

How Flowers Are Arranged

The Structural Architecture of Inflorescence



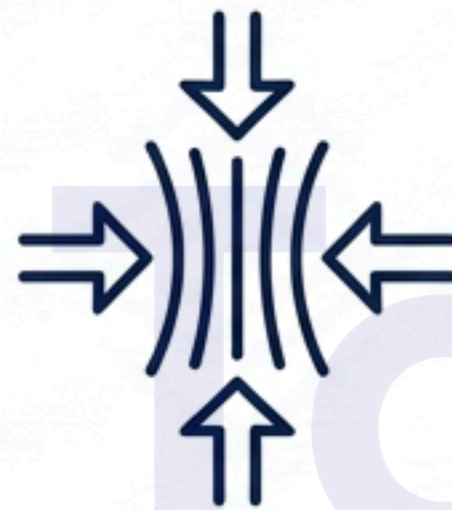
The Transformation of the Shoot

A flower is fundamentally a modified shoot, created when the shoot apical meristem changes to a floral meristem.



1. Meristem Shift

Shoot apical meristem changes its primary function to floral meristem.



2. Axis Condensation

Internodes do not elongate, causing the central structural axis to condense.



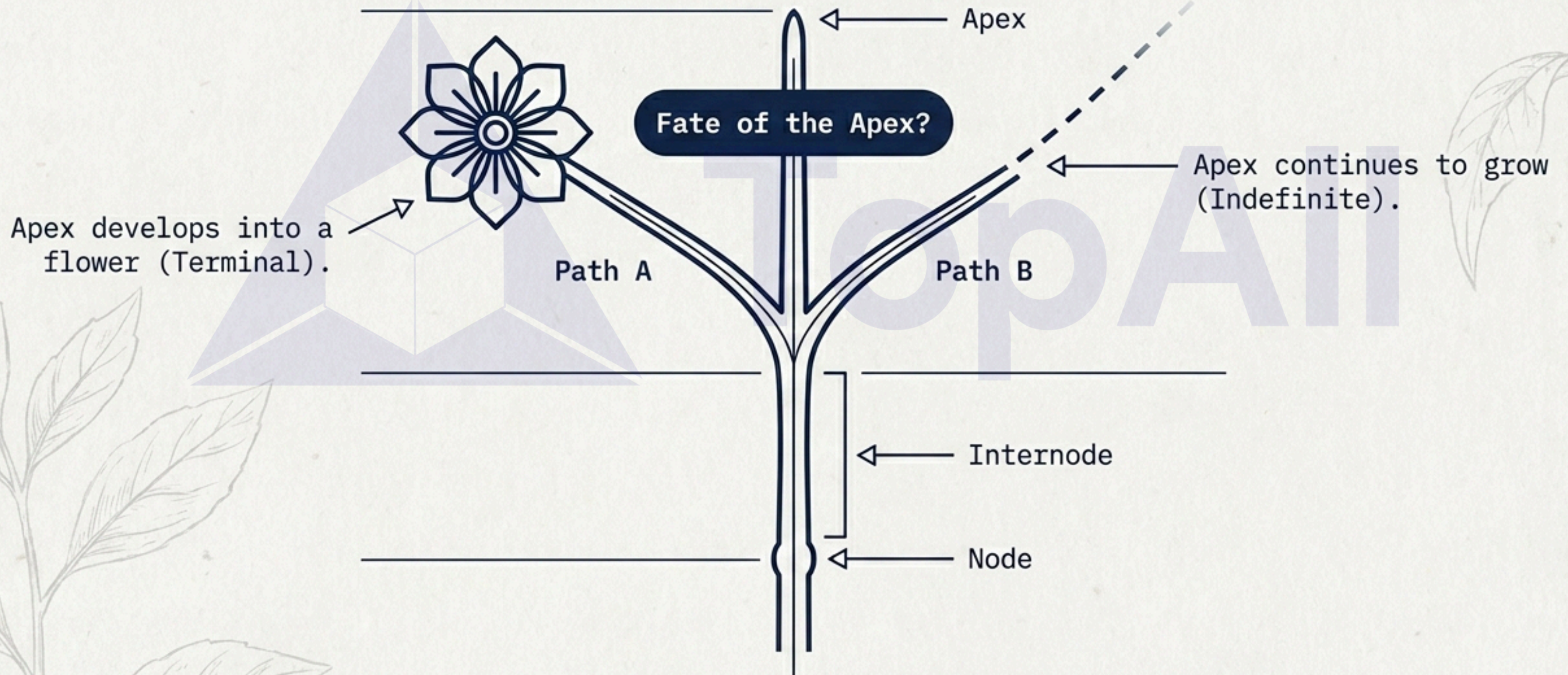
3. Appendage Formation

The apex produces floral appendages laterally at successive nodes instead of vegetative leaves.

