



The Open World Swing Dance Championships – 2026

Mission Statement

Our mission is to unite and inspire the global swing dance community by providing a premier competitive platform where the world's most accomplished dancers can showcase their talent, dedication, and artistry at the highest level.

About Our Event

The Open is the premier international swing dance championship, bringing together the world's top West Coast Swing dancers, it features the largest and most competitive routine divisions, alongside workshops and social dancing, competitors from around the world vie for World Champion titles and the coveted OPUS Trophy.

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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Organizer Responsibilities

1. **Selecting the competition officials.** A panel of Judges, Chief judges, Scorer, Referee Judge, Review Panel, MCs, Chief DJ, and Competition DJs will be made available on The Open website prior to the event.
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 for all divisions that require them..
4. **Holding all competitions as planned or modifying them if necessary.** The event will make every effort to hold competitions as scheduled. Any changes to competition times, registration deadlines, or eligibility requirements will be communicated at the event and through official event communication channels.
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 tabulate all competition results. Preliminary and semifinal rounds will use callbacks as determined by the Chief Judge, and finals will be scored using relative placement. Scores will be posted online and available for review following the Sunday awards ceremony.
7. **Announcing the results and presenting awards.** Results and awards will be announced and presented according to the event schedule.

Competitor Responsibilities

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 all 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. **Bib numbers must be worn during all rounds, including Finals, for all non-routine divisions.** Competitors without a required bib number will not be permitted to compete and will forfeit their entry fee, unless otherwise authorized by competition officials.
6. **Demonstrate good sportsmanship conduct at all times.** Competitors must demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times, both on and off the competition floor. All participants are expected to treat partners, competitors, officials, staff, volunteers, spectators, and the event with respect. Unsportsmanlike, inappropriate, or disrespectful behavior may result in penalties or disqualification at the discretion of event officials. Competitors who are disqualified, withdraw after the registration deadline, or fail to compete will forfeit their entry fees.

7. **Using appropriate channels to communicate your concerns.** Competitors with questions or concerns should use appropriate channels, including the Competitors' Meeting, private discussions with the Competition Director or Chief Judge, or direct communication via email. Competitors may not confront, pressure, challenge, or argue with judges. Harassment or verbal abuse of judges, officials, staff, or volunteers may result in penalties, disqualification, and/or removal from future events.
8. **Reviewing your scores.** QR codes for competition scores will be made available following the awards ceremony on Sunday evening. Scores will also be posted online and accessible through The Open website and official social media channels.
9. **Appropriate behavior and attire.** Creative expression, showmanship, and appropriate humor are encouraged; however, all routines must demonstrate strong dance fundamentals and good taste. Intentionally poor dancing for comedic effect is not permitted.
10. **Age Appropriate.** All performances must be appropriate for a diverse audience. Inappropriate touching, simulated sexual behavior, or other conduct deemed unsuitable by the judges may result in a violation penalty.
11. **Questions.** Competitors with questions contact the Chief Judge in advance 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 entries due November 11th. Late entries may be accepted at the discretion of the Organizers.
4. The Organizers can cancel any division due to **lack** of entries.
5. Divisions that do not meet the minimum entry requirements may be canceled, with entry fees refunded. Divisions with at least three (3) entries may still be held at the Organizer's discretion, with adjusted prize money if necessary. Competitors will be notified of any division cancellations prior to the event.
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.
7. Multiple entries are allowed, competitors may enter any division for which they are eligible. Competitors entering more than one couples division (Strictly Swing or Routine) must compete with a different partner in each division. Juniors and Young Adult competitors are exempt from this rule.

Program

Since 1983, the Official Program has documented the history of THE **OPEN WORLD SWING DANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS** and its competitors. To be included in this collector's item, competitors are encouraged to register early and submit all required information.

1. **THE PROGRAM DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 10th.** Registrations received after October 10 may not be included in the event program due to production and printing deadlines..
2. **Routine Divisions:** Competitors in all Routine divisions, except Pro-Am, are encouraged to submit a photo for the event program. Photos must meet the format requirements outlined on the registration site.
3. **Pro-Am Routines:** Pro-Am Routines will include both the Pro and Am competitors' names
4. **How To Submit Your Program Info:** During registration after the competitor selects the Routine Division, there will be instructions for uploading the picture.
 - a. **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.
 - b. The Organizer reserves the right to reject any image that does not meet standards of good taste.
 - c. Silly photos, photos of pets, or anything outside of the partnership will not be permitted.
 - a. 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 competitors entered in any Routine Division must submit their routine music prior to the event. To ensure proper scheduling and production of the competition, please upload your music using the link below by the published deadline. 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+)	

Music submission Link 1: <https://deejaytools.com/>

Deadline: All routine music must be submitted and received no later than **November 19, 2026**. For questions or additional assistance regarding music submissions, please contact us at music@usopenswing.com.

