



Judging & Handy Hints 2011 Canning Show Sections



CELEBRATION CAKE

Overall impression

Balance, proportion, colour, design

Presentation

Suitability and finish of boards and drape

Placement of cakes and/or pillars

Cover of cake

Texture, colour, finish, shape

Feature Decoration

This may be on the top or sides of exhibit

Addition decorations

On the top, side or base border to complement the feature

Degree of Difficulty

The application and mastering of difficult techniques to a high degree

Creativity

The use of innovative and imaginative design in presentation and cake decorating techniques and skills

NOVELTY CAKE

Overall impression

Visual appeal, proportion, harmony in design and colour.

Presentation

Size, shape and suitability and finish of the board in relation to the exhibit.

Execution of Skills

Skills used in construction to achieve a good shape and proportion.

Use of techniques to decorate and finish exhibit.

The application and use of colour on the main feature and surrounds.

Degree of Difficulty

The mastering of skills and techniques to a high degree.

Creativity

The use of innovative and imaginative design.

DECORATED DOLL CAKE

Overall impression

Visual appeal, design and colour.

Presentation

Suitability and finish of board and/or drape.

Execution of Skills

Skill used to achieve good shape and proportion.

Use of techniques used to decorate and finish exhibit.

Degree of Difficulty

The mastering of skills and techniques to a high degree.

Creativity

The use of innovative and imaginative design.

CAKES GENERAL

Check the class requirements carefully, this is what judges will look for.

Line cake tins carefully and remove lining paper for presentation.

Cake rack marks should not be evident.

Cakes must be level (no hollows or depressions) and of even colour. Hollow or depression indicates insufficient cooking.

Use clean, dry cake tins without wrinkles, dents or chips.

What judges look for – even, golden brown colour with no spotting; level or slightly rounded top with unbroken surface; fine and tender crust; straight sides with no overhang; even, fine crumb with no tunnelling; easily cut and not crumbly; velvet texture, delicate and smooth; lacking flavour.

Hints

Best results are achieved by using highest grade of shortening, as flour is largely determined by this.

Handy Hints

Sponge Cake

Lightness of mixing is essential. Over-enthusiastic mixing will flatten and toughen the sponge. Do not open the oven door until cooking time has elapsed. Never slam the door or create draughts. Do not move the cake in the oven while it is cooking.

Fruit Cake

Fruit sinking to the bottom instead of being evenly distributed is a sign that there is insufficient flour or too much liquid in the mixture. Butter is better than some of the more oily substitutes for holding up the fruit. If the cake becomes too brown when cooking, cover with a sheet of brown paper (do not use foil) large enough to completely cover the top of the tin, but not big enough to touch the sides of the oven.

Lamingtons

The chocolate and coconut coating is the decoration. A handy hint is to use a little sieved apricot jam.

Packet Cakes

Buy packets that are as fresh as possible. Use only the freshest eggs and milk. Try adding a few drops of essence in keeping with the variety being baked.

Pavlova

The outside should be white and dry. The base should be clean and smooth. There should be no weeping from cracks (if any).

Pikelets

When making pikelets, do not over-beat. Better results are obtained from letting the mixture stand for an hour before cooking.

Carrot Cake

Well risen with straight neat sides and a slightly rounded to flat top, golden to dark brown. Fine, even and moist. The cake should not be crumbly.

Scones

The dough (before baking) should be light and soft, not tacky or dry. Never over-knead. The dough can be rolled or patted to about 1 inch thick before cutting, but do it quickly and lightly or the dough will become tough.



BISCUITS

Should be small, not too thick, firm and crisp. They should be even in size and colour, and of good shape. Unhandled look and eye-appeal are important.

Common Faults

Over-baking, too thick, or too large, coarse texture, too moist, too highly coloured and decorated. Avoid opening the oven door until at least two-thirds of the way through baking. Do not stack biscuits during cooling as this causes sogginess. Do not store separate varieties together in one container. Never store biscuits in the same container as cakes as this softens the biscuits.

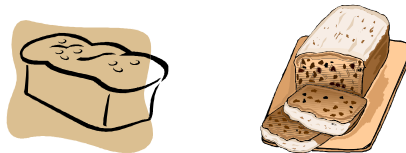
Hints

A spotless oven tray and slow cooking are essential; castor sugar gives a finer texture.



