



2025 USA GRAND NATIONAL DANCE CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION RULES

(Anything in red reflects “New” - updated March 2nd, 2025)

Yellow highlights are for changes to outside organization rules.

Mission Statement

“To provide a fun, friendly, and organized competitive dance environment where separate dance communities can become inspired by the other to share, create, and merge into one dance while maintaining the integrity of each dance individually”

Event Director

USA Grand National Dance Championship is sponsored by Michael and LeAnn Productions LLC. Final decisions on any matter pertaining to these competitions rest solely with the Event Directors.

GNDC General Competition Requirements

Competitor Eligibility:

- Must purchase a weekend pass
- Must sign a waiver (if you are under the age of 18, your parent or guardian must sign for you)
- Register by entry deadline(s)
- Must complete entry form and pay entry fee prior to event or not considered “registered”
- Must follow individual division guidelines as outlined in this document

Age Requirements:

- Are outlined in the specific qualification for each division
- Competitors must meet age requirement by the event date
- Competitors under the age of six are not allowed to compete at this event
- All attendees under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian

Waiver Forms:

- Every competitor must sign the appropriate waiver before being allowed to compete
- Competitors under the age of eighteen must have a parent or guardian sign any required forms
- Every member of a team or cabaret act must sign a waiver

Partner Restrictions:

- Eligible competitors are not allowed to enter multiple routine divisions/Strictly Swing divisions with the same partner (except team division or cabaret).

Restarts:

May request a restart under the following circumstances

- If the DJ plays the wrong song.
- If the music or sound system fails or if the ballroom lights go out during the performance.
- If a contestant has a costume malfunction or loses a vital piece of clothing or breaks a shoe.

May **NOT** request a restart under the following circumstances

- Dissatisfied with their performance, their partner, or their dance order
- Dissatisfied with their music or music tempo
- Fail to remember all or part of the routine or stop their performance
- If a contestant is injured during the performance due to safety reasons

Note: You must request a restart before you leave the floor. The Chief Judge approves the request. The Chief Judge may also call for a restart without a request from you, if our Chief Judge believes it is fair for all and in your best interest. If a restart is allowed, your previous scores will be voided. If denied, or you decline an offer to restart, your prior performance will be scored. Competitors with pre-selected music are expected to ensure their music and tempo are tested on the DJ's sound system.

Responsibility of Competitors

1. Be prepared for the weekend by checking all weekend schedules, attending all mandatory meetings, turning in music on time, and arriving for competition on time. Competitors must be present in ballroom 10 minutes prior to their competition. Remember: Event schedule is subject to change.
2. Read and adhere to the rules for their competition prior to dancer's meeting.
3. Demonstrate good sportsmanlike conduct.
4. Competitors must turn-in music at DANCERS MEETING on FRIDAY.

Cancellations

Any contestant(s) who wish to cancel their application prior to May 15, 2025, will receive a refund of their entry fee. Cancellations received after that date will not receive a refund.

Dancer's Roll Call

The dancers' meeting will be held in the Fulton Room at 5:00 pm on Friday of the event. All competitors must be registered and should plan to attend (except Pro-Am Lead/Follow, Jack and Jill's, and Non-Professional Shag). Dance position numbers will be electronically drawn/assigned at 5:00 pm and roll call will be at 5:15 pm (even if you are not in attendance). If you are not registered, you will not dance without advanced prior approval from the Event Director. Turn in your music to the DJ present at the dancers meeting, USB drive, or it may be emailed in advance. Dance Order will be announced at the end of the meeting.

Referee Rules

Contestants will be judged by a panel of 5-7 judges. All judges' decisions are final. GNDC may utilize a Referee to monitor and flag rules in question. A video review may be required by a 3-person judging panel. If 2 or more agree a penalty or violation may result. See Appendix 1 for Referee Rules.

Scoring Review

Competitors' dance scores will be available for review immediately after the awards ceremony on Sunday evening in the Ascot Room off the Atrium. **This review is for competitors ONLY please; however, parents of junior dancers may accompany their children into the review room. No cameras will be allowed in the scoring room!** The Head Judges, Referee Judge, as well as other judges, will be asked to be available for questions.

2025 USA GRAND NATIONAL DANCE CHAMPIONSHIP (GNDC) DIVISION RULES

Non-Professional Carolina Classic:

This division is designed to feature Carolina Shag dancers who are non-professionals (have never competed in or won a professional shag dance competition)

General:

1. Competitor couples will be comprised of one male and one female.
2. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the event's discretion. The minimum number of entries for this division is 5.
3. An individual is not permitted to dance twice within the same division.
4. Props are not allowed.

