

2026 Dance Showcase USA Guidelines

Regional & National Entry Fees – Entry fees are available within the On-line registration system.

Rebate Information – Rebate Information is available within the On-line registration system.

Performance Levels

Each division will be divided into four levels:

Jewel Level (Adaptive)

For dancers who have a physical, sensory or mental disability. We would like for all dancers in this adaptive level to have the opportunity to express themselves through their creativity in dance. This level is for Solos, Duet/Trios and Group dances. At least one dancer must be in the duet/trio dance to qualify for the Jewel Level. In the groups, more than 50% of the dancers must be Jewel dancers. (Star dancers cannot compete in the Jewel level). Jewel dancers may also compete in their studio groups in the other 3 levels as the director feels is applicable. Aerials, consecutive handsprings or pointe are not allowed in the Jewel Level. If an aerial, consecutive handsprings or pointe are performed, there will be a 3 point deduction after the judges have provided their scores.

Crystal Level (Recreational)

For recreational/beginner dancers who are currently taking 3 hours or less of dance/acro per week and have not mastered the technical skills required for higher levels. Based on discussions with directors, dancers practice at least 30 minutes a week for each dance they are in. Consequently, if a dancer is in 7 or more dances, then they will automatically be considered a Diamond Level dancer for all of the dances they are competing in.

In addition to specific training & rehearsal hours weekly, directors and teachers should consider the following guidelines when placing their dancers in this level for competing.

A few examples of beginning level skills:

- Basic turns (single pirouette, simple combinations of chainés and piqués, extensions knee to hip high, and single fouetté or a la seconde turns)
- Basic leaps and jumps (saut de chat, grande jeté, leap in second, simple ballet combinations such glissade pas de chat or glissade jeté)
- Basic tap/clog skills (simple rhythms with limited syncopation, repeated patterns)
- Beginner acrobatic skills (able to execute a cartwheel, front walk over and back bend, no aerial skills)
- Beginner Folkloric dance (basic compositional forms, simple rhythms, simple use of handheld props)
- Know your dance/routine and simple choreography.

Dancers that have mastered the majority of these Crystal skills and are attempting skills defined in the Diamond level below should consider moving up to the Diamond level. Aerials, consecutive handsprings and pointe are not allowed in the Crystal Level. If an aerial, consecutive handsprings or pointe are performed, there will be a 3 point deduction after the judges have provided their scores.

Diamond Level (Intermediate)

Open to contestants currently taking 5 hours or less of dance/acro per week and those dancers who would not be considered as a beginner due to previous dance experience. Based on discussions with directors, dancers practice at least 30 minutes a week for each dance they are in. Consequently, if a dancer is in 11 or more dances, then they will automatically be considered a Star Level dancer for all of the dances they are competing in.

In addition to specific training & rehearsal hours weekly, directors and teachers should consider the following guidelines when placing their dancers in their level for competing.

A few examples of intermediate level skills:

- Intermediate turns (double pirouette, combinations of multiple chaînés and piqués, extensions waist to shoulder high, and 2-3 fouetté or a la seconde turns)
- Intermediate leaps and jumps (leaps that change direction or switch legs, ability to combine 2 or more leaps in a pattern, ballet leaps and jumps with multiple beats or turning)
- Execute all positions well (1-5) arms and feet
- Intermediate tap/clog skills (variety of rhythms with moderate syncopation, variety of patterns and execute Irish, buffaloes and single toe turns and single wings)
- Intermediate acrobatic skills (One or two aerial skills)
- Intermediate Folkloric dance (intermediate compositional forms, variety of rhythms, advancing use of handheld props)
- More complex choreography with smooth transitions.

Dancers that have mastered the majority of these Diamond skills and are attempting skills defined in the Star level below should consider moving up to the Star level.

Star Level (Competition)

Open to anyone (regardless of hours) and all contestants taking more than 5 hours of dance/acro per week.

A few examples of advanced level skills:

- Performers perfecting 3 or more pirouettes
- Complex combinations of chaînés, double piqués, multiple fouettés
- Switch leaps and turning leaps
- Placed battements, extensions, and leg holds on relevé
- Advanced acrobatics
- Advanced tap/clog skills (doing pull backs, wings, shiggy bops, complex rhythms and syncopation)
- Advanced Folkloric dance (advanced compositional forms, complex use of rhythms, advanced use of handheld props)
- Complex choreography

In addition to specific training & rehearsal hours weekly, directors and teachers should consider the following guidelines when placing their dancers in this level for competing.

A routine with dancers of different levels will be entered in the Performance Level that applies to more than 50% of the dancers. If exactly 50% of the dancers are at a higher level, then the routine must be entered in the higher level. The Mini Age Division will only be able to compete in the Crystal Level. The Senior Age Division soloist will be able to compete in all four levels. The Senior duet/trios/groups may only compete in the Diamond and Star Level. The Adult Age Division entries will only compete in the Star level or Jewel level. All solos performed by the same dancer must be entered in the same level. If a Star Level dancer is in a duet/trio/group, then that routine cannot be entered in the Crystal Level.