Eggs

To test eggs for freshness. Fill a basin with water. Put the eggs in one by one. A fresh egg will sink to the bottom and will lie flat. If it rises slightly it is not perfectly fresh, and if it floats, it is bad.



Bread

To check if yeast is fresh – pour a teaspoonful in a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of warm water with a teaspoon of sugar. Set aside for a few minutes. The yeast is dead or is not activating if foam does not cover the surface of the water as the result of fermentation.

Always use fresh ingredients – store in fridge after opening.



JAMS & PRESERVES

Brand names on container and lids must be removed or covered.

All exhibits must be clearly labelled for identification (e.g. Orange Marmalade) and must display date of production.

Filled jars should be no further than 1 cm from the top of the jar/bottle.

Only clear glass jars and bottles to be used.

Jams should be well set, but not stiff. Colour should be bright.

There should be no scum, mould, blemishes, sugar crystals, or weeping on top.

Peel, fruit or vegetables in jam, marmalade, chutney, relish and pickles should be evenly distributed. There should be no air bubbles and the surface, particularly in jellies, should be level.

Colour plays an important part in presentation. In a class for more than one jar, make your selection so that colours complement each other.

Never present an exhibit that has been exhibited and opened at another show.

Lemon Butter

Is judged on appearance, which should be bright and attractive, smoothness of texture, flavour, colour, and freedom from specks of egg white, lemon peel or pith.

Jellies

Jellies will not always reflect the original colour of the fruit used, but should always be clear and bright without sediment, cloudiness or air bubbles.

Marmalades

The marmalade should be fresh, bright, with a good jelly consistency and the correct colour of the fruit used, not dark or cloudy. There should be no seeds or signs of fermentation, crystallization or mould. The rind should be tender and evenly distributed, and the flavour should be a good flavour of the fruit used, sharp but not bitter or sugary.

Chutneys

The colour should be a rich fresh colour of the fruit, vinegar, sugar and spices used. The aroma should be pungent and appetizing. Judged on appearance, presentation, colour, aroma, flavour, consistency and texture, seal and labelling. There should be no separation of vinegar from the fruit.

Pickles

Fruit and vegetables in pickles should be crisp but tender, not tough or overcooked. Jars of thickened pickles should be filled to the brim to allow for shrinkage.





FLOWERS

A pinch of alum in water will lengthen the life of cut flowers.

Gerberas should be cut early in the morning and the ends burnt.

A mixture of milk and lukewarm water in equal parts sponged onto ferns can improve and freshen.

Roses

Water at the base of the plant and avoid getting the leaves wet. Hot humid weather is a breeding ground for rose diseases. Boiled water from fish (when cold) will improve your roses wonderfully.

Cacti & Succulents

For good drainage, use a layer of broken crockery or gravel in the bottom of the pot. Fill potting mix to within 2-3 cm of the top then cover the surface with a layer of fine pebbles or gravel to reduce surface tension and allow water to soak in. Empty any water from saucer after watering. Feed regularly but lightly with an all-purpose fertilizer. In winter, do not feed, and reduce water.

Cattleyas

Cattleyas are usually grown in hanging baskets of wooden slats or tree fern, filled with a mix of bark chunks, broken terracotta, tree fern and other chunky material through which they twine their roots. Top dress with old animal manure. Water the baskets by dunking them in the sink.



FLORAL ART

A judge will look for –

Good design, balance and harmony. Flowers to be in proportion to the container in which they are used, that is, arranged to be at least 1 and ½ times the height of vase.

Well conditioned flowers.

Good focal point.

Firm foundation.

Bouquets

Well wired and covered with florist tape making sure that no uncovered wires are showing. Flowers to be of good quality and well treated, also that colours blend. Make the whole bouquet as light as possible.

Pot Plants

Two classes – Foliage plant and plants in bloom. Points should be awarded for condition, gracefulness and suitability of pots.

Artificial Flowers

Fabric and moulded. General points to watch for when judging all artificial flowers.

Observe natural shape and formation, colour and proportion.

Suitability of materials chosen to work with as well as the blending of colours.

Do not mix different materials, e.g. leaves should be of the same type of material as the flowers.

