

PEONY PALOOZA!
Exhibitor's Guide 2024

Do you grow your own peonies and want to show them off? Enter your peonies into Peony Palooza at the Scott Arboretum! There are two categories open to the public: cut peonies and floral arranging. Each category has a **competitive** (judged) and **non-competitive** (not judged) option. Continue reading to learn more about entering your peonies into the show.

Who: [Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College](#) and the [Mid-Atlantic Peony Society](#) (MAPS)

Where:

[Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College: Wister Center](#)

500 College Ave
Swarthmore, PA 19081

Complete Schedule:

Date	Time	Activity
Tuesday, May 14	2 - 7 pm	Drop off for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competitive cut peonies - Non-competitive cut peonies - Competitive flower arrangement - Non-competitive flower arrangements - Peony photo contest
	7pm	Judging of competitive cut peonies to begin
Wednesday, May 15	9:30 am - noon	Drop off for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-competitive cut peonies - Competitive flower arrangement - Non-competitive flower arrangements - Peony photo contest
	12 - 2pm	Judging of peony photo contest
	1 - 7 pm	Peony Show Open to Public
	3 pm	Judging of competitive floral arrangements begin
	3 - 6 pm	Make and Take Youth Peony Arranging
	5 pm	Judging for Youth Peony Arranging Contest
Thursday, May 16	10 am - 5 pm	Peony Show Open to Public

	3 pm	95 Years Highlights Tour: Peonies
	5 - 7 pm	Pick up of all Peony Entries*

* Any entries not picked up by 7pm on May 16 will be composted or become prop

Tips for Cutting Peonies:

- Early in the morning is ideal for cutting flowers.
- Select a bloom that is either at the marshmallow stage (soft and squishy) or starting to open.
- Cut the stem on the diagonal with sharp clippers or a sharp knife, 16 to 24 inches below the herbaceous bloom (shorter for Itoh and tree peonies). Stems will be recut when you put the flower in the vase for competition.
- Place cut stem(s) in a container of room temperature water (optional: adding floral preservatives or drops of lemon juice to water to prevent bacteria clogging the stem).
- Bring the bloom indoors and keep it away from direct sunlight and heat sources.
- If the flower is opening too quickly, you can place the container and cut flowers in the refrigerator to slow the growth cycle down.
- If you notice a lot of ants on your peony, submerge it in room temperature water and the ants should float to the surface.

How To Enter Cut Peony Flowers: Competitive and Non-Competitive

- Competitive cut peonies will be judged Tuesday, May 14 starting at 7pm

Before You Deliver your Entry: Decide which class(es) you would like to enter cut peony flowers, or MAPS representatives can help you decide which class is appropriate for your entries. You do not need to know the cultivar name of the peony in order to enter it for competition.

Classes for Cut Herbaceous Peonies

- CLASS 1: 3 blossoms—red, same cultivar
- CLASS 2: 3 blossoms—white, same cultivar
- CLASS 3: 3 blossoms—coral/peach, same cultivar
- CLASS 4: 3 blossoms—pink, same cultivar
- CLASS 5: Flower form—Single: 1 blossom—any color
- CLASS 6: Flower form—Japanese: 1 blossom—any color
- CLASS 7: Flower form—Anemone: 1 blossom—any color
- CLASS 8: Flower form—Semi-double: 1 blossom—any color
- CLASS 9: Flower form—Double: 1 blossom—any color
- CLASS 10: Flower form—Double: 1 blossom—red or dark pink
- CLASS 11: 3 blossoms, any flower form, 3 different colors

Classes for Tree and Itoh Hybrid Peonies

- CLASS 12: Tree (woody) peony, 1 blossom, any color, any flower form
- CLASS 13: Itoh hybrid (Intersectional), 1 blossom, any color (except yellow), any flower form
- CLASS 14: Itoh hybrid (Intersectional), 1 blossom, yellow, any flower form

Entry Details

- Exhibitors can place multiple entries into classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 13, and 14 as long as the entries are of different cultivars.
- Exhibitors can place only one entry into classes 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.
- Exhibitors can place entries in all 14 classes.

