



In general, a flower has 4 whorls, or rings, of structures. The outermost whorl is comprised of the sepals. Inside or above that will be a whorl of petals. Inside or above that will be the male stamen(s) and in the center will be the female pistil(s). Seeing what is missing or what is extra beyond these 4 whorls, may help us identify the plant or at least the plant family.

Lilium

1. Before the flower opens, it appears that there are green sepals covering the bud.



2. Before the bud begins to open, these structures take on color.



3. Once the flower opens, the 6 structures unfurl and reveal that all six look the same. This is not the typical combination of a whorl of green sepals under a whorl of colored petals. This is two whorls of tepals.



4. Looking into the open flower, the 6 tepals are visible in two whorls. The 6 stamens surround the single pistil in the center.

