

Exhibiting in a Daylily Flower Show

Bring your manners. Use common sense & be as courteous as you can. Let your competitive juices flow, but don't make enemies. If a bloom you exhibit doesn't score as well as you expected, ask a judge for advice for the future. Volunteer to be a clerk to learn first hand how the judges score. Take a judges clinic at a regional meeting to acquire more info.

On scape or off? You may exhibit any number of blooms **off-scape** (bloom has been removed from the stem) or **on-scape** (with the bloom(s) attached to the entire stem). On-scape entries should be no taller than 36" in the container except for seedling entries, which should include the entire scape, cut at ground level. Judges look for an **aesthetically pleasing proportion** between flower & length of scape showing above the top of the exhibit container. All entries are eligible for local awards and but only on-scape entries are eligible for AHS awards.

How it works: On-scape entries will be given a blue (1st), red (2nd), yellow (3rd) or purple (high blue) ribbon or no ribbon at all. A panel of 3 judges will critique each entry & judge it against **perfection for that cultivar**. For example, if you enter Condilla it could earn 100 points. However, this is rare. The judges will deduct points for flaws & choose the best of all Condillas entered. At the end of the judging of individual flowers, all the purples in a given class (say, large flowers) will be grouped together & the best chosen. This best in class will go to the Queen's table and the judges will select the **Best in Show**. All on-scape Best In Class winners will be listed with the exhibitor's name in the AHS Journal and be featured in the Regional Newsletter.

Start Planning Early. As soon as your daylilies start blooming, walk around your garden each day & **judge the blooms yourself**. By critiquing them ahead of time, you won't feel so rushed on the morning of the show. Remove all open blooms the night before, so only newly opened blooms have your attention the morning of the show. If two buds look like the blooms might touch, you can wedge rolled up wet newspaper between the blooms so that you don't have to cut one off to improve points. Also look for **good branching** on the scapes. Choosing scapes with **first blooms** is best. Know your plant. If it is registered as a double, DO NOT select a single for exhibiting.

Get the Show Schedule early & study it so you will know the rules & times of the show. Plan to enter as many categories as possible to increase your chances of getting to the head table (Extra Large, Large, Small, Miniature, Double, Spider, Unusual Form, Popularity Poll). **If you hybridize, by all means enter your seedlings.** Get entry tags from the show committee ahead of time so you can fill in some of the information at home & **use sticky name tags** to save time. This will allow you more time for grooming.

Give your daylilies plants a good deep watering 3 days before the show if the weather has been on the dry side.

It's OK to cut your scapes the night before to avoid rain or dew disfiguration, but do not cut your off-scape blooms until the morning of. If you do cut the night before, put about 4" of the bottom stem in warm (not boiling) water in containers previously cleaned with bleach. If you have a lot of travel time to go to a show, keep scapes cut early in as much natural light as possible. When stored indoors, they sometimes don't open well. A hairdryer set on low temperature might help with slow opening.

Have your grooming tools together and in the car ahead of time. Have your means of carrying the blooms ready also. Plan to cut a few **extra scapes for the designers** to use if you can spare them. It will enhance the show for them to have newer cultivars, since many only have access to the orange "ditch lily".

Grooming Tools:

Exacto knife or new razor blades
Q-tips/ cotton balls/ Al foil
Soft small camel hair paint brush
Small nail &/or cuticle scissors
Small jar/vial of water w/ cloth

Small jar or vial of oil
Pruning clippers
Small retractable measuring tape
Tweezers (optional, but helpful)
Makeup sponges

The club will have a limited amount of cotton balls, Q-tips and foil on hand; 1st come, 1st served

How to transport the blooms safely to the show is most important. Various methods are popular:

-Put soaked floral oasis in the bottom of a 5 gal bucket. Make a grid for the top of the bucket of 1" x 2" fencing or make well-spaced holes in the top of the bucket lid. Stick scapes into the oasis (with water) through the holes in the wire or lid.

-Use strong tape to make a grid crisscrossing a 5 gallon bucket. Or tape scapes to the edge of a bucket.

-Put the scapes in wine (or other) bottles and store in wine box or wooden bottle crate.

-Make sure your bucket or box is heavy enough not to turn over in curves.

-Be careful and don't drive like a maniac

It's Show Time!

Get up early on the day of the show so you can allow plenty of time to cut, transport and groom your blooms. **Any entry placed after 10:15 am will not be eligible for judging (no exceptions). The grooming area will open at 8 am or earlier.**

When you arrive, go straight to the grooming area. Ask for assistance if you need it. Freshen up the bud scars where previous blooms have been, using your clippers or exacto knife. Brush off any pollen with your makeup sponge. The idea is to make everything appear green; as little brown as possible. If more than one flower is open, remove all but the best one unless they are all equally good. Remove any bud(s) or flower(s) that are interfering with the best open flower on the scape.

After you have finished grooming an entry, give the entry tag to the runner so your tag can be verified by the Classification Committee. (Note: You might want to prepare some scratch paper name tags ahead so that while your entry tags are being verified your plants do not become mixed up if you can't remember a bloom name.) Your tag will be returned to you so you can attach it to the bloom & place it on the table for the Placement Committee pickup. Styrofoam sheets will be on the table for off-scape entries. The Placement Committee will place all entries in the show hall. No one else is allowed in that room before the judging begins. Give any leftover blooms and scapes you have to the designers to use in their arrangements. They greatly appreciate the donations.

Things the Judges will deduct points for:

Missing parts, including stamen & pistil
Pollen or dirt on the petals and sepals
Misshaped or brown buds
Signs of damage or aging of petals/sepals
Bloom size not true of cultivar
Failure to groom entry
Brown scars on the scape

Petals that gap open or look irregular
Weak scapes or uncharacteristically small blooms showing poor culture
Seed pods left on scapes
Blooms that interfere with one another
Poor branching as a result of cultural practices
Color breaks as result of insects or moisture

A scape with 3 open blooms is a beautiful sight to behold, but a judge must judge the worst open bloom. Judges are asked to take local weather situations into consideration (droughts, end of season, etc.). However, well grown plants will win over poorly grown ones.

Some Final Thoughts

Don't be afraid to enter. Don't think you can only enter newer cultivars. All named (registered) daylilies are eligible. Pick the best blooms from your garden. Be adventurous! Relax and learn the joy of displaying your favorite daylilies. You will either receive a ribbon or improve your knowledge of exhibiting. Either way, you will be contributing to the educational value of the show. By exhibiting as many different cultivars as possible, we are showing others the diversity and beauty of our favorite flower. We'll be looking for you.

If you have duties as a show chairman, you can still exhibit. Come in early before your committee gets busy. Exhibit off-scape; it's much faster. Do as much ahead of time as possible.