

by Fred Russell

# CULTIVATING COLORFUL Corsages

*Having multiple design options can make them appealing for any special occasion*




**The mother-daughter team** of Celeste and Destiny Mackey, both Kentucky Master Florists (KMF), have over 50 years combined design experience. About three years ago, they came up with a unique, multi-purpose corsage that can be attractive to many female customers.

The backbone of the design is the wire. The Mackeys' one of choice is the 12-gauge aluminum wire from Oasis. "The wire gives you an element of color you don't get in the flower," says Celeste. It comes in lime green, aqua blue, gold, silver, and others that can make quite an impression. Destiny adds that the wire's versatility is a great design feature. "I like to coil it into different shapes like circles, hearts, or various configurations." They use needle nose pliers for more intricate and tighter designs.

It can be used as a pinned or wrist corsage or for a girl's hair, and the design can be used

for any formal occasions including proms, homecoming dances, and weddings.

By using different color dendrobium orchids, you develop multiple combinations, creating variety and more appeal to customers. You could also use baby roses to differentiate it a bit, but the orchids work better because they lay flat. The other advantage to using this corsage is that it has many different price points depending on whether you use a single or multiple orchids. They take the a la carte approach and offer jewels, ribbons, glitter, and other accessories to dress up the design.

"Both mothers and daughters love it," says Celeste. "The versatility and simplicity are the biggest sellers," adds Destiny. 

**Designers:**  
Celeste and  
Destiny Mackey,  
both KMF

**Experience:**  
Celeste 40 years,  
Destiny 12 years

**Exposure:**  
Presented design  
class on corsages  
at the Southern  
Retail Florist  
Association Show



## ARRANGEMENT NECESSITIES

\* **HARD GOODS** 12-gauge aluminum wire (Available in 16 colors), glue, Oasis flower gems. (Fassler's uses many Fitz Design accessories.)

\* **FRESH** Dendrobium orchids.

\* **PREP TIME** The design time is 3 to 8 minutes based on the intricacy of the wire design.

\* **DESIGN TIP** Personalize the corsage by taking the coil of wire and manipulate it into a shape or design. For the embellishments, add glitter, sparkle, or little jewels to add flair.



## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- \* **STEP 1:** Take a 48" 12 gauge wire and make a loop, in opposite direction make another loop.
- \* **STEP 2:** Continue in bow-like manner to make 4 loops.
- \* **STEP 3:** At top of loops, shape wire into heart design. The excess wire can be swirled with needle nose pliers.

- \* **STEP 4:** Add orchids or flower heads with floral adhesive (Oasis tube glue) into the center of the design.
- \* **STEP 5:** Add embellishments. You can use beaded wire from Oasis wrapping it around your design and gluing the end back into center.