

# HOW TO ENTER THE VRS ROSE SHOW!

The 3 main reasons behind holding a Rose Show are:

1. To hold a show for the public to visit and enjoy - to be able to show them the beautiful roses we are capable of growing in the Lower Mainland and try to interest them in joining our Rose Society.
2. To raise funds for the VRS.
3. To offer our members an exciting venue for getting into the spirit of friendly competition by 'showing' or 'staging' their roses in the show - we try to convince all our members to enter anything they might have in their gardens...the public doesn't know a perfect bloom from one not so perfect - they only want to see lots of bloom.

The following info talks about entering "the perfect bloom" - not many of us achieve such a perfect state in our gardens...this info simply is to teach you what a perfect bloom **might** look like and that the bloom in the show that is closest to "perfect" will be the overall winner in a class. As well, the only way you can hope to produce a "near-perfect bloom" is to practice every year by entering several rose shows. So, just remember, practice makes perfect!

## THE SCHEDULE:

The rules in the schedule were made not to make things difficult but for uniformity, information and fairness to all exhibitors. **Don't forget, you can enter NOVICE classes as well as all other "Open" classes - give it a try!**

1. **Exhibiting Hours** - you have 3 1/2 hr. to stage your blooms - don't wait until the last hour - it might take longer than you think. As well, give yourself extra time to wander around the show room to get a better idea of what all the blooms look like when sitting on the show bench. Observe other exhibitors to get an idea of what they do, how they transport their blooms, etc. But beware...busy exhibitors don't have time to talk.
2. **Exhibitor # and Entry Tag** - every exhibit must have an entry tag either around the neck of the vase or in the case of a basket, box, the entry tag is to be placed beside the exhibit. You can obtain tags at our May/June meetings or on Rose Show morning. Your name and exhibitor # can be written on the entry tag and the name of the rose or the roses. **Make sure to fold over the bottom part of the tag and put the class # in the space provided.** The only thing the judges should see is a class #. Do not use fancy writing on cards as judges should NOT be able to identify a bloom as a particular person's.
3. **ARS Handbook for Selecting Roses** - very handy for identifying which 'colour' your particular blooms fall into. There are 18 different classifications - notice that the schedule will group several colour classes together into one of our 'classes', as well, some 'classes' do not specify any particular colour.
4. **Number of entries** - you can place an **unlimited number of roses into each class**, except where noted.
5. **The Classes** – there are a largenumber of “classes” you can enter in our Show. Don't be intimidated by it all! Start out by learning the “Novice” classes and then venture out to all the other “Open” classes. There are usually 2, 3 or 4 different places you can put any particular rose – in novice and open “single stem” classes, in “multiple stems/vase” classes, in “fully open” classes, in “bloom progression”, in fragrance etc. Check it out!

## JUDGING:

All exhibits will be judged on the following Canadian point scale: **Total = 100 points**

**Form – 25 points** - form refers to the shape of the bloom, the configuration of the petals, the degree of openness of the bloom and its symmetry.

**Colour – 25 points** - colour should be bright and display the full depth of the true season colour of the variety with no streaks, blotches, fading or blueing.

**Substance – 20 points** - substance is defined as the freshness of the bloom. The petals display firmness, crispness and texture with no appearance of discolouration or loss of sheen. The exhibit is fresh, due to the amount of moisture and starch in the petals, leaves and stem.

**Stem, Foliage & Balance – 20 points** - Stems should be straight and in proportion to the size of the bloom, with intact prickles and be sufficiently strong enough to support the bloom or flower head. The foliage should be clean and healthy, be free of unwanted residue and should not have any disbudding stubs or immature growths coming from a leaf axil. Balance refers to the exhibit as a whole, the relative size of the bloom to stem and foliage.

**Size – 10 points** - Size refers to the actual dimensions of the bloom. The bloom should be the typical size for the specific variety. In Multiple stem exhibits the blooms should be uniform in size and stage of development.

