

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION QUALITIES FOR FULLY DOUBLE CULTIVARS

Introduction	The authoritative sources of judging information are the "Guide to Judging Dahlias" (<i>GJD</i>) and the "Classification and Handbook of Dahlias." (<i>CHD</i>) The most current <i>CHD</i> always supersedes statements in the <i>GJD</i> . The following characteristic summaries provide brief reminders of the content of these references. Consider each characteristic on the scorecard independently, making point deductions based on the value of the attribute. For example, if an entry shows virtually perfect stems, judges should make no deductions; but if judges deem a stem of passing quality, they should score the quality of at least 85%, deducting no more than 1.5 points from the 10 points assigned to stem. Base the severity of the fault on the <u>degree</u> and <u>extent</u> of the fault. If the fault is subtle and isolated to one bloom, the fault is minor, but if the fault is blatant and widespread over a number of blooms, the fault is more severe.
Color	Ideal color means lustrous, shiny, and clean color uniformly distributed over the ray florets. Blends will have two or more differing, harmonious or pleasing contrasts of color easily seen from three feet." Bicolors will have a sharp separation of colors with little bleeding between the colors. <i>Color faults include a dull, splotchy, gray, or streaked appearance. Faults also include distracting bracts at the base of the florets, petaloids with a different color, or wolf petals. Deduct for fading, burning, spotting, bruising, and, on Seedling Bench Evaluation (SBE), insect damage and spray deposits. Bicolor and variegated faults include solid color florets, uneven color distribution, and poor separation of color.</i>
Form	Form in fully double cultivars consists of 5 parts: <u>symmetry</u> 5 points, <u>contour</u> 5 points, <u>development</u> 5 points, <u>trueness to form</u> 5 points, and <u>size proportion</u> 8 points. Symmetrical blooms will display a circular profile with a tight, round center. Surrounding maturing ray florets will spiral equally in width, length, and uniformity. Contour refers to the overall structure of the bloom with the florets uniformly distributed in a spiraling pattern from the bloom center, free from varying spaces between ray florets. In SBE, chosen blooms exhibited at their peak of development with the center in proper proportion to the overall size of the bloom are most desirable. Apply the latest <i>CHD</i> definition when determining trueness to form. Size proportion refers to the ratio of depth of the bloom to its diameter. Find the ideal ratios in the most recent <i>CHD</i> . When evaluating an entry, carefully include each point value recommendation above for each part of form, making certain to assign an accurate proportional value. <i>Faults of bloom centers include: not circular -- oval, elongated, misshapen,-- or too high or depressed, too large in proportion to the bloom, too open or loose; Symmetry and contour faults also occur with blooms that are elongated, lopsided, or bearded and when gaps appear around the circumference of the bloom. Development faults are associated with immature, shallow blooms on the show bench. Fully mature blooms with minor faults should prevail over immature blooms. Trueness to form faults should accrue to a bloom with mixed form or form that does not conform well to the ideal definitions in the current CHD. Size proportion faults occur when the depth of the blooms is less than ideal.</i>
Substance	Ray florets and foliage should be fresh, clean, crisp, springy and turgid. <i>Substance faults include: soft, wilted or missing ray florets.</i>
Stem	Stems should be straight, round, smooth and strong enough to support the bloom. Stem length should be in proportion to the size of the foliage and at least as long as the diameter of the bloom. Longer stems are okay for smaller blooms. <i>Stem faults include: too long, too short, not straight, not round, and too small or too large in diameter.</i>
Foliage	Leaves should be of uniform color, equal in form and size, alternate and opposite on the stem, and free from damage. The spread of the foliage should be larger than the diameter of the bloom. <i>Faults include: diseased appearance, not opposite or tri-leaf, unequal in size or form, too large or too small relative to the size of the bloom and the length of the stem. Pale, blotchy, soft, crinkled leaves are faults.</i>
Bloom Position	Ideal bloom position is 45° from the stem for most forms, but top facing is acceptable for the Pompon, Miniature Ball, Ball, and Waterlily forms. For "AA" and "A" dahlias, top facing is a minor fault. Ideally, the foliage should frame the bloom as it faces the judge. <i>Down facing is a serious fault; side or top facing is a fault except as noted above.</i>
Floriferous-ness Uniformity	Trial Garden judges assess the number of blooms available at the right time of the season. <i>Faults include too few blooms, blooms too late, and too few quality blooms.</i> Seedling Bench Evaluation judges assess the uniformity of the blooms in a triple entry. Ideal uniformity is achieved if these blooms are identical in all characteristics. <i>Faults occur for each variation in each characteristic.</i>
Distinction	Cultivar will be unique and/or visually appealing, have few faults, and will stand out from its competition. <i>Distinction faults include lack of competitiveness, weak evaluation characteristics, poor visual appeal.</i>