



The Open Swing Dance Championships – 2025

Mission Statement

Our mission is to create a platform for the highest level of swing dancers to showcase their talent, hard work, and artistry in a competitive environment to be showcased globally.

About Our Event

The Open takes pride in being the flagship International Swing Dance competition hosted each year in California. This prestigious event caters to routine competitions while also providing workshops and social dancing for attendees. **The Open** is the most challenging and exciting swing dance competition of the year as it hosts the most routine divisions and competitors of any event. This is where the top dancers of West Coast Swing gather to compete for the title of “World Champion” taking home the coveted **OPUS**.

The Open is also home to the “*Walk of Legends*.” This award is presented each year to an individual(s) who have been legendary in their influence on swing dancing nationally and/or internationally.

Statement of Swing

Swing is an American Rhythm Dance based on a foundation of 6-beat and 8-beat patterns that incorporate a wide variety of rhythms, built on 2-beats, single, delayed, double, triple, and blank rhythm units. The 6-beat patterns include, but are not limited to, passes, underarm turns, push-breaks, open-to-closed, and closed-to-open position patterns. The 8-beat patterns include, but are not limited to, whips, swingouts, Lindy circles, and Shag pivots. Although they are not part of the foundation of the dance as stated above, 2-beat and 4-beat extension rhythm breaks may be incorporated to extend a pattern, to phrase the music, and/or to accent breaks. The objective is to provide a competitive performance venue for the various unique styles of swing that have developed across the nation to include but not limited to Carolina Shag, Dallas Push, East Coast Swing, Hand Dancing, Hollywood Swing, Houston Whip, Imperial Swing, Jive, Jitterbug, Lindy Hop, Rock-n-Roll, and West Coast Swing.

This statement is used only to identify the presence of Swing content in a performance. It is not intended to be a full definition of Swing, or to be used to evaluate the quality of the performance.

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Responsibilities of the Organizers

1. **Selecting the competition officials.** A panel of Judges, Chief judges, Scorer, Referee Judge, Review Panel, MCs, Chief DJ, and Competition DJs will be provided with the names prior to the event location on The Open website. The MC will announce the judges for each competition at the start of the competition. There will be a minimum of five (5) judges for all routine competitions as well as a chief Judge.
2. **Determining the rules and schedule.** Competition Rules will be determined and posted in advance on The Open website. A full weekend schedule, listing the times for all meetings, workshops, competitions, and awards will be posted well in advance on The Open Website. If any last-minute changes are needed, announcements will be made on social media platforms and/or at the event.
3. **Registering contestants and verifying eligibility.** Entries will be submitted for eligible competitors in advance (using the online registration system) and at the event (for applicable contests during contest registration times listed on the weekend schedule). All competitors will be verified for eligibility prior to each competition entered. Bib numbers will be assigned at registration to Strictly Swing Leaders and Jack & Jill Leaders and Followers.
4. **Holding all competitions as planned or modifying them if necessary.** Competitions will be held at the time set according to the most updated weekend schedule and will be held to that time as best as the events abilities. If changes or times need to be updated/changed, communication will be announced at the event as well as on all social media platforms. If necessary, the event may extend the registration deadline or change the eligibility requirements (IF it applies and is in line with the event rules) for competition size requirements.
5. **Cancellation of a competition.** If the event cancels a competition (for whatever reason necessary) entry fees will be reimbursed to the purchaser. If the opportunity presents itself, routine dancers may be offered to dance in an exhibition in lieu of a canceled competition.
6. **Scoring the results.** A qualified independent scorer will be hired for the scorekeeping of the event. The scorer will use callbacks for all preliminary and semi-final heats based on the amount of competitors and chief judges preferences, and relative placement for all finals. (A detailed explanation of relative placement is available on the WSDC website at www.worldsdc.com.) Scores will be available for review on Sunday after the awards ceremonies at the event and online.
7. **Announcing the results and presenting awards.** Results of all competitions will be announced according to the event schedule.

Responsibilities of a Competitor

The competitor may register for competitions in advance using The Open online registration system, or at the event prior to the cut-off contest signup times listed on the schedule. Registration is not valid for routine competitors at the event. Routine competitors must register prior to the event following the registration deadline posted on the website. If you registered in advance, you must pick up your Bib Number(s) at the registration desk.

