



Forcing Flowering Branches

Sample the beauty of spring a few weeks early, by cutting small branches of flowering shrubs and bringing them indoors in a pot of water. Forsythia, dogwood, magnolia, viburnum, flowering cherry, apple, plum, almond, redbud, azalea, rhododendron, and many others can yield early blossoms indoors.

Procedure:

1. Gather branches one to two months before they would bloom outdoors.
2. If possible, cut the branches on a mild day. It is also good to cut them at the warmest part of the day, when the buds are filled with sap.
3. Select small branches about 2-3 feet long that have plump buds. (Take care that you maintain the shape of the tree or shrub as you choose which branches to cut.)
4. Put the branches in a bucket of warm water and keep in a cool place (out of direct sunlight) until the buds are ready to open. Change the water every other day.
5. Make fresh cuts at the bottom of the branches periodically to facilitate water intake.
6. When the buds start to swell and show color, bring the branches into a warmer room and get ready to enjoy the blossoms!
7. The blossoms should last about a week.