NOTE: When a shoot tip transforms directly into a flower, it is always solitary.

The Floral Axis Concept

The specific arrangement of flowers on the floral axis is termed **Inflorescence**.





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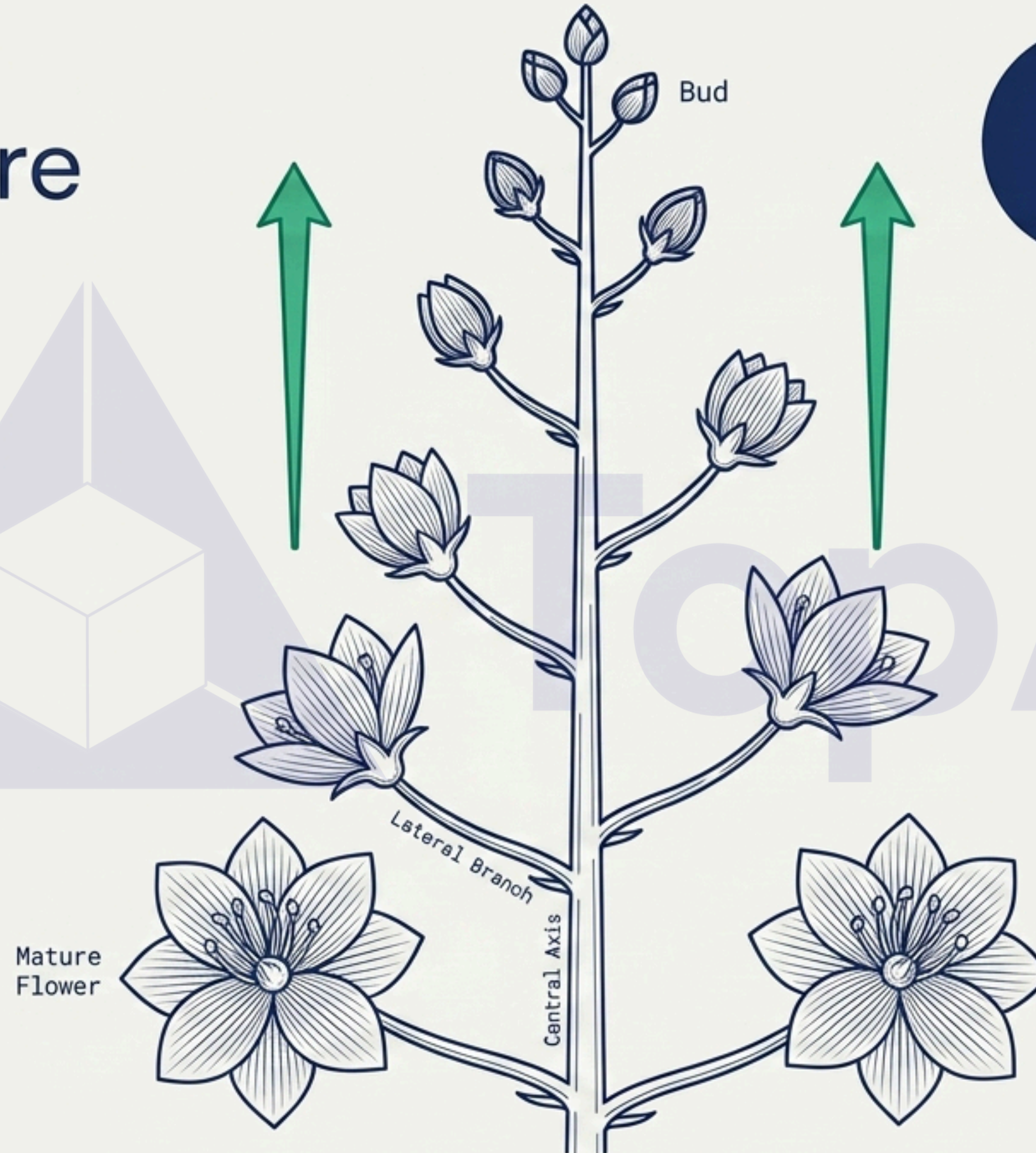
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Racemose Architecture

The main axis continues to grow indefinitely.