1. **General Rules.** Competitors must have a full weekend pass, pay any required entry fee, and sign a legal waiver (if you are under 18, your parent or guardian must sign for you) in order to compete.
2. **Knowing the rules.** ALL Competitors are responsible for following the rules and are encouraged to read the rules carefully prior to competing. For any questions regarding the rules, please contact the Chief Judge through email at usopencjyma@gmail.com or questions can be asked during the competitors' meeting at the event. Please check the online schedule for the time of the competitors' meeting.
3. **Attending the Competitors' Meeting.** It is recommended that at least one partner of a couple attend this meeting and if this is your first time competing at **The Open**.
4. **Being prepared to compete.** Competitors should be in the Green Room at least 30 minutes before the competition with their bib number. All competitors should check the competitor schedule which includes the times for lining up in the green room according to each division. If a competitor is not in line when the division is announced, they will be scratched and not able to compete.
5. **You must wear your bib number for all competition rounds including finals.** If you are not wearing a bib number, you will not be allowed to dance and will forfeit your entry fee. The only exception is when competition officials allow you to compete without the bib number.

6. ***Demonstrate good sportsmanship conduct at all times.*** Competitors must demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times, both on and off the competition floor. This includes treating your partners, other competitors, competition officials, spectators, event staff and volunteers, and the event itself with respect. Demonstrating a poor attitude by behaving in ways that our competition director, Chief judge, judging panel, or other competition officials deem inappropriate or disrespectful may result in a violation penalty or disqualification. If you are disqualified, miss the competition, or withdraw after the registration deadline, you will forfeit your entry fee.
7. ***Using appropriate channels to communicate your concerns.*** If you have questions or concerns about our competitions, you should use the appropriate channels such as at the competitors' meeting, in a private discussion with the competition director or Chief judge, or through email to the event director or Chief judge. You are not allowed to confront, pressure, challenge, or argue with individual judges. If you harass or verbally abuse a judge or any other competition official, the event may disqualify you, potentially leading to being banned from attending the event in the future.
8. ***Reviewing your scores.*** QR codes will be posted for all scores after the presentation of the award ceremony on Sunday night of the event. If you are unable to review scores at the event, scores will be available online with links through the social media channels and on The Open website.
9. ***Appropriate behavior and attire.*** It is The Open's desire to encourage expressive and exciting dance performances without sacrificing the quality of dancing and good taste. To maintain this balance, The Open encourages competitors to put on a good show (including humor where appropriate) but within the context of presenting solid dance fundamentals. Comedy routines where a couple dances poorly on purpose for comic effects will not be tolerated and are not allowed.
10. ***Age Appropriate.*** Dancers of all ages will be present at our event, and competitions will be live streamed online and recorded. Any action the judges believe would be uncomfortable and inappropriate in social dancing (such as inappropriate touching or simulating sexual behavior) may earn a violation penalty.
11. ***Questions.*** Check with the Chief judge in advance if you have any questions regarding the acceptability of your choreography or competition attire at: usopencjyma@gmail.com

Registration

1. Online registration opens July 1st.
2. Competitors who register by October 1st are guaranteed entry. Entry fees increase October 2nd.
3. Routine Divisions must register by November 11th. Late entries may be allowed at the discretion of the Organizers.
4. The Organizers can cancel any division due to **lack** of entries.
5. If a division does not have the required number of entries, the Organizer may choose to cancel that division. If a division is canceled, the entry fees will be refunded. If a division has at least three (3) entries and the Organizer decides to run the division with less than the required number of entries, the Organizer has the right to adjust the prize money. Competitors will be notified prior to the event about a canceled division.
6. The Registration desk will be open on the Wednesday of the event according to the weekend schedule. We encourage everyone to register online prior to November 17th.
7. Multiple registrations are allowed. You may choose to enter any competition for which you meet the specific entry requirements. However, if you enter more than one couples competition (Strictly Swing or Routines), you must compete with a different partner each time.

Program

Our program is part of THE **OPEN WORLD SWING DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS, INC.** history and has been a collector's item since 1983. It documents the history of all who compete and with whom. We encourage every competitor to register in time and provide the information needed to be in our program.

1. ***THE PROGRAM DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 10th.*** If registering after October 10th, you may or may not be included in the program based on editor and printing timelines.
2. ***Routine Divisions:*** Competitors in Routine divisions (except Pro-Am Division) are highly encouraged to submit a picture for The Open program. They must be submitted in the proper format (guidelines are available on the registration site).
3. ***Pro-Am Routines:*** Pro-Am Routines will feature the name, city, state, and country (if outside the United States of America) of the competitor listed in the program.

4. **How To Submit Your Program Info:** During registration after the competitor selected the Routine Division, there will be instructions for uploading the picture.
- Picture:** The picture should be a headshot rather than a full-body shot. Submit images in JPEG format, at least 300 dpi, and size them no smaller than 2" x 2". Image should be a photo of the partnership.
 - The Organizer reserves the right to reject any image that does not meet standards of good taste.
 - Silly photos, photos of pets, or anything outside of the partnership will not be permitted.
 - To ensure your picture is processed properly, you **MUST SUBMIT** it through the link provided upon payment. If you bypass the recommended process, there is no guarantee it will be in the program.

