

Selecting Leaves for the Show

In selecting your leaves, look for the most mature leaves on the clump with the truest color and most even pattern. **You should try to choose the best typical leaf, not the one that might be the most interesting.** This is especially true with variegated leaves. In most cases, that means looking for the most even (symmetrical) pattern you can find.

At the same time, look for leaves with the least amount of imperfections such as holes, tears, sun scald, or insect damage. You also need to watch out for any color disparities caused when one part of a leaf gets significantly less or more light than other parts of the leaf as the result of being partially shaded out by other leaves. It may be subtle but you can see the difference in color between the two portions of the leaf. The judges will see it, too, and deduct points for it. Be sure to look on the front AND back of the leaves. Judges always look at the back sides of entries as well as the front.

Finally, look at the surface dirt on the leaves. Many of the smoothly textured varieties have leaves that are easily cleaned but some of the heavily puckered leaves and all of the blue leaves can be very difficult to clean without damaging the leaf surface. You should pass on leaves that are so dirty as to be difficult to groom.

Cutting and Grooming Leaves

Leaves are best cut early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Evaluate your leaves as best you can a few days prior to the show and tentatively select the ones you would like to bring to the show. Leaves may be cut several days prior to the show but the later you cut them, the fresher they will be. The petiole (leaf stem) should be cut as long as possible. You can remove excess length later during preparation of the exhibit for show. A sharp knife should be used to make a clean cut. After cutting, hold the leaf up to the light to further inspect for major holes, damage or other large flaws that you may have missed. If significant flaws are found, you may want to select another leaf.

After cutting the leaves, place them in cool water in a cool place out of strong sunlight and drafts. This will help to keep your leaves fresh for the show.

Specimen cleanliness is the first attribute that a judge notices. Take care to properly clean leaves of all exhibits prior to entering them in the show. An entry should have no dirt or other debris, insects, or insect webs anywhere on the leaf surface or on the petiole. Pay particular attention to the point where the leaf meets the petiole where trash often becomes lodged. Again, don't forget to check the back sides of the leaves. That is a particularly popular place for spiders to leave webs.

Carefully wash the leaf in cool water but do not scrub. A very mild dish detergent may be used to help dislodge dirt from the leaf surfaces. Often on smooth-surfaced leaves, you only have to gently swish the leaf in the water and the dirt falls off. On leaves with quilted surfaces, you may have to use a moistened Q-Tip, small soft artist's paint brush, or a cotton ball to remove dirt from the valleys and creases. Be very gentle and careful not to damage the leaf surface in any way. Be sure to rinse leaves if detergents are used to clean them.

Blue leaves are especially hard to clean and prepare for show because the delicate glaucous coating on the leaves is easily damaged. Be very careful when cleaning those blue leaves. On blue leaves with very rough surfaces, it is almost impossible to remove all the dirt without causing damage. The judges would prefer a little dirt over damaged surfaces in this particular case. They know how difficult blues are to clean and they take that into account.

Preparing Entry Tags and Classifying Your Hosta Leaves Correctly

Once you have your leaves selected and groomed, it is time to prepare the entry tags. **When you prepare your tags, please remember to add your name, address, and other required information on both the top and bottom portions of the entry tags.** You may use name/address labels in lieu of writing your name and address on both portions of the tag. The bottom portion is removed after the leaf is judged and is used by the tabulator to record show results. That is why it is so important to fully complete both top **and** bottom portions of the tag. While you may wait to prepare your entry tags until you are in the prep area at the show, you will find it is best to do this step **before** you come to the show.

You will note in the schedule that hosta leaves entered in Division I (cut-leaves) must be classified by both **section** (size) and **class** (color and pattern). This information is placed on the entry tag when you enter your hostas in a show. Many people feel intimidated in trying to determine just which section and class their hosta leaves belong in. However, it is easy.

The American Hosta Society provides a **Hosta Show Classification List** which is updated each year. The list provides the correct classification data for all **named and registered** hosta cultivars. This list is available on the American Hosta Society Web Site, www.americanhostasociety.org. After accessing the home page, click on the Hosta Judging button at the top of the page and select and click on the Show Judging drop-down tab. Then scroll down to Classification Lists and select the Full Classification List. The list provides not only the show classification data for all named registered hostas, it also provides the registered leaf length and width data for each.