At the Scott Arboretum (Wister Center):

- Park along College Avenue or in the Wister Center parking lot.
- Go inside the Wister Center and find a volunteer to assist with entering your peony into the show.
 - Glass vases and jars with water will be provided upon entry.
- **Groom your peony:** Any leaves below water level need to be removed. It is your choice if you want to remove all leaves or leave one leaf.
- **Confirm which class(es)** you should enter with a volunteer. (For competitive entries only.)
- **Fill out a 3" x 5" index card** (provided) with the name of the class (competition only), the exhibitor's name, and the cultivar (if known) for each entry.

Tips for Judged Peonies

- Stem length for herbaceous cut peonies should be 12"-18". Itoh hybrid peonies should have stems at least 12" and tree peonies typically are shorter, but need to be long enough to provide support to the blossom in a short vase.
- At the time of judging, the peonies should be approaching or in full bloom.
- Judging is based on:
 - Condition 25%
 - Form 25%
 - Color 25%
 - Stem and foliage 10%
 - Size 15%
 - Uniformity is important for the classes with more than one blossom per vase.
- Cultivar names are not required for entry or for judging, but can be helpful to educate the public.

How To Enter Flower Arrangements: Competitive and Noncompetitive

- Competitive Flower Arrangements will be judged on Wednesday, May 15 starting at 3pm

Design your arrangement at home.

Guidelines for Flower Arrangements:

- Competitive arrangements must have at least three peonies. Non-competitive arrangements must have at least one peony.
- The arrangement cannot be larger than 22 inches wide by 30 inches deep.
- Non-Competitive Arrangements:
 - Put your name on the bottom of the container with tape.

At the Scott Arboretum (Wister Center):

- Park along College Avenue or in the Wister Center parking lot.
- Go inside the Wister Center and find a volunteer to assist with entering your flower arrangement into the show.
- Find the competitive or noncompetitive arrangement area.
- Fill out a 3 x 5 index card (provided) with the exhibitor's name.
- Water will be available to top off the container, if needed.

Floral Arrangement Judging Rubric (Competitive only)

Floral arrangements will be judged on a 20 point scale, with each category below being worth a maximum of 5 points.

- Originality
- Construction
- Color Harmony
- Design Balance and Proportion

Youth Peony Arranging Contest

Entry Details:

- Wednesday, May 15 from 3 - 5 pm
- Children of all ages are welcome to participate.
- Arrangements will be created on-site using materials provided by the Arboretum.
- Children will be able to take home their arrangements after the program.
- Children have the option to make their flower arrangements and take them without entering the competition.

Flower Arrangement Judging Criteria

- Youth Peony Arranging will be judged using a 12 point rubric, with each category being worth a maximum of 3 points.
 - Color - Combination of color is pleasing and appropriate
 - Balance - Shows visual and actual balance
 - Harmony - Component parts blend together
 - Proportion - Container and flowers are in good proportion

- Classes will be based on age ranges of children.
- Judging will be held at 5:00 pm
- The top floral arrangements in each class will have the opportunity to enter their floral arrangement into the adult exhibition that evening and for inclusion in the public show on Thursday, May 16 from 10 am - 5 pm.

Pick up of all entries:

- Children can make their flower arrangements and take them home at the conclusion of the judging on Wednesday, May 15 around 6 pm or youth arrangements can be picked up on Thursday, May 16 between 10 am - 7pm at the Wister Center.
 - Any entries not picked up by May 16 at 7pm will be given away or composted.
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Peony Photo Contest

Entry Details

- Tuesday, May 14 from 2 - 7pm or Wednesday, May 15 from 9:30 am - 12 pm.
- All photos must have at least one peony flower.
- Minimum photo size is 4x6 inches. Maximum photo size is 8x10 inches.
- Photos must be framed or on a stretched canvas.
- Include the photographer's name, phone number, and email on the back of the photo.

Judging Criteria

- Photos will be judged on Wednesday, May 15th between 12 - 2pm on the following criteria:
 - Lighting
 - Creativity
 - Composition
 - Impact
 - Use of Color
 - Points of Interest

Pick up of Photos:

- Photos must be picked up on Thursday, May 16 from 5-7pm. Any photos not picked up by Thursday, May 16th at 7pm will become property of MAPS.
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Contact Jeff Jabco (jjabco1@swarthmore.edu) from the Scott Arboretum or Bernie Miller (brmilleriii@yahoo.com) of Mid-Atlantic Peony Society if you have any questions.