Music Submission

All Routine Division competitors participating at The Open are required to submit their music in advance. Routine Divisions include:

Classic	Showcase	Rising Star	Teams
Sophisticated	Masters	Juniors (6-13)	Young Adult (14-17)
Pro-Am Leader - Open (6+)	Pro-Am - Follower - Open (6+)		
Pro-Am Leader - Sophisticated (35+)	Pro-Am Follower - Sophisticated (35+)		

Please choose one of the following submission options:

Option 1: Upload via SwingDancer

During registration for your division, you will have the opportunity to upload your music file. Please ensure your file is labeled in the following format: **2025Open_<Division><LeaderName>_<FollowerName>.<audioextension>**

****It is most preferred that submissions are in MP3 format.**

If your music is not available at the time of registration, please proceed with Option 2.

Option 2: Submit via Google Form

If you are unable to upload your music during registration, you may submit it through the Music Submission Google Form available on the Open Website.

****It is most preferred that submissions are in MP3 format ****

Deadline: All music submissions must be received no later than November 19, 2025.

For any questions or additional support, please contact us at music@usopenswing.com.

Bib Numbers

All competitors are provided with a randomly selected Bib Number.

- You are required to collect your Bib** at the event registration desk, 30 minutes prior to your first competition.
- Your Bib must accompany you when you check into the Competitors Green Room, 30 minutes prior to the competition. Show your Bib to the Competition Coordinators every contest.
- Jack & Jill Divisions—both the Leaders and the Followers are required to wear their assigned Bib numbers for Prelims, Semis, and Finals (unless our competition officials tell you it is not needed).
- Strictly Swing Divisions—only the Leader is required to wear Bib numbers.

Wrist Bands

- We do not recommend removing your wristband for Jack & Jill and Strictly Swing divisions.
- Routine competitors do not have to compete with their wristbands. Allow the Green Room staff to remove.
- After competing, one of the Green Room staff will replace your wristband.
- Wristbands are your responsibility. **Do not throw them away or lose them.**

Schedule

The Open will determine the date and time for each competition.

- A tentative schedule will be listed on **The Open's** website.
- The organizer reserves the right to change the schedule based on the number of entries in a division and whether a prelim and/or semi-final is needed.

Practice Times

The Open will provide as much practice time in the main ballroom as possible. Main Ballroom Open Practice Schedule: Priority is given to the divisions competing that day. Divisions not competing that day will be given separate times. **SEE THE SCHEDULE FOR DETAILS.**

Dance Order

1. **Jack & Jill Divisions.** Prelims and Semis will rotate partnerships and will be danced in heated format. The order of the Leader lineup and the order of the Follower lineup is determined by the competitors' randomly assigned Bib number (ascending order). Finals may or may not be danced in heated format. For Jack & Jill Finals, the final round pairings will be computer generated, randomized by the Fisher-Yates shuffle algorithm.
2. **Strictly Swing Divisions.** Computer generated, randomized by Fisher-Yates shuffle algorithm. Prelims and Semis will be danced in heated format. Finals may or may not be danced in heated format.
3. **Pro-Am Divisions.** Computer generated, randomized by the Fisher-Yates shuffle algorithm.
4. **Opus Routines.** Computer generated, randomized by the Fisher-Yates shuffle algorithm will take place in the Ballroom, during the Competitors Meeting (see schedule for day and time).

Eligibility – Verification Process

1. The Open will verify that competitors are eligible for the competitions they enter by checking the World Swing Dance Council (WSDC) Points Registry and other sources of information, if applicable.
1. If a competitor is concerned that other contestants have entered an incorrect division or are ineligible, they are encouraged to contact the chief judge or event director privately, as soon as possible. The Open will investigate and take appropriate action, if necessary.
2. If a competitor has wrongly registered for a division, the registration team will reassign the competitor to the correct division or allow for a withdrawal. If after finals The Open discovers that a competitor misrepresented their status and was not eligible, the partnership may be dropped out of awards.

Petition Process

Competitors who want to enter a competition for which they do not meet the entry requirements, or want to change divisions, must submit a petition. If a competitor is unclear about which competition or division to compete in, they can email the Chief judge at usopencjyma@gmail.com before registering.

1. To petition in advance, complete Petition Application online through: <https://theopenswing.com/rules-and-important-dates/>. You must make your request prior to November 1st. Please check WSDC rules for petitioning “up” and “down.”
2. List division, partner's name, ages, partner relationship/history and present your case, to petition to dance together.
3. **The Open's** Chief judge will review your petition, and it will either be approved or disapproved.
4. The Chief judge will notify you of the decision. The Chief judge's decision is Final.
5. For information regarding Jack & Jills petitions, please go to: <https://www.worldsdc.com/wsd-points-registry-rules/>

