



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

REGISTRATION

- All entries must originate from a studio. We do not accept independent entries
- Entries are accepted on a first come, first serve basis, and are limited to the amount of performance time available.
- Only credit cards or certified cashier's checks (made payable to Elite Dance Challenge, LLC) will be accepted. Entries are not considered complete without full studio payment. All studio entries must be submitted together. **No entries will be processed without full payment.**

Studios will be notified of the event schedule approximately 10-days prior to the event (**ONLY** if they have paid in full for the event). Each studio will be given a deadline date to contact our office by **EMAIL** with any corrections to dancer names, routine names, and number of dancers in a routine. Carefully review the entire schedule. ****Any registration changes AFTER the final schedule has been released will incur a \$10 change fee, except in cases where an injury is involved. There will be an Accommodation Fee (\$20 per routine) for any special requests/conflict – emailed or submitted via the registration system portal.**

AGE GROUPS

Each entry will be placed into one of the following age groups based on the average age of all competitors in the routine. All ages will be recorded as of January 1st. Average categories for all entries will be determined by taking the average age of all participants in that entry. An average of 0.5 or above will round up to the next age group.

- Tiny – 3 – 5 years
- Mini – 6 -7 years
- Petite – 8 – 9 years
- Junior – 10 – 12 years
- Teen – 13 – 15 years
- Senior – 16 – 19 years
- Adult – 20+ years

ADDITIONAL NOTES / RULES:

- Any entry containing a dancer that is 20+ years in age will automatically compete in the adult category, regardless of the average age of the entry.
- Any person who is visible once the routine has started and prior to the end of the routine will be considered a performer and is subject to age groups and division rules.
- Studio Directors must be prepared to present birth certificates should a protest arise. All protests must be made in writing and signed by the protestor within 20 mins of the incident and passed to the director of the competition.
- Any routines in the Adult, Pro-Am, or Parent category are not eligible for Overall High Score Awards – Specifically – Novice, Intermediate or Competitive Overall High Point Solo/Duo/Trio or Novice, Intermediate, or Competitive Overall High Point Group/Line/Production OR Judges Choice Awards: Outstanding Choreography, Outstanding Entertainment, Showmanship, Technical Excellence, and Emotional Execution.

PERFORMANCE LEVELS

Upon registering, studio directors select the performance level for each dancer. Dancers' level will automatically bump to the appropriate level based on their number of routines. Solo entries must compete in the performance level that the dancer is registered.

Performance levels are defined as below:

- **Spirit Level *New This Season** – Spirit level is designed for dancers with special needs or disabilities who want to share their love of dance. Dancers who compete in the Spirit level are not eligible to compete in any other level of competition. Routines will be adjudicated and eligible for Judges Choice Awards only.
- **Novice Level** – EDC recommends dancers enter this level if they have minimal to no competition experience.
 - A dancer in this level may compete no more than 6 routines.
 - Dancers can only perform one solo in the novice category and are not able to compete for title.
 - Demonstrate basic knowledge of simple technical skills, basic understanding of body lines, placement flexibility, control, stage presence and timing
 - Novice level dancers demonstrate simple choreography with beginning level performance quality.
- **Intermediate Level** – EDC recommends dancers enter this level if they have moderate competition experience.



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

- Dancers in this level can only perform 11 routines or less.
- Intermediate dancers may compete in no more than 2 solos and are eligible to compete for Emerging Artist title.
- Intermediate dancers demonstrate a progressive knowledge of technical skills.
- Demonstrate progressive understanding of body lines, placement, flexibility, control, stage presence and timing.
- Intermediate level dancers will demonstrate progressive spatial awareness, performance quality and clean execution of choreography with moderate difficulty. Progressive understanding of style and quality of movement.
- **Competitive Level** – EDC recommends dancers enter this level if they have significant competition experience.
 - Competitive level dancers may compete in an unlimited number of routines.
 - Dancers in the competitive level may compete a maximum of 3 solos.
 - Competitive level dancers demonstrate advanced knowledge, technical skills, spatial awareness and execute challenging choreography.
 - Demonstrate advanced understanding and execution of body lines, placement, flexibility, control, stage presence and timing with a sophisticated and polished quality of movement and style.
- **Pro-Amateur** – Teachers or professional dancers must enter the Pro-Am level.