Bib Numbers

Competitors will be assigned a randomly selected bib number during registration, as required for their division.

1. **You are required to collect your Bib** at the event registration desk, 30 minutes prior to your first competition.
2. Bring your bib number when checking into the Competitors' Green Room 30 minutes before your competition and present it to the Competition Coordinators for each contest.
3. For all Jack & Jill divisions, Leaders and Followers are required to wear their assigned bib numbers throughout Prelims, Semifinals, and Finals, unless instructed otherwise by competition officials.
4. Strictly Swing Divisions—only the Leader is required to wear the Bib number.

Wrist Bands

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

Schedule

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

1. A tentative schedule will be listed on *The Open's* website.
2. 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

Main Ballroom practice time will be prioritized for divisions competing that day. Other divisions will be assigned separate practice times. **Refer to the event schedule for details.**

Dance Order

1. **Jack & Jill Divisions.** Preliminary and Semifinal rounds will use rotating partnerships in a heated format. Leader and Follower lineups will be ordered by ascending bib number. Finals may or may not use a heated format. Jack & Jill Final pairings will be randomly generated using 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.
2. Concerns regarding a contestant's division eligibility should be reported privately to the Chief Judge as soon as possible. The Open will investigate and take appropriate action if necessary.
3. Competitors who register for the wrong division may be reassigned to the correct division or permitted to withdraw. If The Open later determines that a competitor was ineligible or misrepresented their status, the partnership may be disqualified and removed from awards and final placements.

Petition Process

Competitors seeking an exception to division requirements or wishing to change divisions must submit a petition. Questions regarding division eligibility should be directed to the Chief Judge at usopencjyma@gmail.com.

1. To petition in advance, complete the Petition Application online through: <https://theopenswing.com/rules-and-important-dates/>. You must make your request prior to November 1st.
2. List division, partner's name, ages, partner relationship/history and present your case, to petition.
3. **The Open's** Chief Judge will review your petition, and it will either be approved or disapproved. The Chief Judge will notify you of the decision. The Chief Judge's decision is Final.

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** – a shoe breaks, becomes untied or unfastened, or a costume tears, malfunctions, creates a safety hazard, or results in unintended exposure.
2. Restarts will not be granted due to dissatisfaction with the dance order, music, partner, performance, or forgetting part of a routine.
3. For the safety of the competitor, a restart is **not allowed** if a competitor is injured during their dance.
4. Restart requests must be made before leaving the floor and approved by the Chief Judge. The Chief Judge may also order a restart when deemed fair and in the best interest of the competitors.
5. If the Chief Judge allows a restart, the previous scores will be voided.
6. The Chief Judge will determine when a restart occurs based on the division and circumstances. A restarted routine will not automatically be placed at the end of the performance order.
7. If a restart request is denied, or a competitor declines a restart, the original performance will be scored.

Awards

Prizes and payouts are determined by the Organizer and awarded at the Awards Ceremony.

1. **Weekend Awards.** See event schedule for awards days/times.
2. Your award envelope will direct you where to pick up your payout. This should be done prior to Sunday evening at 7:30 PM.

In the event of a national emergency, economic downturn, or other circumstances beyond the Organizer's control, prize money may be adjusted. Competitors will be notified in advance whenever possible.

