

**THE GARDEN CLUBS OF ONTARIO JUDGES' COUNCIL**  
**Schedule Writing Educational Session 1, Thursday, February 8, 2024**

*The Importance of Schedule Writing*  
*Components of a Well-Written Schedule*  
*The Horticulture Division*

**Why do we have flower shows?** (see Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards, 2019 edition, pg. 7)

- to educate the public and club/society members
- to stimulate interest in horticulture
- to provide a venue for creative expression
- to encourage community participation
- to offer a program in which all members can participate

**Why is schedule writing Important?**

A well-written schedule:

- ensures all requirements are clear and therefore provides an equal playing field for all participants
- benefits all: show committee, exhibitor, judge, viewing public
- encourages exhibitor participation
- helps, informs and stimulates the exhibitor by being easily understood
- educates and interests the public
- is the “Law of the Show”

**A “Standard Show” must have the following four components:** (see OJES 2019, pg. 152)

- a written schedule
- at minimum, a Horticulture Division and a Design Division
- the Horticulture and Design Divisions must both have at least five classes with four exhibits in each of the five classes
- be judged by a qualified judge in good standing (see OJES 2019, pg. 10)

**Considerations when writing a schedule:** (OJES 2019, pg. 15)

- venue space, properties (staging materials), budget
- time of year
- interest, skill and garden type of exhibitors

**The 6 C's of a well-written schedule:**

- CLEAR: easily understood and clear to all exhibitors
- CONCISE: brief and succinct
- COMPREHENSIVE: customized to the event, audience, exhibitor skill/interest/garden type, space available, season, properties and funds available, etc.
- CONSISTANT: sets a pattern and follows it (terminology, sentence structure, etc.)
- CONSECUTIVE: consecutive numbering throughout (DO NOT renumber for each Division), Horticulture classes in alphabetic order (see OJES 2019, pg. 15)
- CHALLENGING: not too easy or too difficult, make some changes from year to year

### **Components of a schedule:**

(see OJES 2019, pg. 11-18 and the 6<sup>th</sup> RBG Horticulture Judging School document “Horticulture Schedule Writing Checklist” for detailed information.)

#### All schedules will include:

- a theme
- general information (date, location, sponsoring group, times, contact info for queries, etc.)
- general rules (who may exhibit, standards of judging, responsibility of exhibit safety, etc.)
- divisions (i.e. Horticulture, Design, Special Exhibits, Juniors, etc.)
- division rules – each division will have specific rules
- classes & associated information (i.e. flowering branch: maximum stem length and how it’s measured, potted plant: maximum pot size and how it’s measured)

#### Some schedules may also include:

- sections within the divisions (i.e. Horticulture Division - Section A: Roses, Section B: Perennials, Section C: Potted Plants, etc.)
- definitions (use OJES 2019 Glossary, pg.129-157)
- other helpful information/hints (i.e. Narcissus Classification Guide)

## **HORTICULTURE DIVISION**

### **Class descriptions:**

Be specific and use the correct terminology.

- Use both botanical and common names in class title. Common names alone may lead to confusion, i.e. cone flower could be *Echinacea*, *Rudbeckia*, *Ratibida*, etc.
- Be careful using the term ‘herbaceous’ when referencing perennials. Herbaceous perennials die to the ground at the end of the growing season but many perennials, especially spring flowering alpine perennials, are evergreen, i.e. *Bergenia cordifolia* (pig squeak), *Iberis sempervirens* (perennial candytuft), *Phlox subulata* (creeping phlox), etc.
- Do not use growth habit as criteria, i.e. Perennial, plant height under 15” – 3 stems, same cultivar. The same plant will perform differently in different locations due to varying environmental conditions. Class descriptions of ornamental grasses & grass-like plants may include mature growth habit range (see OJES 2019, pg. 72).
- Combine *Heuchera*, *Heucherella* and *Tiarella* in a single class, i.e. *Heuchera*, *Heucherella*, *Tiarella* – 3 leaves, same cultivar. Exhibitors may not know which genus they have as the three are closely related and resemble each other.
- Indicate leaves or flowers/inflorescence i.e. heuchera, hosta, ornamental grasses, etc.
- Indicate stem, stalk, bloom, spike, scape, spray etc., as appropriate, for cut flowering specimens. For example, *Narcissus* classes should ask for a scape(s) not a bloom – some types, like *N. triandus* and *N. tazetta*, have multiple blooms on a stem.
- Indicate leaf, stem or frond, as appropriate, for cut foliage specimens.

- Which is it - a multi-stem entry or a collection?
  - a multi-stem entry consists a specified number of the same species/cultivar
  - a collection consists of a specified number of different species/cultivars
- For collection classes, indicate:
  - the number of different species/cultivars
  - how many of each species/cultivar are required or permitted,
  - how they are to be exhibited (in 1 container or separate containers) and
  - space allotted or maximum container size.
- For ornamental grasses & grass-like plant classes, include sedge and rush in the class title, i.e. Ornamental grasses, sedges and rushes – 3 stems, same cultivar. This removes any ambiguity as to what might be considered a grass-like plant. It is important to include the word 'ornamental' so it is clear that only grasses that are considered ornamental are permitted, not turf or weed grasses.
- Consider writing hosta classes using the American Hosta Society's leaf colour classification instead of their leaf size classification which is based on mature leaf size. Determining the correct class and subdividing is faster and easier with colour classes because the need to measure and calculate the area of each leaf is eliminated. Also, errors are avoided – when the cultivar name is unknown, the correct leaf size classification cannot be determined since the entry may be an immature leaf. Exhibits are judged on their own merits so there is no reason leaves of varying sizes should not be in the same class.
  - i.e. *Hosta*, solid colour – 3 leaves, same cultivar  
(can be divided into 3 different classes: green, blue, yellow)  
  
*Hosta*, variegated – 3 leaves, same cultivar  
(can be divided in two different ways: light edge with a dark center, dark edge with a light center; or by specific margin colour - white margin, yellow margin, green or blue margin).
- Requiring a specific type (i.e. clear glass) of container, when not supplied by the show, limits potential exhibitors from participating and may reduce the number of entries. Stability and showing the entry to its best advantage should be the guiding factor.

*'The schedule should encourage excellence.'*

*January 31, 2024*