ADDITIONAL NOTES / LEVEL DETERMINATION / RULES:

- **Level Determination** – In order to keep levels fair for each studio attending, EDC utilizes a point system for determining the specific level of a routine. At registration, you will select a level for each dancer that will carry through with them in each of their routines.
 - Novice dancers are 1 point each
 - Intermediate dancers are 2 points each
 - Competitive dancers are 3 points each
 - Spirit and Pro-Am dancers routines – will default to either spirit or pro-am once they are in a routine. Similar to 20+ year old dancer will default to the Adult age category.
 - There are no separate group level placements. For example:
 - 5 Intermediate dancers x 2 points = 10
 - 3 Competitive dancers x 3 points = 9
 - 10 is greater than 9 – therefore the routine would be an intermediate level routine.
 - Please note – that if there is a tie between the number of points, the routine will be placed in the higher level of competition.
- The pointe category can only be performed in the Intermediate, Competitive or Pro-Am levels
- Only Competitive and Intermediate routines can be invited to participate on the Elite Performance Team at National Finals.

DIVISIONS & TIME LIMITS

Entry Divisions		Time Limits	
Solo or Solo & Title	1 dancer	Solo or Solo & Title	2:45 minutes
Duo/Trio	2 – 3 dancers	Duo/Trio	2:45 minutes
Small Group	4 – 9 dancers	Small Group	3:00 minutes
Large Group	10 – 19 dancers	Large Group	4:00 minutes
Line	20+ dancers	Line	4:30 minutes
Production	15+ dancers	Production	8:00 minutes

- Extended time is available for purchase. Solos, duo/trios, small groups and large groups may be extended by up to 1 minute. Lines and productions may be extended by a maximum of 3 minutes.
- A production routine is a routine that conveys a story or theme throughout their performance that can be enhanced with the used of props and scenery.

PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES

Each routine must be registered in one of the following categories based on the descriptions below:



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

Performance Categories	
Category	Definition
Acro	Controlled acrobatic or gymnastics movements involving flexibility and balance. Routine must include dance technique, choreography, and fluid moves.
Ballet	Routine must consist of ballet technique, classical steps and movements, performed in soft shoes.
Clogging	Routine consisting of clogging technique and performed in clogging shoes.
Contemporary	Routine consisting of contemporary jazz and lyrical technique.
Folkloric	Routine using ethnic styles of dance such as Polkas, Hawaiian, Spanish, Celtic, etc.
Hip Hop	Routine using primarily hip hop technique or street style moves from at least one of the various styles; no jazz technique.
Inspirational	Dancers with life challenging abilities.
Jazz	Routine using primarily jazz technique.
Lyrical	Routine must emphasize control utilizing the lyrics and mood of the music.
Modern	Interpretive dance using such principles as space, force, weight and time. Dancers demonstrate balance, extensions, isolations and control.
Musical Theatre	Designed primarily for musical comedy and Broadway dancing. Mime, lip sync singing, etc. are allowed.
Open	To encompass any form of dance not already listed or which is a combo of two or more performance categories.
Pointe	Routine containing pointe technique. At least 50% of the performers must be on pointe. *Intermediate and competitive levels ONLY.
Street Jazz	Routine containing elements of funk, hip hop and classical jazz. Blends commercial dance with traditional dance styles.
Student Choreography	Any style of dance choreographed by a student. Students must be age 19 or younger to participate.
Tap	Dancers wear tap shoes and execute tap technique. May be performed with or without music accompaniment. Tap sounds may not be recorded.
Vocal	Any type of vocal performance using one handheld microphone provided by Elite Dance Challenge. Accompaniment may only be instrumental.

****A maximum of 4 acrobatic/gymnastic tricks may be done in any category except acro and open or any production routine, which may have an unlimited number of tricks.**

An acrobatic trick is considered anything where both feet pass over the head and the body is airborne. Such as, but not limited to back handsprings, back-tuck, front and side aerials; etc. An acro pass is considered one trick.

- Example: round off back handspring, round off back handspring back tuck. The following movements are not included in the acrobatic trick count; handstands, cartwheels, front/back walkovers, forward rolls, kip up variations and other transitional movements. Also, if an entire group executes one ariel - at the same time or in a ripple effect, that is considered 1 trick.

TITLES

Intermediate Level Title – Emerging Artist Title

An intermediate level soloist may enter up to two regional solo routines for the regional title. At nationals, dancers may select only one solo for title. Each title entry's score is based on the performer's overall performance ability, personality, and entertainment skills, in addition to technique. Each title winner will receive a large trophy, medal, and crown/cap.

