

# COMPETITION RULES

## General

### ALL CONTESTS ARE DEGENERED

1. Waivers:  
Each competitor must sign an entry/waiver form and pay in full BEFORE competing.
2. Weekend Pass:  
All Entrants are required to purchase a weekend ticket and may be asked to verify event pass purchase.
3. Age:  
Strictly swing, rising star, and pro-am are open to all ages.  
Jack and Jill contests are open to ages 18 and above.  
Competitors between ages 11 and 17 may petition to compete in Jack and Jill contests.  
Sophisticated age division is 35 and above.  
Masters is 50 and above.
4. Costumes:  
Costumes are not allowed in any category except Rising Star and Pro-Am Routines. Strictly swing partners may choose to coordinate outfits.
5. Swing Definition:  
This is a 'Swing Dance' competition and all recognized swing styles are allowed, including Whip, Push, West Coast, Swing, Shag, Lindy Hop, Imperial, Swingout, Jitterbug, Stepping and others.
6. Entry Limits and Requirements:  
Dancers may compete in multiple swing contest categories during the weekend. You may compete or enter a particular contest more than once, but each entry must be at the different level. If you are unable to compete in a different level, you may only compete in the contest once. See Strictly Swing and Pro-Am Rules.

There is no limit to entries to any division except for pro-am routines and pro-am strictly swing. A professional may dance with up to five (5) amateurs at each level of pro-am strictly swing or pro-am routines.

If there are fewer than five (5) entries in any division, Swing City Chicago reserves the right to combine or cancel that division. Swing City Chicago also reserves the right to have all lead/follow categories run in a heated format in lieu of prelims or spotlight format to facilitate event schedule constraints.

7. WSDC Jack and Jill Rules: NEW!!  
WSDC points will be used to determine the level for all Jack & Jill competitors.  
Masters may compete in the appropriate WSDC level and in masters (novice or open based on WSDC points but not both).  
You may now compete at a leader and follower per the new WSDC guidelines.

Here are details on how it works:

- Leader and Follower points will be tracked separately in Points Registry.
- Competitors qualify for their dance level based on either their Leader or Follower points, whichever is higher.

- Competitors are allowed to compete in their non-dominant role one level down if they don't qualify in both for the same division. No petitions will be approved for dancing more than one level down.
- Competitors will not be permitted to dance both roles in the same division.

Current competitors whose combined points as both a Leader and Follower would have moved them into a higher skill level will be offered a one-time option (to be "grandfathered" into the higher level).

Competitors – please contact [points@worldsdc.com](mailto:points@worldsdc.com) if any points are/were incorrectly allocated to the wrong role in the system.

8. Qualification for Newcomer Dancers:  
Designed for the dancer that is BRAND NEW to competition. You may enter Newcomer only once at Swing City Chicago. This division is not open to all levels.
9. Lifts, Drops, and Aerials:  
Lifts, drops and aerials are allowed in Swing City Chicago's routine divisions (rising star and pro-am routines). Drops that are considered 'safe' and that work within the realm of 'lead/follow' are allowed in the Advanced, All-Star, All-American, and Master's Divisions of Jack and Jill and Strictly swing ONLY.

Definition of a LIFT: That point when both feet are off the ground, and weight is not self-supported.

Definition of an AERIAL: The point at which one partner is off the ground due to the other partner and not maintaining contact with their partner.

Definition of a DROP: The point at which the head goes below your partner's waist and weight is not self-supported.

10. All rules will be strictly enforced:  
Scoring and penalties will be at the discretion of each individual judge.

### **Appropriate Behavior and Dress Code:**

It is the desire of the Organizer to encourage expressive and exciting dance performances without sacrificing quality of dancing and good taste. To encourage this balance, any action that the judges believe would make them uncomfortable in a social dance setting (such as wearing inappropriate attire or showing disrespect toward one's partner, other dancers, or the event) is prohibited. Competitors should check with the Chief Judge in advance if they have questions regarding the acceptability of their routine/competition attire.

### **Responsibilities of Competitors**

1. **Planning:** Competitors should check the weekend schedule in advance in order to arrive in time to meet registration deadlines. They should bring appropriate competition attire. They should also plan to be on time for all meetings and competitions. Competitors are responsible for checking at the event for any changes to previously announced schedules, which are always subject to change.
2. **Knowing the Rules:** All competitors should read these rules carefully prior to attending the contestant meeting for their competition. Competitors are responsible for adhering to these rules whether they have read them or not. Questions about the rules should be asked at the contestant meeting or addressed in advance to the Organizer or the Chief Judge.

3. **Being Prepared to Compete:** Competitors should be present in the ballroom at least 15 minutes prior to the start of their competition. Any change in partnership for the couple's competitions may require an additional entry fee as well as a new entry form and waiver.
4. **Demonstrating Good Sporting Conduct:** Competitors must always demonstrate good sporting conduct, both on and off the competition floor. Competitors may not speak to judges regarding their placements or scores until after the awards have been given. It is bad sportsmanship to badger or argue with judges about placements and scores. Competitors must also refrain from any behavior that the judges deem inappropriate. Failure to adhere to this code of behavior may result in disqualification.

### **Petitions for Reclassification**

It is the Organizer's goal to encourage all competitors to assign themselves to a fair and appropriate classification using the honor system. If competitors feel uncomfortable with their assigned classification, they may petition for reclassification on their entry form by providing a brief, written explanation of the reason(s) for their request. Competitors must submit such petitions at the contest registration desk prior to the earliest registration deadline for the competition(s) in question. Petitions for reclassification will be reviewed by the Chief Judge, in consultation with the Organizer, and contestants will be notified as quickly as possible of the outcome.