Scores – Posting

QR codes for score review will be available in the Green Room for one (1) hour after the Sunday Awards Ceremony. The Chief Judge and Referee Judge will be available for questions. 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.”** Evaluates how well the dancer connects to the music by staying on beat, reflecting the swing rhythm, and executing syncopations and footwork accurately.
2. **Technique. “How Well You Do What You Do.”** Evaluates the quality of movement execution, including balance, weight transfer, foot placement, body lines, spins, turns, and control of the arms and hands.
3. **Teamwork. “How Well You Work Together.”** Evaluates the quality of partner connection, lead/follow skills, cooperation, adaptability, and respect for partner safety throughout the performance.
4. **Content/Choreography. “What You Do.”** Evaluates the selection and arrangement of movements, musical interpretation, phrasing, variety, contrast, and overall tastefulness.
5. **Showmanship/Presentation. “How Well You Sell What You Do.”** Evaluates overall performance quality, including appearance, audience engagement, dance chemistry, sportsmanship, and the ability to create an entertaining and professional presentation.
6. **Musical Interpretation. “How Well You Interpret the Music.”** Evaluates how well the dancer interprets the music through variations in style, tempo, mood, rhythm, and phrasing.
7. **Level of Difficulty. “How Difficult the Performance is.”** Evaluates the complexity, innovation, and challenge of the movements performed, as well as the ability to execute them with ease and confidence.

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

Swing Content is evaluated independently by Judges according to the percentages required by the event rules.

Primary Identifiable Characteristics (Spatial Structure)

1. Danced in a slot
 - a. Follower stays in the slot
 - b. Leader moves off the slot to allow the follower to pass
 - c. 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 a consistent meter of 2 or 4 beats per measure. Variations on these meters should appear appropriate to swing dancing, and 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 recognizable swing patterns.
4. **(NEW for The Open 2026)** It is recommended that all Swing division routines use music in 4/4 time. The use of 3/4 time is discouraged. Artistic intros or transitions are permitted but may not exceed 32 beats. Questions regarding music selection or eligibility may be submitted to music@usopenswing.com

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

Violations & Errors

If you fail to follow *The Open's* rules and no Referee Judge is assigned, the judging panel may impose penalties for rule violations. Unless otherwise specified, the following penalty levels apply:

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

Violations may result in a reduction of one or more final placement positions at the judges' discretion.

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 a couple fails, a Review Panel consisting of the Chief Judge and two (2) judges will be convened.
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 determines that a violation occurred, it will decide the appropriate placement reduction based on the severity of the violation.

Time Violation for Routines

Routines outside the required time limits will be disqualified and placed last. Competitors are responsible for verifying compliance and may test their music during floor trials.

Costumes – Performance Attire

1. Performance attire is required in all Routine divisions.
2. Performance attire is prohibited in Strictly and Jack & Jill divisions; matching/dressy attire is encouraged.
3. Dress to impress and perform to win. Attire should be tasteful, dance-appropriate, and flattering.

Dress Code

1. Blue Jeans and/or torn jeans are not allowed in 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.
3. Age-appropriate attire is required in Juniors, Young Adults and Junior Jack & Jill divisions.

Definitions

1. **Age restrictions.** Age requirements apply to some divisions. Check division eligibility before registering.
2. **Break-aways.** Breaking physical contact for 8-beats of music.
3. **Costume.** Costumes are routine-specific attire not normally worn for social dancing and are allowed only in Routine divisions. Matching or coordinated outfits are permitted in Strictly Swing.
4. **Couple/Partnership.** A couple consists of one leader and one follower.
5. **Dancing twice in the same division.** A competitor may not dance in the same division twice.
6. **Entrance.** An entrance is a pre-choreographed opening sequence used to enter the floor and begin a routine. Entrances are 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. Using a prop in any division will result in a violation.
 - 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 similar dance attire may be worn in all divisions. However, clothing and accessories may not be removed, discarded, or exchanged between partners during a performance.
 - c. If you are concerned that something might be considered a prop, you must ask prior to competing.
 - d. Microphones and/or headsets are not permitted during any routine.
9. **Routine.** A routine consists of prearranged choreography rather than spontaneous lead-and-follow dancing. (Coordinated footwork or mirror patterns from Carolina Shag are not considered routine).
10. **Side-by-side.** A side-by-side is a sequence of coordinated footwork performed by both partners that is not part of a recognizable lead-and-follow pattern, regardless of dance position. Side-by-sides of up to 8 beats are permitted in all divisions; however, excessive use may be marked down by the judges.
11. **Time Limit.** Performance time limits are 2–3 minutes for all divisions unless otherwise noted below:
 - a. Pro-Am Routine performances must be between 1½ and 2½ minutes in length.
 - b. Team performances must be between 3 and 5 minutes in length.
 - c. Choreographed Floor Entrances and Exits are included in the time limit (whether there is music or not).
 - d. A five-second buffer is allowed to account for equipment differences. Timing begins with the first performance movement.
 - e. Failure to comply with time limit requirements will be considered 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. A dancer is unable to rise from the floor without assistance from their partner.
 - c. A partner is unable to assume the required position without full support from their partner.
 - d. At least one body part below the waist must remain in contact with the floor during all weight-supported movements. Judges will evaluate these criteria assuming performance by highly athletic individuals and will err on the side of the competitors.
 - 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

These divisions feature performance-level swing dancing and are open to all swing styles..