Regional / National Title	Age Divisions
Emerging Artist Mini Miss Elite / Emerging Artist Mini Mr. Elite	6 - 7
Emerging Artist Petite Miss Elite / Emerging Artist Petite Mr. Elite	8 - 9
Emerging Artist Junior Miss Elite / Emerging Artist Junior Mr. Elite	10 – 12
Emerging Artist Teen Miss Elite / Emerging Artist Teen Mr. Elite	13 – 15
Emerging Artist Miss Elite / Emerging Artist Mr. Elite	16 – 19

Competitive Level Title – Elite Title



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

A competitive level soloist may enter up to two regional solo routines for the regional title. At nationals, dancers may select only one solo for title. Each title entry's score is based on the performer's overall performance ability, personality, and entertainment skills, in addition to technique. Each title winner will receive a large trophy, medal, and crown/cap.

Regional / National Title	Age Divisions
Mini Miss Elite / Mini Mr. Elite	6 - 7
Petite Miss Elite / Petite Mr. Elite	8 - 9
Junior Miss Elite / Junior Mr. Elite	10 – 12
Teen Miss Elite / Teen Mr. Elite	13 – 15
Miss Elite / Mr. Elite	16 – 19

ADDITIONAL NOTES / RULES:

- You do not have to win a Regional Title to compete for a National Title.
- Title routines are eligible for overall high score awards. For example – a dancer competing for the title of Miss Elite will also be eligible for the overall high score in the Senior Competitive Solo category.
- Dancers in the Tiny or Adult age category are not eligible to run for title.

JUDGING GUIDELINES / SCORING CRITERIA

- A highly qualified panel of judges will judge and critique each entry according to the competition level, age and category.
- The decisions of the judges are final.
- All entries will receive an adjudication score and award.
- Contacting or speaking to judges is strictly always prohibited, to give a fair chance to all participants.
- Performers who exit the stage prior to the end of their performance will not receive a score if the judges do not feel enough of the routine was completed. The performance is eligible to perform again for adjudication only.
- When the judges unanimously agree that dances are placed incorrectly, the routine will be moved up to the appropriate level regardless of whether the overall award has been given.

Each performance will be evaluated on the following elements:

1. Technique	30 Points
2. Stage Presence	20 Points
3. Choreography	20 Points
4. Execution	20 Points
5. Difficulty	10 Points

There is a maximum of 100 points per judge. The judges will also take into consideration whether a routine is age appropriate and placed into the correct performance level.

A CONTENT AWARENESS note will be given to a studio director when a judge believes the content of a dance is offensive or culturally insensitive. Cultural or racial appropriation and over-sexualization for an age division are examples that could receive a content awareness note. Content Awareness notes were created to give judges the opportunity to explain their point of view. There is no point deduction accompanying a content awareness note.

Deductions

- **Time:** 1 point will be deducted for every 5 seconds over the time limit
- **Props:** 1 point will be deducted for a prop that was not included on the prop list while registering or during schedule review.
- **# of Dancers:** 5 points will be deducted if a routine contains more dancers than the amount registered.
- Any routine in the wrong category/division will be 5 points deducted.
- Performance Order Violation 3 points will be deducted.
- **Routines must be appropriate for family viewing:** Any routine that a judge feels is not appropriate is subject to a deduction or even disqualification. If a judge finds a routine is not appropriate, it will be noted in your studio score sheet after the event. All routines should be family friendly.
- Coaching from the wings or audience is not allowed at any time throughout a performance. Doing so will result in a 2-point deduction.



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

- Props must be moved on and off the stage/floor in a timely manner. If a judge feels that the removal of a prop takes too long, points may be deducted. No dangerous props allowed. Dangerous props include but are not limited to knives, swords, anything thrown directly at the judges table that may be harmful, anything that could alter the surface of the dance floor, any prop that is required to be plugged into electricity. Any routine that uses a dangerous prop will receive a max of a 10-point deduction &/or may be disqualified.
- Anyone that is observed taking photos &/or videos will receive point deduction &/or disqualification 1-10 points will be deducted.
- Other rule violations included but are not limited to dancer prompting, facility abuse, screaming, dancer heckling or other unsportsmanlike behavior while at the event. **Cowbells and airhorns are not allowed – points will be deducted.** EDC reserves the right to assess penalties, adjudicate only or disqualify routines and/or a studio if deemed necessary 1-10 points will be deducted.