Restart

1. Competitors may request a restart if something happens during your dance that could impact safety, such as:
 - a. **Technical problems** – factors outside their control, such as: lighting malfunction; flooring is faulty or damaged; music stops/skips/malfunctions; or the DJ plays the wrong music for the routine.
 - b. **Costume malfunctions** – their shoe breaks or becomes unfastened or untied; a costume tears or breaks or malfunctions, endangering themselves or other dancers or expose a part of their body that would not normally be exposed in a public setting.
2. Competitors may **not** request a restart if they are dissatisfied with the dance order, performance, partner, music, or because you fail to remember part of your routine.
3. For the safety of the competitor, a restart is **not allowed** if a competitor is injured during their dance.
4. Competitors must request a restart prior to their departure from the floor, and the Chief judge must approve the request. The chief judge may also call for a restart without a request from the competitor if the Chief judge believes it is fair to all and in the best interest of the competitor(s).
5. If the Chief judge allows a restart, the previous scores will be voided.

6. The restart will begin at the Chief judge's discretion depending on whether it is a Showcase or Classic routine. They will not automatically perform last, if possible.
7. If the Chief judge denies your request for a restart, or you decline an offer to restart, your prior performance will be scored.

Awards

The Organizer will determine and award all prizes and money. Monetary awards will be given in the form of a check at the Awards Ceremony.

1. **Weekend Awards.** See event schedule for awards days/times.
2. If your check or checks total more than \$600, you will be required to complete an IRS 1099 tax form.
3. Your award envelope will direct you where to pick up your checks. This should be done prior to Sunday evening at 7:30 PM. If not picked up, the checks will be mailed once the required information has been provided.

If for whatever reason, there is a national disaster or a severe economic downturn beyond the Organizer's control, the Organizer reserves the right to adjust the prize money. Competitors will receive advance notice if this should occur.

Scores – Posting

QR Codes will be posted in the Green Room after the Awards Ceremony on Sunday evening. QR Codes will remain posted for one (1) hour. The Chief judge and Referee will be present to answer any questions. Please be respectful. The results will be posted online shortly after.

Appeals

No appeals will be allowed. All decisions of competition officials are final. However, you may use appropriate channels to discuss any concerns with our Chief judge or competition coordinator.

Judging Criteria

You will be judged on the following criteria:

1. **Timing. "How Your Body Connects to the Music."** Swing is danced beginning on the downbeat. Good timing includes not only dancing to the correct beat but finer distinctions such as whether you are dancing to the syncopated "swing" of the music. Your syncopations and footwork also need to be on time.
2. **Technique. "How Well You Do What You Do."** How well you execute the movements in your dance constitutes technique. Good technique includes clean execution and completion of dance elements such as control of balance and weight, foot placement, body lines, spins and turns, and control of arms and hands.
3. **Teamwork. "How Well You Work Together."** Swing is a connected partner dance. Demonstrating this connection through lead/follow or action/reaction with your partner is an expected part of any swing dance competition. A balanced performance of give-and-take with your partner should be your goal. Ignoring, disrespecting, or jeopardizing the safety of your partner indicates poor teamwork. Compensating and adjusting for your partner is an expected part of good teamwork.
4. **Content/Choreography. "What You Do."** The selection and order of movements and transitions executed during a dance comprises choreography. Good choreography demonstrates an intimate connection with the music and its phrasing, as well as variety and contrast of movements. Choreography must be tasteful and respectful.
5. **Showmanship/Presentation. "How Well You Sell What You Do."** Creating an atmosphere of excitement by inviting interest in your performance is the desired effect of a good presentation. A good presentation begins with your selection of appropriate attire and shoes. While providing a good show is one aspect of the presentation, it cannot substitute *good dancing*. You should aim primarily to demonstrate positive dance chemistry together as a couple. Gratuitous mugging to the audience or the judges may result in a lower score. Good sporting conduct before, during, and after your dance is also an expected element of good presentation.
6. **Musical Interpretation. "How Well You Interpret the Music."** Good musical interpretation consists of adjusting the flow of your dance to fit the style, tempo, mood, and rhythm variations in the music. You should strive to demonstrate the ability to hear and interpret nuances in the music throughout your dance.

7. **Level of Difficulty.** “How Difficult the Performance is.” Depending on “the degree of difficulty” that is executed will keep the audience engaged and the performance exciting. An elevated level of difficulty includes intricate and innovative movements that should be maintained throughout the performance, and the execution should not appear “difficult.”

Guidelines for “Swing Content” for the West Coast Swing Routine Dancers

Swing Content is measured by percentages required within event rules. Each individual judge considers Swing Content percentages within their scores.

