

Chrysanthemums, carnations, alstroemeria and waxflower are practical choices for a drafty dining room because they generally last well as cut flowers. Even sturdy blooms need protection from a direct stream of cold or warm air, so the vase location matters as much as the flowers you choose.

Choose flowers with staying power

Start with fresh stems that have firm petals and clean foliage. A long lasting flower can still suffer if it sits beside an open door or under a heating vent, but these choices give you a useful starting point.

- **Chrysanthemums:** Their many small florets make a full arrangement, and they are widely valued for their vase life.
- **Carnations:** Their sturdy stems and ruffled petals work well in a low dining table arrangement.
- **Alstroemeria:** Several blooms grow on each stem, giving a vase plenty of color without needing many stems.
- **Waxflower:** Its small flowers and branching stems add a light shape around larger blooms.

Mix a few kinds or use just one. For a table where people talk across from each other, trim the stems so the flowers sit below eye level. A low, broad vase can also make the arrangement less likely to tip.

Find a sheltered spot

Watch how air moves through the room before setting out the flowers. A vase directly in the path of an exterior door, a frequently opened window or a heating vent is more exposed than one on a sideboard away from those openings.

Cool conditions generally help cut flowers last, but cold air blowing directly on them is another matter. Keep the arrangement away from freezing windows and do not leave it where petals can touch cold glass. Avoid radiators and strong sun as well, since heat can make flowers lose water faster.

If the table is the only suitable place, move the vase to a sheltered spot between meals. Keep it clear of serving dishes and candles when the table is in use.

Keep the water clean

Wash the vase before arranging the flowers. Remove any leaves that would sit below the water line, then cut the stems and place them in fresh water. Use flower food if it came with the stems, following the packet directions.

Check the water each day, especially if the room is heated. Top it up as needed, and change it if it becomes cloudy. Rinse the vase and trim the stems again when you change the water. Remove fading flowers so they do not crowd the fresher ones.

Questions about flowers in a drafty room

Can I put flowers near an open window?

Yes, if they are out of the direct airflow and away from cold glass. Close the window or move the vase if a strong draft reaches the flowers.

Are delicate flowers unsuitable?

Not necessarily. They may be lovely for a meal, but a sheltered position is especially important if you want them to last.

Should I use a heavy vase?

A stable vase is sensible on a busy table. Choose one with a wide base and enough room for the stems.

Can flowers stay on the table overnight?

Yes, provided the table stays away from direct drafts, freezing temperatures and heat sources.

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