AWARDS

Every entry will receive an adjudicated award. Each routine will receive one adjudicated trophy and pins for all registered dancers in that routine.

Adjudicated awards will be given based on the scale below:

Adjudication Scale			
	Rising Star / Novice	Intermediate	Competitive
Ultimate Platinum	N/A	N/A	300 – 291
Elite Platinum	300 – 285	300 – 294	290.9 – 279
Platinum	284.9 – 270	293.9 – 276	278.9 – 267
Elite Gold	269.9 – 252	275.9 – 258	266.9 – 255
Gold	251.9 - 237	257.9 - 240	254.9 - 243

High Score Awards

- High scores will be given out at every regional and national competition.
- Entries must compete prior to their awards ceremony to be eligible for High Score Awards.
- High Score Awards will be given in each competition level, age and size division.
- All scholarships/cash prizes will be awarded to the studio.
- Scholarships will be given to the first place High Score Award winners in the Novice and Intermediate Divisions when there are 5 or more routines entered in that age and size division.
- Cash awards will be given to the first place High Score Award winners in the Competitive division when there are 5 or more in that age and size division.
- Pro-Am and Adult routines are not eligible for scholarships or cash prizes.

REGIONALS			
	Novice	Intermediate	Competitive
	Scholarship	Scholarship	Cash Awards
Solo	\$50	\$75	\$100
Duo/Trio	\$50	\$75	\$100
Small Group	\$100	\$100	\$125
Large Group	\$125	\$125	\$150
Line	\$150	\$150	\$175
Production	\$175	\$175	\$200

NATIONAL FINALS			
	Novice	Intermediate	Competitive
	Scholarship	Scholarship	Cash Awards
Solo	\$75	\$100	\$125
Duo/Trio	\$75	\$100	\$125
Small Group	\$100	\$125	\$150
Large Group	\$125	\$150	\$175
Line	\$150	\$175	\$200
Production	\$175	\$200	\$250



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

ADDITIONAL AWARDS

JUDGES SPECIAL AWARDS – Given at each awards ceremony during regional and national competitions Elite Dance Challenge recognizes unique and entertaining performances with special awards. These awards are selected and presented by our judging panel.

OVERALL HIGHEST SCORING SOLO/DUO/TRIO – At each Regional and National event, the highest scoring solo, duo, or trio in each level (Novice, Intermediate, Competitive) will be awarded.

OVERALL HIGHEST SCORING GROUP/LINE/PRODUCTION – At each Regional and National event, the highest scoring group routine (small group, large group, line, or production) in each level (Novice, Intermediate, Competitive) will be awarded.

ELITE PERFORMANCE TEAM INVITATIONS – Elite Performance Team Invitations are awarded to exceptional solo and duo/trio performers in the Petite, Junior, Teen or Senior age categories and in the intermediate and competitive levels. Dancers receiving Elite Performance Team Invitations are invited to participate in the Elite Team at any of our National Finals in the same calendar year. Elite Performance Team Invitations are non-transferable.

JUDGES CHOICE AWARDS – At each regional and national competition judges will select routines that stand out in the following categories:

- Outstanding Entertainment
- Outstanding Choreography
- Technical Excellence
- Emotional Execution
- Showmanship
- Outstanding Costume

ALL STAR DANCER INVITATIONS – The recipients of these awards are invited to participate in one of the exciting All-Star Dancer experiences in New York City. All dancers in the Petite, Junior, Teen and Senior age groups from the Novice level are eligible for this award. These special invitations are presented to All Star Dancers that display a passion for performing on-stage. Winners will receive an informational brochure with details of this amazing event.

- **NEW YORK CITY DANCE EXPERIENCE** – For six days you will experience the best of Broadway including inspiring master classes, top Broadway shows, guided tours and special events in the heart of New York City. For more information, please visit <https://www.artistic-adventures.net/>

HEART OF GOLD – This award will be presented to one soloist in each intermediate age category that the judges feel showed the most heart, soul and passion in their performance. Winners will receive a “Heart of Gold” medal and letter. Heart of Gold is only given out to Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen and Senior age groups.

BE DISCOVERED – We are honored to partner with Be Discovered, a world-class mentorship and performance company in New York, that offers life changing opportunities for dancers and performers. This award will be presented to one soloist in the competitive category in the teen and senior age levels. These dancers will receive a \$2,500 partial scholarship towards one of Be Discovered's signature travel-and-dance experiences – including New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Las Vegas or Disney. Each winner chooses the program they want to attend.

