

LOOKING AT YOUR EXHIBIT - WHAT IS THE JUDGE LOOKING FOR?

HOW TO EXHIBIT

Penny Stewart 2019

- **Print off the Show Schedule well in advance and read it carefully.**
 - Read over the rules of the show and make sure you understand them, if in doubt call the show chair or show coordinator.
 - Is there a registration deadline?
 - **The Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards is an excellent source of information about exhibiting in flower, vegetable and design classes.**
1. A few days before the show tour your garden and make notes on your copy of the schedule of what classes you may want to enter based on what you have in bloom at the time of the show.
 2. For design classes start well in advance and make notes of how you will interpret the titles of the designs. What flowers and other materials will you need. You may want to do a mock up of your design in the container, so you know how the mechanics will work. This will give you time to make changes which always are easier in advance rather than late the night before or minutes before you enter. We have all had experience with things that go wrong too late to fix them. Make sure you know the definitions of the design styles, the size of space allocated, and rules regarding type of plant material permitted etc. Read the Schedule very carefully.
 3. If possible, the day before the show prepare all your entry tags. This will save you time when you get to the show and are placing entries. It is also very helpful to bring along for the Clerk a list of all the classes you are entering, this speeds up registration and helps to reduce errors. It also gives you a record to keep of what you entered. The exhibitor is responsible for tags and to ensure they are filled in correctly and legible.
 4. Arrive on time better early than late. Most shows will not accept late entries and of course rushing around tends to lead to mistakes like misplaced entries.

Preparing Flowers for Exhibition

- Choose your specimens carefully; you want to choose flowers which are blemish free and have foliage not overly damaged by mechanical means or pests.
- Your flowers should be of uniform size and colour and be well shaped.
- Refer to the schedule to ensure you have the required number of specimens in your exhibit.
- If you have enough blooms in good condition it is a good idea to cut one extra specimen to bring to the exhibition in case one is damaged in transit. Just make sure to place the correct number of specimens on the exhibit table.

A flower's chance of being a prize- winner begins at the time it is picked. Cut flowers and foliage the evening before the Show or in the early morning. Use a sharp knife to cut the stem. The use of a sharp knife does not crush the stem; therefore, the water carrying vessels in the stem are not constricted. When cutting the stem, it helps to use a slanted cut. A stem cut in this manner cannot sit squarely on the bottom of the container and the passage of water into the stem is not blocked.

DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN!!!!

As soon as the stem is cut, put it in a pail of deep warm water (110F), right up to its neck. The theory is that all plants take up warm water more easily than cold. This rule applies for all flowers except those which produce a milky or sticky sap, such as poppies. These require cold water treatment after their stems have been seared. There are two ways of searing a stem, either by holding the cut end of the stem in boiling water or in an open flame for one minute before placing it in cold water. Spring bulbs prefer being placed in 2 inches of cold water.

Flowers or branches with woody stems should have the first one or two inches of the cut end scraped and crushed. This helps them absorb water more freely. Remove lower foliage cleanly. Upper foliage must be attached unless otherwise stated.

Now that you have your flowers in their pail of water, place the pail in a cool dark place, free of draughts for at least three hours and preferably overnight before beginning to arrange the flowers. To increase the humidity around the flowers, you may place a plastic bag over the entire pail.

- Choose your display containers as carefully as you are able, permitting the flowers to be shown to their best advantage.
- Show specimens with their own foliage which must be attached unless otherwise indicated in the show schedule. Pieces of cedar foliage may be placed inside the neck of the container to help keep the flower stems where you want them.
- It is essential to groom the specimens by removing evidence of insects, dust, pollen, and any other foreign material from the petals and foliage.
- A bud showing color is considered a bloom. Wiring, oiling and artificial coloring are not permitted in Horticultural Division.

Preparing Vegetables for Exhibition

- When selecting vegetables for exhibition each specimen should be as nearly like the next as possible.
- Uniformity is very important. They should also be true to type, meaning that it is a good example of that particular vegetable.
- Your vegetable should be at the peak of perfection, ready to be used for eating. Ensure that there are no blemishes or evidence of disease or pests.
- Root crops should be washed but not scrubbed, as scrubbing leaves marks which will bring down your score.
- Any soil should be rinsed from leaf crops.
- Vine crops can be cleaned with a moist, clean cloth.
- Onions should be harvested about two weeks before the show in order that they may cure properly. Remove the rootlets and carefully remove only the dirty outer scale from the bulb. Do not remove all the outer skin layers.

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Preparing Houseplants for Exhibition

- Grooming is an important aspect of preparing the plant for show.
- All dead or shriveled leaves and spent flowers are to be removed.
- Clean up all debris on the soil surface.
- The leaves of the plant should be gently cleaned to remove dust, dirt and pet hair. Trim off all fading blooms.
- Remove all decorations and unnatural supports you have placed in the soil or on the pot. Where necessary staking is permitted but should not be obtrusive.

Containers should be of proper size for the size of the plant, clean and in good repair. Elaborate planters will detract from the plant itself and should not be used. Remove the commercial labels that have been placed in the soil by the grower, usually present at the time of purchase.

- All plants entered for competition must have been grown by the exhibitor for the minimum time set out in the schedule. They should be well established and mature.

Natural growth is important. This is achieved by turning the plant often so that all sides of the plant receive even light. Visible gaps in the plant's growth pattern are undesirable. Ensure your plant is insect free.

- Water the plants well the day before the exhibit and do any last-minute grooming. Clean the outer surface of the pot to remove accumulated salts and dirt. Leave the saucers you use to catch runoff water at home.
- Be sure to read the program to ensure your plant meets the specifications of the class, to avoid placing your plant in the wrong category. If you are unsure of the correct class contact the convenor.

DESIGN DIVISION

- Check for definitions in OJES and the Schedule
- If in doubt check with the show chair or coordinator
- Check the space allotted this will give you a clue to the size of design
- Do you need to supply any staging i.e. table, pedestal?
- Do some research on the words in the Title to give you some ideas on how to interpret the theme of the show and title of the class
- Make notes jot down ideas on colour, plant material, containers, be creative.
- Plan a mock up of your design first on paper a quick sketch then do a live one.
- Think about transport – that's half the work how you are going to get it from A to B. Are you going to partially make it then finish it in place? How much time do you have?

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DESIGN

- 1) Is the plant material fresh and well groomed
- 2) Are mechanics obscured
- 3) is the design suitable for it's purpose
- 4) is the container suitable in shape, colour, texture and style
- 5) are the principles of design used well

Eg.

Balance

Does it appear to lean forward, backward, sideways

Does visual weight on one side balance visual weight on the other side

Does the base aid or destroy balance

Proportion

Is it too short or tall for the niche

Are relative measurements pleasing

Do colours, forms, textures balance themselves and other components

Scale

Are plant forms too large or small for container

Rhythm

Is the design too static

Has it too much unrelated movement

Is the rhythmic flow interrupted

Is colour too spotty

Dominance

Is focal area not well defined

Is focal area a bull's eye

Is there dominance of area, colour, line

(note there are exceptions in advanced work)

Contrast

Is there too much variety

Too much or too little

(note there are exceptions in advanced work)

- 6) Has the design depth
- 7) Does the accessory add to the design? Will it be missed if it is removed
- 8) is there complete harmony of components
- 9) Does the design communicate something: beauty, an idea, a feeling
- 10) Is it creative, imaginative, original

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