

ILMINGTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

GUIDELINES FOR EXHIBITING AT THE ANNUAL SHOW OF FLOWERS, FRUIT, VEGETABLES, COOKERY AND CRAFTS 2022

We think that one reason why some potential exhibitors may not enter an exhibit is because they do not know how to stage their produce or by what criteria it may be judged. So these guidelines¹ aim to provide useful information for anyone who wishes to enter the IHS annual show.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Read the Schedule- there is lots of information already there.
- Note the requirements of each class, e.g. the number and ESPECIALLY the size of exhibit.
- When showing fruit, flowers and vegetables aim for uniformity in size, length and appearance.
- Pick/cut your exhibits as late as possible but allow time for preparation and cleaning.
- Discard damaged flowers and leaves and misshapen fruit and vegetables.
- Soil should be washed off but no attempt should be made to polish specimens.

NB These are guidelines only. The judges' decisions are final.

SECTION A: VEGETABLES AND FRUIT

Fruit

- Pick as near to show time as possible. Retain stalks.
- Do not polish fruits – leave the natural 'bloom'.
- Do not select over-ripe fruits.

Apples (Class 12-14)

Select large, solid unblemished fruits of shape and colour typical of the cultivar, with stalks intact. Stage with the eye uppermost and stalk end downwards. If an odd number of fruit is called for, place one fruit in the centre and the remaining fruit around it. The centre fruit may be raised by placing a cushion of white tissue beneath it.

Pears (Class 15)

¹ With thanks to the Naphill Horticultural Society whose example we followed and whose work we borrowed extensively.

Select large and shapely fruit with eyes and stalks intact, with skins clean and unblemished and the colour of the particular cultivar.

Plums (Class 16)

Select large, firm, ripe fruits with a good colour and having perfect bloom. Display with stalks intact.

Soft fruit (Class 17)

Blackcurrants and redcurrants: Select large strings with plenty of berries. Berried should be large, ripe and uniform on fresh stalks. Display on a plate. Your own foliage may be used for decoration.

Gooseberries: Select large ripe fruits of good colour with stalks. Stalks should look green and fresh and point all one way when staged.

Strawberries: Select large ripe fruits of good colour with stalks. Stalks and calyces should look green and fresh and all point one way when staged.

Vegetables

Wash root vegetables careful to remove soil. Use a soft cloth and plenty of water as brushing may damage the skin. On other vegetables, retain the bloom where possible.

Beans (Runner, French) (Classes 8-10)

Select straight tender pods of even length and good colour with no sign of seeds. Stage with stalk intact.

Carrots (Class 11)

Select full-length roots of good shape, colour and size, free from side roots and from green on the crown. Retain the full length of the tap root.

Courgettes (Class 27)

Select young tender uniform fruit of 100 to 200mm in length or, if round, approximately 75mm in length. Display flat with or without flower still attached.

Cucumbers (Class 24)

Select fresh, young, straight fruits with uniform thickness with short stems and flowers still attached. Retain the waxy bloom.

Marrow (Class 26)

Stage directly onto the bench after wiping clean.

Onions (Classes 2-3)

Select uniform well-ripened bulbs of good colour. Avoid removing too much skin. Necks should be firm and thin. Tops should be tied with uncoloured raffia or sting. Trim roots to the base of the onion. May be staged on rings or soft collars.

Peppers (Class 20)

Select fresh, brightly coloured fruit. Stage on a plate with the stalks.

Potatoes (Classes 5-7)

Select equally matched, medium-sized tubers (between 170 and 225 grams) with shallow eyes and free from skin blemishes. Before judging keep the curd away from light. Stage on a plate.

Tomatoes (Classes 18-19)

Select uniform, ripe but firm, richly coloured fruit with stalks attached. Avoid over-ripe fruit or those with greenback. Stage on a plate with stalk uppermost. They will be judged on flavour.

SECTION B: FLOWERS

General flower and plant classes (Classes 29-45)

- Select flowers in good fresh condition, i.e. In the most perfect stage of its possible beauty and free from damage from weather, pests and diseases.
- Flowers should be displayed in a plain container (vase) having a greater height than width measurement of its mouth. No account is taken of the containers when judging material shown in it.