Primary Identifiable Characteristics (Spatial Structure)

1. Danced in a slot
 - a. follower stays in the slot
 - b. the leader moves off the slot to allow the follower to pass
 - c. The follower moves forward on counts “1” and/or “2” of the pattern

Structural Identity (Rhythm Structure)

1. Built on 6-beat and 8-beat foundation patterns: passes, push breaks, whips, tucks, open-to-closed and closed-to-open position patterns
2. Incorporates all 2-beat rhythm patterns: singles, doubles, triples, delays, holds, and syncopated rhythm patterns
3. Built on a foundation of 2-beat rhythm patterns: doubles and triples
4. 2-beat and 4-beat pattern extensions are frequently used to reconnect with musical phrasing
5. Patterns are connected by a 1 or 2-count stretched redirection referred to as an anchor
6. Stretch (default connection)

Musical Identity

1. The Open strongly recommends that Swing divisions be danced to music with consistently 2 or 4 beats per measure. Variations on these meters should look appropriate to swing dancing. Please remember that Swing is best danced when a swung rhythm is present.
2. Music should pulse (accent) the Upbeat (2,4,6,8)
3. Accents and interpretive *Musical Nuisances* should be choreographed within the context of recognizable swing patterns.

Swing Content Violations

Please go to: <https://nasde.net/nasde-scoring/>

Violations & Errors

If you fail to follow *The Open’s* rules, and a Referee is not part of the judging panel for a particular competition, our judges may assess a penalty. Unless defined elsewhere in our rules, the levels of severity and associated penalties are as follows:

1. **Errors.** An error is a minor and unintentional breach of the rules. For example:
 - a. A brief and unintended loss of contact with your partner (where the rules require contact)
 - b. A momentary loss of balance
 - c. A momentary loss of composureErrors may be penalized (or not) at the discretion of each judge observing the error.
2. **Violations.** A violation is a serious and intentional breach of the rules. For example:
 - a. Making a face or expressing unhappiness with your draw of a particular partner or musical selection
 - b. Behaving disrespectfully toward your partner, another competitor, a spectator, a judge, or the event
 - c. Wearing an inappropriate outfit or costume
 - d. Competing while intoxicated or under the influence of mood-altering drugs
 - e. Using prohibited choreography, such as a lift in a Jack & Jill competition
 - f. Performing a “trick” move that endangers your partner, other competitors, or spectators
 - g. Choosing choreography that blatantly ignores or contradicts the phrasing of the music
 - h. Failing to include the required percentage of recognizable swing content in your dance

Judges may assign violations at their discretion, and they may choose to penalize a violation by a drop of one more position in their final placements.

Referee Judge and Review Panel

Routine and designated Final competitions will use the **Wayne Bott Referee System**, developed by Wayne Bott. A referee judge uses a checklist to determine whether each routine follows the rules.

1. If all couples pass, the review panel is not needed.
2. If any couple fails, our chief judge will appoint a review panel, which consists of the chief judge plus two (2) other judges.
3. These judges will review the video of the flagged couple to determine if a violation occurred.
4. If a majority of the review panel agrees that a violation has occurred, the review panel will determine the number of placements to be dropped based on the magnitude of the violation.

Time Violation for Routines

If our referee judge determines that your routine is over the maximum or under the minimum time limit and verified by our Chief judge, you will be disqualified (placed last). You will have the opportunity to try out your music before the competition during floor trials. It is your responsibility to ensure that your routine meets the time requirements.

Costumes – Performance Attire

1. Performance attire is required for all routine divisions, including Showcase, Classic, Sophisticated, Rising Star, Masters, Young Adult, Juniors, Teams, and Pro-Am Routine.
2. Performance attire is **NOT** allowed in the Strictly and Jack & Jill divisions, however matching and/or dressy dance clothing is encouraged.
3. Please “Dress to Impress – Perform to Win.” Clothing and costumes should be in good taste, suitable for dancing and flattering in all divisions.
4. Halloween style costumes are not allowed.

Dress Code

1. Blue Jeans and/or torn jeans are not allowed in any Jack & Jill or Strictly Swing Divisions. (Chief judge may disqualify the competitor).
2. If jeans are worn in a Routine division, they must connect to the music and a petition must be submitted to the chief judge prior to the event. If jeans are worn as costumes without prior approval, it will be reviewed by the review panel.
3. Age-appropriate costumes for Juniors, Young Adults, Strictly Swing and Junior Jack & Jill divisions.

Definitions

1. **Age restrictions.** There are divisions that have age restrictions/requirements. Please check each division for age requirements.
2. **Break-aways.** Breaking physical contact for 8-beats of music.
3. **Costume.** A costume is any attire specifically designed for dance routines and that would not be worn for social dancing. Costumes are allowed only in Routine divisions. (Matching or complementary outfits are not considered costumes and are allowed, although not required, in Strictly Swing).
4. **Couple/Partnership.** A couple consists of one leader and one follower.
 - a. A Routine couple may not compete together in another routine or strictly swing division.
5. **Dancing twice in the same division.** A competitor may not dance in the same division twice.
6. **Entrance.** An entrance is an initial, pre-choreographed segment of a performance, where competitors formally enter the floor and prepare to dance. An entrance is permitted in Routine divisions. (Acknowledging your partner, the judges, or the audience is not considered an entrance).
7. **Exit.** An exit is a final, pre-choreographed segment of a performance, where competitors formally leave the floor. An exit is permitted in Routine divisions. (Acknowledging your partner, the judges, or the audience is not considered an exit).
8. **Prop.** Props are not allowed in any divisions.
 - a. A prop is anything used in the routine that is outside of the costume and is used to help tell a story.
 - b. Hats, jackets, capes, sunglasses, and other reasonable dance clothing items are considered costumes and may be worn in all divisions. However, clothing or items may NOT be discarded, nor switched from one partner to another.

