

TEN TIPS YOU NEED TO KNOW WHEN BUYING OR ORDERING “THE PERFECT WREATH”

By Nancy Alexander
www.ladybugwreaths.com

Tell your friends; they can also receive this FREE special report by joining my newsletter or subscriber list. I will notify you of end-of-season specials, and new additions, and products to my website. You will also receive free design tips in each newsletter along with information on building you own online business!

Have you ever walked into your favorite florist or gift shop and found a wreath that you really love? You stand and gaze at it wondering where and how it would look in your home. There is just something about this one. You just can't quite put your finger on it, but you just know.... this one is really you – your style – your colors.

But still, you're thinking, and wondering. Do I really have the perfect spot for this beauty? Can I put it over my mantle to replace the worn out one that has been hanging there for 10 years? You know, the one that nobody ever pays attention to anymore because it claimed that spot 10 plus years ago and hasn't moved since. Will it be large enough to fill up and really brighten that sad little spot?

Or what if I hang it on my front door? Is it too large for my door? I don't remember how large my door really is. I don't want people to get slapped in the face with sticks and stems as the door is opened and closed over and over every day.

Maybe this one will be so pretty hanging over my bed when that old picture from Aunt Sue comes down.

Walking out of the store, you say to yourself, well, I really wasn't shopping for wreaths today anyway. Maybe, another day.... As days go by, you just can't get "your" beautiful wreath off your mind. You make a quick trip back into the store and, just as you feared....it is gone! Do you remember what you really liked about it? Do you remember the mix of colors that really grabbed your attention? Probably not, you just knew you liked it.

Throughout the many years I operated my own business, I spent a lot of time with customers who had no idea what to look for when purchasing a wreath for their home. Many would want me make a house call just to see where their wreath would be hanging, others would bring in pictures, and then there would be the ones who were really prepared. They are the ones I want to talk about in this special report, and then, hopefully, you will become a very prepared "shopper."

With these tips and suggestions in my special report, you will become better equipped in making the right choices. These choices will prepare you to select "Your Perfect Wreath." So, the next time you see a wreath you love, you will know if it will work for you, or at the very least, you will be prepared to make an informed decision right on the spot. This same information will also help in placing a custom order, you will be better prepared to make choices as to sizes and colors which make up your wreath.

TIP NUMBER ONE: BE PREPARED.... Notebook

First, purchase a small notebook. Choose one that is small enough to slip into your purse when shopping. The rest of the time, you can store it in your car.

Take a walk through your home. Stop in each room: What is your very favorite thing about the room? What makes your heart swell when you look at it, what about that worn out knick-knack that reminds you of other times, of wonderful memories? Is it the furniture, the fabrics, or the paint colors that give you that calming feeling when you come home after a trip, or is it the smile and the feeling of pride you feel when you think “did I really put those things together myself? They really look great!”

I want you to jot down all of these things about each room of your house in your notebook. Set aside several pages for each room in your home. On these pages, tape a small sample of every fabric from that room, a small paint swatch, and measurements of just about every wall and door. If you don't have fabric swatches and paint samples, take pictures of every area and every color and tape those to your pages.

When measuring, don't leave a thing out, like measuring between the top of the mantle and the ceiling. (That measurement certainly comes in handy when looking at wreaths.) Also, make sure you measure the depth and length of the mantle, and make note of items that are already

in place that you like, and don't want to move. Make a note of the items you don't like that are just filling up space. Measure the wall space between the door and the corner, you know, the one that always looks drab and empty, but when you're out shopping, you never know what size would fit there. Then, with your notebook in hand you are ready to purchase your perfect wreath.

TIP NUMBER TWO: COLOR

With your wall color and accent colors, or colors which add warmth to your room, you can then pick out the colors which will really look good in your wreath. If there are colors which really appeal to you that you aren't already using, don't be afraid to bring in just a little of that color at a time. I would not use a color on your large flowers that is not already used in your room, but I certainly would add some smaller flowers or filler when bringing in a new color. Maybe you could look for a piece of pottery to sit on a table, and throw pillows for your couch that are in the new colors you are adding. These things will tie it all together.

Another great tip is to really look around while standing in each room. What other rooms can you see into? What are the colors and accent colors in those rooms? Your colors used in your home need to flow from one room to another. If there are some really pretty colors you like in an adjoining room, like a kitchen, then you can certainly add some of that color to your wreath in your den. A dear friend and

designer told me once: “You should be able to move pictures, furniture, florals around to different rooms in your house and have them look just as good in each room.” Well, she’s right. A color that is an accent color in one room can be the main color in another.

I have spent many, many hours talking with customers about color. So many customers wanted a wreath or a floral with only two colors, like burgundy and cream. After I convinced them to try and add a little more color for contrast, like a lighter rose to make the burgundy pop, or a little touch of blue for an accent, they were always thrilled. They left my store much happier than if they only had two colors in their floral. My point here is, PLEASE don’t be afraid of color. It will really brighten your world!!!

TIP NUMBER THREE: LOCATION

The most popular location for wreaths is on doors, front doors, and back doors. Walking up to a door, adorned with a beautiful wreath is sure to bring a smile. You feel welcome!

