

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S RURAL INSTITUTES
ABERDEENSHIRE FEDERATION
SCOTTISH CHARITY NUMBER SC000895



SWRI

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

DECEMBER 2012

*This booklet contains general guidelines only,
it is not a set of rules.*

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**Office Hours: Tuesday 9.30am-2.30pm
Thursday 9.30am-2.30pm**

Housewives Hints

1. Always read the schedules carefully, if in doubt about anything get more information from the Convener or Show Secretary or someone who is more familiar with competing.
2. If you are given a recipe try it out beforehand.
3. Judges must cut and taste every item entered and must open all jars to taste. It is not fair to competitors to discard without tasting.

Jams, Jellies and Chutney

Judges look for clean jars, well sealed, labels on straight, waxed disc on properly. If the item is for a Combined/Co-operative entry an additional cover with ribbon, colour to suit/match the other entries on the table may be added. Jars should be well filled. Screw top jars are acceptable but this is less skilful than covered jars. Screw top lids should be new. The first named ingredient in mixed fruit, etc, must be the most prominent one. Labels should be on straight and in the centre of the jar. Any coverings should be trimmed to fit the jar.

If unsure of pectin content of fruit use the Pectin Test (Page 76 of the SWRI 75th Anniversary Cookbook).

Choose nice shaped jars.

Choose fresh ingredients.

Fill jars up to the neck.



Jams and Jellies

Jams and Jellies should be well set but not too stiff as this indicates over boiling.

Chutney

Chutney ingredients should be well cooked. Melted Wax or wax disc on top.

Lemon Curd

Lemon Curd is best made with free-range eggs which make a much better colour.

Chutneys

Chutneys are best made at least 3 months beforehand. Melted wax disc on top of chutney.

Baking

Always use 'fresh' ingredients, especially flour, butter, margarine, as old ingredients can be tainted and spoil the end product.

Pastry

Flan cases must be well cooked – no soggy bottoms! Shortcut pastry should be short and crisp. Flaky pastry must not be hard. Plate tarts are best made on an enamel plate, the pastry cooks far better. Fluted tins should be used for sweet, plain for savoury.

Quiches

Quiches should be removed from tin and presented with a *little* garnish. Individual items should be small.

Fruit Loaves

Look for evenly fired ones with no cracks on the top (a damp cloth put over cracks when removed from oven closes it up). Fruit must be evenly distributed. No uncooked centres. Smooth sides and bottom (indicate well lined tins). Bought tin liners can be used but this is less skilful than lining the tin properly. Line tins with Baking Parchment very carefully, this prevents any marks on the finished item. Bought tin liners may not be acceptable for some shows.

Fruit Cakes

As with loaves, well mixed fruit, smooth sides and properly cooked, not over-fired.

Scones

Scones should be light to touch, evenly fired, even glaze on top, fruit evenly mixed. No sloped tops. If cut, take care to cut properly. Scones must all be the same size.

Pancakes -Pancakes should be evenly fired and all the same size. It should be possible to bend over the pancake without cracking.

Sponges

Both halves should be same depth. Sponge should be evenly fired. Only put in filling if asked in the schedule. No sugar sprinkled on top (this could be to hide something). Should be light to touch and no rough edges if tin is properly lined.

Biscuits/Shortbread

Biscuits/Shortbread must be crisp and not too big. When presenting small cakes/biscuits/tray bakes, make sure they are all the same size, if two or four are requested. If a variety of cakes are asked for – vary shape as well as flavours.

Always present neat items on a suitable plate/container.

Individual Item asked – make sure it is small and neat.

Decoration on any item should be small and neat, ie tiny bits of cherry and angelica or tiny sprig of parsley is much more effective than large bunch of parsley.

Co-operative Competition

Colour co-ordination is important. Items chosen must be suitable to the theme.

Think on this as a 'Shop Window'. If accessories are allowed choose very carefully not to overcrowd. Label any Own Choice items to save confusion. Base cloth is important and must be ironed, straight on table and place items at different heights, watch space – use all the space that is allowed.