## SHOW ETIQUETTE:

1. Exhibiting time is precious to those people with lots of exhibits – try not to bother another exhibitor or ask to borrow any equipment – but don't be afraid to ask to WATCH or help stage another exhibitor's blooms.
2. An exhibitor must never touch another exhibitor's exhibit on the show bench. If there is not enough room on a table to place your bloom, you must advise the Show Chair or a member of the Staging Committee - they are the only people who can move exhibits.
3. An exhibitor should never attempt to identify him/herself by completing entry cards in coloured ink or by fancy writing.

## GETTING READY FOR THE SHOW:

### **Disbudding**

- should be done on all Hybrid Teas that show they are producing more than one flower bud at the end of each shoot. Use your fingers to simply nip the new little shoots out - if done when shoots are very young, the scar will heal over and not be visible to the judges.
- on Floribundas, the large central bud and 1 or 2 of the smallest buds should be nipped out about 2 weeks before the show - this encourages a larger number of open and equal-sized blooms on show day.

### ***Rain Shelter***

- if rain threatens the week or two prior to the show - try nailing a 1 or 2 gallon black pot or a peat pot onto the end of a long garden stake. Hammer into the ground so the pot is about 3-5" above the bloom. Should be done when bloom starts to show colour. Can also use plastic baggies BUT they will burn the bloom if the sun comes out. You can also try a small novelty-type umbrella or a regular umbrella.

### ***Cutting The Blooms***

- When to Cut - blooms can be cut either the night before the show or the morning of the show. Sometimes the night before is best as it gives you more time to organize yourself and condition the blooms.
- Water - before starting to cut, fill up some buckets with lukewarm water (about 100 F) and take them with you into the garden along with your secateurs. Some people put 50% Sprite and 50% water, others one teaspoon of sugar and a few drops of bleach to a quart of lukewarm water. You can choose what to use. ALSO, take another smaller pail with warm water to use for cutting stems (see below)
- Neck Tags - walk through your garden to pick out the blooms you want to cut. Take neck tags with you, write the rose name on and attach them to the bloom before you cut!!! **Remember that when you place your entry in the show to remove this neck tag – put the name of the bloom on the entry tag.**
- Cutting Stems - cut as long a stem as you can!!
- Foliage Removal - remove the leaves that will be below the vase line and use the side of your secateurs for rubbing off the tips of the thorns.
- Cutting Stems Under Water - this step is the single most important step in "conditioning" your blooms. When stems are cut from the bush, they draw in air and begin to make pockets which, when they reach the bloom, cause the blossom to nod prematurely. After cutting your bloom, put the stem end in the small pail and re-cut the stem under the water - cut 1/4" off at an angle and then remove from water and place in your large pail of lukewarm water.
- Hardening Off Your Blooms - once your pails are full of blooms, make sure your water level is at least half way up the stems...put pails in a cool, dark spot (basement) for 3-4 hours or overnight. This ensures the blooms and stems have 'hardened' to the point of maximum water retention.
- Consulting the Schedule - as you cut each bloom, write the name of the bloom next to the class in the schedule you intend it to enter. OR, write the names of your blooms on a sheet of paper and spend the evening figuring out which classes they can be entered in.
- GROOMING – see below for details on cleaning up your blooms – **this can easily be done the night before the show if you have time.**

### **ON THE DAY OF THE SHOW:**

Travelling - be sure to keep all your blooms in water while travelling to the show. Exhibitors have devised many useful ways of transporting their blooms - in 1 and 2 litre milk cartons all inside a box or tub of some sort; in 1 lb. coffee tins or juice tins; minis fit well inside plastic margarine/yogurt containers; some of us simply use pails that we pack quite tightly with blooms so they can't move around too much.

Kit to Take to Show - pack a little bag or box with the following necessities:

- show schedule
- Tweezers
- secateurs
- Handbook for Selecting Roses
- Paper towel (for spills)
- small nail and larger scissors

- pen and/or pencil
- Q-tips
- old thin dress sock, soft fabric or nylon
- margarine container for water
- box of saran/plastic bags or baggies or tin foil
- paint brush
- small sponge or dish cloth
- watering can
- Entry Cards
- old towel

**Arriving at the Show** - find a spot at the set-up tables and bring in the roses. When everything is at your table, take a few minutes to wander around the Show Hall to familiarize yourself with everything. VISIT THE KITCHEN FOR COFFEE AND MUFFINS!!! Locate the Show Registration desk at the entrance to the Floral Hall (if needed), locate the location of all vases just inside the Floral Hall doors. There should be a "map" of the tables inside the Floral Hall showing where each Class is located. Fill up your watering can and small margarine container with water and head back to your set-up spot. Calculate how many and what 'letter' vases you need - obtain them and then you're ready to start "grooming".