Care with finishing is most important, and should be neat with no wire showing.

Avoid bulkiness when attaching flowers to stems.

Good workmanship throughout most important.

Presentation for a competition is important.

If using a container this should enhance work and give a pleasing effect over all



FRUIT

All fruit shown, should be of top quality, fresh in appearance and free from disease, blemishes or bruising. Fruit should not show signs of sunburn or exposure to heavy rain.

Cape Gooseberry

Very little pruning is needed unless the plant is being trained to a trellis. Pinching back of the growing shoots will induce more compact and shorter plants.

Loquats:

Firm, slightly immature fruits are best for making pies or tarts. The fruits are also commonly used to make jam, jelly and chutney.



VEGETABLES

Some don'ts when planting vegies:

Don't line beds with black plastic or arsenic-treated pine logs.

Don't plant citrus trees in the vegetable patch as they don't like their shallow feeder roots disturbed.

Don't grow any vegetable in the same place year after year.

Don't throw fresh lawn clippings on top of vegies.

Don't spray insecticides indiscriminately on every vegetable as they kill the predators as well as the pests.

Don't mulch with woodchips.

In vegetables, "quality" is the most important factor, and therefore all conditions which have an influence on quality must be considered. General things such as maturity, freshness, internal characteristics and freedom from disease, insect damage and blemishes being important. The judge must also be familiar with the characteristics of the different types and market requirements, particularly in regard to size and types. Too much emphasis is often placed by society's exhibitors and judges on size, whereas this aspect is important only in respect of certain vegetables. Cutting quality is important, especially with the root vegetables and pumpkins, potatoes etc.

The following standards are suggested for the principal vegetables:

French Beans

Pods should be fresh and young with no pronounced development of the seeds; of good colour; straight (compatible with the cultivar); fleshy, tender and brittle. Pods should be uniform in size and should not be misshapen or over mature.

Broccoli

One centre primary head to be exhibited with 6 inches of stalk. Head to be compact, tender, clean, of a dark green colour and free from blemishes, insects and diseases. Flowers opening or trace of yellowing must be regarded as a defect.

Broad Beans

Pods should be long, straight, broad, well filled, well developed, having a clear skin and containing at least five large tender beans.

Beetroot

Roots should have a smooth skin, crisp, tender flesh, evenly coloured. Crown should be free from scaling or sunburn. The tap root should be small and well defined. The stalk attachment should be small and free from side shoots. The presence of side roots, zoning and growth cracks are defects.

Cabbage

Heart should be firm, compact, of good colour and fresh. There should be an absence of seed stalks and disease and insect damage.

Should be exhibited with protective leaves attached and the leaves trimmed sufficiently to expose the curd. Curd should be compact, deep, firm and perfectly white. Should be free from burriness and richness. There should be an absence of leaves growing through the curd.

Carrots

Colour and uniformity of size are important. The roots should have a smooth skin and a small core with a well developed cortex. A deep orange colour is desirable. Forking, growth cracks, side rootlets, discoloured crown (green), multiple crowns and coarse attachments are defects. The roots should be exhibited with as least their tops attached.

Leeks

Should have uniformly thick, long, tender, firm, well blanched stems and no tendency to softness or puffiness.

Onions

Should be firm, of a uniform size and shape, with a small neck. There should be no depression or softness round the base of the neck. The protective scale-like leaves should completely surround the onion. Exhibits should be free of peelers, doubles, splits and seeders.

Peas

The pods should be of uniform size and maturity, young and well filled with large tender peas. The peas should be of good flavour, desirably sweet and of a uniform dark green colour.

Potatoes

Should be uniform in size, shape and general appearance. The tubers should be medium size (not too large) and with shallow eyes. Of good internal quality as determined by the cut. Defects are presence of greening, damage by insect pests and diseases, second growth, flecking, hollow heart, mechanical injury and presence of growth cracks.

Pumpkin

Should be mature and possess good internal colour; deep, firm and finely grained flesh. Should be solid and weighty. The specimens should be exhibited with a small portion of the stem attached. Defects are over maturity, presence of "bone" and pale flesh.