Specific

1. Contestants must be 21 years or older by the end of the event to participate.
2. Newcomer, amateur, or novice shag dancers who have never competed in OR won a professional shag dance competition.
3. Performance time is a minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes.
4. Competitors select their own music.
5. No choreographed routines or lifts allowed.
6. No costumes allowed although matching or complimentary outfits are appropriate.
7. No choreographed entrances or exits.

Carolina Classic:

This division is designed to feature Carolina Shag dancers who are professionals (any person who has danced in a professional shag contest)

General:

1. Competitor couples will be comprised of one male and one female.
2. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the event's discretion. The minimum number of entries for this division is 5.
3. An individual is not permitted to dance twice within the same division.
4. Props are not allowed.

Specific

1. Contestants must be 21 years or older by the end of the event to participate.
2. Any person who has danced in a professional shag contest (regardless of outcome).
3. Performance time is a minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes.
4. Competitors select their own music.
5. No choreographed routines or lifts allowed.
6. No costumes allowed although matching or complimentary outfits are appropriate.
7. No choreographed entrances or exits.

Junior Shag I:

This division is designed to feature young Carolina Shag dancers who are under the age of 14

General:

1. Competitor couples will be comprised of one male and one female.
2. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the event's discretion. The minimum number of entries for this division is 5.
3. An individual is not permitted to dance twice within the same division.
4. Props are not allowed.

Specific

5. Contestants must be between the ages of 6 -14 by the end of the event to participate.
6. Performance time is a minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes.
7. Competitors select their own music.
8. No choreographed routines or lifts allowed.
9. No costumes allowed although tasteful, age-appropriate, matching or complimentary outfits are allowed.
- 10.No choreographed entrances or exits.

Junior Shag II:

This division is designed to feature young Carolina Shag dancers who are older than 15 but under the age of 21

General:

1. Competitor couples will be comprised of one male and one female.
2. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the event's discretion. The minimum number of entries for this division is 5.
3. An individual is not permitted to dance twice within the same division.
4. Props are not allowed.

Specific

1. Contestants must be between the ages of 15-20 by the end of the event to participate.
2. Performance time is a minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes.
3. Competitors select their own music.
4. No choreographed routines or lifts allowed.
5. No costumes allowed although tasteful, age-appropriate, matching or complimentary outfits are allowed.
6. No choreographed entrances or exits.

Carolina Masters Shag:

This division is designed to feature Carolina Shag dancers who are over the age of 45

Carolina Masters Shag General:

1. Competitor couples will be comprised of one male and one female.
2. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the event's discretion. The minimum number of entries for this division is 5.
3. An individual is not permitted to dance twice within the same division.
4. Props are not allowed.

Carolina Masters Shag Specific:

1. Contestants must be 45 years or older by the end of the event to participate.
2. Performance time is a minimum of 2 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes.
3. Competitors select their own music.
4. No choreographed routines or lifts allowed.
5. No costumes allowed although matching or complimentary outfits are appropriate.
6. No choreographed entrances or exits.

GNDC Team:

This division is designed to feature synchronized couples dancing of any genre of "swing" with a minimum of two couples

Team General:

1. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the event's discretion. The minimum number of entries for this division is 3 teams.
2. An individual is only allowed to compete on one team, unless there are extenuating circumstances. Must be approved by event director if an individual is competing on more than one team.
3. Props must be approved by the Chief Judge and/or Event Director.

Team Specific

1. Contestants must be 6 years or older by the end of the event to participate.
2. Performance time is a minimum of 3 minutes and a maximum of 5 minutes.
3. Competitors select their own music.
4. Choreographed routines are required. No line dances allowed.
5. Lifts, aerials, acrobatic moves, drops, slides, break-aways, switching of partners, and reverse lead/follow are all allowed.
6. Costumes are required.
7. Choreographed entrances or exits are allowed. The clock begins when the performance starts as determined by the Chief Judge.
8. Guidelines for expected swing content: 50% in Team. It is at the judges' discretion to determine the swing content requirement has been met.

NASDE Swing Dance Competition Divisions

NASDE sponsors the swing dance competition divisions of Showcase, Classic to help promote, preserve, and improve swing dancing. The objective is to provide a competitive performance venue for the various unique styles of swing that have developed across the nation to include the Carolina Shag, Dallas Push, East Coast Swing, Hand Dancing, Hollywood Swing, Houston Whip, Imperial Swing, Jive, Jitterbug, Lindy Hop, Rock-n-Roll, and West Coast Swing, to name a few.