Dance Showcase USA relies on each studio Director/teacher to place their dancers in the level that is best suited for the dancer's abilities and experience of dance. When placing your dancer/dances in the appropriate dance level, you need to consider their technical ability, choreography, master classes, convention attendance, private lessons and stage experience. While placing dances or dancers, you should also consider if the dancer is consistently winning in a lower level, then you should move them up a level to compete against other dancers with similar abilities and to challenge the dancer. When placing group dances into levels, you should also consider if you have 1 or more Star or Diamond level dancers that are being highlighted during the dance and the less experienced dancers are not receiving the same recognition during the dance, then the dance should be placed in a higher level and disregard the 50% rule. Winning is great, but we should challenge our dancers at the same time to allow them to gain self-confidence and positive self-esteem.

When placing your dances, please consider the following when determining which Performance level best fits your dancer or dancers:

- *How many hours of dance do they take. This includes hours of dance per week for all practices including class time, private lessons, and rehearsal time. It also includes any hours taken in a dance or drill team class at school.
- *Amount of competition experience.
- *Technical ability
- *Past Scoring – for example: a dancer who consistently wins in the Crystal level is demonstrating that they have mastered that level and should move to the Diamond Level. A dancer who is consistently winning at the Diamond level should move to the Star level.
- *Choreography, keep in mind the difficulty and execution of the dance.
- * ***NEW*** If our judges suggested that performers move up a level in previous competitions, we kindly ask that you take these comments into consideration when creating or updating this season's roster.

Please be advised that these rules are offered as guidelines for studio owners in the placement of their dancers in the level of competition that they feel are appropriate for their dancers. If you have any questions regarding placement or any other rule, please feel free to email or call us, we are always happy to help.

Dance Showcase USA has no control over whether a routine has been placed in the correct level for the regional competitions. Our judges have to judge each dance based on the level that it was entered in. However, if a dance routine has been placed in a level where the dancer/dancers have mastered the majority of the skills in the level they are competing in and are performing skills at the next level, then DSUSA will deduct 3 points from that dance score since the dancer/dancers should have been placed in the next higher level. Also that dance will be moved to the next higher level if that routine decides to come to Nationals. Rather than disqualification or dancing for adjudication only, the purpose of the 3 point deduction is to insure that the rightful winner of that level receives the recognition they deserve.

Division

- Solo
- Duet/Trio
- Small Group (4-9 dancers)
- Large Group (10-17 dancers)
- Line (18 or more dancers) or Line/Production (15 or more dancers).

Should a routine drop below the minimum number of performers for the group or line sizes during the competition, the routine will be awarded their adjudication award based on points, however, the routine will not be eligible for Overall Awards.

Age Division

- Minis (4 & under)
- Petite (5-6, 7-8)
- Juniors (9-10, 11)
- Teens (12, 13-14)
- Seniors (15-16, 17-19)
- Adults (20-29, 30 & over).

For Solos, Duet/Trios & Groups, if more than three dances are entered in a combined age division in any category, the division will be split into single age groups. For Duet/Trio, Small Group, Large Group and Line, the average age determines the age division into which you compete. To determine the average age: Add the age of each dancer together, then divide the total by the number of dancers. Drop the decimal point after the average age has been determined, i.e. average age 12.99 will compete in age 12. **ALL AGES FOR REGIONAL & NATIONAL COMPETITIONS WILL BE BASED ON THE DANCER'S AGE ON JANUARY 1, 2026. FOR NATIONALS, IF ANY ADDITIONS/SUBSTITUTIONS/DELETIONS ARE MADE TO THE ORIGINAL LIST OF DANCERS, THEN THE AVERAGE AGE WILL BE RECOMPUTED.** The instructor/parents will be responsible for providing proof of age, if requested.

Bump Rule

Duet/Trio, Small Group, and Large Group entries cannot compete in an age division more than one age division younger than the oldest dancer, regardless of the average age. An example would be a performer age 15 (Senior) dancing in a duet/trio or group with an average age of 10 (Junior), would be moved into the Teen Age Division and put into the lowest age group of the Teen Age Division (age 12). ***NEW*** If a performer's age is 20 or older, the Duet/Trio, Group or Line must compete in the Adult Age Division and the above rule does not apply.

Time Limits

- Solo and Duet/Trio – minimum 1½ minutes and maximum 3 minutes
- Small Group – minimum 1½ minutes and maximum 3 minutes
- Large Group – minimum 2 minutes and maximum 4 minutes
- Line – minimum 2½ minutes and maximum 5 minutes
 - Production Category – minimum 5 minutes and maximum 8 minutes.

We do allow extended time; however, the studio must contact Dance Showcase USA Staff to get approval.

Stage Setup – Setup time for props for Production routines must be limited to 2 minutes and cleared within 1 minute. For other routines, props must be set up within 1 minute and cleared within 30 seconds. If these time limits are exceeded, performances may be subject to point deductions.

