

2018

AMERICAN DAHLIA SOCIETY  
CLASSIFICATION  
AND  
HANDBOOK OF DAHLIAS



FANCY PANTS

Supplement to  
Bulletin of the American Dahlia Society

# Classifying Dahlias

- Over 55,000 varieties have been introduced
- The ADS (American Dahlia Society) Classification and Handbook Guide currently lists ~ 1800 varieties that have won at least 3 blue ribbons at dahlia shows across the country in the last 2 consecutive years

# Classification system

The ADS categorizes today's dahlias into various groups based on:

- Size (6 size categories)
- Form (29 forms)
- Color (15 colors)

All dahlias classified receive a 4-digit number indicating their size, form and color

- Zorro - 0107
- Hollyhill Electra - 1403
- Lakeview Glow - 4302

# Classification system

## SIZED DAHLIAS

There are 6 size categories

Size indicated by first digit of classification number

Zorro # **0107**



Size	1st Number	Form	2nd Number
AA	0	FD	0
A	1	ID	1
B	2	SC	2
BB	3	C	3
M	4	IC	4
MC	5	LC	5

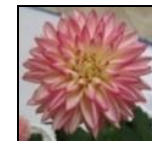
# Classification system



## SIZE

Six size categories – 1<sup>st</sup> number (0-5)

- AA #0 over 10 inches in diameter
- A #1 over 8 to 10 inches in diameter
- B #2 over 6 to 8 inches in diameter
- BB #3 over 4 to 6 inches in diameter
- M #4 up to 4 inches in diameter
- MC #5 up to 2 inches in diameter



# Classification system

## **FORM**

The six sized dahlias can be classified in one of six different forms.

- Formal Decorative (FD)
- Informal Decorative (ID)
- Semi Cactus (SC)
- Cactus (C)
- Incurved Cactus (IC)
- Laciniated (LC)

# Classification system

## FORM

Form is indicated by the second digit in the classification system

Zorro # **0107**



**Table 1: Sized Dahlias**

	<b>Form</b>	<b>2nd Number</b>
Formal Decorative	FD	0
Informal Decorative	ID	1
Semi Cactus	SC	2
Cactus	C	3
Incurved Cactus	IC	4
Lacinated	LC	5



# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

Sized Dahlias AA (>10") through MC (<2")

### **Formal Decorative (FD - second digit is 0)**

Ray florets (petals) are flat, partially revolute (petal edges roll back), or partially involute (petal edges roll forward). The petals are uniform and regularly arranged, tending to curve toward the stem.



# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

Sized Dahlias AA (>10") through MC (<2")

### Informal Decorative (ID - second digit is 1)

Ray florets are twisted, or curled, or wavy creating an affect that the petals are not flat. The petals may be partially revolute with their arrangement appearing irregular.





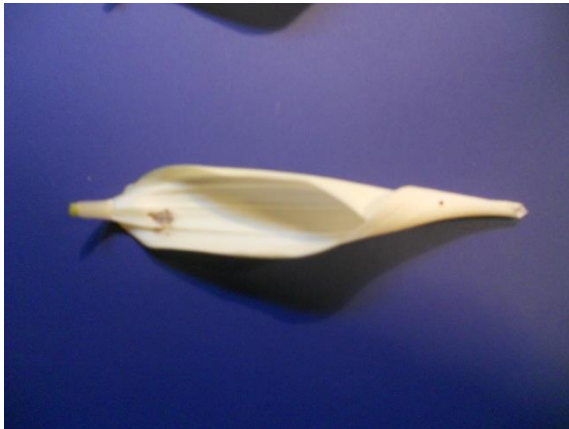
# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

Sized Dahlias AA (>10") through MC (<2")

### **Semi-Cactus (SC - second digit is 2)**

The ray florets are broad at the base straight, incurved or recurved and the ray florets revolute for up to one half of their length. Fully revolute (touching) for one quarter of their length



# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

Sized Dahlias AA (>10") through MC (<2")

### **Straight Cactus (C - second digit is 3)**

The ray florets **revolute** for more that one half of their length; they also may be pointed, straight, or recurved, radiating in all directions from the center of the flower head.



# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

Sized Dahlias AA (>10") through MC (<2")

### **Incurved Cactus (IC - second digit is 4)**

These dahlias also have ray florets that are **curved for more than one half of the length** but the pointed petals have a pronounced curvature toward the center of the flower head.



# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

Sized Dahlias AA (>10") through MC (<2")

**Lacinated (LC - second digit is 5)**

The split or lacination should be in proportion to the ray floret length. There should be an overall twisting in the area of the split involute or revolute ray florets, to give an overall fringed effect.





Formal Decorative



Informal Decorative



Semi-Cactus



Cactus



Incurved-Cactus



Laciniated

# Classification system

## FORM

There are 23 additional forms indicated by the first two digits in the classification system

Example: Waterlily is 73



<b>Form</b>	<b>First two numbers</b>
BA	60
MB	61
P	62
ST	70
MST	71
WL	73
MWL	74
NX	76
MNX	77
PE	80
MPE	81
AN	82
MAN	83
NO	86
MNO	87
CO	90
MCO	91
O	92
MO	93
OT	94
MOT	95
S	96
MS	97



# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

### 23 additional forms

**Ball (BA – first two digits 60)** over 3.5 inches in diameter

Fully double flowers, ball shaped or slightly flattened at the face, and the ray florets are blunt, rounded, or indented, involute for most of their length, fully involute for about one half their length, and normally displayed in a spiral arrangement

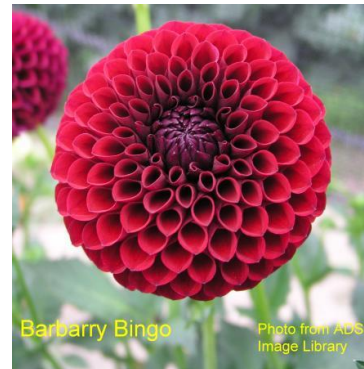


# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

### 23 additional forms

**Miniature Ball (MB – first two digits 61)**  
over 2 to 3.5 inches in diameter



**Pompon (P – first two digits 62)**  
up to 2 inches in diameter

# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS

23 additional forms



**Ball (BA - 60)**  
over 3.5 inches in diameter



**Miniature Ball (MB - 61)**  
over 2 to 3.5 inches in diameter



**Pompon (P - 62)**  
up to 2 inches in diameter



# Classification system

## **DAHLIA FORMS: Stellar, Waterlily** *Distinctive Different Forms*

**23 additional forms**



### **Stellar (ST - 70)**

over 2 inches in diameter

### **Micro Stellar (MST - 71)**

up to 2 inches in diameter



### **Waterlily (WL - 73)**

over 2 in diameter

### **Micro Waterlily (MWL - 74)**

up to 2 in diameter

# Classification system

## **DAHLIA FORMS: Novelty Fully Double**

**23 additional forms**



**Novelty Fully Double (NX - 76)**

over 2 inches in diameter

**Micro Novelty Double (MNX - 77)**

up to 2 inches in diameter

# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS: Peony, Anemone, Novelty Open Center

### 23 additional forms



#### **Peony (PE - 80)**

over 2 inches in diameter

#### **Micro Peony (MPE - 81)**

up to 2 inches in diameter



#### **Anemone (AN - 82)**

over 2 in diameter

#### **Micro AN (MAN - 83)**

up to 2 in diameter



#### **Novelty Open (NO - 86)**

over 2 in diameter

#### **Micro NO (MNO - 87)**

up to 2 in diameter



# Classification system

## DAHLIA FORMS: Open Centered Dahlias

23 additional forms



**Collarette (CO - 90)**

over 2 inches in diameter

**Micro CO (MCO - 91)**

up to 2 inches in diameter



**Orchid (O - 92)**

over 2 in diameter

**Micro O (MO - 93)**

up to 2 in diameter



**Orchette (OT - 94)**

over 2 in diameter

**Micro OT (MOT - 95)**

up to 2 in diameter



**Single (S - 96)**

over 2 in diameter



**Micro S (MS - 97)**

up to 2 in diameter

# Classification system

## COLOR

There are 15 recognized colors (all but blue)