Parsnips

Colour and uniformity of roots are important, Should have a clear, smooth skin and be of good shape and texture with a small core and well developed cortex. The roots should be exhibited with at least half their tops attached. Defects are forking, presence of side roots and growth cracks and over maturity. A white colour is an advantage.

Rhubarb

The stalks should be long, thick, fresh, clean, well shaped, tender and brittle and possess a deep red colour extending as far as possible up the stem. Texture should be fine. Defects are toughness in breaking, coarse texture, staleness and pale colour. Red flesh as well as skin is highly desirable.

Radish

Should be crisp, fresh, solid, young and of good colour. Defects are hollowness, pithiness and over maturity.

Lettuce

The heads should be firm, clean, solid, fresh, tender, crisp and of good flavour. Defects are over maturity, presence of blemishes such as tip burn, damage caused by insects, diseases etc. The exhibits should be trimmed of loose leaves.

Silverbeet

Size is an important feature. The stalks should be long, broad, clean, fresh and free of blemishes. The leaf stalk should be of a clear white colour. Defects are over maturity, presence of soil and staleness.

Swede Turnips

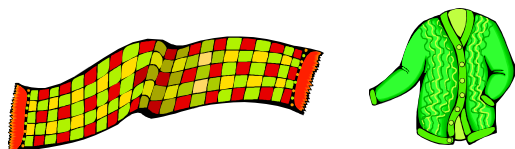
Roots should possess a clean, smooth skin and be of good shape. They should be tender, sweet flavour, young and free from side roots. Defects are forking, woodiness, bitter flavour, irregular shape and presence of growth cracks.

Tomatoes

Should be uniform in size, shape and appearance, possessing clean, unblemished skin. Fruit should be evenly ripened, of good colour and flavour, and having a minimum of core. The should be firm and free from puffiness. Flesh should be thick both of outer walls and sections. Defects are presence of cracking, blemishes due to insect pest, diseases, weather and large core.

Table Turnips

Roots should be young, crisp and free of side roots. The skin should be smooth and regular. Defects are over maturity, forking, irregular shape and presence of growth cracks.



MACHINE KNITTING

Presentation

Suitability of yarn for stitch chosen
Placement and matching of panels
Trimmings
Colour and size of buttons

Balance

Fronts and backs same length
Patterns matching at side, shoulder and sleeve seams
Welts match at seams – length of pattern
Welts in comparison to cuffs
Buttons and buttonholes to suit garment
Neck shaping even
Sleeve shaping even

Tension

Knitting even
No pulls or knots
No Slubs (in plain yarn)
Ribbing even
Tension correct for pattern and yarn
Cast on tension correct

Garment **NOT TO BE WASHED**, with the exception of oiled yarns

Garment **NOT TO BE PREVIOUSLY WORN**



Hand Knitting

Presentation of garment or Article

Cleanliness
Pressing
Finish
Shape
Evenness of Knitting

Neat even work. No knots or loose ends, matching thread, woollen garments to be sewn with same wool. If garment is an odd shape make stating this is made for short body etc.

Hints on what Judges look for:

Presentation of work is most important. This means clean garments or articles. Pressed correctly – not over pressed. Mounted if schedule allows – i.e. knitted table centres or doyleys. Stuffed correctly if a knitted toy – firm but not over stuffed. Cushions stuffed in the corners and firm enough to be comfortable.

Suitability of yarn used for garment. Finer wools or synthetics for baby wear and bed jackets. Coarser yarns for adults and children.

Proportions are very important. Sleeves must not be too long or too short for the size of the garment.

The inside of the garment must have no loose threads. They must all be neatly sewn in on the seams only or if knitted in the round, where a seam would normally be. There must be no gaps in seams. All joints must always be at the seams – never in the middle of a row. Knots are not allowed ever.

Seams must be sewn up with the yarn used in the knitting. Seams must be flat or back stitched, never over sewn, and neatly done.

For baby clothes – usually up to twelve months, all seams must be flat.

This also applies to Bed Jacket for adults. For children and adults seams may be flat or back stitched.

The bands on a garment must have flat seams and must all be knitted on the same size needles and same pattern used for ribbing. Bands must be same width for back and front and the sleeve bands even in width.

Buttons must be sewn on with yarn used for knitting..

Button holes should be large enough only for the buttons used. These must be evenly spaced except at the waist band and neck edge.