Categories of Dance

Acrobatic/Gymnastics – a routine using at least 50% gymnastic passes/moves and incorporates dance technique with definite choreography.

Auxiliary/Drill Team – a routine consisting of precision marching, jazz run or dance style. May use hoops, flags and/or hand props.

Ballet – a routine consisting of ballet technique and classical steps. **(Ballet or similar shoes required. No pointe shoes allowed. Non-compliance will result in a 5 point deduction from the total score).**

Baton – a routine using baton(s) and baton technique. Will be judged on both baton technique and dance.

Character – a routine choreographed to portray a character. The characters may be from movies, theater, TV, etc. Tap sounds are not permitted in music.

Clogging – a routine consisting of clogging technique.

Contemporary – a routine choreographed to interpret and portray emotions, consisting of a combination of lyrical, jazz, or modern techniques.

Contemporary Ballet – a routine consisting of ballet technique with a contemporary style. **(Ballet, prepointe, and pointe shoes acceptable.) If rosin is used, an automatic 5 point deduction will be applied to the total score.**

Folkloric – a routine consisting of ethnic styles of dance, such as African, Hawaiian, Bollywood, Spanish, etc.

Hip-Hop – a routine consisting of hip-hop or street style dance. Reminder: Inappropriate lyrics will result in a 5 point deduction from the total score. We will use Urban Dictionary to interpret.

Jazz – a routine consisting of jazz technique utilizing up-tempo music.

Lyrical – a routine incorporating ballet technical base; meaning technique, lines, placement, balance, flexibility and control, utilizing the emotional lyrics of the music.

Modern – a routine of interpretive dance using balance and control; must be of modern technique, movement, and choreography, not contemporary or lyrical. (example: Graham Horton and Alexander Techniques)

Musical Theatre – a routine interpreting a song from a "Broadway" or movie musical through any style of dance. Tap sounds are not permitted in music.

Open – a routine consisting of a combination of multiple dance styles mixed into one, or one that does not fall under any other **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** category. Tap sounds are not permitted in music. If a vocalist is included in this category, they must also dance, i.e. the vocalist cannot just sing

Pointe – a routine consisting of pointe technique. **(Pointe shoes required for all female contestants. Non-compliance will result in a 5 point deduction from the total score). If rosin is used, an automatic 5 point deduction will be applied to the total score. Crystal and Jewel levels are not allowed for Pointe.**

Pom Pon – a routine consisting of precise and definite dance technique with the use of pom pons. Pom pons must be used at least 50% of the dance.

Production – (line only; 15 or more dancers) A routine which allows any dance performance category or combination of dance performance categories or dance styles. Tap sounds are not permitted in music. All Productions performed at Nationals will automatically be eligible for the Grand Showcase Finals.

Song & Dance – a routine consisting of both singing and any category of dance. Dance must be 50% of the routine. Accompaniment must be with music provided on USB/Flash. No vocals will be allowed on USB/Flash. Vocalist must also dance, i.e. the vocalist cannot just sing. Personal (lavalier type) microphones or sound equipment may not be hooked up. Only microphones furnished by **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** will be allowed.

Tap – a routine consisting of tap technique and primarily tap work. Tap sounds are not permitted in music.

* The penalty for tap sounds in the music is a 5 point deduction from the total score.

*Gymnastic/acrobatic passes are defined as any movement(s) where the dancer is completely inverted without one foot on the stage. The only exceptions are forward, backward, and shoulder rolls which can be performed in any category. Lifts, leaps and splits are also permissible. A pass consists of any number of gymnastics/acrobatic tricks across the stage at one time. **Gymnastics passes are allowed in any category as long as the style of dance is predominately the category entered. (Crystal and Jewel do not allow aerials or consecutive handsprings.) If the judges feel the dancer is in the wrong category, they may move the routine to the correct category, i.e. a jazz routine with too many passes will be moved to the open category.**

Music

Each entrant will furnish their own music on a flash drive. Each routine/song must be labeled as follows on the USB drive:

Dance#_routine_name (example: 005_Chapel Of Love).

Additionally, music should be in a MP3 format or MPEG-4 (M4A) format and a minimum bit rate of 128. Label the flash drive with studio name. You may put as much of your music as possible on a flash drive that it will allow. If you use iTunes, if you right click on the song, it will have an option for converting the music to a MP3 format. Then just copy those MP3 files to your flash drive. We recommend that you bring a 2nd flash drive as a backup or your phone.

Pitch Level and Speed of music cannot be controlled at the event. Please be sure to upload the correct version for your dancers performance. We will not be able to play any songs from an email or off the internet.

Studio name cannot be used as a song title, name of routine, announced in the song, or during the song, Non-compliance will result in a 5 point deduction from the total score.

Once the music starts and Directors/Dancers realize that the incorrect version of the music is being played then they need to notify the announcer or backstage staff before they have danced past three 8-counts, in order to re-dance with the correct music. If they request that the music be stopped or the dancers stop dancing past three 8-counts, then the dance will be allowed to dance again but it will result in an automatic 5 point deduction from the total score for the second dance.

