



Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania

Rules for Spring 2026 Orchid Show Exhibits

1. Agreement to Comply with Show Exhibit Rules

- a. The Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania (OSWP) welcomes Vendors, Orchid Societies, and Others to contribute to the 2026 Orchid Show Exhibits. The following rules govern exhibits, entries, judging, and participation. Submission of an Intent to Exhibit or Completing a Vendor Contract constitutes an agreement to comply with these rules.

2. Commitment to Exhibit

- a. All show vendors selling orchids are required to place an Orchid Exhibit in the Exhibit Room of the show utilizing an assigned area of at least 25 sq. ft. A vendor is automatically registered as an exhibitor once the signed contract is received by the Vendor Chair. Vendors who want to exhibit in spaces larger than 25 sq. ft. need to request this from the Exhibits Chair.
- b. An Intent to Exhibit by those other than vendors shall be submitted to Gary VanGelder via email (gvangelder@verizon.net) or by mail to: 6701 April Lane, Pittsburgh, PA 15236.
- c. An Intent to Exhibit communication must be received no later than Sunday, March 29, 2026.
- d. A request for exhibit space shall also specify the preferred exhibit size and whether more than one open side is wanted. Being open on more than one side exhibit spaces are limited.
- e. A request to exhibit must also include an email address that is checked at least once per day. Confirmation and further details will utilize that address. Providing a cell phone number that can receive text messages would be helpful for quick contact during setup.
- f. The Exhibit Chair will make reasonable efforts to accommodate requested exhibit size, open sides and location preferences; however, the Show Committee reserves the right to adjust exhibit size, open sides or location as necessary.

3. OSWP Supplied Exhibit Infrastructure and Materials

- a. The OSWP provides 6-foot-high dividers and black cloth backdrops. An exhibitor may not replace these backdrops with their own unless written prior permission is granted.
- b. No items may be affixed to or hung from the divider and backdrop system except for one light weight clip-on light fixture on each of the front upright posts without permission.
- c. Exhibitors are responsible for protecting the venue floor from damage. The Exhibitor is responsible for supplying any materials this requires.
- d. Exhibitors must supply all staging materials not expressly provided by written prior arrangements with OSWP.
- e. The OSWP will provide a limited amount of barrier rope and stands to protect exhibits open on multiple sides. However, it is the responsibility of the exhibitor to provide barriers if a simple rope style is insufficient.
- f. The OSWP will hang exhibit number cards from the backdrops prior to exhibitors setting up. The location of the card can be adjusted slightly by an exhibitor, but the number must remain easily visible.
- g. The OSWP will provide unified signage identifying the exhibitor after judging is finished. An exhibitor may add additional signage after judging is done if it does not detract.
- h. The OSWP will place a small plastic pot in front of each exhibit after AOS Judging for the collection of People Choice tickets. It can be shifted slightly by the exhibitor.



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4. Electrical Service and Water Features

- a. The OSWP will provide one duplex electrical receptacle for each exhibit space. Larger spaces may have several, but this is not guaranteed. These are supplied on the floor utilizing branching extension cords unless a wall outlet is directly behind an exhibit. Please be sure you use only the outlet intended for your exhibition area. Check with OSWP if not sure.
- b. Exhibitors shall supply any additional splitters, extension cords, lighting, and related electrical equipment they need. All equipment is expected to be in good shape and safe.
- c. Any water feature must have exhibitor-supplied overflow and leak protection.
- d. All pumps must be connected to an exhibitor-supplied ground-fault protection device.
- e. Any fog/mist generator must be small enough that the mist does not leave the exhibit
- f. If any electrical device cannot be switched on or off easily from outside of an exhibit, an exhibitor must always be present when on or off is needed.

5. Composition of Exhibits

- a. Exhibits shall not extend above the backdrop
- b. Exhibits shall consist of orchids arranged to best display their aesthetic qualities with appropriate staging and contribute to the overall beauty of the show.
- c. No minimum number of plants is required; however, orchids must predominate, and the space must be filled in an artistic manner.
- d. International vendors are permitted to construct a reduced staging tabletop display within their assigned 25 sq. ft. space. However, the display must include enough orchids arranged artistically so that it is visually appealing within the allotted area and enhances the overall beauty of the show.