NASDE Statement of Swing

NASDE Statement of Swing to be used to identify the presence of swing in the NASDE competition divisions. Swing is an American Rhythm Dance based on a foundation of 6-beat and 8-beat patterns that incorporate a wide variety of rhythms built on 2-beat single, delayed, double, triple, and blank rhythm units. The 6-beat patterns include, but are not limited to, passes, underarm turns, push-breaks, open-to closed, and closed-to-open position patterns. The 8-beat patterns include, but are not limited to, whips, swing-outs, Lindy circles, and Shag pivots. Although they are not part of the foundation of the dance as stated above, 2-beat and 4-beat extension rhythm breaks may be incorporated to extend a pattern, to phrase the music, and/or to accent breaks.

NASDE Sportsmanship Expectations

Sportsmanship is a fundamental aspect of our competition. Competing for the NASDE prize fund is privilege, not a right. The event director may flag a competitor's behavior as un-sportsman-like. Said behavior will be reviewed by the NASDE board at the next scheduled NASDE Board meeting. Redress for violations can include but are not limited to deduction of points, dropping in level in the overall standing, or removal of competitor from the NASDE list.

NASDE Prop Rules

To ensure the safety of competitors and the audience, **no props** are allowed in NASDE routines. A prop is defined as any article or object that is intentionally discarded, removed, taken away, or brought into a dance by a competitor. This includes, but not limited to, a hat that is thrown to the floor, a cane that is tossed away, or picking up an object from the floor. The referee will be designated as ensuring this rule is enforced. If the referee determines a violation occurred, the NASDE Referee will be used for verification and applying penalties.

NASDE Re-starts Rule

Re-starts will be allowed in NASDE Classic or Showcase divisions, if something occurred during the performance that would **impact the safety** of the competitors. This includes:

1. **Technical problems** — factors outside the dancer's control (e.g., lights in ballroom go out, flooring is faulty or damages, music suddenly stops)

OR,

2. **Costume malfunctions** — shoe breaks or becomes unfastened or untied; costume tears or breaks, and loose items could endanger dancers or expose a part of body that would not normally be exposed in a public setting.

If such a problem occurs during a performance, the Chief Judge may stop the performance, until the problem can be addressed and rectified at the time of the competition. The competitors may also willingly stop their performance and ask the Chief Judge for a Re-start. The competitors must request the re-start prior to their departure from competition dance floor. They must speak to the Chief Judge when the problem occurs. If it is determined that a Re-Start is allowable, the Chief Judge will then make a decide based on their situation and ask the couples to dance/restart as quick as possible.

Staff Judges will be instructed by the Chief Judge to judge the competitors on the repeat performance only. The performance that occurred before the Re-Start will not be counted toward the competitor's overall ranking.

Classic Division

(Place/Points: 1/10, 2/9, 3/8, 4/7, 5/6)

Swing dancing that allows choreography emphasizing the foundation of swing dancing and swing movement. Drops, leans, circular movements and other partner weight support moves are allowed if both partners keep at least one foot on the floor.

Classic Division General

1. NASDE rules apply
2. If any Event rule conflicts with published NASDE rules, the NASDE rules take precedence.
3. Contestants must be 18 years or older by the end of the event to participate.
4. Guidelines for expected swing content in Classic is 75%. It is at the Judges' discretion to determine that the swing content requirement has been met.
5. A competitive couple must consist of one leader and one follower. They must remain in their designed roles throughout the entire routine with an allowable exception of an 8-count maximum of role switching.
6. The minimum of 3 couple entries in each division is required for a division to occur.
7. The minimum prize money offered for the division should be \$1,200 (1st-500, 2nd-250, 3rd-200, 4th-150, 5th-100).
8. If a member event offers a NASDE competition category and cancels the division due to not having 3 or more couples to compete in the division, the competitors who registered and arrived prepared to compete, will be allowed to compete for NASDE points. Event directors may reduce cash prizes at their discretion.
9. An individual is not permitted to dance twice within the same division.

Classic Division Specific

1. Performance time is a minimum of 2 minutes and maximum of 3 minutes. The clock begins and judging starts at the first dance movement of the performance, with or without music.
2. Competitors select their own music.

3. Costumes are allowed and encouraged.
4. Separate entrances are permitted but the couple must physically join together within 32 beats of music.
5. Couples must maintain physical contact except for spins, turns, short break-aways, and recoveries. If combined, separation cannot be more than 8 beats of music. For example, if a competitor does a free spin or a turn, is not connected to their partner, and goes straight into a side by side break-away, the entire separation cannot be more than 8 beats of music.
6. Both partners must keep at least one foot on the floor during weight-support moves. If the foot comes off the floor, it will be flagged for review to determine if it was a violation (part of the choreography) or an error.
7. A maximum of seven (7) partner weight-support moves are permitted.

