

Funeral Flower Ordering Tips

Many of us are at a loss when it comes to expressing our condolences. Sympathy flowers are a natural and comforting way to express our feeling of loss while comforting others. At some point in our lives, we will be faced with the need to order funeral flowers.

Fortunately Debra Kerr-Hunter of **Eden Garden Center & Florist** has a few simple steps and tips that will make the process of ordering funeral flowers easier.

How To Order Sympathy Flowers

KNOW THE DETAILS – Before you order flowers for a funeral, you will need to know the name of the deceased and the location and date of the funeral. This information can be obtained from an obituary listing, a friend or family member, or from funeral homes in the area. Have all the information written down and within reach before you call.

SET A BUDGET – This can be difficult if you don't know how much the florist charges. Here are some things to consider.

- How many people are going in on the arrangement? If there are 5 people, you might each contribute \$10 or \$20.
- How well did you know the deceased? If it was a relative, your floral sentiment might be more generous.
- What is the minimum order amount? Wire services and most florists have a minimum amount on a phone order. If it's a local funeral and you walk into the florist, there may not be a minimum, however.
- Basket and container arrangements usually begin at \$30 – \$40, and can run as high as \$120 – \$150 depending on the size of the arrangement and types of flowers used.
- Standing sprays, wreaths and crosses are much more expensive, starting at around \$100 – \$130, and running as high as \$250 – \$400 again, depending on the blooms used.
- Plant gifts usually start around \$30 and run up to around \$75 at a high end.

SELECT A FLORIST – You can usually go to your local florist and order flowers for a funeral out of the area. The advantage is that the order will go florist to florist and you don't *have* to use a credit card. In lieu of having a florist order for you, you will need a phone number for a florist in the geographical area of the funeral.

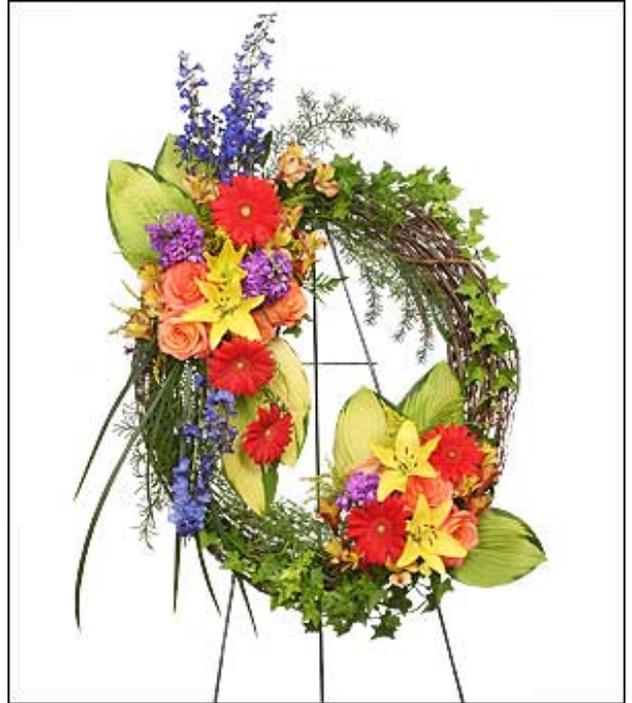
You can obtain the number of the florist who is handling the family's funeral flower displays (casket spray) from a family member, or you can look up a phone number online. My recommendation if you have nobody to ask, is to go to www.flowershopnetwork.com.

You can look up a florist, **funeral home**, or even a **hospital** in the area all at this website. You can even order your floral expression from this website since they have some selections there.

MAKE THE CALL – Write down the name of each person you speak with. Ask if they are aware of the funeral already. This will save time and effort. Tell the florist what you need. Let them ask the questions they have in their own order, as they probably have an invoice to follow. Be polite and listen to what they have to say.

AGREE ON THE ARRANGEMENT AND PRICE - This can be the simplest part of the whole process, or the most difficult. If you have something specific in mind, you could be disappointed because of the florist's ability to order just what you want in the time allotted. It's actually easier if you give the florist the opportunity to create something within a given dollar amount. The advantage is that she can use flowers unique to your arrangement and you don't have to know the names of the flowers.

If there is something specific, though, by all means, ask for it. If the deceased was a classmate, you might want an arrangement in the school colors. If she collected angels, you might want to include an angel figurine in the arrangement, or, if he liked to hunt, you might include pheasant feathers.



WRITE THE CARD – Many people stress a bit over the card. This is because so many strong feelings are involved with funerals. Remember that enclosure cards are small. They will have a pre-printed sentiment such as “With Deepest Sympathy”, “In Loving Memory” or “Our Thoughts and Prayers are With You”. If you must include a personal sentiment keep it short. It is perfectly acceptable to only put the name or names of the senders on the card and nothing else. Many florists, myself included, must write two identical cards for the funeral home. Short is best. Be prepared to spell out every name on the card. It is also considered acceptable to specify who should receive the gift after the funeral.

FINALIZE THE ORDER - Once the order is complete, the florist should go over the item ordered, the price, the card, the deceased person’s name and any other information that has been collected.

Most florists will only take out of town orders that pay with a credit card. Some, in smaller communities, will bill people, but it’s rare.