

Glossary of Dahlia Arrangement Terms

Accessory: A subordinate object in an arrangement, something other than plant material, container, base, special staging, and other mechanics.

Asymmetrical Balance: The visual weight of different materials on either side of the axis providing a sense of equilibrium. The axis may or may not appear to be in the center of the design

Attributes of Design: Beauty, distinction, expression, and harmony.

Beauty: Intangible quality evoking aesthetic pleasure.

Bloom: An individual flower.

Color Harmony: Combinations of color grouped together in an ordinary manner and pleasing to the eye.

Condition: The physical state of plant material at the time of judging. Refers to cleanliness, freedom from blemish and disease, tears, or insect damage.

Conditioning: Process of ensuring utmost freshness of plant material by enabling it to take up more water than it loses.

Conformance: Adherence to schedule requirements.

Connective: A design component used to unify parts of a design into a single whole; may be actual, i.e., vine, rope, or visually implied, for example repetition of colors, textures, and/or forms.

Container: A receptacle for plant material and other design components. Containers for European Period Designs are referred to as “vases.”

Contrast: The placement of unlike characteristics to emphasize their differences: straight line vs. curved line, cool color vs. warm color, rough texture vs. smooth texture, etc.

Creative Design: These designs are not bound by traditional patterns or styles. They are designs with a relationship between form and space. Components are positioned according to “plastic organization.” Molding and shaping the design within a volume of space to create a three-dimensional effect. Create rhythm and balance using forms and spaces to achieve depth.

Depth: The third dimension. Distance within a design from foreground, through middle-and rear-ground to background. Actual or visual depth is essential to good design.

Designer’s tools: Clippers, wire, scissors, floral tape, glue gun, floral clay used when creating designs.

Dominance: The emphasis or impact of one component over another implying subordination (Principle of Design).

Eclectic: Creative concept of borrowing from different styles, geographic areas, and/or periods, and combining these features into a new identity.

Elements of design: The physical (tangible) characteristics or qualities of all components chosen for a design. They are color, form, light, line, pattern, size, space, and texture, and are referred as the “working ingredients.”

Expression: An idea, emotion or mood communicated to the viewer.

Foliage: Leaves or needles of a plant.

Form: The three-dimensional aspect of an object, e.g. height, width, and depth (Element of Design).

Frame of reference: Total three-dimensional space allotted to each exhibit. Schedule should include dimensions for all Designs, Collections, Displays and all other exhibits.

Grooming: Cleaning of plant material or containers by removing soil, spray residue, insect damage, dead florets, and leaves, and other similar items.

Harmony: An Attribute of Design. Pleasing orderly arrangement of components according to Design Principles.

Line: One dimensional, visual path and structural framework of a design (Element of design).

Linear form: A form in which length is the dominant dimension.

Principals of design: Basic art standards by which the Elements of Design must be organized. They are balance, contrast, dominance, proportion, rhythm, and scale. Synonymous with Design Principles.

Proportion: The relationship between amounts and quantities of one area or component to another to the whole (Principle of Design).

Rhythm: The visual movement/s through the design (Principle of Design).

Scale: The size relationships of components to each other in a design (Principle of Design).

Shape: Contours of two-dimensional matter, e.g., height and width.

Size: The perceived or visual dimensions of a component rather than actual dimensions (Element of Design).

Space: The open areas in and around a design or object (Element of Design).

Staging: The means by which an exhibit is supported and/or enhanced.

Symmetrical Balance: Synonymous with “formal balance.” Approximate equal visual weight on both sides of an imaginary vertical axis in which like components and overall side patterns create near mirror images.

Texture: The surface quality of a component (Element of Design).

Three-Dimensional: Having height, width, and depth with all dimensions considered vital to good design, actual or implied.

Traditional Design: Style of floral design.

Transparency design is a modern, three-dimensional style that incorporates see-through or translucent elements – like mesh, glass, or even plant materials – to allow other parts of the arrangement to be viewed through them, creating depth and an airy feel.

Underlay: Fabric, board, etc., placed under an exhibit to enhance staging.

Unit: Term used in the description of a design type when a container is not mandatory, but all components emerge from a single mechanic, or more than one placed to appear as one.

Unity: The harmony of all elements in a work of art contributing to a single aesthetic effect.