Showcase Division

Place/Points: 1/10, 2/9, 3/8, 4/7, 5/6)

Swing dancing that allows lifts, as well as other partner weight-support moves.

Showcase Division General

1. NASDE Rules apply.
2. If any Event rule conflicts with published NASDE rules, the NASDE rules take precedence.
3. Contestants must be 18 years or older by the end of the Event to participate.
4. Guideline for swing content in Showcase is 60%. It is at the Judges' discretion to determine that the swing content requirement has been met.
5. A competitive couple must consist of one leader and one follower. They must remain in their designed roles throughout the entire routine with an allowable exception of an 8-count maximum of role switching.
6. The minimum of 3 couple entries in each division is required for a division to occur.
7. The minimum prize money offered for the division should be \$1,200 (1st-500, 2nd-250, 3rd-200, 4th-150, 5th-100).
8. If a member event offers a NASDE competition category and cancels the division due to not having 3 or more couples to compete in the division, the competitors who registered and arrived prepared to compete, will be allowed to compete for NASDE points. Event directors may reduce cash prizes at their discretion.

9. An individual is not permitted to dance twice within the same division.

Showcase Division Specific

1. Performance time is a minimum of 2 minutes and maximum of 3 minutes. The clock begins and judging starts at the first dance movement of the performance, with or without music.
2. Competitors select their own music.
3. Costumes are allowed and encouraged.
4. Separate entrances are permitted.
5. Break-aways and side-by-side patterns are permitted.
6. A minimum of three (3) lifts total are required, with at least one of those lifts must be where the followers hips is at or above the leads shoulders while the lead is standing (not sitting, squatting, or flexed forward) and the lift must have the appearance of being sustained for 1-3 seconds.
7. There is no lift maximum.

GNDC Shag Jack and Jill (Mixed – Double) Divisions

The Jack & Jill competitions are designed to highlight social dance skills in shag dancing and the ability to dance well with a variety of partners.

Shag Jack and Jill Format

Competitors enter as individuals, are randomly assigned partners, and dance to music selected in advance by the Competition DJ. Depending on the number of entries, preliminary, semi-final, and final rounds may be held and will be danced in a heated format. Each division must have at least 5 leaders and 5 followers. There is no maximum number of competitors.

Shag Jack and Jill General

1. Each competitor may enter only one skill level Jack & Jill competition.
2. Competitors must be at least fourteen (14) years of age.
3. Couples must maintain physical contact except for spins, turns, short break-a-ways, and recoveries.
4. Dancers must maintain their own physical contact with the floor during partner weight support moves (at least one foot on ground).
5. No lifts.
6. Props are not allowed.

Shag Division Qualifications

Our qualifications for entries promote fairness and competitor enjoyment by grouping dancers of similar ability in the same division. It is the Organizer's goal to encourage all competitors to assign themselves to the appropriate classification using the honor system.

Shag Division Non-Professional

1. Competitors must be at least fourteen (14) years of age.
2. Newcomer, amateur, or novice shag dancers who have never competed in OR won a professional shag dance competition.
3. Junior, Senior, or Master competitors who have won or placed in the top three in any national shag dance competition are encouraged to dance in the experienced division.

Shag Division Experienced

1. Competitors must be at least fourteen (14) years of age.
2. Competitors who are considered “experienced” dancers who do not meet eligibility requirements for the non-professional Jack & Jill. Competitors may be shag instructors, hall of fame designees, or experienced social dancers.
3. Junior, Senior, or Master competitors who have won or placed in the top three in any national shag competition are encouraged to dance in the experienced division.
4. Competitors are encouraged to assign themselves to the appropriate classification using the honor system.

GNDC Swing Jack and Jill Divisions

The Jack & Jill competitions are designed to highlight social dance skills in spontaneous swing dancing and the ability to dance well with a variety of partners.

GNDC Swing Jack and Jill Divisions:

Newcomer

Novice

Intermediate

Advanced

All Stars/Champions

Sophisticated (Age 35+)

Masters (Age 50+)

Everybody Dance Now (GNDC’s All American Division)

Swing Jack and Jill Division Qualifications

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 (WSDC) recommendations and points registry competitor data. It is the Organizer’s goal to encourage all competitors to assign themselves to the appropriate classification using the World Swing Dance Council Points Registry. <https://www.worldsdc.com/rules/>

Swing Jack and Jill Format

Competitors enter as individuals, are randomly assigned partners, and dance to music selected in advance by the Competition DJ. Depending on the number of entries, preliminary, semi-final, and final rounds may be held and will be danced in a heated format. Each division must have at least 5 leaders and 5 followers. There is no maximum number of competitors.

