

# Use 'jewelry' to decorate yards

By Maria Cortés Gonzalez

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Don't let the water restrictions keep you inside.

With this warm weather and a bounty of colorful flowers waiting in nurseries, it's time to dress up patios, pool areas and windows with pretty pots.

Jay Korte, founder of Flower Framers, a window box business, said many people like the way window boxes enhance a home's exterior.

"They like the idea of enhancing with seasonal color as if it were jewelry," he said.

Korte's window boxes come in a range of sizes, from 2 to 15 feet in length. They are fiberglass and can be equipped with a micro-irrigation system.

"Going to the garden center and selecting the flowers you're going to try for that season then becomes the fun part," Korte said.

Lisa Brown, a saleswoman at Garden Mart on North Mesa, said people are starting to shop for pots.

The store carries a wide assortment of pots, in both terra-cotta and plastic styles.

Brown said geraniums, petunias, snapdragons, alyssum and zinnias are always popular for container gardening.

Though they need only a small amount of water, potted plants need to be watered more frequently than plants in the ground, according to various nursery experts.

"They tend to dry out faster," Brown said.

Otherwise, they are relatively easy to maintain.

"Unless you see the roots coming through the holes or the pot cracking, they should be all right through sum-

### Where to buy

- ▶ Home improvement stores, nurseries and garden centers all carry a variety of pots for container gardening.
- ▶ To order window boxes with micro-irrigation systems from Flower Framers, go to [www.flowerframers.com](http://www.flowerframers.com)

### Decorating tips

- ▶ Disguise a bare area of the yard by grouping three or four containers in that corner.
- ▶ Alternate various sizes of pots in different finishes so you can create high or low growth where needed.
- ▶ Use a flower bowl as a centerpiece on your outdoor table.
- ▶ Move your plants around to suit the changing position of the sun or just for fun.
- ▶ Turn stumps into natural plant stands. Or hang a hanging planter from a tree branch.
- ▶ Define an eating area or an entryway with large dramatic plants or small trees in larger planters.

Sources: Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center and American Designer Pottery.

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- ▶ More tips, places to buy Online

mer," Brown said.

Upper Valley resident Patti Dodd likes the easy maintenance of container gardening.

"Pretty much the same things come back every year so I don't have to keep buying," she said.

Dodd has a variety of potted plants, including geraniums, hearts and flowers, elephant ears and a dwarf oleander.

"I put a mix of things that use the same amount of water and have the same heat tolerance," Dodd said. "That way, something's always blooming."

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