



For home gardeners or novice growers, identifying the various types of dahlia blooms and understanding the size requirements for show staging can be challenging. It's crucial to carefully read the show schedule and comprehend the event's specific requirements for entering your dahlia bloom. Here are some helpful tips to guide you.

1. Type.

It's crucial to know the type of dahlia you plan to exhibit on the show bench to ensure it is entered in the correct class. Additionally, you must consider the size requirements, which we will discuss next.

A "double bloom" in dahlias refers to a flower that has multiple layers of petals, creating a fuller and more lush appearance. These blooms are characterized by their broad, flat, or slightly curled petals arranged symmetrically, giving them an elegant and classic look

Dahlias come in a wide variety of bloom types, each with unique characteristics. Here are some of the main types:

Formal Decorative: These have double blooms with evenly spaced petals that curve slightly backward.



Blyton Golden Girl - Decorative

Cactus and Semi-Cactus: These feature double flowers with long, pointed petals that roll back, giving a star-like appearance.



Glenmarc Quinella - Cactus



Ball and Miniature Ball: These are fully double flowers with a slightly flattened globe shape and incurved petals.



Cornel - Ball

Waterlily: These blooms resemble waterlilies with broad, flat petals. Must have 4 – 7 rows of petals. Must be under 160mm



Kens Gold - Waterlily

Collerette: These have a single row of 8 flat petals with a contrasting collar of smaller petals around the centre. Must be under 160mm



Aegean Sky - Collerett



Single: These have a single row of 8 petals and a visible centre.



Glenmarc Seeding - Single

Orchid: These have open centres with a single row of 8 petals that are often twisted or curled.



Golden Sunset - Orchid

2. Dahlia Sizes

Understanding the size requirements for the class you are entering your dahlia bloom in is essential. If possible, purchase a set of judging rings to check your bloom before staging it on the show bench. These can be obtained from the dahlia society.

Giant	260mm and over
Large	210mm and under 260mm
Medium	160mm and under 210mm
Small	120mm and under 160mm
Miniature	Under 120mm

Decorative, Cactus and Fimbriated dahlias come in all five sizes.

Ball dahlias come in small or miniature

Pompon dahlias are under 50mm



Waterlily, Collerette, Anemone, Orchid, Stellar and Single dahlias must be under 160mm.

3. Stems

The stem should be straight, centrally aligned with the bloom, ridged, and rounded. Its thickness should be proportional to the bloom. The stem length should be 160mm clear of the container to where it attaches to the bloom. The bloom should face upwards at a 45-degree angle, except for a Pompon, which should face straight up in line with the stem. Artificial support is prohibited, except for staging materials like oasis or paper, which should not protrude above the container's neck.

More information can be found in the Australian Dahlia Council Publication “Standards and Judging Rules of the Dahlia 1998” Printed by the Dahlia Society of Australia. Your local Dahlia Society can provide a copy for you.