Most front and back doors are 36 inches wide. Some back doors, however, are not standard size, so I would measure both of my doors and put the measurements in my notebook.

A front door is usually the best location for the larger, bolder wreath, so it can be seen from the street. If you only purchase one wreath per season, this is probably where it will go.

A back door is used more often, and does not need to be seen from the street; so a little smaller, sweeter wreath with fine details is wonderful here. Anywhere from 14 inches to 29 inches will be just great.

Hanging your wreath on a door can be done in several ways. If you have a solid wood door and don't mind using a nail, or a screw, this is always my first choice. If this is not an option, many different types of wreath door hangers are available for purchase. They hang over the top of the door, but don't interfere with opening and closing. Coming in many types, and colors, I'm sure you can find one that will look good on your door.

If you have a glass door, a large suction cup works best. Make sure the glass is clean, lightly moisten the inside of the suction cup, and push it firmly against the glass. Let it dry for about 15 to 20 minutes. It should then hold a very large, heavy wreath with no problem. I have never had one of these fall from my door, even with my 30 inch Christmas wreath that is very full and heavy.

For wreaths hanging on outside doors, I suggest you have an overhang to protect the wreath. A little wind and blowing rain normally doesn't hurt it. Depending on which part of the country you live in, sun can sometimes be hard on wreaths, and cause some fading. You need to

take this into account when purchasing a wreath. It has been my experience that reds seem to fade more than other colors.

In addition, there are many other locations inside your home where a wreath will add so much. If you happen to have purchased my second book [Intermediate Wreath Design](#), I have a chapter on wreaths in special places with pictures showing how a wreath can really accent that certain spot in your home.

Most people are surprised to see the impact a small wreath can have on a drab space. Think of other places in your home where a wreath can spruce up your space. Wreaths are a wonderful alternative to the typical mirror or framed art that most people hang over their beds. Larger wreaths look lovely hanging over a king sized bed or over fireplaces in a den or great room. A wreath designed specifically to show off your interests and collections is a great idea. [Click here for an example of this.](#) Check out “Tea Time” Wreath that was a custom order for a customer who collected blue and white china.

TIP NUMBER FOUR: SIZE

The size of your wreath is very important. The standard size of a door is 36 inches wide. This size door can hold a very large wreath. A front door is a very good location for a large, oval wreath. But, you don't want it to be so big that you bump into it or knock it off as you go in and

out. The wild birch wreaths that I use look larger than they really are because of the birch stems that radiate out. The most common wreath width sizes for front doors range from 23 inches to 34 inches. I always suggest purchasing a larger, bolder wreath for your front door so it can be seen from the street. The further away from the street you are, the bolder the colors need to be.

A back door is used more often, but typically isn't seen from the street; so a smaller, more detailed wreath is fine here. I would suggest the size of your backdoor wreath could range between 14 and 29 inches, depending on the door.

When purchasing a wreath for inside your home, most customers tend to purchase one that is too small. Remember, you do have larger areas in your home where you need some color to really make a show; for example, the wall above a bed, or the space over your mantle or fireplace. Typically in these spaces an extra-large, or a large round wreath is the one to go with.

If you have a large kitchen and extra wall space, a baking wreath would be an absolutely wonderful addition. Why not put antique, or old baking utensils in this one? You've now added more than just a lovely piece of art – you've created a conversation piece!!

Other areas of your home, such as a bathroom, a hallway, or little girl's room, are great spaces for smaller, detailed wreaths. You are normally

up closer to these wreaths and can see all of the finer details, such as birds, critters, etc., in these!

TIP NUMBER FIVE: STYLE

As you are out shopping, look around to decide what sort of style appeals to you.

I know what my style is: “Wild and Woodsy”, and the wilder the better! I like wreaths that have lots and lots of wild honeysuckle looped around, and wreaths full of wild sticks, stems and berries. And I do not like my flowers lying close to the wreath; I’d rather they drape down and curl up and bend out the side, just wild and free. I don’t like any sort of an exact or formed look.

I have a lot of customers who love my “woody” style. But then, there are those who like a more formal look with large formed flowers such as magnolias, peonies, hydrangeas and fillers. This formal look has less sticks, honeysuckle vine, and moss. This style usually has the flowers lying closer to the wreath form. You would usually find a bow with streamers, but not always.

Decide if you like large, or small flowers. Some customers like the look of smaller “wildflowers.” In a wreath like this I really only use smaller filler flowers and berries and colored leaves. I can get color into my wreath without using large or medium-sized flowers.

The whimsical look is so inviting and playful. A whimsical style can hold a dragonfly or cute little frog sitting on a preserved mushroom, or other form of critter that can add that little touch that makes your wreath have the whimsical style. Styles can also be combined: begin with a “wild & woodsy”, wreath, but add a whimsical touch along the way.

If you don't know what style you really like, read through all of these descriptions and decide what really appeals to you. Look online, shop in neighborhood stores, and see what catches your eye. Maybe you will even like a mix of styles that happens quite often.

