

Handbook For Judges and Show Officials

Ch 25 English Boxes



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Note: This chapter and others from the *Handbook for Judges* are available online. It is recommended that judges and other readers scan over the Introduction and Table of Contents in the full version of the *Handbook* in order to know the full list of available resources, e.g., Glossary, essays, Judge's Activity Record, etc.

Chapter 25

ENGLISH BOXES

Approved by the AIS Board of Directors, April 13, 2021

English Boxes are designed as a means of displaying collections of single flowers without stem, foliage, or the presence of buds. The entire emphasis is on the beauty of each individual blossom. The English Box is entered in the Horticultural Division of an iris show and is judged by AIS judges according to horticultural exhibition judging guidelines. Because of the complexity and time involved in creating and presenting this form of collection, it is suggested that, in addition to the first-place ribbon, a rosette or other special award be given to the best English Box.

English Box entries are not eligible for Best Specimen of Show Award.

An English Box should consist of a minimum of five or not more than six, individual flowers of the same classification of iris, such as all spuria iris, all tall bearded iris, or all arilbred iris. Flowers may be different cultivars or all the same, the latter being more difficult to achieve. The show schedule shall be specific in determining the number and types of iris to be used. An entry not meeting the show schedule requirements should not be judged.

Each blossom should be correctly labeled. It is suggested that labelling be posted outside the box so as not to detract from the overall effect of the display. A 3 by 5 inches index card with the iris names in the correct position maybe be used.

The number of entries in this class may be limited at the discretion of the show committee.

The show schedule will determine the exact method of display, such as construction and size of the box. See the suggestion for English Box construction at the end of this chapter.

SCALE OF POINTS English Boxes

1. Overall Beauty	15
2. Color & Pattern Combination	20
3. Cultural Perfection	45
4. Condition & Grooming	20
TOTAL	100

1. Overall Beauty - 15 points

The English box as a unit is viewed from above. The blossoms selected must be uniform in size and freshness, form, substance, and texture. Harmony of flower characteristics should be achieved. The blossoms should appear to float without visible means of support. Under no circumstances should the falls touch the surface of the box.

NOTE: An exception to the uniformity rule would occur if the show schedule called for a theme, such as “progress in hybridizing.”

2. Color & Pattern Combination - 20 points

There should be harmony in flower color or colors. Because of the viewing angle, colors in the heart of the flower (styles, beards, hafts) are more easily identified and may influence color harmony. The specifics of color and patterns to be displayed may be determined by the show schedule. Color need not have uniform intensity in all the flowers. Dark flowers combined with flowers with bright colors can be bold and pleasing. Bicolor flowers combined with self-color flowers can create a dramatic effect. Glaring color clash and poor color arrangement should be faulted.

3. Cultural Perfection - 45 points

In viewing single blossoms of the English Box, the judge will find each element of the flower more emphasized. The horticultural quality of each flower should be typical of its variety in form, color, and size. Substance should be judged as in any specimen class.

Division of the 45 points allowed for cultural perfection should be according to the guidelines of the iris classification being judged, and the judge should refer to the appropriate chapter in the current edition of the *Handbook for Judges & Show Officials* as needed.

4. Condition & Grooming - 20 points

The flowers should be fresh, mature (not past peak) and beautifully clean. Bruised or torn petals should be heavily faulted, and there should be no evidence of disease or insect infestation. Errors in presentation such as leaning blooms or falls touching the surface of the box should be penalized.

A judge may encounter trickery such as pinning or taping of flower parts or hidden supports and wedges. If any such alterations are found, the entry is to be disqualified from competition.

CONSTRUCTION OF AN ENGLISH BOX

The purpose of the box is to provide an unobtrusive holder for the flowers. The background covering should be on non-reflective material and neutral in color, something that will never clash with the flower color(s). The show schedule should specify whether the box is to be furnished by the show committee or by the exhibitor. In the interest of uniformity, it is recommended that each club construct and make available the boxes for this exhibit.

Use of Styrofoam blocks and visible flower picks is permitted but should be discouraged, as this presentation detracts from the pleasing overall effect and prevents optimum display of each flower.

If displaying miniature tall bearded, standard dwarf bearded or Siberian iris, boxes may be proportionately decreased in size. A good supply of all sizes should be available at the show.

Suggested construction details are shown on next page.