### **Changes to These Rules**

The Organizer will make every effort to conduct all competitions in accordance with these rules. However, the Organizer reserves the right to make any changes in schedule/format deemed necessary for any competition.

### **Jack and Jill Division:**

Our qualifications for entries promote fairness and competitor enjoyment by grouping dancers of similar ability in the same division. Our rules are based on the World Swing Dance Council recommendations. It is the Organizer's goal to encourage all competitors to assign themselves to the appropriate classification using the honor system. If you are not comfortable dancing in the division where these qualifications place you and would like to dance up or down, please petition.

**Novice:** Competitors must stay in Novice until they have earned at least 16 points in Novice.

**Intermediate:** Competitors must have earned at least 16 points in Novice; and less than 30 points in Intermediate.

**Advanced:** Competitors must have earned at least 30 points or more in Intermediate.

**All Star:** Competitors must have earned at least 45 points in Advanced within 3 years prior to this event.

**Sophisticated:** For competitors who are at least 35 years old by the end of the event. Competitors may also dance in a skill level Jack & Jill (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced or All Stars) and Masters.

**Masters Novice:** For competitors who are at least 50 years old by the end of the event and are not eligible to compete in WSDC Intermediate or above. Competitors may also dance in a skill level Jack & Jill (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced or All Star).

**Masters Open:** For competitors who are at least 50 years old by the end of the event and are WSDC eligible to compete Intermediate or above. Competitors may also dance in a skill level Jack & Jill (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced or All Star).

### **Strictly Swing Divisions:**

Swing dancing that encourages lead and follow partner dancing at its best. Although swing includes amalgamations and patterns that are familiar to many dancers, the essence of lead and follow must be maintained in and out of these patterns. Strictly Swing division is not meant for long and extended pre-choreographed phrases. Choreography "on the fly" is the objective. Drops, leans, circular movements and other partner weight support moves are allowed as long as both partners keep at least one foot on the floor.

### **Division Qualifications:**

It is the Organizer's goal to encourage all competitors to assign themselves to a fair and appropriate classification using the honor system. If you do not feel comfortable dancing within these qualifications, please petition accordingly.

**Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, All Star:** For these divisions a couple must enter the highest level either partner qualifies for based on the WSDC points they have earned and the WSDC level criteria for Jack & Jill.

**Masters (50+):** Both partners must be 50 years of age or older. Because this is an age requirement rather than a skill level requirement you may also enter another Strictly Swing contest at the appropriate skill level if you wish.

### **Pro-Am Strictly Swing Division**

#### **General:**

1. Students enter with their teacher. This division is designed to highlight social dancing skills at a performance level with an emphasis on lead/follow technique.
2. For this contest, amateurs are defined as anyone who does not teach dancing on a regular, ongoing basis or earn a significant amount of income teaching or performing. A professional is defined as someone who earns a significant amount of income teaching or performing dance. Anyone who has previously competed in open or professional level competition must be considered a Pro for this purpose.
3. Only the student is evaluated. Different skill levels are offered for both Leader and Follower roles. Each skill level and role are a separate contest.
4. Each professional shall have no more than 5 entries in each Division offered.
5. It is the Organizer's goal to encourage Pro/Am competitions as a learning tool for the students.
6. Length of performance is at the promoter's discretion. Music will be chosen by the Organizer.
7. Costumes are not allowed. However, matching or complementary outfits are acceptable.
8. This division will be danced in heats.

### **Division Qualifications:**

It is the Organizer's goal to encourage all competitors to assign themselves to a fair and appropriate classification using the honor system. If you do not feel comfortable dancing within these qualifications, please petition.

**Novice:** This division is for students with less than 3 years total dance experience and limited previous competition success. Students are expected to perform solid basics. Limited variations are allowed but not required. No leans, drops, or breakaways are allowed. All material should be recognizable as familiar, common "leadable" social patterns.

**Intermediate/Advanced:** This division is for students with significant prior competition and or dance experience. Students are expected to perform clean basics with variations and musicality. Judges will consider musical interpretation, showmanship and creativity.

### ***Pro-Am Spotlight Routine:***

This single division is offered for all styles of Swing: West Coast Swing, Lindy Hop, Hustle, Shag and Hand Dance or any other style of popular swing dance.

#### **General:**

1. Students enter with their teacher and perform a choreographed routine to music they choose.
2. Expected swing content of any style is 70%. It is at the judges' discretion to determine that the swing content has been met.
3. For this contest, amateurs are defined as anyone who does not teach dancing on a regular, ongoing basis or earn a significant amount of income teaching or performing. A professional is defined as someone who earns a significant amount of income teaching or performing dance. Anyone who has previously competed in open or professional level competition must be considered a Pro for this purpose.
4. Routine must be at least 2 minutes long and no longer than 3 minutes.
5. Competitors select their own music.
6. Costumes are required.

### ***Rising Star Division***

#### ***Contest Rules***

##### **General:**

7. A couple consists of one leader and one follower. A couple may be other than a male leader and female follower.
8. Contestants may be as young as fifteen (15) years by the end of the event to participate.
9. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the Event's discretion. Minimum number of entries = three. If there are less than three couples, the event shall offer the competitors the opportunity to perform an exhibition, with judges' feedback.
10. Expected swing content of any style is 70%. It is at the judges' discretion to determine that the swing content has been met.
11. Performance time is a minimum of two minutes and maximum of three minutes.
12. Competitors select their own music.
13. Costumes are required.

##### **Specific:**

- No props.
- Time and judging begins at first movement of performance with or without music.
- Separate entrances are permitted, but must come together within thirty-two (32) beats of the music intro.
- Break-a-ways and side-by-side patterns are permitted, no longer than eight (8) beats.
- Lifts are optional but not required.
- Maximum five partner weight support moves with at least one foot on the ground.