TIP NUMBER SIX: FLOWERS

This is usually an easy one. Look in nature; look in your yard, or your neighbor's yard. Glance around as you are driving down the street.

Maybe you like all types of flowers, and that's great. It makes picking out your wreath easier. There are people who just love hydrangeas, as a matter of fact, a lot of people do. Then there are those who do not like the multi-colored look of hydrangeas. Do you prefer seasonal stems, or do you like flowers that are year round?

Only you can answer these questions. However, it would really help before shopping for your wreath to decide which types you feel drawn

to. [Look at samples of my wreaths on my web page](#) , this should really help you decide which types of blooms and stems you like and prefer.

TIP NUMBER SEVEN: CHARACTER WREATHS

My favorite custom wreaths are “Character” wreaths. These wreaths can display items that your family members have outgrown, but you just can’t seem to let go of.

For example: A ballet wreath for your little girl’s room that proudly displays the worn ballet shoes she has now outgrown. It could also contain a rolled up and tied copy of a program from her last recital. And what about the ribbon or ribbons she wore in her hair? The possibilities are endless here.

A rough and tough wreath for a boy’s room with the baseball glove he has out grown, his shoes with cleats, and the baseball from the game at the end of the season would absolutely be “the cutest.”

A fishing wreath for your mountain home with an old fishing basket, old tackle, red and white bobbers, that old broken rod and reel is so different and intriguing. Fill this one with cattails, grasses, wildflowers, and berries. It just turns out wonderful!!

The bakers wreath I made for a kitchen shop downtown was as cute as it could be. It contained an empty flour bag stuffed with cotton, an

empty salt container, and baking powder container, kitchen tools like a whisk and an old hand mixer – you know – the one with the old red handle, and an old chef’s hat.

You have so very many choices if placing an order for a character wreath for your home. Start looking through old memorabilia and decide what you would like to use. Oh yes, and even music wreaths can be GREAT!!

TIP NUMBER EIGHT: DURABILITY

This one is very important if you want a wreath that will last more than one season, or at least last for the season you bought it in.

When making a wreath, I use at least three to five of the very long glue sticks, depending on the size of the wreath. In addition to all of the glue, pipe cleaners are also used very frequently helping to tie in some of the larger stems, and extra items that I think glue just may not hold.

After adding the stems, and the glue, I also tuck a pinch of green moss in beside the stem while the glue is still hot. This also helps to anchor my stems so that they will really stay in place.

I then turn my wreath around and work on the back. I use a lot of floral picks on my stems to make sure they will stick into the wreath far

enough that they will stay. In doing this, I sometimes have picks and stems that come out the back of my wreath. This needs to be cleaned up when working on the back. Cutting off every pick and stem even with the back of the wreath, and then adding a little moss when needed, are the finishing touches your wreath needs so that if it is hung on a glass door, the view you have of it from the inside still looks good.

Whether purchasing a wreath from me, or a wreath from a store near you, you should ask to look at the wreath from the front and the back. Gently tug on the stems to make sure they are not loose and are anchored securely. In doing this, you will have a wreath which will last you for several seasons.

TIP NUMBER NINE: STORAGE

Living in the South, I have always told my customers that storing their wreath in an attic would be fine. But, this does depend on which part of the country you live in, and what is in your wreath.

If your wreath contains fruit and berries, and you have an extremely hot attic, then that may not be the ideal storage place for your wreath. Some fruit may crack, and some berries will pop open. The sad part is that you cannot know if your wreath will hold up or not. That is something that I cannot tell in advance either.

If your wreath does not have fruit or berries, it will probably be fine in your attic. Don't try to stuff it in a box too small for storage. Put a nail

in one of the rafters, and hang your wreath up. Slit open one side of a dry-cleaning bag and gently hang it over the front of your wreath. That should protect it enough until you are ready to use it again.

Oh, yes, if you have a bow, as long as you hang your wreath just as I mentioned with a dry cleaning bag draped over the front, you do not need to stuff your loops as many people do. It will be just fine hanging and lightly covered.

I ship my wreaths in large boxes; so if you need to store one in a box, make sure the box is big enough not to mash your wreath.

TIP NUMBER TEN: PRICE

The last tip on my list is pricing. In purchasing your wreath, you need to understand that you are paying for materials, for labor, and for creativity of design.

There needs to be a middle ground here. You need for those three areas, materials, labor, and design to be compatible. You don't want to purchase a wreath that has a wonderful design but is made out of cheap flowers. On the other hand, you don't want to purchase a wreath that is full of very expensive stems which have been cut and chopped up so much that you can't really tell if they are nice flowers or not.

Try to choose a wreath which has all of the above three points that is in your price range. The old saying: “You get what you pay for!” applies here most of the time. But, as a newly equipped and prepared shopper you now have the questions and skills to examine each and every wreath you purchase! You need not fret about a wreath purchase ever again. Your new wreath will be of excellent quality and design and is destined to make that special spot in your home come alive with color and character. Step back and get ready for the compliments that will surely come!

HAPPY SHOPPING!!!

Thanks, Smiles, & Blessings... Nancy

Nancy@ladybugwreaths.com