

## TIPS FOR SHOWING FLOWERS

The RHS Handbook is invaluable for seeing how flowers should be displayed and how they will be judged. However, you should always read the Lowdham Horticultural Society Show Schedule very carefully to decide exactly what and how many are required for each entry.

Flowers should be displayed in a plain container (vase) having a greater height than the width measurement of its mouth. No account is taken of the container when judging the material shown in it. Where the Schedule mentions 'POT' or 'BOWL' please note A Pot is higher than it is wide. A Bowl is wider than it is high.

You will need to bring enough vases for all your exhibits. There are a limited number of Bikini Vases available on the day.

Flowers are judged on condition, stems, foliage, form of flower, colour, size and uniformity.

- Where single (specimen) blooms are required, mostly roses, remove any unwanted side shoots or buds to aid the development of the main flowers.
- Check for unwanted buds when staging your exhibit. All buds are considered to be blooms.
- Cut for the show the previous evening or early morning when the flowers are cool and not affected by heat.
- Cut flower stems as long as possible with a sloping cut to assist uptake of water and, if possible, place in cool water overnight and away from bright light.
- Exclude light but don't squash the flowers. It is best to do this the night before the show as it can encourage the blooms to expand.
- Generally speaking flowers and foliage should all be clean and free from disease and insect damage. Where possible choose vases to suit the height of the stems
- Protect your exhibits well on the way to the show.
- Arrive at the marquee in plenty of time to stage your exhibits. If you are rushed mistakes can occur and an exhibit may be disqualified for being 'Not According to Schedule'
- Make sure the container has enough water. A small watering can is useful to top up the vases.
- Take some marbles, glass beads or newspaper as this helps to hold stems in position.
- Pay particular attention to the number of specimens required. Take spares with you in case of accidents, and always do a final check before leaving.
- When staging flowers, remove any damaged flowers and leaves and re-cut the stem.
- A final spray with clean water will help to keep the blooms fresh; it can get very warm in the marquee.

### **Mixed Flowers and other Cut Flower Classes (Roses, Sweet Peas, etc)**

- Choose exhibits that are in good condition, that is, when they are at their most perfect and all parts are fresh and free from damage due to weather, pests, diseases, careless handling, etc
- In vases of one kind of flower, choose exhibits that are the most uniform, that is, when they are most alike in age, size and form

### **Pot plants including Cacti and Succulents**

- Pots or containers should be clean and undamaged
- Check the pot is clean with no slugs underneath, no dead leaves on the soil and the leaves dust free, insect free and undamaged
- Any staking should be neat and should not detract from the appearance of the plant
- The exhibit should be large for the particular type of plant, well-balanced in shape and in good health
- Plants should have healthy unblemished foliage (and flowers in the flowering plant classes)
- Cacti/succulents should be as free as possible from defects, including damaged or missing spines, distorted bodies or leaves, abnormal marks, etc