Please be sure to pick up your music. USB flash drives will not be mailed.

Payment Information

All entries must be entered into the On-line registration system and payment must be postmarked 30 days prior to the competition date which is also the deadline date for all entries. **There will be a \$15 late fee per entry for any entries not paid by the deadline date which is 30 days prior to the competition.** Rebate information is available in the On-line registration system. To receive rebates, payment must be received and entries must be input 40 days prior to the competition date. Please send one studio check or debit/credit card for all studio entries. No entries will be accepted by phone. All entries will be processed once payment is received. Mastercard, Visa and Discover are accepted. No Personal Checks accepted at any time. Studio checks will only be accepted when postmarked by the deadline date.

*Late entries will be accepted as competition space permits.

All payments received after the deadline date must be paid for by cashier's check, money order or debit/credit card. No Studio Checks will be accepted after the deadline date. If debit/credit cards have limits, the studio director/owner is responsible for making sure that all amounts are available for processing prior to the 30 day payment deadline. There will be a \$25.00 charge on all returned checks and all future payments will be required by cashier's check, money order or debit/credit card.

There will be a fee of \$15 per entry for any changes made after the schedule has been posted including adding/substitutions/removal of dancers. In order to avoid this fee, studios should have all entries finalized and any possible conflicts finalized by the deadline date. Conflicts should be entered in the registration system (in the Remarks area for each entry with a conflict) and we will attempt to work around those conflicts when the schedule is being done, especially if there are drill team, prom, or other school conflicts. If we can't avoid the conflict that was identified within each dance, then we will refund that money. Conflicts that result from extensive makeup or costuming should also be identified in the Remarks area of the registration.

All entries will require that the director for that studio be in attendance for all of their dances and be able to pick up score sheets or notification prior to the competition must be given to Dance Showcase USA and approval made for those exceptions. All entries by studios must have a minimum of \$500 in fee totals. **If the fee total is less than \$500, all Solo and Duet/Trio entries must compete in the Star level.** Exceptions may be made but you must contact Dance Showcase USA staff for those exceptions. **If Dance Showcase USA makes an exception for less than \$500 and the director is not in attendance at the competition when the entry dances, then all entries for that studio will be adjudicated only and not eligible for any overall or special awards.** Independent entries are not accepted.

Refunds

No Refunds will be given after the deadline date. This means that any injuries, conflicts due to family emergencies, sudden illnesses, etc. will not receive any type of refund, gift certificate, or credit towards any future dance entries.

Schedules

Detailed schedules will be available in the on-line registration system 1 week prior to the competition. If it is feasible, the schedule will be posted earlier than 1 week in advance. Directors, please do not wait until a few days before the schedule is suppose to be out to identify conflicts. Please notify us as soon as possible so that we are given a chance to work around that conflict. A general schedule will also be available to the directors to provide to their parents if they desire to do so. These schedules will be on the **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** website www.danceshowcaseusa.com within the on-line registration system under Reports. **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** has the right to cancel any event that does not qualify with a minimum number of entries. In the event of cancellation, all entry fees will be refunded in full. Schedules will not be available to a studio until all entries are paid in full.

Judges

A panel of experienced judges will judge the dance routines. All judge's decisions are final. **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** expects all entries to be suitable for "family oriented entertainment." This means that all entries should not be suggestive, sexual or violent. This applies to costuming, lyrics, and choreography. Inappropriate dances will have 5 points deducted. Costuming is not judged unless deemed to be inappropriate.

Dance Showcase USA provides verbal video critiques for all three judges. The videos will only have the music in the background as the judge's comments during the dance will be the main focus. The videos will not be the same HD quality as the videos available for purchase from our professional video company.

*** *NEW*** If a rule violation is not caught at a Regional competition, it may still be applied at another Regional competition or National Finals competition. Previous judging does not set a precedent.

Score Sheets

Score sheets and flash drives will **ONLY** be given to the studio owner/director unless the **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** office is notified in writing. Score sheets and flash drives should be picked up after the last awards program for that studio. Score sheets / flash drives will not be mailed.

\$500 Senior Scholarship

Open to all graduating Seniors competing in Regional/Nationals. Submit in writing an essay (no more than 500 words) describing how dance has been a positive influence in your life. (Please **DO NOT** use your name or studio information in your essay.) Return your essay with the scholarship application (found on our website www.danceshowcaseusa.com) by June 1, 2026.

General Information

DANCE SHOWCASE USA reserves the right to increase/decrease the number of competition dates and/or change locations as needed to meet our demands. All attempts are made in scheduling to avoid late night competition, and to allow the younger ages to compete earlier in the competition schedule. All entries are lined up in a random order to prevent any studio from always being first or last. However, once the random order is generated, **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** reviews the order of dances to determine if any costume conflicts exist. If this occurs, the order will be re-arranged. Any apparent attempt to intentionally alter the scheduled order of the competition will result in a 5 point deduction from the total score.