HOLLYWOOD SUMMER TOUR / THE BUSINESS OF DANCE – The Hollywood Summer Tour is an invitation only dance intensive for advanced dancers wanting to experience the LA dance industry or aspiring professional dancers preparing for a dance career. They will take classes at LA's top dance studios, participate in dance agency showcases, interact with live guest mentors, and so much more. They also offer an online dance mentorship called the Business of Dance. Dancers receive a \$500 scholarship toward either the Hollywood Summer Tour or the Business of Dance online mentorship program. Both programs are fun and educational for the entire family.

STUDIO AWARDS: Outstanding studios at each Regional and National event will be awarded in the following categories:

- **PURE PASSION** – This award is presented to the studio whose commitment and heartfelt devotion are evident both onstage and behind the scenes, showcasing a true love for the art.



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

- **PURE ARTISTRY** – This award is presented to the studio that lights up the stage with creative choreography, a bold concept and strong execution.
- **CLASS ACT** – This award is presented to the studio whose dancers lead by example, displaying professionalism, kindness, and top-notch sportsmanship both backstage and throughout the competition.
- **ADCC STUDIO OF EXCELLENCE** - This award is sponsored by the ADCC (Association of Dance Conventions and Competitions). It is awarded to the studio that exemplifies the mission and purpose of The ADCC, which include working together and striving for excellence.
- **BEST OF EDC AWARDS** (Nationals Only) -The highest scoring groups from the following performance categories (contemporary, lyrical, tap, hip hop, jazz, musical theater, and best of the rest (all other styles combined). This may be awarded by level (novice, intermediate or competitive) based upon the number of entries in the event.
- **STUDIO OF THE YEAR** (Nationals Only) – The EDC Studio of the Year Award is decided by total studio score. The total studio score will be calculated by totaling the top five highest scoring routines from each studio (excluding solos, duos and trios and all adult divisions). The studio with the highest studio score will receive the Studio of the Year Award.

NATIONAL FINALS – SOLOS SHOWCASE AND DANCE OFF RULES/AWARDS

SOLO SHOWCASE

The Solo Showcase takes place on the last day of Nationals. During our National Finals, the Top 3 **competitive** solos from the following age levels (Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen and Senior) will move on to the Solo Showcase. Tiny routines are not eligible for the solo showcase. Routines will re-compete in the Solo Showcase in front of a new panel of judges. There is no cost to participate in or attend the Solo Showcase. **There will be Solo Showcase winner for 12 & Under and one for 13 & Over based upon score.** The Solo Showcase winners will **win \$250 and a trophy.**

THE DANCE OFF OVERVIEW

These Dance Offs are the finale to the entire week of competition where dancers compete for the Battle of the Best and highest honors. They are broken up by performance levels: Novice, Intermediate, and Competitive. Tiny routines and duo/trios are not eligible for the dance off. At the end of each group award ceremony, we will announce which dances have qualified for their respective dance off. Awards will be given at the end of each Dance Off.

NOVICE DANCE OFF: The top 2 in the following divisions Small Group, Large Group, Line and Production from the following age groups (Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen and Senior) will be invited. Studios will be limited to (1) entry per age group within each division. Judges will select TWO Wildcard routines in the Novice Level to be part of The Novice Dance Off. Routines can be from either the Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen or Senior level. Wildcard routines will be announced at the last group award ceremony with recreational entries.

Awards & Prizes – Trophies will be awarded to the Top 3 highest scoring routines in the Novice Dance Off. **The routine with the Highest Overall Score will be the Winner of the Novice Dance Off and will receive a \$500 Scholarship.**

INTERMEDIATE DANCE OFF: The top (3) highest scoring routines from the Small Group, Large Group, Line and Production from the following age groups (Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen and Senior) will be invited. Studios will be limited to (1) entry per age group within each division. If a studio sweeps a category, only their 1st place routine will be invited in that category. Judges will select TWO Wildcard routines in the Intermediate Level to be part of The Intermediate Dance Off. Routines can be from either the Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen or Senior level. Wildcard routines will be announced at the last group award ceremony with Intermediate entries.

