

FALL CONTAINER REFRESH

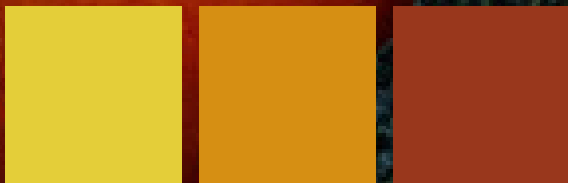


Table of Contents

Introduction

Design Framework: Thriller, Filler, Spiller

The Big Six: This Season's Stars

Container Recipes

Care & Maintenance

Merchandising & Display Ideas

Introduction

As summer containers fade, it's the perfect moment to complete a full fall refresh. One of the easiest transitions to make as the pots, soil, and spots are ready; they just need the right plants to carry them into the cooler months. A handful of hardworking annuals can help transform a tired summer planter into a full autumn display in under an hour.

This guide is built around six of the strongest fall container performers: ornamental Cabbage, Chard, and Kale; Chrysanthemums; Capsicum; and Senecio. Each brings something different to the container - bold textures, saturated color, silvery contrast, or long-lasting structure - and together they cover nearly every role a fall container needs to fill.

But why refresh now? With cooling soil and shortened days, it is a signal for many last summer annuals to decline. But fall containers are just hitting their stride. Planting in early fall, most will hold color for weeks. Some, like Kale and Senecio will hold even longer, giving gardeners a strong return on a quicker container swap.

Design Framework: Thriller, Filler, Spiller

The classic container formula still holds for fall: a tall *thriller* for height and focal interest, a full *filler* to build volume and color around it, and a trailing *spiller* to soften the pot's edge. Fall's structural, foliage-forward plants make this framework especially easy to execute well!

Plants	Design Notes
Cabbage	Offers a bold, sculptural rosette when used as a centerpiece for a larger pot.
Capsicum	Adds clusters of colorful fruit that read as both filler and accent.
Chard	Builds lush volume with brightly ribbed stems and ruffled foliage.
Chrysanthemum	Brings instant height and saturated, seasonal color.
Kale	Adds texture and volume with ruffled foliage.
Senecio	Silvery foliage softens container edges and cools down warmer color combinations, without competing for attention.



The Big Six

This season's container stars (and why they deserve the spotlight)!

Cabbage

Forms tight, ruffled rosettes that hold their shape beautifully through fall's cooler weather — with color that actually deepens as temperatures drop. A classic choice for adding structure and bold color to the center or edge of a container.

Capsicum

Capsicum brings pure late-season sparkle! Their glossy, upright fruit ripens through shades of purple, orange, and red (often all on the same plant at once), adding a playful pop of color that lasts for weeks without any deadheading required.

Chard

Brings vibrant, glossy stems in shades of red, pink, and yellow, paired with rich green leaves for a more colorful, upright texture. A great way to introduce height and a pop of unexpected brightness to a fall arrangement.

Chrysanthemum

The classic fall bloomer for a reason — mums deliver dense, reliable color right when the rest of the garden is winding down. Tuck them in for an instant seasonal refresh, whether you're going for warm rust tones or a crisp, jewel-toned palette.

Kale

Similar frilly texture to cabbage, but with a looser, more feathered look. Its color intensifies with the first cool snaps, making it a dependable centerpiece that keeps improving as the season goes on.

Senecio

A quiet showstopper. Its soft, felted silver leaves add cool, textural contrast against the deeper tones of mums, kale, and capsicum — the perfect foil that keeps a fall container from reading as too heavy or one-note.

Container Recipes

Four ready-to-suggest combinations built around the Big Six, using some of the best varieties on the market.



Golden Harvest

A warm, rust-and-gold palette for a classic autumn porch pot.

Thriller: Chrysanthemum ‘Gigi Orange’

Filler: Capsicum ‘Sangria’

Spiller: Carex ‘EverColor Everillo’



Moody Plum

Deep, saturated tones for a dramatic entryway display.

Thriller: Cabbage ‘Pigeon Purple’

Filler: Senecio ‘Angel Wings’

Spiller: Carex ‘Cappuccino’



Silver & Snow

A cool, elegant palette that pairs well with neutral porches.

Thriller: Chrysanthemum ‘Gigi Snow’

Filler: Cabbage ‘Pigeon White’

Spiller: Calocephalus ‘Silver Stone’



Fireside Red

A bold, high-contrast combination for maximum curb appeal.

Thriller: Kale ‘RedBor’

Filler: Capsicum ‘Onyx Red’

Spiller: Carex testacea

Care & Maintenance

Watering

Containers dry out faster than garden beds, even in cool weather. Check pots every few days and water deeply when the top 1" of soil feels dry, rather than on a fixed schedule.

Feeding

A light, balanced fertilizer every few weeks keeps foliage color vivid on Kale, Chard, and Cabbage, and supports continued blooms on Chrysanthemums. Ease off feeding as temperatures drop through late fall.

Deadheading

Removing spent blooms keeps Chrysanthemums tidy and encourages remaining buds to open. Cabbage, Kale, Chard, and Senecio are grown for foliage and do not require deadheading!

Frost & Cold Considerations

Cabbage, Kale, Chard, and Senecio all tolerate frost well and often improve in color as nights cool. Capsicum is the most cold-tender and is best enjoyed earlier in the season before the hard frost arrives. Chrysanthemums hold reasonably well through light frost, but will decline in a hard freeze.

Refreshing Mid-Season

If a container starts to look thin by late fall, swapping in a fresh Kale or Senecio is an easy way to extend its life without a full replant!

Pro-Tip

Group containers by cold-hardiness! Planters in exposed or high-elevation spots may want to avoid Capsicum for longer-lasting displays.



Merchandising & Display Ideas



Stage by Ready Date

Capsicum and Chrysanthemum peak earliest in the season, while Kale/Cabbage and Senecio carry displays into the fall. Rotate featured combinations as available.



Color-Block End Caps

Group the big six by palette - rust and gold, plum and silver, or classic red and white, for end-cap displays that make combinations easy for customers to visualize and shop.



Pair with Empty Pots

Displaying finished combinations alongside empty containers of the same style makes the “refresh my planter” pitch concrete and easy to act on.



Signage Callouts

Simple signage noting which varieties hold color longest vs. which peak early can help customers plan a succession of color, rather than a one-time swap.