



**THE
PENNSYLVANIA
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY**

*325 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106-2777*

**The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's
Philadelphia Flower Show**

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Horticultural Classes Exhibiting Tips

A MONTH OR SO BEFORE THE SHOW

- Make a duplicate of your entries for each day to keep for your records. Remember that some plants can be entered on more than one day, and enter accordingly. This takes time to figure out; read the Schedule carefully.
- Grooming a plant takes time. It can't be left to the last minute. Go over your plants carefully.

A WEEK BEFORE THE SHOW

- Foliage must be cleaned. For broad-leaved plants, use cotton balls and water. Do not use oil.
- Be sure fruits of plants are clean.
- Do not mist a flowering plant, especially azaleas. Misting will spot the bloom.
- Remove dead or blemished material. There should be no evidence of disease or sprays.
- Entry cards should be filled out according to the Horticultural Rules. Indelible ink or pencil is recommended.
- For miniature garden landscapes, a neat, legible, and waterproof key to the plants is required. Heavy posterboard can be covered with Saran Wrap and neatly taped. Labels should not dominate your exhibit.
- Terrariums should be scrupulously clean; glass should be spotless.
- Top-dress plants with pebbles or other material that will not "float." Keep soil well below the level of the top of the pot so that it does not wash out when watered.
- Pots that haven't responded to repeated scrubbing may be wiped with oil. This is not recommended, however, as it makes pots slippery and is difficult to remove. It is better to repot.
- Plain plastic pots can be used, but most judges prefer standard clay pots. Containers should be the correct size, appropriate and in proportion to the plant.
- Assemble a kit for any necessary grooming at the Show. It should include waterproof pen; entry cards (4" x 6") filled out as required; extra 4" x 6" cards; watering can; plastic bags containing extra soil and/or pebbles, sand, etc.; paper towels; clippers; scissors; small paint brush for small cleaning jobs; tweezers; clipboard for your entry records for the week. (If records are put in an acetate envelope, they will be impervious to dirt and water throughout the week.)
- Mark everything that goes to the Show with your name, using labels or an indelible pen.

TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE SHOW

The following devices are useful for transporting plants:

- Cut circles in blocks of styrofoam to fit pots.
- Cut holes in overturned cardboard cartons to fit pots. Mark cartons with name of plant to facilitate removal.
- Seatbelts can be helpful in supporting some plants.
- Standards can be transported lying sideways in a carton. Line the notch with a soft cloth or sponge to support the main stem. Keep growth clear of floor.
- A rod attached to the car's fixture for hanging clothes will support hanging baskets. A rod or pole may be secured by placing it between the window glass and the top of the car door. Roll the window up as tightly as possible to prevent slipping. Attach the plant to a brick or cinder-block to prevent swinging.
- A bucket with a weight in the bottom and stuffed with newspaper with the plant placed on top will work for some hanging baskets, depending on the size.
- Arrange plants so that they don't slide into each other.
- Put an old rug on the floor of the car. It helps to prevent sliding and keeps the car clean.
- Stake plants for extra support.
- Secure lids of terrariums with tape.
- If the weather is cold, protect plants with newspaper stapled around them. Plastic cleaning bags can also be used. **IMPORTANT:** Plants can be irrevocably damaged by exposure to cold. Warm up the car before loading.
- A dolly of your own is a great help in transporting your plants to and from the car, especially for Sunday-night removal from the Show.

AT THE SHOW

- Arrive early. Entering exhibits takes time.
- Find a work table.
- Bring in and unpack plants carefully. Save wrappings and remove all evidence of travel (i.e., stakes, wire damage to foliage, etc.). Damaged foliage may be trimmed but must look natural.
- Place exhibit in the correct class to its best advantage. Its "front" can be inconspicuously marked before leaving for the Show. This is helpful in case the Staging Committee needs to move the plant. If your plant is moved, keep an eye on it and be patient! Staging the Show is a big job.
- Be sure the correct entry card is with your exhibit.
- Don't leave the exhibit area until your plant is passed by the Passing Committee.
- If a plant is re-entered during the week, it must be carefully groomed and cleaned and re-passed.
- Be sure your plant is watered, but be careful it is not so wet that it spoils the staging.

REMOVAL

- Take the same care in removal as you did in bringing in your plant(s). Remember, there's always another year and another Show! Clean plants thoroughly when they come home--they will be dusty.