

Advice: Flower Arranging Section, Summer 2026

Your entries don't need to be perfect. Don't be afraid, just 'have a go'!

The more entries the better the show.

➤ **Check that your entries comply with all the requirements mentioned in the class descriptions.**

➤ Please don't hesitate to ask the Show Secretary if there is anything that you don't understand. breamgardeningsociety@gmail.com

➤ Alwyn Page shall be judging in accordance with the **NAFAS Competitions Manual**.

This manual provides great advice for entrants as well as judges. It is available to purchase from the NAFAS website.

<https://www.nafas.org.uk/pc/handbooks/>

Alternatively, ask the Show Secretary if you would like to borrow the Society's copy.

➤ Below are basic definitions for some of the terms used in the class descriptions. However, please consult the NAFAS manual for the official definitions.

- **Exhibits** are arrangements that may include accessories (i.e. non-plant material items) as appropriate, but plant material should predominate unless otherwise stated.
- **Plastic foam-free mechanics** are used instead of floral foam (Oasis) to support arrangements. They include aluminium wire, mesh, marbles, pebbles, Agra Wool, plant stems, etc.
- **Garden plant material** includes any plant material that can be cultivated in the UK. It may have been grown by you or your friends, or it may have been purchased from any flower outlet. Local flower farms can be a good source, e.g. www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk.
- **Traditional style exhibits** may have one of the following line/mass styles: symmetrical or asymmetric triangle, oval, crescent, inverted crescent, Hogarth curve or diagonal. They should usually have a focal area and a good transition of plant materials. Please contact the Show Secretary if you need a more detailed explanation. breamgardeningsociety@gmail.com
- **Parallel style exhibits** should have groupings of vertical parallel lines rising from a foundation of plant material and other objects. They usually have more than one area of dominance. Some plant material may extend over the edge of the container to soften the look.
- **Contemporary exhibits** should push boundaries and break with convention. The 'Elements and Principles of Design' may be used in an unconventional way. Unless specified, the shape of the design is totally free and exhibits may have one, several or no points of interest. They may be decorative or expressive. The form of the plant material may be manipulated. Mechanics may be visible if this is a conscious design decision. A diverse range of techniques, mechanics and embellishments may be displayed.
- **Petite exhibits** are small exhibits which look like perfectly scaled-down versions of full-size arrangements. All parts should be in proportion. Make sure that your exhibit complies with the size restrictions for the class.

➤ Alwyn has written three articles for NAFAS providing guidance on entering flower arranging competitions. She has very kindly made them available to the Society. If you would like a copy of any of these articles, please contact the Show Secretary.

- **Preparing to enter a competition - How to read the schedule!**
- **Entering Competitions - What the Judge Looks for**
- **Notes on Conditioning Plant Material for use in arrangements**

➤ If you require any further advice, Alwyn can be contacted via the Show Secretary. breamgardeningsociety@gmail.com

- Depending upon your experience, Alwyn is also able to recommend a number of other books on flower arranging.
- Alwyn is happy to answer any questions about flower arranging skills, research, competition rules etc. However, she does request that entrants do not ask about specific design ideas for a Show Class.
- If you are thinking of entering future shows and wish to develop your flower arranging skills further, Alwyn recommends **Lydney and Severnside Flower Club** or signing up for a local flower arranging class. Contact the Show Secretary for details.