Shank buttons must never be used for baby wear – either back or front.

Ribbons must also be sewn on with the yarn used for the knitting. They must always be the same colour and material – i.e. satin or taffeta but may be wider for bonnet straps and narrower for dress, coat and booties.

Shawls whether square, round or triangular, must be flat. This also applies to table centres and doyleys unless of course, the pattern has a fluted edging.

Patterns must be correct throughout the garment i.e. cables twisted evenly and correctly. Plain knitting such as stocking stitch and garter stitch must be smooth and even throughout the garment.

Picking up of stitches at the neck edge for the band should be evenly spaced and no holes showing.

Bands should be firm and elastic but not too tight.

Casting on and off must be even and elastic.

Armholes and neck openings must be large enough and in proportion to the garment size.

Fairisle and patterns where more than one colour yarn used, threads may be woven in on the back or may be carried across. However, no more than five stitches and then caught in. This is especially important with children's clothes where fingers pull threads and spoil the knitting.

True Fairisle only uses two colours in each row.

If a band of Fairisle is incorporated in the garment, it is sometimes advisable to use one size larger needle for that band so that the weaving does not tighten up the tension.

Stripes must always be matched at the seams and each stripe sewn up with that same colour and ended off within that same stripe.

KNITTED TOYS AND CLOTHES FOR TOYS & TEA POT COSYS

The same rules apply for all toys and clothes for toys as for other knitting.

Articles such as Tea Pot Cosy's should be lined and made suitable for keeping the pot warm.

The hand and spout openings must be large enough for the handle and spout.

For presentation, it may be displayed on a teapot.

If a scarf has a tassel end, the tassels must all be tied the same way.



Knitting

Join a new ball of yarn at the beginning of a row whenever possible. If the yarn covers the width of your knitted piece four times, you will have enough to finish a row. If not, join a ball of yarn (the odd length can be used for sewing up).

The main causes of uneven knitting are using worn or bent needles, or not checking the size of the needles before use. Perfect needles are essential if perfect work is to be achieved.

When working crew necks where the neckband is doubled, work the last 4 rows on larger needles to allow greater stretch and better fit.

Don't leave your work in the middle of a row otherwise the stitches will loosen and a mark will show.

To make a Pom-Pon

Cut two circles of cardboard to the size needed for the pom-pom. Cut a round hole in the centre. Wind the yarn round and round the cardboard until the centre hole is completely filled up. Place the point of a pair of scissors between the two circles of cardboard and cut around. Using a double strand of yarn, wrap round between the two circles of cardboard, knot firmly and take away cardboard. Trim pom-pom.



SOFT TOYS

Soft toys are judged the following way.

Harmless with hand-sewn features and firm limbs, even stuffing and no darkness – cuddly, attractive to the eye, use of soft fabric.

Hints

Filling and fabrics used for playthings should be clean and new, eyes should be firmly attached and focused correctly; if toys are wired, wrap and pad wire well so that it does not protrude, press studs are allowable for dolls clothes, or other products on the market such as Velcro.



CROCHET

Tension must be even.

Work must lie flat – a circular cloth or doily.

Must be neat, clean and not washed.

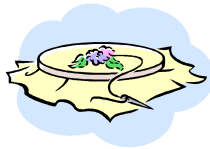
Must be pressed, not ironed – you are dealing with a round thread.

Colour coordination.

Design and degree of difficulty must be taken into consideration.

Three piece or sets must be connected to one another or mounted on piece of cardboard etc.

An article is 'one off' except where you have a pair of gloves, socks etc.



NEEDLEWORK

Fine embroidery

Threads not to be carried on back of work except for French knots. Back should be as neat as front.

Cross Stitch

Top stitch should cross ALWAYS in the same direction. Back of work should show straight lines running in the same direction over all.

Crewel Embroidery

A bold type of pictorial embroidery, stylizing plants, animals and birds out of proportion, predominately greens and blues, browns, yellows and soft reds. Can be worked in one stitch – e.g. chain or a variety of stitches. Worked in heavy threads of any media.

Canvas Work

A variety of stitches can be used which adds character and depth. Almost every embroidery stitch can be incorporated in design as long as canvas is covered.