Cash Awards & Prizes

- 12 & Under Intermediate Challenge Small/Large Group -\$500
- 12 & Under Intermediate Challenge Line/Production -\$500
- 13 & Over Intermediate Challenge Small/Large Group -\$500
- 13 & Over Intermediate Challenge Line/Production - \$500



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

COMPETITIVE DANCE OFF: The top (3) highest scoring routines from the Small Group, Large Group, Line and Production from the following age groups (Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen and Senior) will be invited. Studios will be limited to (1) entry per age group within each division. If a studio sweeps a category, only their 1st place routine will be invited in that category. Judges will select TWO Wildcard routines in the Competitive Level to be part of The Competitive Dance Off. Routines can be from either the Mini, Petite, Junior, Teen or Senior level. Wildcard routines will be announced at the last group award ceremony with competitive entries.

Cash Awards & Prizes

- 12 & Under Elite Competitive Challenge Small/Large Group - \$1,000
- 12 & Under Elite Competitive Challenge Line/Production - \$1,000
- 13 & Over Elite Competitive Challenge Small/Large Group - \$1,000
- 13 & Over Elite Competitive Challenge Line/Production - \$1,000

SCHEDULING

Elite Dance Challenge does not have a set schedule. Schedules are formatted based on the number and type of entries received to best serve the majority of participants. We do not have this breakdown until all the entries have been processed. We do this so we can try to have all the days of the regional end at a reasonable time, especially Sundays, when students have school the next day. We would rather go compete longer on a Friday or a Saturday and let everyone leave earlier on Sunday. This would not necessarily be possible if we followed a pre-determined schedule.

Schedules are emailed approximately 10-days prior to each event.

Scheduling Requests

- Scheduling requests and conflicts must be submitted in writing – either via email or thru the registration portal. **There will be an Accommodation Fee of \$20 per routine for any special requests submitted up until 30 days prior to the event when registration closes.**
- Entries in which accommodations could not be met will not be issued a refund.
- Once the schedule is created, NO STUDIO, TEACHER, OR PARENT may request a performance to be re-scheduled.
- We highly recommend that studios be flexible and be able to perform at any point during the competition weekend. Please be realistic with requests and take into consideration that your request may conflict with others and **may not** be accommodated. We do our best to accommodate all requests, but please remember that not all requests are guaranteed.
- **If a routine cannot perform during their allotted time and award ceremony, their routine will be eligible for adjudication only, but not an overall score or category placement.**

REFUNDS

No cash refunds will be issued under ANY circumstances. Account credits will be issued for entry/dancer removals if this is done prior to the event. No credits will be issued during or after the completion of the event. "Day-Of" scratches will not be issued credits. All credits will be issued to the studio account of which the dancer was registered. Credits may ONLY be used toward entry fees/national fees; they are not valid at the merchandise booth or registration deposits.

PROPS

PROP DELIVERY

Props must be loaded in and out of the venue on the same day they are used. Storing props in the wings or backstage is NOT allowed. Elite Dance Challenge will not be responsible for props left overnight or unattended. Any special request for the assembling of props must be discussed with the Competition Director prior to the event or upon arrival at the venue. All props backstage MUST be labeled with the studio name for identification purposes.

- Props can be delivered backstage up to two hours prior to a performance.
- Props must be removed within one hour following the performance.
- Storage space for props (and/or prop trailers & trucks) is not guaranteed.
- Props must be stored away from pedestrian and vehicle traffic, and NOT backstage, in the lobby or any inconvenient location.
- All props must fit through a standard 36-inch doorway.



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

PROP SET UP

Pre-set props are allowed in all routines. Props and/or sets must be set up and removed as quickly as possible. Make sure there is enough people setting the props to ensure it is done within the total time limit for setting and striking props on the stage. No person setting props should wear a studio T-shirt or jacket. Students should not set props.

A prop is defined as anything that can be carried onstage in one piece and/or can be placed on stage in approx. 30 seconds or less, and a stage set is defined as anything that needs to be assembled on stage and/or takes more than 30-45 seconds. All props must be free standing and may not be attached to any apparatus or stage rigging.

PROP SET UP / REMOVAL TIME LIMITS	
Group Size	Time Limits
Solo, Duo/Trio, Group and Line	Set up and removed within 1 minute TOTAL time. Assembly/set up that exceeds 30 seconds will automatically start the timing of that routine.
Production	Set up and removed within 3 minutes TOTAL time. Assembly that exceeds 1 ½ minutes will automatically start the timing of that routine. Adding extended time when registering production routines is recommended.

If additional time is needed for set up and removal of props/stage sets, you must register as an extended time routine and adhere to stated time limits to avoid a penalty.

Please contact the EDC office if you need further clarification on our prop and set rules.