*You may e-mail **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** at glenda@danceshowcaseusa.com. When emailing us, please call us if we have not responded within 72 hours to your email confirming we received it. For emails, please be sure to provide a subject. If no subject is sent, we will not open the email.

*Admission is free.

*All entrants grant **DANCE SHOWCASE USA** permission to use their photographs/videos for promotional and advertising purposes.

*Sound making devices (such as air horns, cowbells, etc.) are not permitted in the audience.

*Entrants may not compete more than once in exactly the same division, category, and age group. If a routine has at least one different dancer, you may compete in the exact same division, category, and age group. If the contestant performs in more than one solo, the same contestant can only receive one overall cash award, trophy or plaque in the Solo division.

*Any Regional First Place Overall Winner (that has at least 5 entries competing) may not compete the same routine at another Regional competition during the same season unless the routine moves up a level. If a dancer or dancers from that routine, chooses to compete at another Regional competition, then all entries with the exact same dancer/dancers must move up to the next level also. If any of those entries win at the higher level and they choose to come to Nationals, then they must compete all of those same entries at the highest level at the National competition. Routines winning First Place Overall at the 2025 National Finals or 2025 Grand Showcase Finals may not use the same routine at any **2026 DANCE SHOWCASE USA** Regional competitions.

*If a dance routine does not perform during its applicable Division (Solo, Duet/Trio, Small Group, Large Group, or Line) and Age Division (Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen, Senior, or Adult), then it will not be eligible for any overall award or placement award and will be judged for adjudication only. Adjudications will only be done based on available time on a given day and prior arrangements must be made before the competition starts.

*Talking, lip sync, and singing are acceptable, however the dance will be the only criteria for judging, unless the category entered is Song & Dance.

*No coaching is allowed for any age groups.

*All protests must be made in writing and by the studio director 30 minutes prior to the awards ceremony for that age division. The instructor will be responsible for providing proof of age, if requested.

Prop Information

*The following are not permitted: Fire, Swords, Sand, Knives, Air Horns, Cowbells, Special Sound, Liquid, Gel, Paint, Aerosol, Fireworks, Helium Balloons, Glitter, Confetti, Baby Powder, Flour, Lotion, Makeup, and any other substance that could affect the dancing surface. Body Paint/Makeup must be dry before performance starts. Baby Powder or Rosin is **NOT** allowed to be used for pointe or any other category. Painting or spray painting is not allowed anywhere on the premises.

*For safety measures, a dancer may not stand, sit, kneel, or dance above 8 feet from the stage floor on a prop. To clarify this rule, if the dancer's entire body is above 8 feet from the floor a deduction will occur. Dancing blind-folded without a partner on stage is not allowed. **For additional safety measures, no one is allowed to enter, leave the stage during the dance, or exit from locations other than the stage wings and this includes not sitting on the stage with legs extended or any other body part over the edge of the stage.** No items are allowed to be thrown off the stage toward the audience or the judges. Noncompliance for any of the above will result in a 3 point deduction from the total score.

*Props are allowed, however, they must be free standing. No person or persons may assist with a prop on stage during the dance without being a dancer of the routine. ***NEW*** **A person may assist with a prop from off stage as long as no part of the person's body is extended past the stage curtain or wing.** All props must be carried & cannot be dragged across the floor before, during, or after the routine. All props must have the portion that touches the floor covered/padded to prevent damage to the marley floor. Names of the studio are not allowed on props or costumes nor shall be worn by those people assisting with the setup of the props. However, all props left backstage must be identified with the studio name where the audience cannot see it. Hover boards, roller blades, skate boards, drones or any other airborne device are not allowed in a performance or to be used anywhere in the building. The following are not permitted: Props requiring electrical hook-ups, any type of Liquid, Fog, or Smoke equipment and live animals on stage. Electrical cords not allowed to be run off stage to portable gas generators or any other type of generator or electrical outlets. Props involving battery operated electricity must be portable and self-contained. Scenery or backdrops requiring the use of theater fly system or special theater lighting may not be used. A 3 point deduction from the total score will occur if any of these safety measures are violated.

*Each dance routine is responsible for returning the stage to its original condition when the dance has completed. Littering the stage (leaving flower petals, feathers, etc. on stage) will result in a 3 point deduction if the stage is not cleared immediately after the dance has completed. Please have someone from your studio be prepared to clear the stage.

Dressing and Hallways

***Women are not allowed in the boys dressing room and men are not allowed in the girls dressing room.**

***Hallways cannot be used for changing or storage of personal items without permission from the competition.**

***Any costume changes made during a performance, off-stage or backstage, should have appropriate undergarments.**

***NO CAMERAS, PHONES OR ANY ELECTRONIC DEVICE OF ANY TYPE ARE ALLOWED TO VIDEO, FACETIME, OR TAKE STILL PHOTOGRAPHY DURING ANY COMPETITION PERFORMANCE TIME. VIDEO AND STILL PHOTOGRAPHY IS ONLY ALLOWED DURING AWARD PRESENTATIONS. We no longer allow recording or still photography for a number of reasons. In the past, it was always to protect the choreography of studio directors, which still applies. However, in today's world of the internet, it is probably more important to protect our children. Since we do not necessarily know who is from which studio, someone could video or take pictures of children for other purposes than just personal family use. We would hate for someone to put a video on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, or other social media sites and represent those children in a demeaning manner. This has been a request of teachers and parents. Directors and teachers please explain this to your parents and tell your parents that they are responsible for telling their guests. If anyone is seen holding a camera in the air or any accidental flash occurs, the routine could have an automatic 5 point deduction applied to the total score.**

