

You can arrange tulips without floral foam by setting freshly trimmed stems in cool water and using the vase or reusable materials to keep them steady. Leave them room to shift and curve: cut tulips keep growing and turn toward the light.

Select a vase and get the tulips ready

Choose a vase tall enough to support the stems while letting the blooms sit above its edge. A narrow opening keeps a small bunch together; a wider one lets the flowers fan out. Before adding cool water, wash the vase thoroughly.

Strip off leaves that would be underwater, since submerged leaves can decay and cloud the water. Keep the upper foliage if you enjoy its shape, or remove a few leaves to make more space around the blooms.

Use clean, sharp scissors or a knife to cut a small piece from the base of each stem. For a relaxed look, cut the stems to varying lengths; for a fuller bunch, keep them closer in length. Begin with stems a little longer than you think you need. There is always time for another trim once they are in the vase.

Use simple support for the stems

A small bunch may stay in place with help from the vase alone. Rest the outer stems against the rim, then fill the center. Rotate the vase as you go so you can check how it looks from all sides.

For a broad opening, these foam-free options can help hold the stems:

- **Reusable flower frog:** Set it in the vase base and tuck stems into its openings.
- **Clean pebbles:** Cover the bottom with a shallow layer, then nestle the stems among them.

- **Smaller vessel:** Put a narrow glass inside a wider container to keep the bunch gathered.

Check that every stem reaches the water. After using pebbles or a flower frog, clean them before storing them away.

Shape the arrangement naturally

Place the tulips one by one, with some near the rim and others closer to the middle. Let a few angle outward instead of insisting on a row of perfectly upright stems. Tulips tend to bend as they settle, and their gentle curves can add character.

Step back to spot any gaps, then shift a stem or two if needed. Do not squeeze the flowers together until the stems are pressing firmly against one another. If you add other flowers, leave enough room to reach the stems later when it is time to change the water.

Maintain fresh water

Check the water every day and refill it as needed. Change it regularly, rinse the vase, and trim the stem ends again at the same time. Keep the flowers out of direct sunlight and away from heat to help them last longer.

If the tulips grow taller or lean, reposition the stems or shorten them slightly. Their shape may change over several days, which is part of the charm of a simple arrangement.

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