PROPS

- **NO DANGEROUS PROPS ALLOWED** – Dangerous props include but are not limited to knives, swords, guns, anything thrown directly at the judges table that may be harmful, anything that could alter the surface of the dance floor, any prop that is plugged in and use of live animals are prohibited. This includes both real and fake weapons. Any routine that uses a dangerous prop will receive a max of **10 POINT deduction** or may be disqualified.
 - Fire (including candles, matches, lighters), fireworks (including sparklers), explosives, swords, knives, guns or toy guns, weapons and use of animals are strictly prohibited. **No form of liquid, gel, powder, glass objects, aerosol cans of any type (including hairspray or spray paint) may be used that will physically alter the surface of the marley floor. Prohibited items include water (on body, costume, or prop), wet paint (on body, costume, or prop), fake blood, fake snow, silly string, bubbles, confetti, streamer or confetti cannons, loose feathers, candy, chalk, crushed cork, flour, loose glitter (on body, costume or prop), sand, sawdust, dry ice, etc. Any act that uses a substance that is not permitted and creates a safety hazard on the marley floor may result in a point deduction and/or disqualification.**
- **HUMAN PROPS** – A human prop is a person acting as a prop and one that can be seen clearly by the audience but does not dance with the group. Human props must pay as a participant; however, they will NOT be factored into the age level and dancer count of the routine. If a person enters the stage and cannot be seen by the audience, they are NOT considered a human prop and do NOT have to pay as a participant.
- For safety measures, all props (free standing or handheld) are restricted to a maximum height of 10 feet.
- The use of safety railing is allowed. Hanging backdrops and special lighting may not be used.
- **MANY VENUES PROHIBIT THE USE OF HELIUM BALLOONS. HELIUM BALLOONS ARE ONLY ALLOWED IF THEY ARE WEIGHED/SECURED TO THE DANCER OR COSTUME AND PERMITTED BY THE VENUE.**
- **DUE TO SAFETY & LIABILITY ISSUES, NO PROP MAY BE CONSTRUCTED WITH TRUSS OR RIGGING**

If the stage is littered after your performance your studio is responsible for an immediate and expeditious removal of any debris. Failure to follow these safety measures may result in the routine being classified “adjudication only.”

MUSIC

Studios are **REQUIRED** to upload their music online after completing their registration. Music must be uploaded in the online registration portal at **least two weeks** prior to your scheduled event. Please contact our office if you have any issues while uploading. We still ask that you bring a backup option (USB) to the competition in case there is an issue with the uploaded music.



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

One wireless hand-held microphone is available at each competition. No stands or lavaliers. **EDC does not allow any outside microphones of any kind.**

Music that is offensive, demeaning, intentionally derogatory, or threatening will not be tolerated and is subject to a 2-point deduction or disqualification as determined by the judging panel. Any music in question will be pulled and listened to by the panel and the competition director to determine if a point deduction or disqualification will occur. This particularly pertains to music in which slurs or derogatory language are not fully edited.

Music containing disturbing sound effects (including realistic gunshots and realistic explosions) is subject to a point deduction based on judges' discretion.

No studio or group may use ANY music owned by Kribyko Music LLC or Watson Music Group (including "Space Jam") without rights. Violators of this rule will be subject to copyright fees.

If the music stops for any reason, the dancers will be given the opportunity to re-compete without penalty.

Dancers experiencing a wardrobe malfunction should exit the stage immediately and may be called off based on the severity. That routine may re-complete without penalty.

Elite Dance Challenge is not responsible for an USB Flash Drives, iPods, iPads, etc. that are not collected after the event.

PHOTO/VIDEO

Photo and video taking are **ONLY** allowed during awards ceremonies.

ABSOLUTELY NO personal photo or video are allowed during performances at any of our events. This includes backstage and/or Facetimeing and Vlogging, or other social media recording. If any Elite Dance Challenge crew member sees any audience member taking photos or videos during performances, they will be approached and asked to stop, and points may be deducted. Failure to comply with these rules will result in the routine point deductions and/or disqualification of dancer(s) and/or studio(s).

We have put this rule in place to protect the intellectual property of the choreographers. More importantly, we enforce this rule to protect children from having their images used inappropriately without their consent. We urge all studio owners, teachers, and parents to keep our performers photographically safe. Elite Dance Challenge reserves the right to remove media being used or those using it from the event. **It is the responsibility of the Studio Owner/Director to inform their students and parents of the NO Photo/Video Rule.**

All competitors, teachers and studio owners' consent to the use of video, audio and photographs for use in promotional material, without royalty, fee or other compensation. By attending or competing in an Elite Dance Challenge regional or national event you are agreeing to the use of your image and likeness by Elite Dance Challenge.