- c. If you are concerned if something might be considered a prop, you must ask prior to competing.
 - d. Microphones and/or headsets are not permitted during any routine.
 - e. Using a prop in any division will result in a violation.
9. **Routine.** A routine is any dance performance or segment that uses prearranged choreography rather than spontaneous lead-and-follow moves. (Coordinated footwork or mirror patterns from Carolina Shag are not considered routine).
10. **Side-by-side.** A side-by-side is any set of symmetrical or complementary movements of footwork executed by a couple that is not part of a recognizable lead/follow swing dance pattern. Such segments are often executed with partners next to each other, both facing the judges (i.e., side by side), but segments executed in other positions (e.g., back-to-back, open position, closed position) are included in this definition for the purpose of these rules. Side-by-sides (no longer than 8 beats of music) are allowed in all our competitions. However, our judges may mark down excessive use of side-by-sides.
11. **Time Limit.** Performances must be a minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes in every division with the exceptions below:
- a. Pro-Am Routine performances must be a minimum of 1 ½ minutes and a maximum of 2 ½ minutes.
 - b. Team performances must be a minimum of 3 minutes and a maximum of 5 minutes.
 - c. Choreographed Floor Entrances and Exits are included in the time limit (whether there is music).
 - d. A five-second buffer will be allowed to accommodate differences in music equipment. Time starts at the first performance movement.
 - e. Not adhering to time limit requirements will be treated as a violation.
12. **Weight Support Moves.** When the Center Point of Balance (CPB) is leveraged beyond the supporting leg, to the point that release of connection, would result in falling.
- a. This does not include slides. Unless the body position of the slide falls in line with the above statement.
 - b. When the dancer is not able to get up from the floor without the connection of their partner.
 - c. When the partner cannot get into position without full support from their partner.
 - d. One part of the body below the waist must remain on the floor through all weight supported moves. All these criteria will assume they are being performed by highly athletic individuals, so judges will err on the side of the dancers.
 - e. A weight support move is counted as two (2) weight support moves when the dancer comes back up in a vertical position over their Center Point of Balance (CPB) and then back off of their CPB. However, if the CPB is not gained, then it is one (1) continuous weight support move.

Divisions and Rules

The following divisions are characterized by Swing dancing at a performance level. These divisions are open to all styles of Swing and can include, but is not limited to, Carolina Shag, Dallas Push, East Coast Swing, Hand Dancing, Hollywood Swing, Houston Whip, Imperial Swing, Jive, Jitterbug, Lindy Hop, Rock-n-Roll, and West Coast Swing.

Classic and Showcase Divisions (18+) – OPUS Divisions

Please go to the following link for Classic and Showcase rules: <https://nasde.net/nasde-rules/>

Rising Star Division – OPUS Division

Please go to the following link for Rising Star rules: <https://risingstartour.com/rules/>

For 2025, the Rising Division will be split into Showcase and Classic, with a minimum of ten (10) couples required for Showcase, otherwise it will remain combined.

Rising Star Classic:

*** Lifts are not allowed. Dancers must have at least one foot on the ground at all times.**

Rising Star Showcase:

*** A minimum of three (3) separate lifts are required, one of which must have the followers hips above the leader's physical waistline.**

Sophisticated Swing Division (35+) – OPUS Division

1. The rules governing the Sophisticated Swing Division are the same as those governing the Showcase Division, except lifts and aerials are permitted but not required, and both competitors must be 35 years of age or older on or before the Sunday of the event.
2. Break-away is to be no more than 8 beats of music.
3. Partner weight support moves, such as lifts, aerials, and acrobatic moves, are allowed but not required.
4. A couple must remain in their designated roles throughout the entire routine with an allowable exception of (1) 8-count maximum of role switching.
5. Choreographed routines are required. Competitors select their own music.
6. A competitor may also dance in Masters, Classic, or Showcase if age requirements are met.
7. Dance costumes are required (Halloween-style costumes are not considered appropriate).
8. Performance time is a minimum of (2) minutes and a maximum of (3) minutes. Timing starts with the first performance movement with or without music.
9. Competitors must register by November 11th. We will not be taking registrations at the event.
10. A minimum number of five (5) entries are required to run this division. If less than 5 entries are registered, the division may run, but the prize money may be adjusted. The Organizers will make this decision.