The length/width information is now required information on the entry tags. This information helps the judges in their evaluation of leaves and it can also help you to determine if your leaf is mature size-wise. Remember, though, that hosta leaves usually grow a little smaller down here in the South than in the northern areas of the country where most hostas are registered. Use the registered sizes to *help* you choose the best leaf, but do not simply dismiss a leaf because it might be a bit undersized.

If you do not find your named hosta on the list, it probably means that your hosta is not registered. In that case, you would exhibit it in the non-registered hosta section, Section XII, and the class would simply be the first letter of the hosta name.

Copies of the Classification Lists will be available at the show prep area but you will save a lot of time and some anxiety by looking up your hosta entries' data and filling out the show tags prior to coming to the show.

Once you have your tags filled out, go ahead and prepare an **Individual Tally Sheet** showing the division and variety name for each of your entries. (See last page for a copy.) You will turn this in at the show after you have entered your leaves. The Tabulation Chair would love to have the entries **listed in alphabetical order** although that is not a requirement. It just makes her job easier.

Preparing Leaves for Entry into the Show

When you arrive at the exhibit preparation area, first sign the Exhibitor Registration Form and **secure an exhibitor number**. This number should be placed in the appropriate place on each entry tag. There are different sized containers available. Select the container that makes your leaf look its best (no tiny leaf in a big container, etc.). Stage your leaf in the container, cutting the petiole to an appropriate height that makes the leaf look its best. Use cotton balls to position the leaf at the best viewing angle in the vase. Then attach the entry tag to the container using rubber bands provided if the tags you have require rubber bands. The newer tags have a cut-out and do not require rubber bands. You may have either or both types.

At the show, there will be members to help guide you through the entry and final grooming activities should you need assistance. Supplies such as cotton balls to stage leaves in the containers and rubber bands to affix the tags to the containers will be available in the preparation area. Once you have an exhibit ready, just take it to the classification table where other members will be on hand to check your entry's tag data for accuracy before placing it in the show. Do not fold up the bottom section of the tag at this time. The Classification Committee will do that after the entry's data is checked. After you have prepared and submitted all your entries, check your Individual Tally Sheet one more time to be sure all your entries are shown on it. If you prepared it ahead of time and then decided not to enter a particular leaf, just line through it on the sheet. Be sure to add your Exhibitor Number on the sheet. Then turn it in to Exhibitor Assistance Chair.

Enter in Divisions other than the Cut-Leaf - Division I)

If you have some nice container grown hostas or container gardens, you should consider bringing one or more of them to enter in Division II - Container Grown Hostas, or Division III – Trough/Container Gardens Arranged for Effect. The rules are spelled out clearly for each of these divisions in Rule #12 and Rule #13 of the show schedule. Be sure to remove dirt and debris that may be on the containers prior to entering them. Be especially careful to clean the underside of the containers so that they do not soil the table cloths.

You might also consider preparing an educational exhibit about hostas. These exhibits may contain posters, plants, photos, or anything you deem necessary to support the theme of your exhibit. Educational exhibits are always popular with our members and are especially popular with visitors.

If you have something hosta-related that you want to share with everyone but which does not fit into any of the other divisions outlined in the show schedule, you may put it in Division V – Non-Competitive Exhibits. This would be a perfect place to display a leaf of a prized seedling that you only have one leaf to share (two leaves required for seedlings in Division I). Or maybe you have a beautiful leaf of a hosta whose name has been lost. Just place it in the non-competitive exhibits with a "What's My Name?" note on the tag. Someone might be able to identify its name for you. You might have a leaf with an unusual characteristic not normal for that particular hosta that you want to share with members.

We look forward to seeing all of you at the show. Please come, bring a few leaves, bring a friend if you can, volunteer to help in one of the many activities, and above all – Have Fun!

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 II-I-c.

AHS HOSTA SHOW

INDIVIDUAL TALLY SHEET

Name _____ Exhibitor Number _____ Date _____

	Div	Variety	1 st B	2 nd R	3 rd Y	4 th W	BOC G	BOS P	Special	
1.										
2.										
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24.										
25.										
TOTALS										

Special Awards: Circle those applicable

Best of Show (Div I, Sec I-V & XI) Best Seedling/Sport (Div I, Sec VI-X)

Best Container Grown (Div II) Best Container/Trough (Div III) Best Educational (Div IV)

Sweepstakes