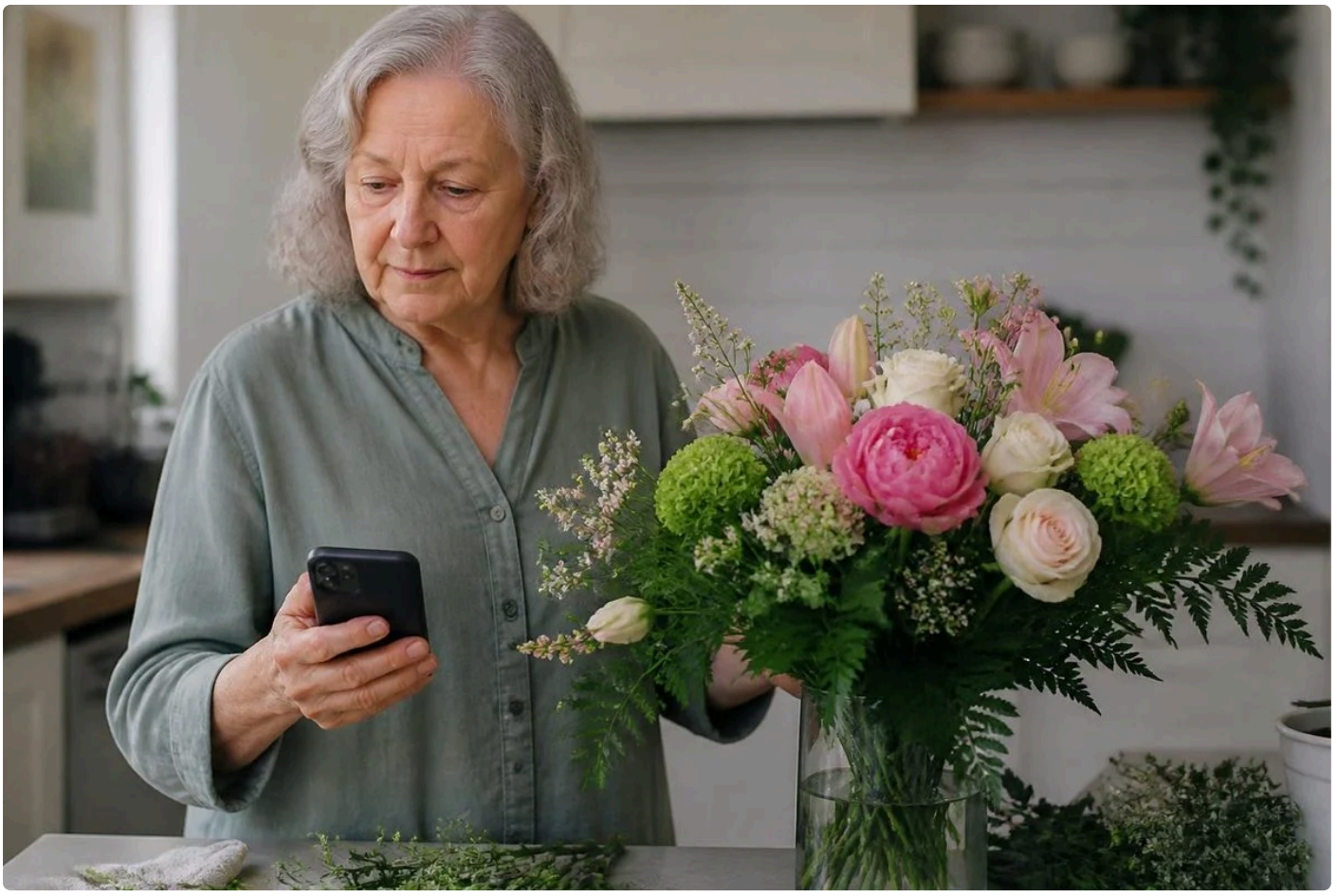

Schedule congratulations flowers for the recipient’s local date, not yours, and check that the florist delivers on that day. Across the International Date Line, the calendar date can differ from the one at home, so confirm the date and delivery window before placing your order.

Start with their calendar

Find out the date of the occasion where the recipient lives. A graduation on Saturday in New Zealand, for example, may still be Friday where you are. The flowers should follow the graduate’s calendar, even if your own says it is too early to celebrate.

Use a world clock or a time zone converter and enter the recipient’s city. Check the date as well as the time. Time zones do not always follow neat lines on a map, and daylight saving time can change the time difference during the year.

Be especially careful if you are arranging a surprise from a date mentioned in a message. A friend may write “tomorrow” based on their local clock. Ask for the calendar date if there is any doubt. It is less romantic than guessing, but much better than congratulating someone a day late.

Choose a delivery window

Once you have the local date, look at the florist’s delivery options. Some services let you select a date but cannot promise an exact hour. Others may offer a narrower window. Check the terms before you order, particularly if the recipient will be at a ceremony, dinner or workplace.

Keep these details together while booking:

- The recipient's full address and local phone number.
- The occasion date in the recipient's location.
- A delivery window when someone can receive the flowers.
- The florist's local order cutoff and delivery days.
- A backup plan if the recipient is out.

Place the order early enough to meet the florist's cutoff in its own time zone. A cutoff that looks comfortably distant on your clock may already have passed there. Weekends and public holidays can also affect availability, so check those before settling on a date.

If the celebration has a fixed start time, an earlier delivery may be safer than a tight arrival window. For flowers going to a venue, confirm that staff can accept them and know whom they are for. Add any useful delivery instructions without sharing more personal information than necessary.

Questions before you order

Should I use my date or the recipient's date?

Use the recipient's local date for the delivery. Review the order confirmation to make sure that date appears as intended.

Can flowers arrive at the exact moment of the celebration?

Only if the florist offers and confirms a specific timed delivery. Otherwise, choose an available window that leaves room for delays.

What if the recipient will be away all day?

Ask about delivery to another suitable address, or choose a day when the recipient can receive the flowers. Check that the alternate location accepts deliveries first.

Further reading: guide to flower paintings