SPORTSMANSHIP

All competitors, teachers, studio owners, family members and audience members are required to show respect, courtesy and sportsman-like behavior to all competitors, staff (venue and competition), teachers, etc. always during the competition. Failure to comply could result in removal from the event, disqualification and/or loss of privileges to participate at future Elite Dance Challenge events.

No air horns, bells, whistles or other noise making devices are allowed. Points will be deducted if used.

Facility Respect Policy – Dressing rooms, performance, workshop/loading dock and audience areas are to be left in the same condition after the competition as before. If any attendee abuses the premises in any way, or food/drink/gum is found on the premises, EDC reserves the right to discard it and to excuse spectators and competitors from the event. Non-compliance could result in disqualification of the dancer and/or studio.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



2026 COMPETITION RULES

Last Updated: November 1, 2025

Please be ready to perform at least 1-hour prior to your performance time. Dancers must check in with our Stage Manager and perform in the scheduled order unless our Stage Manager grants special permission. ONLY legitimate costume changes of less than three routines and costume malfunctions will be accommodated. Failure to comply with any of these directives may result in the routine being classified "adjudication only." The wrongful holding of numbers may result in disqualification. Any studio that delays the competition because they are rehearsing will have points deducted from their total score. Should an event run ahead of its scheduled time, performers should still plan to be ready to perform early.

- Elite Dance Challenge and the host venue are not responsible for any personal injury / property lost or stolen items, before, during or after any event. Please take extra precautions.
- All attendees must abide by any state, local or venue mandates and rules set in place.
- Dancers may only compete for one studio per event.
- Dancers may not be registered for solos in multiple levels.
- Soloists may only win high scores one time in each age category.
- Soloists that choose to exit the stage prior to the conclusion of their solo will be eligible for adjudication only and will not be eligible for overall awards (This does NOT include technical difficulties or costume malfunction. Dancers experiencing a wardrobe malfunction should exit the stage immediately and may be called off based on the severity. Dancers with music or costume malfunctions may re-perform without penalty.
- For safety reasons, dancers may NOT exit or jump off the front of the stage at ANY time during the competition (including performances).
- Unless a piece of choreography is copy written, Elite Dance Challenge cannot enforce ANY plagiarism policies.
- If a routine performs outside its scheduled session, it will not be eligible for Judges Choice or Special Awards.
- Only studio directors may question routines for rule infractions, however, any protest must be made in writing to the competition director within 30-mins of the performance.
- Coaching from the wings or audience is NOT allowed at any time during a performance. Doing so will result in a 2-point deduction.
- Elite Dance Challenge reserves the right to refuse entry to any studio.
- All participants are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and treat students with respect. Also, participants are expected to be respectful of dressing rooms making sure to leave it the way you found it upon arrival. When in the audience, please stay seated and keep talking to a minimum during all performances.
- Hallways may NOT be used for changing, makeup application, storage of personal items or for any other reasons other than traveling through the building.
- Elite Dance Challenge reserves the right to cancel any and all events due to lack of registration, inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances. Furthermore, Elite Dance Challenge reserves the right to change an event's location, venue and/or date(s). Upon changing a location, venue and/or date(s), a representative from Elite Dance Challenge will contact your studio if you are registered for the event. Elite Dance Challenge will not be held liable for any costs endured for any type of travel arrangements made upon canceling an event or an event selling out, included but not limited to hotel fees, transportation fees or bank fees. We HIGHLY recommend registered for an event prior to making ANY travel arrangements.
- Entry fees and deposits are non-transferable and non-refundable.
- **Family Friendly Policy** – Elite Dance Challenge is dedicated to providing a family friendly environment. We realize that dance is an art form and crosses a broad range of styles and tastes; however, routines, costumes and music must be age appropriate and suitable for audiences that include children of every age. Offensive language/lyrics, choreography, costuming, and/or the use of dance themes such as rape suicide, murder, sex, domestic violence, or other dark undertones presented with a lack of "artistic discretion" may be considered inappropriate. We recognize that this is extremely subjective and sensitive. Therefore, Elite Dance Challenge judges and staff will use their utmost professional judgement to ensure appropriateness while still encouraging artistic creativity.
- Rules and Regulations are subject to change each season.