Applique

Bold simple designs. Fabrics which fray should be avoided. Simple embroidery stitches add interest to design. The design should be balanced. Blanket or buttonhole stitch can be used on edges turned in and hand sewn, with no puckering of background or design.



PATCHWORK

Patchwork can be used for a wide range of articles or as a trimming. Do not mix different fabrics together. Always work in one media, e.g. all cotton, velvet etc. True patchwork must be hand sewn. Shapes must be uniform in size and sit perfectly flat. All templates must have been removed. Stitches should be small, even and firm, but not so tight that the work puckers. All stitching should be worked throughout in the same colour thread. When attaching to backing or mounting, patchwork design must be complete leaving a border in a plain colour which will harmonise with the patchwork.

Machine Patchwork

This is all worked by machine. There are several styles, but again the general rules of patchwork apply. Workmanship, colour harmony, uniformity of fabric used, care with shape and size of each patch. General appearance of finished article.

Machine Sewing

Must at all times be neat. Seams must be over sewn. All fasteners must be sewn on evenly. When schedule states machine it must be all done by machine.



WOODWORK

Woodwork is judged by the following.

Well proportioned article, sound construction, joints neat and correct, no tool marks, timber should be straight and true, not warped or twisted, no knot holes. Putty or fillers should be used correctly to give a smooth finish. Any moving parts should move freely, e.g. wheels. Article suitable for intended use, e.g. no sharp edges on toys, finishing off of article should be well done, no runs, bubbles or brush marks in paint.

Hints Take care timber is suitable for the intended use and is of good quality.



PHOTOGRAPHY

This is an important concept - The more you zoom in, the more the camera will shake. So getting a sharp picture with a zoom requires a much higher shutter speed than if you were using a wide-angle lens.

The Definitions of Still Life, Wildlife Photography and A Portrait

Still Life

Still Life photography is the depiction of inanimate subject matter, most typically a small grouping of objects that is either human-made or “natural”. Still Life photography, more so than other types of photography, such as landscape or portraiture, gives the photographer more leeway in the arrangement of design elements within a composition.

Still Life photography is a demanding art, one in which the photographers are expected to be able to perform their work with a refined sense of lighting, coupled with compositional skills. The Still life photographer makes pictures rather than takes them. Knowing where to look for propping and surfaces also is a required skill.

Wildlife Photography

Wildlife photography is devoted to capturing interesting animals in action, such as eating, fighting, or in flight. Although usually shot in the wild, game farms are also a frequent location for wildlife photography.

The techniques of Wildlife photography differ greatly from those used in the Landscape photography. For example, in Wildlife photography wide apertures are used to achieve a fast shutter speed, freeze the subject's motion, and blur the backgrounds, while landscape photographers prefer small apertures. Wildlife is also usually shot with long telephoto lenses from a great distance; the use of such telephoto lenses frequently necessitates the use of a tripod (since the longer the lens, the harder it is to handhold).

A Portrait

A Portrait is a painting, photograph, sculpture, or other artistic representation of a person, in which the face and its expression is predominant. The intent is to display the likeness, personality and even the mood of the person. For this reason in photography a portrait is generally not a snapshot, but a composed image of a person in a still position. A portrait often shows a person looking directly at the painter or photographer, in order to most successfully engage the subject with the viewer.

Handy Hints

Landscape Photography

Get Down: So many good landscape shots miss the chance to be great simply because we lift the camera to our faces and shoot. This may capture the inspiring scenery, but from a head-height perspective that we are all unconsciously accustomed to. Simply getting low to the ground can improve your results and make your photo stand out.

Tilt Forward: Enhance the impact of your immediate location in the context of the whole by tilting your camera forward and focusing on what's immediately in front of you while keeping the rest of the landscape in the picture.

Shoot Through: Shooting from just inside a tree line or through a bunch of tall grass or flowers will heighten the sense of being in the landscape.

Seek Contrast: Include strong elements of light and shadow to achieve a more stunning effect.

Frame: Look for opportunities to frame your landscape photos in dramatic ways such as breaks in the foliage or open portals like glassless windows and open doors.

Plan where your subject is going to sit and avoid too many distracting backgrounds. Always check that there isn't a tree, lamppost or flower growing out of your subject's head!

