



Top Tips for Organizing and Competing at Shows – May 2021

Please note the official guide for shows adhering to NAFAS standards is the NAFAS Competitions Manual. The following notes are my top tips for organizing and competing at shows.

TIPS FOR COMPETITORS

1. Read the Schedule to choose the class(es) you would like to enter
2. Then re-read the schedule for staging instructions and restrictions
3. Check access times and parking options
4. Check description of background
5. If in a marquee – remember tables may not be very stable
6. If creating a large exhibit in a marquee think about uneven grass
7. Don't bring too much foliage
8. Prepare foliage at home – strip leaves and check for longer straighter pieces
9. Take flowers out of wrapper to ensure condition – even if you rewrap to transport
10. Soak oasis at home and if possible bring ready-taped into container
11. Take a tape measure – and use it (the staging lines may not be as in schedule)
12. Ensure chosen accessories are in scale with space allowed and plant material
13. Iron any drape to be used and if possible bring it rolled not folded
14. Condition your material – if it is floppy or dropping just don't use it
15. Prepare any "Title" beforehand – make it interesting not just a white card
16. For exhibits to be staged hung eg wreath, work out mechanics before arranging
17. When you have finished, top up and spray – but not over paperwork or drape
18. Clear up, then walk to other side of hall or marquee and look at your exhibit
19. Gently nudge the table to check all elements are secure and petals won't fall
20. When you read the Judge's comments please take them as constructive criticism

TIPS FOR COMPETITION ORGANISERS

1. Use the current NAFAS Competitions Manual and state this in the schedule
2. Run the schedule past your Judge – it is part of the job you are paying them for
3. Try to keep titles open to give variety on the show bench
4. Try to give class titles which inspire – but not terrify
5. Try not to use the word “Arrangement” – use “Exhibit” or “Design”
6. Be precise in the schedule about the space available for each exhibit
7. Then be precise about measuring the space when you are marking up
8. Give full instructions for staging exhibits if to be hung eg who provides hook
9. Never have an allocated space across a table join
10. For the depth measurement – try to offer the full width of the table
11. If “height unlimited” is to be given as an option avoid using a background at all
12. State colour of background – including if it will be just a brick wall or canvas
13. Try not to have open staging with another class immediately behind
14. Ensure access to water – ideally an outside tap
15. Petite or Miniature Class competitors need a separate arranging table + chairs
16. Ensure exhibits to be “viewed all round” have sufficient space for this
17. Try not to have a Judges’ Steward who is also a competitor
18. Know the location of brooms, dust pans and sacks (or bring your own)
19. Have cloths to hand to soak up spillages on floor – and show bench
20. Towards the end of staging just walk round to check for cards and leakages

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