6. Restrictions on Plant Material

- a. Cut orchid flowers are prohibited in live orchid exhibits.
- b. Live flowering plants are prohibited in cut-flower exhibits.
- c. No flowering plants other than orchids may appear in any exhibit.
- d. Use of distracting background foliage (e.g., highly variegated foliage) is strongly discouraged.

7. Cut Flower Exhibits

- a. Any cut-flower orchid exhibit requires prior approval from the Show Chairs.
- b. The 2026 OSWP Show Schedule does not include cut-flower classes, and therefore such exhibits are ineligible for class or trophy awards, with the sole exception of People's Choice.

8. Single and Small Quantity Plant Entries

- a. Single plants will be accepted for exhibition and judging.
- b. Lasty minute single and small quantity of plants may be offered to be placed in the OSWP Society Exhibit or in the Overflow Exhibit if not claimed by another exhibitor.
- c. An exhibitor may exhibit several plants in the Overflow Exhibit, but it is highly preferred they try to work with an existing exhibitor if they have more than a few plants.
- d. The size of the Overflow exhibit area is limited. Priority will be given to the registered plants. No more plants will be accepted once the Overflow Exhibit area is full.



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9. Conditions for Plants in the OSWP Society Exhibit

- a. It is expected that anyone bringing in plants for the OSWP Society Exhibit will contact the coordinators ahead of time to let them know what to expect.
- b. Plants must be free of disease and pests and be prepared suitable for public display.
- c. The Society Exhibit Coordinators will make final decisions about which orchids are included. There are times when a good orchid just does not work in the exhibit and they will move it to Overflow. Plants with disease, pests or poor aesthetics will not be used.
- d. Minor adjustment may be performed at the discretion of the OSWP Society Exhibit Coordinators. Approval will normally be obtained before full removal of any leaf or flower.
- e. Society Exhibit plants must arrive before Noon on Friday, April 10, 2026, unless other arrangements have been made.

10. Exhibitor Categories

- a. Open Exhibitor: A person who sells more than 100 orchid plants per year and/or is a professional horticulturist.
- b. Amateur Exhibitor: A person who sells no more than 100 orchid plants per year and is not a professional horticulturist.
- c. Novice Exhibitor: An Amateur who has entered exhibits in three or fewer previous shows. Novices may collaborate with others and may receive guidance from an experienced mentor. A Novice Exhibit should be limited to a 9 sq. ft. tabletop.
- d. Exhibits can contain a mix of Open and Amateur plants. The Exhibit itself will be classed upon the source for most of the plants within it and/or who set it up.

11. Exhibit Setup

- a. The Exhibit Room will be open for setup from 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM on Friday, April 10, 2026. Anything beyond 6:00 PM is by prior arrangement only. Registration deadline is 5PM.
- b. The Exhibit Room tends to be a bit crowded in the afternoon on setup day. All exhibitors are expected to allow access to all other exhibits.
- c. It helps to get supplies out of the room once they are no longer needed. All transport and staging supplies must be placed out of sight or removed from the Exhibit Room by the exhibitor prior to leaving on Friday.
- d. All exhibits must be completed and ready for judging by 7:30 AM on Saturday, April 11, 2026. A small opening may be available on Saturday morning before judging for minor tweaking, such as adding a label. No major plant rearrangement is allowed on Saturday.

12. Registration for Judging

- a. Initial Exhibitor and Plant Registration via email will open at 12:00 PM on Sunday, April 5, 2026, and will close at 9:00 PM on Thursday, April 9, 2026, to compile a starting database.
- b. Registration will open again on Friday April 10, 2026, and will be on-site. It will be available from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM in a nearby room. The 5:00 PM deadline is firm as judging paperwork needs created and reviewed by the Judging Team.
- c. Detailed registration procedures are provided in the Registration Instructions document.
- d. Unregistered plants may be placed in exhibits but must be appropriately labeled.
- e. The individual who coordinates each exhibit is ultimately responsible for confirming Plant Registration has accurate information and if any changes are made (additional plants, pulled plants, moved plants, etc.)



