

How to make a lavender wand

Contributed by Bugs

Making a lavender wand (or lavender bottle) is a nice way to while away a summer afternoon in the garden. A bit like knitting, it's not exactly a time efficient craft, but very satisfying, and recyclable. Chances are you have a bit of ribbon in the house, and if you are reading this you probably have access to a lavender bush. You'll need some ribbon and some lavender with as long a stalk as you can pick. The technique is very simple and reliable so you will find you can vary the materials and although your wands will vary they will all look good. Follow these instructions and then experiment!

Start with about 2 metres of narrow ribbon (0.5cm or a little smaller). Choose any colour that suits you as you will only see the lavender stalks so it doesn't have to go with blue!

Pick lavender with as long a stem as possible, before the flowers open, and use it fresh. Lots of lavender has a second ruff of flowers below the main head - remove these and use them in pot pourri, bags et cetera. Remove any leaves and extra stalks so you have a smooth stem.

On this one I've used 13 stems. Bunch the stems and stagger the flower heads so that they form a head about 10 cm in length. Knot the ribbon tightly just under the flowers, leaving one short piece of about 25 cm and one long piece.

Bend the stalks at the join where the ribbon is. This is the point where you think it has all gone wrong but this is what forms the basket for the flowerheads when you weave the ribbon through.

Use the long end of the ribbon to weave over and under the stalks which you have bent down over the flower heads.

Continue all the way down the stalks, gradually covering the flower heads altogether.

As you weave, keep the ribbon tight and rearrange the stems to make the "basket" neat and even. You need to pull it tight because you're working with green stems that will dry out and leave you with a looser weave that will look untidy if you don't keep it tight now!

Keep weaving, rearranging and tightening until you reach the end of the flower heads

Tie a knot. Now you have a choice of finish. Either tie a bow using the spare short end and your remaining weaving ribbon, and trim the remaining stems neatly about an inch below (as I have done in one of the pictures above, on the left). This is good for hanging up.

Or for a gift or for something to put in drawers or as a decoration, and if you have enough ribbon left, you can continue with the long piece of ribbon you did the weaving with, and wrap the stem for another 10 cm or so, trim them neatly, then push the ribbon between the stems, and wrap it back up to the join and your remaining short piece of ribbon, and tie a bow, as in the picture below.

Once you have made one you can experiment - use more or less stems, weave two or even three stems at a time, and use different ribbons. I find it looks neater the narrower the ribbon you use, but apparently you can use quite wide ones. I've also seen it done with ribbon that has little looped borders and this looks very pretty if you can do it neatly, but I

would start with something 0.5cm wide maximum, and plain satin or matt, not too thin.