Portrait Photography

If you are using your camera hand held, try crouching down and get your subject to lean forward a bit.

Focus on your subjects eyes, make sure they are nice and sharp – in all portraits, whether art or portrait photography the eyes are always the focal point of the picture.

Wearing glasses all the time can sometimes leave a slight mark on the nose which can look like a "blemish".

The best thing to do is to try and get your sitter to angle their face a little bit upwards, downwards or to the left/right and make sure that their glasses are all the way back on their nose – mind you a little light on the top of the frame would be fine.

Memory Cards

One of the big worries with digital cameras is that when a problem does occur with a memory card, instead of losing a roll of 24 shots as is the case of film, you could lose several hundred images (possibly an entire wedding, holiday etc.). There are a few 'best practices' when it comes to card management.

Never put fingers on exposed gold contacts on the card.

Never fill the card to capacity; this can cause errors when the camera is accessing the card.

When not in the camera keep the card in its' protective case, not loose in your pocket.

Get the images safely burnt to CD as soon as possible (and a back up CD copy for those really important photos).

NEVER EVER remove the card from a camera before turning off the camera. This is a great way to not only lose your images but to literally destroy the card.

If you do get an error and lose photos, do absolutely nothing before taking the unit to a camera store. They have advanced image recovery software that can recover files, often even after formatting has taken place.



PAINTING

Oil Painting Brushes

There are three basic types of brushes for oil painting:

Natural ivory-coloured hog-hair bristles that are rather stiff.

Sable bristles that are silky and brown in colour.

Pure white synthetic brushes that are springy when you bend the bristle back and forth.

Painting Tips

Hog-hair bristle brushes are the traditional oil painting brushes, but nowadays modern synthetics made of nylon filaments are becoming common with many artists. The synthetics outlast the bristle brushes by about 5-1.

Before using any brush for the first time gently flex it in your fingers to break the sizing that protects it.

Sable brushes are used mainly for smooth blending of strokes and tiny precise detail work and for signing your name when your painting is finished. Usually a round pointed number 1 or 2.

Fat over Lean Rule

This is one rule in Oil Painting that should be observed:

'Fat over Lean' - means always applying fatter paint (paint with more oil in it) over leaner paint (paint with more turpentine in it).

The reasons for this are -

Fat, oily paint is flexible whilst lean paint is brittle.

If you apply a layer of 'lean' paint on top of a 'fat' layer, it will in time crack and flake off as the lower layer expands and contracts.

Watercolour Painting

Grab a brush and dip it in the water, shake some on your palette to make a puddle. Dip your brush into a colour with a twist or wiggle of the brush and pick up some colour with your brush. Stir the colour into the water puddle until it is of uniform colour (or not). Charge your brush with this colour and test out the colour and brush on the paper. Get a feel for how the brush feels in your hand and how different angles affect the resulting stroke.

Play with the other colours in the same manner. Each colour may have unique physical properties that affect how each is mixed. Some paints are clear bright transparent colours. Some are heavy and dense and are almost opaque. Some watercolour paints are grainy and settle into the texture of the paper when they dry.

Try lines. Try big splotches of color. Try mixing two or more colors together. Make it wet. Make it dry. Experiment and play. When your water turns murky replace it with clean water. Keep your brushes rinsed between colours so you don't pollute the colour you are picking up. After you fill up a sheet with your doodling, grab a new sheet or use the back of the first sheet after it dries.

Drawing with Charcoal and Conte

Charcoal drawing is an inexpensive and expressive medium, always popular for large figure drawing, but also useful for smaller works, offering rich and subtle tones. The coarse carbon particles offer a far deeper black than graphite pencil, and surprisingly, it can be used for a comparable degree of detail.



CHINA PATINTING

China painting is based on the following criteria.

- Originality
- Design
- Application
- Cleanliness
- Difficulty



POTTERY

Pottery must have good shape and balance, regardless of being made on a wheel or moulded. It should sit flat on a surface and be smooth so it does not scratch surfaces.

Firing

If a pot is to hold liquid it must be correctly fired to prevent leaks. The glazed surface must be smooth with no fine cracks or bubbles. A properly fired article rings when tapped with a pencil. Legs and handles should be well examined, poor joining can lose points.