

If dried flowers smell musty, move them to a dry, well ventilated place and check them for dampness or visible mold. If you see mold, or the smell remains after drying, discard the flowers rather than trying to cover the odor.

Check the flowers and their surroundings

Take the arrangement away from other flowers and soft furnishings while you inspect it. A musty smell can be a sign of moisture or mold, though the odor alone will not tell you exactly where the problem is.

Look at the stems, flower heads, leaves, and any ribbon or wrapping. Check the container too, especially its bottom and any narrow spots where moisture or debris may have collected. Mold may appear as fuzzy or powdery patches, but it can also be hard to see among the textures of dried petals.

Do not put your face close to the flowers or deliberately sniff them. Handle them gently, since dried material breaks easily and disturbing a moldy arrangement may release particles into the air. If you have a mold allergy or a respiratory condition, ask someone else to handle it if possible.

Dry a damp arrangement carefully

If the flowers feel slightly damp but show no visible mold, place them in a dry room with good airflow. Spread the stems out if you can do so without damaging them. Keep them away from bathrooms, damp windowsills, and other places where moisture tends to collect.

Give the arrangement time to dry, then check it again. A dry location can help remove moisture, but it will not reliably remove mold from porous petals and stems. If the musty smell persists, it is safer to let the flowers go.

Avoid spraying the flowers with water, perfume, or a scented room spray. Water adds moisture, and fragrance can mask the smell without dealing with its source. Do not use a hair dryer on them either, since the airflow can scatter fragile pieces and potentially spread mold particles.

Discard moldy flowers and clean the container

If you find visible mold, put the arrangement in a bag, seal it, and place it in the household rubbish. Avoid shaking it or brushing off the affected parts indoors. Wear gloves when handling moldy material, and wash your hands afterward.

Remove any loose debris from the container, then wash a washable vase with soap and water. Dry it completely before using it again. If the container itself is porous and remains musty or visibly moldy after cleaning, consider discarding it too.

Check the spot where the arrangement stood for dampness. A leak, condensation, or a humid room can affect a replacement as well. Store and display dried flowers in a dry place with some airflow, away from direct sources of moisture.

Once the area and container are dry, you can decide if you want to replace the flowers. A musty arrangement is not worth keeping if you cannot get it clean and dry.

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