Dahlias (Classes 39-41)

Select clean blooms with florets intact, firm and free from blemish. Stems should be straight and proportionate to the size of bloom and the bloom held at an angle of not less than 45 degrees to the stem. Stage with blooms all facing the same direction, not touching and with balanced effect. Retain some foliage on the stems if possible.

Gladioli (Class 44)

Select straight, well-balanced spikes still carrying the bottom floret, ideally one third in full flower, one third with buds in colour, one third in green bud. Remove secondary spikes.

Roses (Classes 35-37)

Select blooms with a well-formed centre, free from blemishes with strong stems and healthy leaves.

Pot plants (Class 29)

Indoor and outdoor. See Schedule for maximum pot size.

SECTION C: FLOWER ARRANGING

Make sure the dimensions of the exhibit complies with the schedule.

Plant material must predominate, be well-prepared and in good condition. Exhibits should show good overall harmony in the choice of colour, texture and form of plant material chosen. There should be evidence of good design by overall balance, scale and proportion with a good overall shape.

The cut ends of fresh plant material must be in water or water-retaining material so that it remains turgid for the duration of the Show. Do not use artificial plant material.

SECTION D: COOKERY

Jams and preserves

- The flavour and consistence and colour are all judged and some account is also taken of the jar, which should be well polished with a clean cloth, with no fingerprints.
- Labels should be of a suitable size for the jar and state the contents and the date of making
- Jars should be filled to within 3mm (1/8") of the top of the jar
- To seal jars use either a wax disc (smooth side down and carefully trimmed to fit the rim of the jar. Avoid honey jars with screw tops as the thread does not produce a good seal.

Jams (Class 53)

Should have a bright, even and characteristic colour with no scum, foreign bodies, mould or sugar crystals. Fruit should have tender skins, be evenly distributed with not too many stones. The jam should be consistently set, not runny or sticky, no loose liquid or syrup.

Curd (Class 54)

Should have a bright characteristic and even colour with a spreadable consistency but not runny or rough. The flavour should be fresh and well-balanced with no greasy taste. Fruit curds should be sealed with a wax circle and cellophane.

Jellies (Class 55)

Should be brilliantly clear and of even colour, with no pulp, scum, haze or air bubbles. Consistency should tremble but hold its shape.

Marmalades (Class 52)

Should be based on citrus fruits but other ingredients may be added unless the Schedule states otherwise and labelled accordingly. Traditionally peel should be sliced rather than minced and should be uniformly cut and distributed. Consistency should be set, not runny or too firm.

Chutney (Class 56)

The ingredients should be boiled down to a uniform consistency. The colour should be bright and even throughout. Chutney should be kept for at least two months before showing. Fill jars leaving a 12mm (1/2") headspace. Use a twist top with an integral plastic lining or a plastic press-on cover to prevent corrosion.

Cakes and pastries

- Items should be exhibited on a plain white plate, pottery or paper.
- Slide a folded length of greaseproof paper under a cake to place it in and remove it from the container you are using to transport it.
- The majority of marks are awarded for favour/aroma, but the internal condition and overall appearance are also taken into account.

Bread (Class 59)

The bread can be baked 24 hours before judging. The loaf should be well-risen and evenly baked with a base free from shaping cracks and bulges. The inside should be even-textured with no streaks or holes showing lack of kneading.

Cake (Classes 61-63)

Cakes should be presented on a doily. Lining papers should be removed. The cake should be well-risen, even in shape and baking. Sides should be smooth indicating a well-lined tin with no cooling rack marks on the top of the cake. Any fruit should be evenly distributed with no signs of flour pockets.

Scones (Class 60)

Scones should be even in shape, size and colour (pale golden), flat on top and should stand erect. Savoury scones should always be prepared using a plain cutter. A fluted cutter may be used for plain, sweet or fruit scones. Diameter should equal the height (in an ideal world!).

SECTION E: ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

The colour should be bright characteristic and brilliantly clear with no sediment in the bottle. Bottles should be filled within 12mm (1/2 inch) of the base of the cork (ideally white plastic topped) and need not be sealed.

These are guidelines only. The judges' decisions are final.

