list of ideas and principles by Gordon Hayward

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So many decisions we make when developing a garden have to do with finding the right place for everything: paths, beds, a gazebo or a fence, plants as well as pots and garden ornaments.

When you keep in mind that gardens are for people, and that your job as a garden designer is to draw your friends and visitors along an engaging, varied and exciting itinerary, you will find appropriate uses for pots, both planted and unplanted.

A fine pot, for example, draws people toward it while providing a focal point for the garden in which it is set. Once visitors get to the pot they'll see the next path to the next garden and so on. Fine pots act as magnets, drawing people along an itinerary.

Placing Large Unplanted Decorative Pots

- Place one at any junction where two paths converge.
- Place them in the in-curves along a woodland path or in a mass planting IF they have the stature to compete with large-scale plantings or woodland.
- Use them as a focal point in intensely planted gardens. They act as a still point in an ever-changing space.
- Place groups of fine pots of varying sizes in the corner of a terrace, deck or patio or combine planted pots with a single unplanted pot or ornament that will act as the group's visual center.
- The windows of your house may well give you ideas for where to site pots out in the garden and on line with the center of those windows, especially those you can leave them outdoors permanently.
- Walls of buildings or solid walls can become backdrops for ornamental pots, planted or unplanted.
- Place a decorative pot at the end of a long straight lawn path and animate it with water. Set a pool and antique wellhead on line with the center of your straight path and set a pot behind the center of the pool on a stone base.
- Place an ornamental pot at the meeting point of four intersecting paths, especially in a four-quadrant herb garden. When planted or unplanted pots are placed at the intersection of four paths, you see them from many different angles.
- Two matched urns placed at the beginning and end of a straight path help visitors understand depth and distance.
- Set important pots at the end of long, straight paths to draw people down that path.
- Set one, two or three pots in a perennial bed to act as a visual center or a repeated form down the length of a bed. A single pot will act as a focal point that marks the center.



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Placing Planted Pots

- Gather fine pots around the broad landing by the front door, or at the ends of broad steps into the house. Plant with fragrant plants for another level of interest. Choose plants, the foliage and flowers of which complement the color and mood of the pot.**
- Place fine pots or varying sizes on broad steps at the entry into your garden or house.
- Create color combinations near the front door with plants in pots in combination with nearby flowering shrubs or trees.
- Use a particularly fine 18"-24" diameter pot as a vase rather than a planter so what you put in it is constantly changing with the seasons. Placing them near the front door acts as a seasonally appropriate welcome.
- Set pots symmetrically atop walls or at the edge of a stone patio to frame views out into your garden.
- Cut a long narrow path into any woodland you have; frame the view with a pair of pots; place a sculpture or beautiful pot deep in the woods at the end of the straight path.
- Place a pot (or pots) at the corner of a dock or deck.
- Place planted pots at the bases of pergola or arbor uprights, or at the base of steps.
- Place a pot on peastone or fieldstone base in front of a large, handsome unadorned wall. That wall will act as a backdrop for the plant and pot.
- Use pots that hold water to grow water-loving plants you can put on a patio, deck or dock.
- Planted pots can be laid out symmetrically along a fence or stone wall, especially if you put peastone down in a long narrow band in front of that fence or wall on which to set the pots. Formality results.
- Pots against a trelliswork panel add a level of sophistication, especially with a striking plant in the pot.
- Raise smaller planted pots on a soundly set pedestal.
- Contrast a large unplanted pot with smaller planted ones.
- Place pots, planted or unplanted, around a swimming pool.
- Place pots planted with annuals next to nearby herbaceous perennials to create strong color combinations.
- Place pots planted with dramatic foliage plants right in perennial beds or atop a pedestal if the pot is planted with a trailing plant.

With gratitude to Gordon Hayward, for his generosity in allowing me to photograph my pots in his garden. Learn more about Gordon and Mary Hayward at www.haywardgardens.com.