

Brooklin-Whitby Garden Club



Flower Show Questions & Answers

March 2026

What is a Flower Show?

It's more than just flowers. It is an exhibit of horticultural specimens. It may include flowers, vegetables, house plants, branches, special exhibits and designs. All classes will have been judged.

Who Can Enter The Show?

Any member of The Brooklin-Whitby Garden Club.

Where is the Show Held?

At the Brooklin United Church during our monthly meetings on the 4th Wednesday of April, May, June (2nd & 4th Wednesdays), August, September and October.

What Time is the Show?

Entries MUST be placed by 7:15 pm on the night of the show. The doors will be open at 6:30 pm for you to prepare and place your entries. The show is judged during the meeting from 7:30 to 9:00pm and then is available for viewing. All entries should stay in place for at least 30 minutes after the meeting to allow everyone the opportunity to view the exhibits.

What is a Show Schedule and How Do I Get One?

A show schedule outlines the classes available where entries may be placed. All members receive a copy of the club's yearbook which contains the show schedules for the year. It also outlines all of our show rules along with tips on preparing your entries. Names and contacts for show committee members can also be found there.

How Can I Obtain More Information about Judging Standards?

The Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) publishes, "Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards (OJES 2019)," which is the standard that all shows base their show rules on. It can be purchased from the OHA website or at our meetings for \$10. Our own show book rules apply to our shows where they deviate from the OJES. OJES has much more information about showing that can be very helpful to exhibitors.

Who Judges the Show?

An accredited judge from the Ontario Horticultural Association who has successfully taken and passed an OHA sponsored judging school. Some other judges are acceptable if they are listed on the OHA judging site.

I Have a Flower I could Enter, How do I Know if it is Good Enough?

You will never know if you do not try and enter it. After viewing the show you can see what a winning entry looks like and if it's not yours then you can try to ascertain what yours might need to become the winning entry. Some judges will leave comments on entries that will help you. Any member of the show committee can help you figure out what features the winning entry had. A flower show is all about education. The number of entries in a class can vary greatly and the show committee will subdivide the class if there are three or more of the same type/colour in order to award more prizes.

How Many Entries Can I Place in Each Class?

You may enter only one entry per class except for **open** classes in which you may enter two but they must be of different cultivars. Some exceptions are noted in the show schedule.

How Should I Prepare My Entries for the Show?

Container grown plants need to be “groomed” before entering. This means dead-heading spent blooms, removing any discoloured foliage and gently removing any dirt or bugs. The plant must have been in your care for at least three months before it is eligible to be entered.

Condition any cut material. Different specimens have differing conditioning needs and there are lots of online resources. The most common rule for conditioning flowers is to let them stand in a cool place, out of direct sunlight, in tepid water for several hours (preferably overnight). Add some cut-flower food. Cut all stems on a 45 degree angle.

Before the show recut stems to the proper length and place in an appropriate sized clear container with the entry tag attached by an elastic. Remember that all specimens must have some foliage, unless noted otherwise in the rules. It must be from the same plant but it does not need to be attached.

What Containers do I Use For Specimens?

All specimen entries must be shown in clear glass containers provided by you. The container must be suitable in height and neck size to display the specimen standing straight. Be sure to put heavy stems in an appropriate container with sufficient water to prevent it tipping over. When showing container grown plants exhibit them in their growing pots only.

Where and How Do I Fill Out My Entry Tags?

You are encouraged to take home several tags so that you can fill them out beforehand as you prepare your entries. Fill in the class # and specimen or design name from the show schedule. Always try to fill out the specimen name or variety and provide a list of materials in any design entry. This will garner you extra points from the judge.

Always fill in your name (and date if you wish) and fold the tag to hide your name from the judge. If you arrive without tags you will find them on the prep tables along with elastics, water etc.

How Do I Place My Entry?

The show tables will be labeled with class numbers. Place your exhibit along with your entry tag in the appropriate class, an appropriate distance from other entries. Make sure your entry meets any size restrictions stated in the show schedule.

Who Will Be There To Help Me?

Several members of the show committee, usually wearing blue aprons, will be ready to assist you in any way and to answer your questions. Our goal is to make showing a fun, pleasurable and learning experience for you.

Are Prizes Awarded at the Show?

A sticker or ribbon is attached to each entry that receives a placement, indicating where it placed. Points are awarded for each placement and tallied throughout the year. There are extra points awarded for winning a Best In Show. Prize money, determined by your accumulated points, is awarded at our Annual General Meeting/Awards night in November of each year.

Further questions can be directed to any member of the show committee.

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