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 2026, the Rising Division will be split into Rising Star Showcase and Rising Star Classic.

Rising Star Classic:

* No lifts. One (1) foot must remain on the floor during weight-supported movements.

Rising Star Showcase:

* Minimum three (3) lifts required, including one with the follower's hips above the leader's waistline.

Sophisticated Swing Division (35+) – OPUS Division

1. Sophisticated Swing follows the same rules as Showcase, except lifts and aerials are permitted (but not required), and both competitors must be at least 35 years old by the Sunday of the event.
2. Break-aways and side-by-side patterns are permitted.
3. Partner weight support moves, such as lifts, aerials, and acrobatic moves, are allowed but not required.
4. Competitors must maintain their designated roles, with one (1) allowed role switch of up to eight (8) counts.
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.
8. Time limit: 2–3 minutes, measured from the first performance movement whether music is playing or not.
9. Competitors must register by November 1st. No onsite registration is available.
10. Minimum five (5) entries required. Prize money may be adjusted if fewer entries are registered.

Masters Division (50+) – OPUS Division

1. Master Swing follows the same rules as Classic, except both competitors must be at least 50 years old by the Sunday of the event.
2. Break-away is to be no more than 8 beats of music.
3. Competitors must maintain their designated roles, with one (1) allowed role switch of up to eight (8) counts.
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.
7. Time limit: 2–3 minutes, measured from the first performance movement whether music is playing or not.
8. Competitors must register by November 1st. No onsite registration is available.
9. Minimum five (5) entries required. Prize money may be adjusted if fewer entries are registered.

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.
9. Time limit: 3–5 minutes, measured from the first performance movement whether music is playing or not.
10. Teams must register by November 1st. No onsite registration is available.
11. Minimum five (5) entries required. Prize money may be adjusted if fewer entries are registered.

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 for an exception to the age restrictions rule by November 1st.
5. 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.
6. Choreographed routines are required. Competitors select their own music.
7. Swing content: 60% recognizable West Coast Swing is present throughout the performance.
8. Costumes and music must be age-appropriate and in good taste. Violations may result in penalties.
9. Time limit: 3–5 minutes, measured from the first performance movement whether music is playing or not.
10. Competitors must register by November 1st. No onsite registration is available
11. Minimum five (5) entries required. Prize money may be adjusted if fewer entries are registered.

Juniors Division (6-13) – OPUS Division

1. 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.
2. Weight support moves are optional.
3. 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..
4. Choreographed routines are required. Competitors select their own music.
5. Swing content: 60% recognizable West Coast Swing is present throughout the performance.
6. Costumes and music must be age-appropriate and in good taste. Violations may result in penalties.
7. Time limit: 2–3 minutes, measured from the first performance movement whether music is playing or not.
8. Competitors must register by November 1st. No onsite registration is available.
9. Minimum five (5) entries required. Prize money may be adjusted if fewer entries are registered.

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+)

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

Competitors may enter as both a Leader and a Follower using different routines, but may only compete in one Leader division and one Follower division. Amateurs age 35 and older must choose either the Open or Sophisticated division. Amateurs under 35 may compete only in 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.

1. You must compete with a different partner in each Strictly Swing Division if competing in more than one.
 - a. **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).
2. Lifts, aerials, and acrobatic moves are **NOT** allowed (Champions are exempt from this rule).
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. Blue jeans or torn jeans are NOT allowed.
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. Minimum five (5) entries required. Prize money may be adjusted if fewer entries are registered.

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.
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 & Jill showcases social dance skills, emphasizing lead and follow, technique, timing, and teamwork. All swing styles are welcome.

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 (Champions are exempt from this rule).
5. Drops, slides, and splits are allowed if they can be performed safely 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.
10. Prelims and Semis will be heated. Finals format will be determined by the Organizers and Chief Judge.

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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