Masters Division (50+) – OPUS Division

1. The rules governing the Master Swing Division are the same rules that govern the Classic Division, except both competitors must be 50 years of age or older on or before the Sunday of the event.
2. Break-away is to be no more than 8 beats of music.
3. A couple must remain in their designated roles throughout the entire routine with an allowable exception of (1) 8-count maximum of role switching.
4. Choreographed routines are required. Competitors select their own music.
5. A competitor may also dance in Sophisticated, Classic, or Showcase if age requirements are met.
6. Dance costumes are required (Halloween-style costumes are not considered appropriate).
7. Performance time is a minimum of (2) minutes and a maximum of (3) minutes. Timing starts with the first performance movement with or without music.
8. Competitors must register by November 11th. We will not be taking registrations at the event.
9. A minimum number of five (5) entries are required to run this division. If less than 5 entries are registered, the division may run, but the prize money may be adjusted. The Organizers will make this decision.

Team Division (6+) – OPUS Division

1. Teams must consist of eight or more dancers comprised of any combination of gender/skill level.
2. Lifts, aerials, acrobatic moves, drops, slides, break-aways, switching of partners, and reverse lead/follow are all allowed, but not required.
3. Dancers must be aged 6 or older on or before the Sunday of the event.
4. A dancer can only dance on one Team.
5. A team member is allowed to enter a Couples Division.
6. All members performing on a Team must have purchased a full weekend Pass to compete.
7. Teams select their own music and have choreographed routines.
8. Dance Costumes are required. (Halloween style costumes are not considered appropriate).
9. Performance time is a minimum of (3) minutes and maximum of (5) minutes. Timing starts at the first movement with or without music.
10. Competitors must register by November 11th. We will not be taking registrations at the event.
11. A minimum number of five (5) entries are required to run this division. If less than 5 entries are registered, the division may run, but the prize money may be adjusted. The Organizers will make this decision.

Young Adult Division (14-17) – OPUS Division

1. The rules governing the Young Adult Division are the same rules that govern the Showcase Division, except that lifts and aerials that have one (1) partner's torso rise above the other partner's shoulders are **NOT** allowed. The intent of this rule is for the safety and/or lack of experience to execute these moves for this age group.
2. Weight support moves are optional.
3. This division is for Competitors aged 14 to 17 on or before the Sunday of the event.
4. If an established partnership has one partner 18-19 years of age, that couple may petition the Organizer for

- an exception to the age restrictions rule by November 1st.
- If one partner has reached the age of fourteen by the Sunday of the event, and the other partner is under 14, this couple must compete in the Young Adult Division.
 - Choreographed routines are required. Competitors select their own music.
 - Swing content: 60% recognizable West Coast Swing is present throughout the performance.
 - Routines, Costumes and music choices must be in good taste and appropriate for this age group. A breach of this rule may be considered a penalty or a violation.
 - Performance time is a minimum of (2) minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes. Timing starts with the first movement with or without music.
 - Competitors must register by November 11th. We will not be taking registrations at the event.
 - A minimum number of five (5) entries are required to run this division. If less than 5 entries are registered, the division may run, but the prize money may be adjusted. The Organizers will make this decision.

Juniors Division (6-13) – OPUS Division

- The rules governing the Junior Division are the same rules that govern the Showcase Division, except lifts and aerials that have one (1) partner's torso rise above the other partner's shoulders are NOT allowed. The intent of this rule is for the safety and/or lack of experience to execute these moves for this age group.
- Weight support moves are optional.
- Age requirements: This division is for Competitors aged (6-13) years of age on or before Sunday of the event. If one partner has reached the age of 14 by the Sunday of the event, and the other partner is under the age of 14, this couple must compete in the Young Adult Division.
- Choreographed routines are required. Competitors select their own music.
- Swing content: 60% (as in Showcase) of recognizable West Coast Swing is present throughout the performance.
- Routines, Costumes and music choices must be of good taste and appropriate for this age group. A breach of this rule may be considered a penalty or a violation.
- Performance time is a minimum of (2) minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes. Timing starts with the first movement with or without music.
- Competitors must register by November 11th. We will not be taking registrations at the event.
- A minimum number of five (5) entries are required to run this division. If less than 5 entries are registered, the division may run, but the prize money may be adjusted. The Organizers will make this decision.