ACROPETAL SUCCESSION

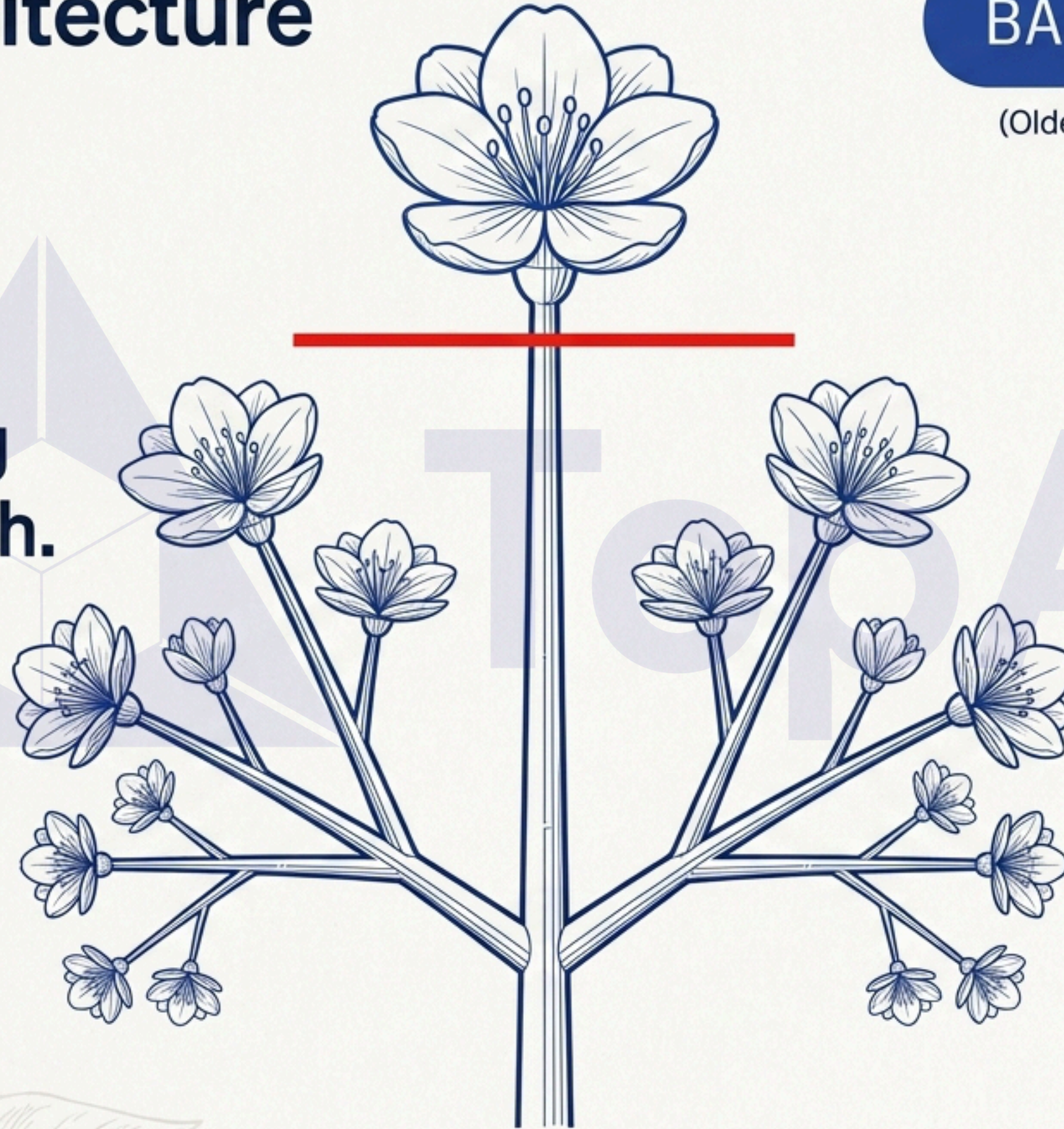
(Youngest flowers are at the growing apex)

Cymose Architecture

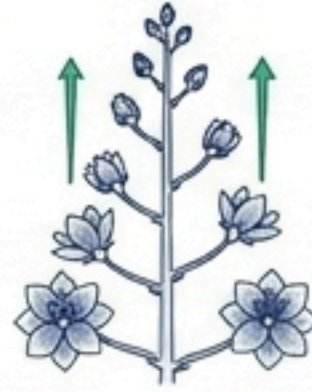
The main axis terminates in a flower, resulting in limited growth.

BASIPETAL ORDER

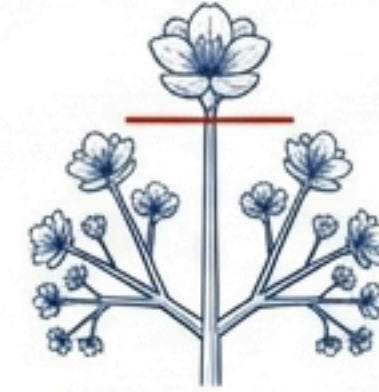
(Oldest flower is at the terminated apex)



Comparing Inflorescence Patterns



Racemose



Cymose

Main Axis Growth	Continuous (Indefinite)	Limited (Definite)
Apical Termination	Vegetative / Continues Growing	Terminates in a Floral Bud
Flowering Order	Acropetal Succession	Basipetal Order
Oldest Flowers	Located at the base	Located at the apex

TAKEAWAY: The architecture of an inflorescence is fundamentally dictated by a single variable: the fate of its apical meristem—whether it yields to a flower or persists in growth.



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