Color is indicated by the last two digits in the classification system

Zorro # **0107**



<b>Color</b>	<b>Last two numbers</b>
White	01
Yellow	02
Orange	03
Pink	04
Dark Pink	05
Red	06
<b>Dark Red</b>	<b>07</b>
Lavender	08
Purple/Black	09
Light Blend	10
Bronze	11
Flame	12
Dark Blend	13
Variegated	14
Bicolor	15

# Classification system

## TEST

1. What would be the smallest number in the ADS Classification Guide?

**0001 (AA FD White)**

2. What would be the largest number in the ADS Classification Guide?

**9715 (MS Bicolor)**

Table 1: Sized Dahlias			
Size	1st Number	Form	2nd Number
AA	0	FD	0
A	1	ID	1
B	2	SC	2
BB	3	C	3
M	4	IC	4
MC	5	LC	5

Table 3: Color	
Color	Last two numbers
White	01
Yellow	02
Orange	03
Pink	04
Dark Pink	05
Red	06
Dark Red	07
Lavender	08
Purple/Black	09
Light Blend	10
Bronze	11
Flame	12
Dark Blend	13
Variegated	14
Bicolor	15

Table 2: Other Forms	
Form	First two numbers
BA	60
MB	61
P	62
ST	70
MST	71
WL	73
MWL	74
NX	76
MNX	77
PE	80
MPE	81
AN	82
MAN	83
NO	86
MNO	87
CO	90
MCO	91
O	92
MO	93
OT	94
MOT	95
S	96
MS	97

### ADS Dahlia Classification and Number Guide

To aid in the identification of unknown, unclassified, or seedling Dahlias, use this guide in conjunction with the ADS Classification and Handbook of Dahlias. Establish Size and Form (type), then follow across to the appropriate color column. This will give you the ADS classification number for the dahlia. Go to the Classification Number and Awards section of your handbook to identify and assess the competition.