Pro-Am Routines (Pro-Am Follower & Pro-Am Leader) – Star Trophy Division

This division is designed to highlight a performance between a professional and an amateur. You may choose from four (4) categories: Open Pro-Am Follower and Leader (6+), Sophisticated Pro-Am Follower and Leader (35+)

- The time limit must be a minimum of 1 ½ minutes and a maximum of 2 ½ minutes.
- Swing content: 50% is present throughout the performance.
- Amateurs must be at least 6 years of age on or before the Sunday of the event.
- Costumes are encouraged but not required.
- Choreographed routines are required. Competitors select their own music
- To qualify for a partnership in our Pro-Am, an instructor/student relationship must exist.
- Amateurs are defined as anyone who does not teach Swing dance.
- A Professional is defined as someone who earns a significant amount of income teaching or performing Swing.
- Each Pro is limited to five (5) students per Division

While you may enter as a leader and a follower using different routines, you may only dance in one leader division and/or one follower division. Amateurs of 35+ must choose whether to dance in the Open or Sophisticated division. Amateurs that are under 35 can only enter the Open division.

Strictly Swing Divisions (Nov/Int, Open, Masters, Juniors, Champions) – Star Trophy Division

The goal of these divisions is to emphasize the social aspects of West Coast Swing dancing. You may choose from five (5) categories: Nov/Int, Open, Masters (50+), Juniors (6-17), Champions.

- You must compete with a different partner in each Strictly Swing Division if competing in more than one.
 - Exception:** You may dance with the same partner if you dance in a different dance genre (i.e., Strictly Swing WCS and Strictly Swing Shag).
- Moves such as lifts, aerials, and acrobatic moves are NOT allowed

3. Support moves, such as drops, slides, and splits, are allowed (but not required) to the degree that they would be considered safe and appropriate on a social dance floor.
4. Short breakaways (breaking of contact immediately followed by an effort to re-physical contact) are allowed with an 8-beat maximum. (Champions are exempt from this rule)
5. Swing content: 75% of recognizable West Coast Swing is present throughout the performance.
6. Costumes are not required. Matching clothes are optional.
7. The DeeJay will randomly select the Music. It will not be previewed in advance for competitors.
8. Preliminary rounds will be heated. The chief judge will determine the Final round format.
9. A minimum number of five (5) entries are required to run this division. If less than 5 entries are registered, the division may run, but the prize money may be adjusted. The Organizers will make this decision.

Strictly Shag (6-20) – Star Trophy Division

1. These divisions are designed to highlight social Shag dancing skills and are open to all Shag styles, including those listed in the Statement of Swing.
2. Moves such as lifts, aerials, and acrobatic moves are Not allowed.
3. Support moves, such as drops, slides, and splits, are allowed (but not required) to the degree that they would be considered safe and appropriate on a social dance floor.
4. Competitors must be between the ages of 6-20 on or before the Sunday of the event.

Strictly Shag Open (21+) – Star Trophy Division

1. This division is designed to highlight social Carolina Shag dancing skills.
2. Moves such as lifts, aerials, and acrobatic moves are NOT allowed.
3. Support moves, such as drops, slides, and splits, are allowed (but not required) to the degree that they would be considered safe and appropriate on a social dance floor.
4. Competitors must be aged 21 or older on or before the Sunday of the event.

Jack & Jill General Rules – Star Trophy Division

The Open is proud to be a member of the World Swing Dance Council since its inception. We are offering the following WSDC divisions: **Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Masters, All Stars and Champions**. Jack & Jills highlights social dance skills with an emphasis on lead and follow, technique, timing, and teamwork. This division is open to all styles of Swing and can include, but is not limited to Carolina Shag, Dallas Push, East Coast Swing, Hand Dancing, Hollywood Swing, Houston Whip, Imperial Swing, Jive, Jitterbug, Lindy Hop, Rock-n-Roll, and West Coast Swing.

1. For updated WSDC rules, please go to their website at: <https://www.worldsdc.com/wsdc-points-registry-rules/>
2. The music will be selected by our deejay staff.
3. Each competitor must have a Weekend Pass.
4. Lifts, aerials, and acrobatic moves are **NOT** allowed **except in the Champions Division**.
5. Support moves, such as drops, slides, and splits, are allowed (but not required) to the degree that they would be considered safe and appropriate on a social dance floor.
6. Switching roles is not permitted.
7. Costumes are NOT allowed, but tasteful and dressy clothing is encouraged. Blue jeans or torn jeans are NOT allowed. (Chief judge may disqualify the competitor).
8. Competitors enter as individuals and will be randomly assigned partners.
9. Depending on the number of entries in each division, there may or may not be a preliminary or semi-round. The chief judge and the competition coordinator will determine rounds.
10. The Preliminary and Semi-final Rounds will be heated. The Organizers and Chief Judge will determine whether or not the finals will be heated.

Juniors Shag Jack & Jill (6-20) – Star Trophy Division

1. Competitors must be between the ages of 6-20 on or before the Sunday of the event.
2. Junior Shag Jack & Jill Competitors may also dance in the WSDC Jack & Jills. See WSDC Rules. <https://www.worldsdc.com/wsdc-points-registry-rules/>

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