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13. Class Entry Rules

- a. The OSWP utilizes a class schedule developed by the Mid America Orchid Congress (MAOC). All plants must be registered to the correct class to be eligible to be judged.
- b. Uncertain entries shall be placed in the lowest-numbered appropriate class.
- c. Plants may be entered in only one class, except for the Specimen Class, which allows dual entry.
- d. The Foliage Class does not allow dual entry.
- e. Registration staff are available to assist with class selection.
- f. Species Class Definition - Species classes include natural hybrids.

14. Plant Label Requirements

- a. Exhibitors must provide their own display labels.
- b. Labels shall be attractive, easy to locate, clearly legible, and linked to the correct plant.
- c. No owner identifying information may appear in the exhibit until judging is complete.
- d. However, we strongly recommend a hidden label identifying the plant name and owner of each plant to be placed with each plant. We often end up with a forgotten plant or two and they are not always found in the area where they were exhibited.

15. Award Structure and Eligibility for Exhibit and Plant Classes

- a. Ribbons and Trophies will be awarded according to the Show Class Schedule and published Trophy List, including designated special trophies.
 - The Awards for the overall exhibits are divided between Open, Society, Amateur, and Novice. The first three are also divided by size.
- b. There is just one set of ribbon awards for all Plant Classes. These are open to all participants. Plant group Trophies are open to all exhibitors except for a few Amateur Only Trophies as identified in the Trophy Listing. Other than these few trophies, there is no separation between Open, Society, Amateur, and Novice for plant judging.

16. Ribbon & Trophy Judging Procedures

- a. Judges may award first, second, and third place ribbons when merited.
- b. Judges may withhold any ribbon award or trophy if no entry meets their expectations.
- c. Judges may subdivide plant classes when warranted.

17. American Orchid Society (AOS) Judging

- a. All exhibited plants are eligible for AOS judging unless otherwise designated.
- b. Exhibitors agree to comply with all AOS award requirements, including associated fees.
- c. Any plant an exhibitor does not want to be AOS judged or is not eligible must be clearly designated as 'Not For AOS' at the time of registration.

18. Public Viewing Hours

- a. Saturday, April 11, 2026 – Exhibits open between 11:00 AM and 12:00 PM and close at 5:00 PM; Vendors open 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
- b. Sunday, April 12, 2026 – Exhibits open 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM; Vendors open 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.



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19. Liability

- a. Reasonable precautions will be taken to safeguard exhibitor property.
- b. However, neither the Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania nor the Crowne Plaza Pittsburgh South shall be liable for loss or damage to exhibitor property.

20. Removal of Exhibits

- a. All exhibits must remain in place until 4:00 PM on Sunday, April 12, 2026.
- b. Items not removed by 5:00 PM can be disposed of by the Show Committee.
- c. We will not normally dispose of a valuable orchid if the plant has owner identification. However, it is the responsibility of the one who left it to make storage and transportation arrangements. A cell phone number on the hidden label would be helpful.

21. Authority and Interpretation

- a. Questions concerning policy interpretation shall be directed to the Show Chairpersons and Registration Team.
- b. All decisions of the Show Chairpersons and Registration Team are final.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their help in making the show successful, the Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania extends its appreciation to American Orchid Society Judges and Crowne Plaza personnel.

CONTACTS FOR EXHIBITS

Exhibits Chair: Gary VanGelder

(412) 638-9756; gvangelder@verizon.net

Registration Team Co-Chairs: Gary VanGelder & Mona Rice

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Exhibits Layout & Setup Chair: Bob Lusnak

(724) 444-0436; LJR2000@zoominternet.net

Judging Chair: Taylor Slaughter

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Judging Clerks Chair: Carol Panza

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Show Co-Chair: Kathy McCafferty

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Show Co-Chair: Mary Ann Pike

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Vendors Chair: Kaoru Kawasaki

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