***A National entrant must have competed in a DANCE SHOWCASE USA Regional competition during the 2026 competition season to qualify for Nationals. All regional entries are eligible to compete at the National Finals regardless if you receive a Regional Overall or Not.** An increase, reduction, or substitution from an original qualifying entry at Regionals is acceptable. Regional entries cannot move down in Performance Level for Nationals. Entries must remain in the same dance category which they qualified at Regionals. However, if an entry performed as a Production at a Regional competition with 15 or more dancers decides to perform at Nationals but has less than the 15 dancers to qualify as a Line/Production, then Dance Showcase USA will allow that dance to be performed in the Open category as a Large Group at Nationals.

A "LAST CALL" REGIONAL Competition is held at the start of the National Competition. Anyone not able to compete at one of the Regional Sites can qualify for Nationals at this preliminary "Last Call" competition.

A TRIP FOR TWO valued at no more than \$2000 will be awarded to a director or instructor. A drawing will be held during a Grand Showcase Finals Award Ceremony to determine the winner. Entries will be awarded for Regional & National competitions as follows: Solo/Duet/Trio – Two chances per entry, Small Group – Four chances per entry, Large Group – Six chances per entry, and Line – Ten chances per entry. The name of the instructor to be entered in the drawing will be taken from the registration system. The trip must be taken by July 2027.

***DANCE SHOWCASE USA** and the hosting facility are not responsible for personal injury or property loss to either contestants or spectators. This includes trailers or vehicles left in the parking lot.

CATEGORY AWARDS

Trophies and Award Pins will be awarded to the **FIRST, SECOND, and THIRD PLACE** finalist in each age division of each dance category. In addition, all dancers will compete against an adjudicated scoring system. Each judge is allocated 100 points. Titanium, Platinum, and Gold Award Pins will be awarded based on the combined scores from three judges as follows:

- Titanium – 293-300
- Elite Platinum – 289-292.9 points
- Platinum – 285-288.9 points
- Elite Gold – 279-284.9 point
- Gold – 270-278.9 points

Every contestant will receive an award pin based on their adjudication placement.

REGIONAL OVERALL AWARDS AND SPECIAL SHOWCASE AWARDS

Overall Awards and Trophies will be given to entrants receiving the highest scores in their applicable Level as outlined below for the Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen, and Senior Age Divisions. Only trophies will be given to entrants receiving the highest scores in the Adult Age Division. In each of these Age Divisions, a minimum of five (5) entries must be entered in the Solo, Duet/Trio, Small Group, or Large Group in order for trophies, cash prizes or gift certificates to be awarded. In order to make as many routines eligible for Overalls as possible, we reserve the right to combine Age Divisions and/or Levels as required to insure there are enough routines to qualify for Overalls.

When Performance Levels are combined, awards will be given based on the highest Level combined. The Line Division will be divided into Junior (11 & under) and Senior (12 & over) Age Divisions with a minimum of five (5) entries in order for cash prizes to be awarded. If there are 5 or more entries for the Line Division, the Line Division will be further divided into Line (less than 5 minutes) and Production (5-8 minutes) and Cash Prizes / Gift Certificates and Trophies will be awarded to each of these divisions.

Our decision when there are less than 5 entries for a division/performance level will be made based on what we believe is best for all dancers involved and to allow as many as possible to be eligible to compete for Overalls.

All cash prizes and certificates will be awarded to the studio director.

Overall Awards

	Star	Diamond	Crystal
Solo	\$100 plus \$50 Gift Cert.	\$50 plus \$50 Gift Cert.	\$100 Gift Cert. to 2026 Nationals
Duet/Trio	\$100 plus \$50 Gift Cert.	\$50 plus \$50 Gift Cert.	\$100 Gift Cert. to 2026 Nationals
Small Group	\$150 plus \$75 Gift Cert.	\$75 plus \$75 Gift Cert.	\$150 Gift Cert. to 2026 Nationals
Large Group	\$200 plus \$100 Gift Cert.	\$100 plus \$100 Gift Cert.	\$200 Gift Cert. to 2026 Nationals
Line	\$250 plus \$125 Gift Cert.	\$125 plus \$125 Gift Cert.	\$250 Gift Cert. to 2026 Nationals

Gift Certificates can only be used for the dance at Nationals that it was awarded to at the Regional competition. Non-transferable to other dances.

REGIONAL SPECIAL SHOWCASE AWARDS

Solo/Duet/Trio Awards

A plaque will be awarded for Outstanding Costume, Choreography, and Judge's Choice Awards

Group/Line Awards

A plaque will be awarded for Choreography, Entertainment, Outstanding Costume, and Judge's Choice Awards.

