

TOP 10 SHOW-WINNING TIPS

TIPS FOR THE SHOW FROM THE LIPS OF THOSE WHO KNOW

By Shiv S. Pathak - Reprinted for entertainment purposes only.

10. **If you're not going to do something right, don't do it at all.** That's right. Execution is everything. Thinking about installing a monster air scoop on your carbon fiber hood? Forget it unless you have enough resources to make the final product look perfect. Please spare the judges the frightening sight of haphazard Bondo work, nasty glue residue, or fabrication asymmetry. It's just not worth it.
9. **Make the car a stud, not a scud.** The better a car looks, the more attention one pays to it. If you want to attract the attention of the judges, your car's "at-a-first-glance" appearance must be up to par. And if you want to keep their attention, the finer details must be there as well.
8. **Be subtle. Don't reveal all of your cards at once.** Build your car so only a more astute observer will notice the smaller details such as a slight color change or a mild fender flare. Most observers, judges included, don't always like to be spoon-fed with details. If you make them work a little bit, they will more likely appreciate what they find. However, if you make them work too hard, they'll ignore your work, quickly lose interest, and walk away.
7. **Keep your distance; don't get jaded.** Often, a builder gets a bit near-sighted when it comes to judging his own creation. This tendency to over-appreciate one's work is the downfall of many artists. Whether it may be a particular piece of bodywork that you spent a lot of time working on or a mystical pearl paint job that cost you an arm and a leg, don't let your efforts color your perspective.
6. **Women are people, not decorations.** While it may be awfully tempting to have bikini-clad woman sprawled over your show car, don't expect to earn any brownie points with the judges. While there's no doubt that beautiful ladies attract their attention, they do so by taking it away from your car! Not to mention the fact that having whistling men surrounding your car makes it difficult for the judges to get a close look (at the car, that is).
5. **Presentation is everything.** When it comes to displays, be as creative as possible. The right display, whether it is as extravagant as a neon backlit hydraulically actuated platform, or as simple as a well-placed smoke machine, can add a big impact to your overall appearance. While display may not be worth any hard points from the judges, the right one can make a nice-looking car look better.
4. **A winning car must look great from every imaginable angle.** Judges pride themselves for their ability to find flaws by looking in the deepest recesses of your car. Don't let them win. Be creative. With a flashlight, look in every nook and cranny of your car to find and eliminate even the slightest imperfection. It would be a shame if a single rusted bolt head, nestled in your fender well, kept your otherwise perfect car from taking home a prize.
3. **Make bolt-on's look like they weren't simply bolted on.** This applies to electronics as well. A show car should look well thought out, with all of its modifications carefully integrated to its surroundings. Having something simply bolted on to the engine or screwed into the dashboard looks crude. Don't be afraid to spice things up by fabricating an attractive mounting bracket or a custom holder. Remember that there will be other cars with the similar or same, modifications as yours. Distinguish yourself! It's your only chance.
2. **Keep your eyes, ears and mind open.** Listen to what the judges say and try to learn from it. If a judge says that your car is too distracting and dissonant, find out what he means before assuming that he doesn't know what he is talking about. It's as important to learn from others, as it is to figure things out for yourself. It saves time as well as money.
1. **Have fun! Remember, it's only a car show.** While driving home with a fat check in your back pocket or a trophy is nice, don't get obsessed with winning. In the long run, the friends that you make and the people who you positively influence will be the real prize.