

## **How to become an ADS trained judge**

The ADS, working with and through local society Judging Chairs, has a program to train and credential judges. There are three levels of judges – **Candidate, Accredited, and Senior**. Someone wishing to become a judge, signs up to be a Candidate (minimal requirements, listed below) and then participates in training, online and at seminars, and in on-the-job training at shows.

### **Candidate Judge**

To get started as a Candidate Judge you must:

- have a desire to judge
- be a member of ADS
- participate in the training (we offer two in-person judging seminars a year) and actual judging
- have a copy of the *Classification and Handbook of Dahlias* (comes with ADS membership) and the *Guide to Judging Dahlias*, available on the ADS website store
- plan to exhibit

Once you are a Candidate, your training, judging experience, and exhibiting experience will lead you fulfill the requirements to move up to Accredited Judge and eventually Senior Judge.

### **Accredited Judge**

To become an Accredited Judge, you are required to have:

- exhibited dahlias for five years
- passed a written examination on judging dahlias based on the current ADS Judging Manual, the ADS Classification and Handbook of Dahlias and the ADS Seedling Scorecard
- served as a Candidate Judge in at least five dahlia shows in the last three years
- acquired a current ADS Judging Manual

### **Senior Judge**

To become a Senior Judge, you are required to have:

- served a four-year apprenticeship as an Accredited Judge
- judged at a trial garden or seedling bench, judging at least once per year for the past four years.
- demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Evaluation Chair your ability to use an ADS Evaluation Scorecard in judging seedlings
- demonstrated the ability to properly classify blooms as to size, type, and color

- demonstrated your ability to identify what a seedling would compete against going forward, either from memory or from the ADS Classification and Handbook of Dahlias
- passed the Senior Judge's Test

Judges at the shows work in teams with judges at various levels. In addition to the serious work of correctly and fairly choosing the winning blooms, everyone learns a lot as they observe and discuss the blooms, and it's a lot of fun! It is also a great way to contribute to the society and to interact and forge relationships with the members.

The American Dahlia Society has also a number of judging resources for ADS members on its website. If you are an ADS member, sign into the member's section to access these resources. Be sure to check out the new (January 2023) Judge's Online Curriculum. Even if you aren't ready to become a judge, studying these modules will enhance your growing skills.

ADS members, please refer to the last ADS Bulletin for the login information.

(Credit: <https://www.dahliasocietyofohio.org/judging-dahlias> )