Pinnacle Award

A plaque will be awarded to the highest score of all Petite/Junior/Teen/Senior Crystal, Diamond and Star for each of these age divisions for all 3 levels (Crystal, Diamond, Star) for each of the Category Groups listed below:

- 1) Jazz
- 2) Ballet, Contemporary, Contemporary Ballet, Lyrical, Modern, Pointe
- 3) All other Categories Combined

Production is excluded and there must be at least 3 routines competing within each group of categories. If there are not at least 3 routines in a Category Group, then we reserve the right to combine 2 or more of these Category Groups to allow that group to have 3 or more routines, even if that means combining all categories, in which case there will be one Pinnacle Award given for that grouping.

All-American Award

A plaque will be awarded to the studio that has the three highest combined scores for the weekend for All Levels combined for the Petite/Junior Age Groups/Lines and Teen/Senior Age Groups/Lines.

NATIONAL OVERALL AWARDS AND SPECIAL SHOWCASE AWARDS

Overall Awards and Trophies will be given to entrants receiving the highest scores in their applicable Level as outlined below for the Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen, and Senior Age Divisions. Only trophies will be given to entrants receiving the highest scores in the Adult Age Division. In each of these Age Divisions, a minimum of five (5) entries must be entered in the Solo, Duet/Trio, Small Group, Large Group, or Line in order for trophies, cash prizes or gift certificates to be awarded. In order to make as many routines eligible for the Grand Showcase Finals, we reserve the right to combine Age Divisions and/or Levels as required to insure there are enough routines to qualify for the Grand Showcase Finals as applicable. If there are 5 or more entries for the Line Division, the Line Division will be further divided into Line (less than 5 minutes) and Production (5-8 minutes) and Cash Prizes and Trophies awarded to each of these divisions.

In order to avoid combining Performance Levels for less than 5 entries, we reserve the right to combine Small Groups/Large Groups/Lines in order to have 5 entries at the same Performance Level. If at all possible, we will attempt not to include Productions with Large Groups. In this case, awards will be given based on the largest division. Our decision when there are less than 5 entries for a division/performance level will be made based on what we believe is best for all dancers involved and to allow as many as possible to be eligible to compete for overalls and Grand Showcase.

If a studio has a group of dancers that performed as a Line at a regional competition and no longer has enough dancers to qualify as a Line at Nationals, then that group will be changed to a Large Group even if the time exceeds the 4 minute time limit set for Large Groups. In addition, if a Line that performed as a Production at a regional competition does not have enough dancers to qualify as a Line at Nationals, then it will be changed to a Large Group and the category will be moved to the Open category. All cash prizes and certificates will be awarded to the studio director.

Overall Awards

	Star	Diamond	Crystal
Solo	\$150 plus \$75 Gift Cert.	\$75 plus \$75 Gift Cert.	\$150 Gift Cert. to 2027 Regionals
Duet/Trio	\$150 plus \$75 Gift Cert.	\$75 plus \$75 Gift Cert.	\$150 Gift Cert. to 2027 Regionals
Small Group	\$200 plus \$100 Gift Cert.	\$100 plus \$100 Gift Cert.	\$200 Gift Cert. to 2027 Regionals
Large Group	\$250 plus \$125 Gift Cert.	\$125 plus \$125 Gift Cert.	\$250 Gift Cert. to 2027 Regionals
Line	\$300 plus \$150 Gift Cert.	\$150 plus \$150 Gift Cert.	\$300 Gift Cert. to 2027 Regionals

NATIONAL SPECIAL SHOWCASE AWARDS

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Group/Line Awards

A plaque will be awarded for Choreography, Entertainment, Outstanding Costume, and Judge's Choice Awards.

Pinnacle Award

A plaque will be awarded to the highest score of all Petite/Junior/Teen/Senior Crystal, Diamond and Star for each of these age divisions for all 3 levels (Crystal, Diamond, Star) for each of the Category Groups listed below:

- 4) Jazz
- 5) Ballet, Contemporary, Contemporary Ballet, Lyrical, Modern, Pointe
- 6) All other Categories Combined

Production is excluded and there must be at least 3 routines competing within each group of categories. If there are not at least 3 routines in a Category Group, then we reserve the right to combine 2 or more of these Category Groups to allow that group to have 3 or more routines, even if that means combining all categories, in which case there will be one Pinnacle Award given for that grouping.

All-American Award

A plaque will be awarded to the studio that has the three highest combined scores for the weekend for All Levels combined for the Petite/Junior Age Groups/Lines and Teen/Senior Age Groups/Lines.

GRAND SHOWCASE FINAL RULES AND AWARDS

The Petite, Junior, Teen, and Senior age groups of all levels will have the opportunity to compete in The Grand Showcase Finals. (Minis and Adults are not eligible). The Grand Showcase Finals competition for solos and duet/trios will take place after all solos and duet/trios have competed for the National Finals competition. The Grand Showcase Finals competition for small groups, large groups, and lines will take place on the last day of competition (Sunday, June 28).

