# Hints for successful exhibiting in mini shows and County Blooms

## The Garden Clubs of Ontario, Ontario Horticultural Association has released the second edition OJES 2019 “Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards for floral design and horticulture”. This book contains everything you need to know about exhibiting and more; from elements and principles of design, to requirements for display of specific flowers and vegetables, to a comprehensive glossary of useful horticultural terms.

## For those wishing to participate in mini show displays, designs and/or ‘Bring and Brag’ here are some hopefully helpful tips.

## Read the rules. Although our mini shows are not officially judged they are meant to ‘follow the rules’ of judged shows and allow entrants to practise for the June flower show. So, if the requirement for a display is triplet tulips, you should present 3 identical (not fraternal) tulips (size of bloom, height, colour).

##  Grooming is important. Your specimens should be clean; free of dust, pests, dirt and dead or damaged foliage.

## Conditioning is another aspect to consider. Cuttings taken in the early morning or evening will last longer than those taken in the heat of the day. Stems should be immediately placed in water to prevent air from entering the stem and blocking absorption of water. Stems should be cut on an angle with a sharp knife being careful not to crush the stem. Cuttings should remain in the water for several hours or overnight in a cool, dark, moist area. Information for conditioning specific plants is available in the above named book.

## Containers used for display purposes should be clean and stable. Plastic pop bottles are not suitable as they tip over. Glass wine bottles work well (labels removed).

##  And a final point from a judges standpoint - a perfectly grown and presented plant, no matter how common, will always do better than a poorly grown rare or mature plant. (Although a perfect rare, exquisite and magnificently displayed plant should win hands down).