**Grooming:** (can be done at home the night before show OR on Rose Show morning)

1. **Q-tips** - Look for any hybrid tea blooms that you feel maybe aren't out quite full enough - set in vase (cutting stem a little if necessary to make a balanced look). Using your Q-tips, gently push some down in between the petals to try to convince them to open out a little more for you. Leave these blooms until the end (be sure to remove ALL Q-tips before setting on show tables!!!). You can also use your paint brush to brush the backs of the outer petals so they curl and reflex a little and open a little wider.
2. **Vases** - fill your vases with water from your watering can, or, simply dunk each vase into the garbage cans filled with water - put your blooms into their selected vases - **NOTE - the schedule simply 'suggests' certain vases be used - if you feel a vase is too small for your particular bloom, you can select a larger vase.** If necessary, cut some of the stems to make a pleasing balance of vase/bloom/stem. If stem is a little too short, you can use a piece of Styrofoam provided by the society to hold the bloom higher in the vase (the stem end won't be touching the bottom of vase). As well, you can use the styrofoam, to wedge against the stem (again, just under the rim) to help slightly drooping blooms stand more erect! **YOU WILL BE DISQUALIFIED IF YOUR WEDGING MATERIAL STICKS OUT FROM THE TOP OF THE VASE...SO BE CAREFUL WITH IT!**
3. **Removing unsightly petals** - the small outside "guard" petals are sometimes streaked and torn (they are located at the top of the stem, under all the other petals) - these should be removed carefully with your fingers by rocking back and forth until they snap cleanly away at the base.
4. **Cleaning foliage** - use your sponge and clean water from your margarine container to clean ALL the leaves on your blooms. After they have dried, try polishing them up with the old sock or nylon or soft fabric.
5. **Small scissors** - small imperfections in the leaves or petals can be cut out carefully with your small scissors. Leaves can be trimmed following the rounded shape of the leaf.
6. **Brushing** - (use this technique as you become more familiar with exhibiting) - using a very soft, small, square tipped, 1/2-1" wide watercolour paint brush...softly stroke the inside of petals near their bases and coax them into opening wider, OR, brush the backs of the outer petals to make them curl and reflex back nicely.
7. **Label & Stage** - wipe any water from vases, be sure your that if you have used a neck tag on the

bloom to remove this prior to putting the entry into the show class. Each entry MUST have an entry tag COMPLETE with your name, exhibitor # , class #, and **MAKE SURE THE BOTTOM OF THE TAG IS FOLDED OVER SO ONLY THE CLASS NUMBER AND NAME OF THE ROSE IS SHOWING**, then get set to "stage" your blooms. Simply take several blooms and find their "classes" on the show tables. You can place your bloom on the tabletop, or, if the tables have them, on the 1st or 2nd 'riser' to give more height to your bloom. As a courtesy to other exhibitors, we recommend putting overly tall blooms on the table with the shorter ones on the risers to be seen easier. If you have trouble finding a particular class, there will be Staging Committee people around to help you out.

Check your schedule for the classes you entered and then check the show tables to make sure you entered everything in the right classes. That's all there is to it....now you can clean up, go for breakfast and come back after noon to count up your ribbons!! Please note – no one but Judges and Clerks are allowed in the show room once judging begins.

**Suggestion: Tour your garden with a piece of paper with 4 columns – list the names of your roses in column A, list the type of each rose in column B (hybrid tea, shrub, OGR, mini, etc.), use the ARS Handbook to determine the colour classification in column C. Then, with schedule and list in hand, sit down and determine which of your roses will fit into which classes and write them in column D. Finally, tour your garden several days prior to the show to see which roses you feel might be ready to show in those classes.**