

# Design Concepts and Tools

Before you start your design you need to know a few basics on the elements of design. In other words what judges look for when they judge a design.

**Space** - The exhibit should fill the space with out crowding the space. Some basic rules for deciding on how to fill your space are:

1. Space in your pattern is more eye catching when it is irregular.
2. Crossing lines and overlapping planes can cause a feeling of depth
3. Rough textures appear to advance and smooth ones to recede.

**Balance** – The creation of visual weight and gravity

1. Balance is achieved by the weight being equally distributed on either side of an imaginary central line.
2. It can be conveyed as a visual effect, even though both sides are irregular in form and shape.
3. Generally the greatest weight, largest form, strongest colors, and thickest lines, should be placed low in a design

In and arrangement the weight of the plant material, container, base, accessories, etc., must all be considered in a well balanced composition.

**Proportion and Scale** – This is the relationship of one component to another. You should look for areas of color, texture, space or voids to be well balanced. The size relationship of the components, containers, bases, plant materials, and so on, are in scale with one another

**Rhythm** – The sense of movement which flows through the design. The proper rhythm directs your eye so that the shape of the whole composition is followed and your attention is held throughout and yet your eye is drawn back to the focal point. Rhythm can also convey mood,, pease, serenity, excitement, and movement, swift, sharp, or lazy and flowing.

**Contrast** – The use of different colors, textures, sizes and forms to create visual interest.

1. Use pointed or rounded forms
2. Dull and shiny materials
3. Rough and smooth surfaces

**Dominance** – one component should unify the entire design. In this case it should always be the African violets.

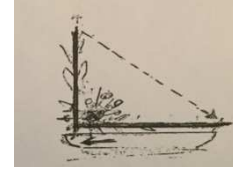
**Line** - is the most important component in deciding the plan of your design. It is the representation of the visual movement between two points. It can be used as a unit of construction and expression. Lines are used to to develop the shape of your arrangement. The best way to start your design is to sketch it out on a piece of paper first. You need to decide your line and shape before you begin working on your design. Shapes you can use are:

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1. Crescent – This is an asymmetric shape which is longer from the middle point upward than from the middle down.



2. Right Triangle – The focal point faces the right. Straight and tall lines flow upward; straight and long lines flow outwards from the center. Filler material is situated between the lines and focal point.



3. Left Triangle – The focal point faces to the left. Straight and tall lines flow upward; straight and long lines flow outwards from the center. Filler material is situated between the lines and focal point.



4. Hogarth Curve – William Hogarth was an English artist who was first credited for using the S shaped curve. The lines flow in a curve in opposite directions from the focal point. It generally requires a tall container.



5. Upright Torch – This shape is good when there is little space but you need perpendicular line. Spear shaped foliage is the best type for this shape.



6. Triangle- This line is a basic shape for symmetrical arrangements. The designer should establish height and width first and fill in the center last.



**Form** – This is what you need to add depth to your design. This can be achieved by placing shorter materials behind larger taller ones, graduating length of stems in the central area, placing darker colors in the rear to draw the eye to the back of the space, leaving space between stems, and finishing the arrangement at the back. Last cover exposed mechanics and stems to make sure your look is complete.

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**Color** – Color communicates mood. Color also sets the tone such as, cheerful, somber, casual or formal. Your colors must fit your design theme and the schedule's requirements. Whatever your design plan, deeper colors are perceived as heavier and kept at the base of your design to anchor. Vertical outlines should be set with light tint in the highest position. This is a good position for buds.

**Texture** – This is used to enhance an arrangement. It can vary from coarse to smooth, hard to soft, shining to dull, and tough to fragile. The main thing to avoid is combining the large and robust with tiny and delicate. It results in a misalliance. Using texture well is important because it affects the balance, rhythm and force of a design.

When judges look at your design they are looking for:

1. Interpretation – How well does the materials used suggest the theme, mood or idea outlined in the schedule.
2. Distinction and Originality – Are there any unusual materials? Has the theme been achieved in a subtle or bold way?
3. Suitability of Materials – Are all the components suitable and appropriate?
4. Relationship of Materials – Are all the colors, textures, forms, and lines compatible?
5. Condition of Materials – This applies to all elements of design. Are all plant materials clean and are all mechanics hidden?

Here is a list of tools that designers may need:

- Hot glue gun and glue sticks
- Wire cutters
- Needle nose pliers
- Long tweezers
- Tape of various kinds – duct, masking, floral, double-sided, clear
- Pins – straight, tiny, large corsage
- Pin frogs
- Small pen caps, needle covers, to use as water vessels for flowers
- Wire of various gauges
- Various size scissors
- A small syringe to fill water vessels
- Pipe cleaners
- Stickum
- Paper towel
- Spray bottle with water
- Distilled water

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Construction of designs should be done at home and be ready just to set up at the show. If material back drops are used in niches, they should be ironed. Paper can be used for a backdrop but it cannot be taped to the niche.

For the flower blossoms, blooms must be fresh from a recently watered plant. Always have extra blooms.

For plant arrangements, be sure that the plant is healthy and the rootball is secured by plastic wrap, plastic bag with a rubber band or a piece of old hose. Plants are not allowed to be in individual containers.

Read your schedule and make sure your arrangement does not exceed the measurements in any direction. Rule of thumb for the height is it should be  $\frac{7}{8}$  the height of the niche.

Arrangement itself should be  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times the height of the container, or the width of the base, if the schedule allows one.

## JUDGES SCALE OF POINTS FOR FLOWER AND PLANT ARRANGEMENTS

Design.....	40 points
Interpretation of Schedule.....	15 points
Distinction and Originality.....	15 points
Suitability of Materials.....	10 points
Relationship of Materials.....	10 points
Condition of Materials.....	10 points