		Size	Form Type	01 W	02 Y	03 OR	04 PK	05 DP	06 R	07 DR	08 L	09 BR	10 LB	11 BR	12 FL	13 DB	14 V	15 BI
Form (Type)		AA	FD - 0	0001	0002	0003	0004	0005	0006	0007	0008	0009	0010	0011	0012	0013	0014	0015
Code	Description	over 10"	ID - 1	0101	0102	0103	0104	0105	0106	0107	0108	0109	0110	0111	0112	0113	0114	0115
FD	Formal Dec.	GIANT	SC - 2	0201	0202	0203	0204	0205	0206	0207	0208	0209	0210	0211	0212	0213	0214	0215
ID	Informal Dec.		C - 3	0301	0302	0303	0304	0305	0306	0307	0308	0309	0310	0311	0312	0313	0314	0315
SC	Semi-Cactus		IC - 4	0401	0402	0403	0404	0405	0406	0407	0408	0409	0410	0411	0412	0413	0414	0415
C	Straight Cact.		LC - 5	0501	0502	0503	0504	0505	0506	0507	0508	0509	0510	0511	0512	0513	0514	0515
IC	Incurved Cact.		A	FD - 0	1001	1002	1003	1004	1005	1006	1007	1008	1009	1010	1011	1012	1013	1014
LC	Laciniated	over 8"	ID - 1	1101	1102	1103	1104	1105	1106	1107	1108	1109	1110	1111	1112	1113	1114	1115
BA	Ball	LARGE	SC - 2	1201	1202	1203	1204	1205	1206	1207	1208	1209	1210	1211	1212	1213	1214	1215
MB	Miniature Ball		C - 3	1301	1302	1303	1304	1305	1306	1307	1308	1309	1310	1311	1312	1313	1314	1315
P	PomPon		IC - 4	1401	1402	1403	1404	1405	1406	1407	1408	1409	1410	1411	1412	1413	1414	1415
ST	Stellar		LC - 5	1501	1502	1503	1504	1505	1506	1507	1508	1509	1510	1511	1512	1513	1514	1515
MST	Micro Stellar		B	FD - 0	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
WL	Waterlily	over 6"	ID - 1	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115
MWL	Micro Waterlily	to 8"	SC - 2	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215
NX	Novelty Double	MEDIUM	C - 3	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315
MX	Micro NX		IC - 4	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415
PE	Peony		LC - 5	2501	2502	2503	2504	2505	2506	2507	2508	2509	2510	2511	2512	2513	2514	2515
MPE	Micro Peony	BB	FD - 0	3001	3002	3003	3004	3005	3006	3007	3008	3009	3010	3011	3012	3013	3014	3015
AN	Anemone	over 4"	ID - 1	3101	3102	3103	3104	3105	3106	3107	3108	3109	3110	3111	3112	3113	3114	3115
MAN	Micro Anemone	SMALL	SC - 2	3201	3202	3203	3204	3205	3206	3207	3208	3209	3210	3211	3212	3213	3214	3215
NO	Novelty Open		C - 3	3301	3302	3303	3304	3305	3306	3307	3308	3309	3310	3311	3312	3313	3314	3315
MNO	Micro NO		IC - 4	3401	3402	3403	3404	3405	3406	3407	3408	3409	3410	3411	3412	3413	3414	3415
CO	Collarette	LC - 5	3501	3502	3503	3504	3505	3506	3507	3508	3509	3510	3511	3512	3513	3514	3515	
MCO	Micro Collarette	M	FD - 0	4001	4002	4003	4004	4005	4006	4007	4008	4009	4010	4011	4012	4013	4014	4015
O	Orchid	up to 4"	ID - 1	4101	4102	4103	4104	4105	4106	4107	4108	4109	4110	4111	4112	4113	4114	4115
MO	Micro Orchid	MINIATURE	SC - 2	4201	4202	4203	4204	4205	4206	4207	4208	4209	4210	4211	4212	4213	4214	4215
OT	Orchette		C - 3	4301	4302	4303	4304	4305	4306	4307	4308	4309	4310	4311	4312	4313	4314	4315
MOT	Micro Orchette		IC - 4	4401	4402	4403	4404	4405	4406	4407	4408	4409	4410	4411	4412	4413	4414	4415
S	Single	LC - 5	4501	4502	4503	4504	4505	4506	4507	4508	4509	4510	4511	4512	4513	4514	4515	
MS	Mignon Single	MC	FD - 0	5001	5002	5003	5004	5005	5006	5007	5008	5009	5010	5011	5012	5013	5014	5015
		up to 2"	ID - 1	5101	5102	5103	5104	5105	5106	5107	5108	5109	5110	5111	5112	5113	5114	5115
		MICRO	SC - 2	5201	5202	5203	5204	5205	5206	5207	5208	5209	5210	5211	5212	5213	5214	5215
			C - 3	5301	5302	5303	5304	5305	5306	5307	5308	5309	5310	5311	5312	5313	5314	5315