The Grand Showcase Finals will consist of the Top 3 or Top 5 routine scores that competed in our National Finals during the previous week. The finals will be for all age groups and all levels or combination of age groups that have at least 10 routines in the National Finals competition. For example, if there are at least 10 routines for Junior Small Group Diamond, then the Top 3 group scores and any ties will compete at the Grand Showcase Finals. If there are at least 15 routines, then the Top 5 group scores and any ties will compete at the Grand Showcase Finals. The Top 3/5 scores are determined based on the actual score and not the placement, i.e. if the overall scores are 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and a two way tie for 4th place, then 5th place would not be included in the Grand Showcase Finals because the top 5 scores would have been above the 5th place overall score due to ties.

We also have the discretion to add additional dances to the finals based on the number of entries, i.e. if there are 50 Junior Diamond Solos, we may take more than just 5 entries to the finals. There must be at least 10 Large Groups and at least 10 Lines in order for them to compete separately for a given Age Division/Level. If there are not 10 Large Groups and 10 Lines, then these scores will be combined in order to create a Large Group/Line combined competition. If there are not 10 Large Group/Lines, then they will be combined with the Small Groups. After the Small Groups/Large Groups/Lines have been combined, there must be at least 10 routines for this Age Division/Level to be selected for the Grand Showcase Finals. If necessary, we reserve the right to combine Age Divisions to reach the 10 routine minimum.

Productions are not (see paragraph below for Productions) included with Lines for determining the top scores for the Grand Showcase Finals. When groups are combined, awards will be given based on the highest group combined. When Small Groups, Large Groups, or Lines are combined, due to not having 10 entries in that division, then in addition to the Top 3/5 scores, the National Overall winner for each division will also advance to the Grand Showcase Finals. An example of this would be when there are 7 Large Groups and 3 Lines and the Top 3 scores are all from the Lines, then the National Overall winner from Large Groups would also advance in addition to the Top 3 scores. If one of those Top 3 scores and the National Overall winner are the same studio and has some of the same dancers, then only the group with the highest score will advance from that studio. In this case, the next highest scoring Large Group would advance to the Grand Showcase Finals.

All Productions will automatically compete at the Grand Showcase Finals. All levels will be combined for the Production Grand Showcase Finals. Separate awards will be done for this group (see awards below). Dance Showcase USA has the discretion to separate these Productions based on Age Divisions/Levels if necessary.

For Solos, a studio can have all dancers that qualify from that studio selected to participate in the Grand Showcase Finals, i.e. the studio can have more than one dancer qualify.

For Duet/Trios, Small Groups, Large Groups, & Lines, a studio can only have more than one routine in a particular age division/level selected if the second routine is comprised of completely different dancers. Otherwise, only the highest scoring group from a studio will be selected in each age division/level. If a studio ties itself for the Grand Showcase Finals competition, then the tie will be broken by the judges.

For Duet/Trios, Small Groups, Large Groups, & Lines, a studio cannot have more than two routines qualify for an Age Division/Level.

Performance order is determined by random order.

There will not be any scores or judge's critiques for the Grand Showcase Finals. After the Top 3/5 numbers have been performed, the judges will confer to determine the placement of the dances for that Age Division/Level. The routines that will compete at the Grand Showcase Finals will be announced when the National Finals Overall awards are presented.

Star Level Grand Showcase Awards

	Solo	Duet/Trio	Small Group	Large Group	Line
1st Place	\$200 + \$100 GC	\$200 + \$100 GC	\$300 + \$150 GC	\$400 + \$200 GC	\$600 + \$300 GC
2nd Place	\$100 + \$50 GC	\$100 + \$50 GC	\$150 + \$75 GC	\$200 + \$100 GC	\$300 + \$150 GC
3rd Place	\$50 + \$25 GC	\$50 + \$25 GC	\$80 + \$40 GC	\$100 + \$50 GC	\$150 + \$75 GC

Diamond Level Grand Showcase Awards

	Solo	Duet/Trio	Small Group	Large Group	Line
1st Place	\$100 + \$100 GC	\$100 + \$100 GC	\$150 + \$150 GC	\$200 + \$200 GC	\$300 + \$300 GC
2nd Place	\$50 + \$50 GC	\$50 + \$50 GC	\$75 + \$75 GC	\$100 + \$100 GC	\$150 + \$150 GC
3rd Place	\$25 + \$25 GC	\$25 + \$25 GC	\$40 + \$40 GC	\$50 + \$50 GC	\$75 + \$75 GC

Crystal Level Grand Showcase Awards

	Solo	Duet/Trio	Small Group	Large Group	Line
1st Place	\$200 GC	\$200 GC	\$300 GC	\$400 GC	\$600 GC

Production Grand Showcase Awards

1 st Place	\$600 GC
2 nd Place	\$300 GC
3 rd Place	\$150 GC

*GC are Gift Certificates for 2027 Regionals