

The Language and Symbolism of Flowers

Traditionally, flowers are a way to represent growth, new life and movement forward. The natural beauty of flowers at a funeral and at the home of mourners brings a sense of warmth and comfort to the environment.

Choosing the right flowers

Here are the most common and usual symbolic meanings attributed to each kind of flower....

1. **Orchids** - Any orchid, regardless of color or species, is a way to say "I will always love you".
2. **Red Rose** - A multi-purpose flower, a red rose obviously expresses love.
3. **Single Rose** - This, when included in a bouquet, expresses enduring love for the deceased.
4. **Yellow Rose** - A yellow rose is given by friends of the deceased to symbolize their strong ties.
5. **Dark Crimson Roses** - These types of roses show grief and sorrow. They are sent to tell the family of the deceased that they are not alone in mourning.
6. **Magnolias** - These flowers are used in funeral flower arrangements to show that the dead is being remembered.
7. **Crocus** - This type of flower is intended for the jovial person worth remembering.
8. **Dark Pink Roses** - Used to express thankfulness to the deceased, dark pink roses are a symbol of appreciation.
9. **Pink Carnations** - Signifying true love, pink carnations are given to deceased partners or loved ones.
10. **Yellow Tulips** - For those touched by the sweet and welcoming smile of a dearly departed, yellow tulips are the right choice for a funeral flower arrangement.
11. **Red Carnations** - A way to express strong feelings and yearning, red carnations can be the main components of a funeral flower arrangement.
12. **Pink Camellias** - Similar to red carnations, pink camellias symbolize longing.
13. **White Poppies** - If you wish to comfort and cheer up the bereaved, white poppies will do just the right thing.

14. **White Hyacinths** – These pretty blossoms are a reminder that they are always included in your prayers.
15. **Purple Hyacinths** – Like dark crimson roses, purple hyacinths are sent to convey sorrow and anguish over the death of a loved one.
16. **Chrysanthemums** – The most common flower used to express grieving and sadness, Chrysanthemums are commonly found in funeral flower arrangements.
17. **White Lilies** – These flowers symbolize purity and innocence, just like a white rose.
18. **Sweet Pea** – This type of flower is perfect for those who wish to bid a peaceful farewell to the deceased.

Carnations, chrysanthemums, gladiolas, lilies and roses are traditionally used in funeral flower arrangement.

Other kinds of flowers that are not traditionally used in funeral flowers are still acceptable as long as they symbolize or represent something important in the life and death of the person who died. The possible funeral flowers ideas are endless.

Choosing the right flowers for different ethnic traditions and cultures

African:

Types of flowers preferred are roses, lilies and tropical exotic bouquets
Color preferences or prohibitions for flowers: none

Arab:

Types of flowers preferred are roses and carnation
Color preferences or prohibitions for flowers: none

Asian:

Types of flowers preferred are chrysanthemums, lilies, orchids and gladioulas or stalk-like flowers
Color preferences or prohibitions for flowers: Chinese avoid red. Koreans prefer white and light yellow

Jewish:

Types of flowers preferred are roses, snapdragons or gladioulas orchids and tropicals
Color preferences or prohibitions for flowers: none

Hispanic:

Types of flowers preferred are roses, snapdragons, carnation or gladioula orchids and tropical flowers
Color preferences or prohibitions for flowers: none

Irish:

Types of flowers preferred included almost any type of flowers although roses, carnations and wildflowers are typically sent
Color preferences or prohibitions for flowers: none

French:

Types of flowers preferred included chrysanthemums for cemeteries (they're placed on graves on All Saints' Day)
Color preferences or prohibitions for flowers: none

When flowers may not be appropriate...

There are instances when flowers are not appropriate. Such as when the family requests that donation be made in lieu of flowers. Although flowers are freely accepted by many religious and cultures at funerals, it is worth remembering that there are some which do not traditionally receive flowers such as the Jewish and Islamic faiths.

Jewish law has always demanded immediate burial - within three days - so flowers were never deemed necessary. To this day it has never been customary to send any flowers, although they are not forbidden and some Jews have begun sending them for Reformed Jewish funerals. Instead it is customary to send fruit and food baskets to the home of the bereaved during the mourning period.

At Islamic funerals some people send flowers and some do not. It is, however, common to place individual flowers on graves along with palm branches and other greenery. Flowers are not a traditional part of Hindu funerals, but they are not unwelcome.

References:

<http://www.funeralwise.com>

<http://funeralflowersnow.com>

<http://funeralflowersideas.com>

<http://www.teleflora.com>