			IC - 4	5401	5402	5403	5404	5405	5406	5407	5408	5409	5410	5411	5412	5413	5414	5415
			LC - 5	5501	5502	5503	5504	5505	5506	5507	5508	5509	5510	5511	5512	5513	5514	5515
01	WHITE	BALL > 3.5"	6001	6002	6003	6004	6005	6006	6007	6008	6009	6010	6011	6012	6013	6014	6015	
02	YELLOW	MIN. BALL > 2 - 3.5"	6101	6102	6103	6104	6105	6106	6107	6108	6109	6110	6111	6112	6113	6114	6115	
03	ORANGE	POMPON up to 2"	6201	6202	6203	6204	6205	6206	6207	6208	6209	6210	6211	6212	6213	6214	6215	
04	PINK	STELLAR	7001	7002	7003	7004	7005	7006	7007	7008	7009	7010	7011	7012	7013	7014	7015	
05	DK PINK	MICRO STELLAR	7101	7102	7103	7104	7105	7106	7107	7108	7109	7110	7111	7112	7113	7114	7115	
06	RED	WATERLILY	7301	7302	7303	7304	7305	7306	7307	7308	7309	7310	7311	7312	7313	7314	7315	
07	DK RED	MICRO WATERLILY	7401	7402	7403	7404	7405	7406	7407	7408	7409	7410	7411	7412	7413	7414	7415	
08	LAVENDER	NOVELTY	7601	7602	7603	7604	7605	7606	7607	7608	7609	7610	7611	7612	7613	7614	7615	
09	PURPLE	MICRO NOVELTY DOUBLE	7701	7702	7703	7704	7705	7706	7707	7708	7709	7710	7711	7712	7713	7714	7715	
10	LT BLEND	PEONY	8001	8002	8003	8004	8005	8006	8007	8008	8009	8010	8011	8012	8013	8014	8015	
11	BRONZE	MICRO PEONY	8101	8102	8103	8104	8105	8106	8107	8108	8109	8110	8111	8112	8113	8114	8115	
12	FLAME BLEND	ANEMONE	8201	8202	8203	8204	8205	8206	8207	8208	8209	8210	8211	8212	8213	8214	8215	
13	DK BLEND	MICRO ANEMONE	8301	8302	8303	8304	8305	8306	8307	8308	8309	8310	8311	8312	8313	8314	8315	
14	VARIEGATED	NOVELTY OPEN	8601	8602	8603	8604	8605	8606	8607	8608	8609	8610	8611	8612	8613	8614	8615	
15	BICOLOR	MICRO NOVELTY OPEN	8701	8702	8703	8704	8705	8706	8707	8708	8709	8710	8711	8712	8713	8714	8715	
		COLLARETTE	9001	9002	9003	9004	9005	9006	9007	9008	9009	9010	9011	9012	9013	9014	9015	
		MICRO COLLARETTE	9101	9102	9103	9104	9105	9106	9107	9108	9109	9110	9111	9112	9113	9114	9115	
		ORCHID	9201	9202	9203	9204	9205	9206	9207	9208	9209	9210	9211	9212	9213	9214	9215	
		MICRO ORCHID	9301	9302	9303	9304	9305	9306	9307	9308	9309	9310	9311	9312	9313	9314	9315	
		ORCHETTE	9401	9402	9403	9404	9405	9406	9407	9408	9409	9410	9411	9412	9413	9414	9415	
		MICRO ORCHETTE	9501	9502	9503	9504	9505	9506	9507	9508	9509	9510	9511	9512	9513	9514	9515	
		SINGLE >	9601	9602	9603	9604	9605	9606	9607	9608	9609	9610	9611	9612	9613	9614	9615	
		MIGNON	9701	9702	9703	9704	9705	9706	9707	9708	9709	9710	9711	9712	9713	9714	9715	

# ADS Dahlia Classification and Number Guide

4-digit conversion

## Links to more information

### [Online Classification Guide](#)

- Great "look-up" tool to determine if your dahlia varieties are ADS Classified
- Use CAUTION! Tool is not accurate when using phone to look-up. Use computer for most accurate look-up.

### [Dahlia University \(ADS\)](#)

- Lots of great information
- Classification topics
  - [Understanding Dahlia Forms and Sizes](#)
  - [Color Presentation](#)

### [ADS Judge's Online Curriculum](#) (ADS members)

- This curriculum is an excellent way to learn all about dahlias. It is "promoted" for judges but anyone who is interested in exhibiting dahlias should go through the training.

### [ADS Store](#)

- [Classification and Handbook of Dahlias](#) can be purchased for \$9 (included in ADS membership)
- [Guide to Judging Dahlias](#) can be purchased for \$9.50

### [SEMDS Website](#)

- [LEARN MORE](#) – SEMDS training presentations and information links can be found here