Sweeties

If toffee is asked for be sure it is not fudge. If four squares asked must all be of equal size. Sweets don't always need to be all the same shape. Variety of flavours is good, ie use milk, plain, and white chocolate in a box of chocolates.

Drinks

If presenting in a bottle, please make sure there is no trace of previous contents, this prevents the entry being tainted. Label and date the bottle. Bottles should be filled. Always place a small glass for judge to use for tasting.



Serving dishes should be appropriate size for serving and must be clean with no spills. Use of doyleys enhances baking – it is not recommended to put doyleys under items that are to be cut. Don't put doyleys under savoury items.

If size or space is specified be sure to adhere to this.



Handcrafts Hints

Judges will be looking at design and use of colour, suitability of material, workmanship, techniques, finish and variety of skills used.

Please read the schedule very carefully more than once, then read the schedule again!

Decide on what you mean to enter and give yourself plenty of time.

Check again that the article is according to the schedule wording and sizes.

If there is a given pattern - use it, the judge will have studied and perhaps tried it out.

Crafts

Choose the best yarns and fabrics you can afford and make sure the scale of the pattern on the fabric fits in with the design. If using a new pattern try it out first. Make sure it is fit for the purpose in which it will be used. Article must be clean and fresh, preferably not laundered, but is preferable to something soiled. An article means one item, not a collection. Best use of a given quantity can be more than one.

Beadwork

Beadwork covers many aspects, sewn, embroidered, loom. Tension is most important, not too tight or it won't lie flat, or too loose that the threads are very apparent. All clasps, etc, must be well attached, and be able to take the weight of the beads.

Canvas Work

Canvas Work is any stitching, using any yarn, worked on canvas.

Card-making

When presenting cards, make sure they are firm enough to stand up. Add an insert and wording. Make sure the insert is attached. Put an envelope with the card. If using an aperture card stick it all round the aperture using wide double sided tape or Pritt-Stick type glue. Do NOT use water based glue or it will warp.

Crochet

Use an appropriate yarn or thread. Tension is most important. Thread crochet must be stretched. Damp or wet first and pin out and leave to dry. Use new pins.

Cross Stitch

Cross Stitch can be worked on Aida or even weave. All top stitches should be the same direction. No threads showing across the back. The item should be well stretched and framed. Make sure the line of fabric is even with the mount. Even if using a given pattern, creativity would be appreciated.

Cushions

A cushion has a pad ready to use, a cushion cover need not. An opening is preferable, either a zip or pillowcase flap. It is easier to insert in the middle of the back. The pad should be slightly larger to bulk out the cover.

Decoupage

Decoupage is mostly 3D. Cut your pictures very carefully and layer exactly one on top of the other. Silicone rubber sealant shows more skill. Be careful of trails of glue on cards.

Dressmaking

Choose fabric to suit the pattern. A plain fabric done well is better than a check done badly. Make sure everything matches exactly. Darts should be well shaped and stitching tension good. If this is being made to fit a different shape, add a note. Finishing is very important. Over-locking and machine buttonholing are acceptable. Buttons should be of good quality and suited to the material.

Embroidery

A piece of embroidery means the back will be looked at. An embroidery picture will not. Fabric Boxes for competition are mostly sewn, not glued. There should be no glue showing and the box must be suitable to purpose eg drawers that open well and hinges strong.

Knitting

Tension is most important and seam finishing. Try ladder stitch for seams and grafting shoulders. Yarns should be joined at the edge or spliced. NO KNOTS. Do not press synthetic yarns. You will get more even tension with a wool mix. Baby garments should have no lacy patterns or ribbons at the neck. Replace with a button and band. It is better to use flat buttons on baby garments.

Patchwork

Is it hand or machine? Read schedule carefully. Accuracy is vital. Fabric to be cut on the straight. All points and corners should be well matched. Small stitches should be strong enough to withstand wear if needed. If article is to be hung attach plenty of rings or hangers.

Toys

Toys should be made with suitable fabric and well stuffed. No loose parts, eyes and noses should be really tight. Whiskers should not be used for baby toys. Remember a toy is to be played with so removable clothes would add to the appeal. No glass eyes on toys for babies. Toy filling should conform to British Kite standard.

Remember - if something is presented well it makes a big difference!