Swing Jack and Jill Specifics:

Competitors must be at least 14 years of age, and if you are under age 18 you must have the consent of your parent or guardian)

Couples must maintain physical contact except for spins, turns, short break-a-ways, and recoveries
Dancers must maintain their own physical contact with the floor during partner weight support moves, (one foot on the ground) Props are not allowed.

World Swing Dance Council Rules Effective 2025:

Competitors: Skill Levels and Points Registry

For Competitor specific rules about skill levels and points registry, please see <https://www.worldsdc.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/wsdcrules.pdf>

Petitions

Competitors may submit a formal petition (<https://www.worldsdc.com/wsdc-forms/>) to the Event's Chief Judge to dance at a different skill level than they qualify for in a Jack and Jill division.

1. All Events will offer a petition process.
2. Petitions can be submitted one skill level up or one skill level down only.
3. The Chief Judge, or qualified individual(s) designated by the Chief Judge, will consider the requested reclassification petition after reviewing the competitor's Points Registry record.
4. Petitions are Event-specific and not transferable. Competitors may need to submit a new petition at their next Event.
5. All petitions must be submitted by the Event Director with the WSDC Event Reporting form.

Contest Tiers, Points Awarded, and Competition Rounds

Point Tier Awards

Tiers are defined by the number of unique competitors in each role (Leader or Follower). Dancing in finals does not guarantee that a competitor will be awarded points. Points awarded to leaders and followers may not be identical. The higher the number of competitors within a division, the higher the Tier, and the greater the points potential.

A division may have different tiers for Leaders and Followers. For example, a Novice contest may have 18 Leaders and 35 Followers. Leaders would receive Tier 2 points; Followers would receive Tier 3 points. The points awarded to a competitor according to their placement in finals is listed in Chart 4.

WSDC Jack and Jill competitions must have a minimum of five (5) unique Leaders and five (5) unique Followers in finals be awarded and the results to be included in the Points Registry.

Chart 4: Points Awarded per Tier

Tier	# of Unique Competitors (per role)	1 st Place	2 nd Place	3 rd Place	4 th Place	5 th Place	Additional Placements in Final
Tier 1	5-10	3	2	1	0	0	0
Tier 2	11-19	6	4	3	2	1	0
Tier 3	20-39	10	8	6	4	2	1 (up to 10 th place)
Tier 4	40-79	15	12	10	8	6	1 (up to 12 th place)
Tier 5	80-129	20	16	14	12	10	2 (up to 15 th place)

Tier 6	130+	25	22	18	15	12	2 (up to 15 th place)
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Competition Rounds

If the leaders and followers fall into different tiers, the number of rounds must be determined by the **higher tier**. The number of rounds for tiers is **mandatory** (see Chart 5: Competition Rounds based on Tier Size).

Chart 5: Competition Rounds based on Tier Size

Tier	Number of Competitors	Number of Rounds	Prelims	Quarters	Semis	Finals
1	5-10	1	Allowed if numbers are uneven	No	No	Yes
2	11-19	1-2	Optional	No	No	Yes
3	20-39	2	Yes	No	No	Yes
4	40-79	3	Yes	No	Yes*	Yes
5	80-129	3-4	Yes	Optional	Yes	Yes
6	130+	4	Yes	Optional	Yes	Yes

*Registry Events are allowed to waive a competition round if the number of competitors is no more than 10% over the previous Tier's maximum (e.g., a Tier 4 contest with 43 Followers (and fewer than 39 Leaders) could run a prelims and finals only). This is allowed to provide stability for contest planning.

GNDC 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 if both partners keep at least one foot on the floor.

Strictly Swing General:

1. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the event's discretion. There is no minimum number of entries.
2. A single entry is one couple (two dancers). A couple may be other than a male leader and female follower. Guidelines for expected swing content are 90% in Strictly Swing. It is at the judge's discretion to determine that the swing content requirement has been met.
3. An individual is not permitted to dance in both Open and Champions Strictly Swing.
4. Competitors are not permitted to dance with the same partner in Strictly Swing and a Routine Division.

Strictly Swing Specific:

1. Contestants must be at least fourteen (14) years or older by the end of the event to participate, and if you are under 18, you must have the consent of your parent or guardian.
2. Length of performance is at the promoter's discretion.
3. Costumes are not allowed. However, matching or complementary outfits suitable for social dancing are acceptable.
4. This division will be danced in heats for preliminaries, semi-finals, and for finals.
5. Couples must maintain physical contact except for spins, turns, short break-a-ways, and recoveries.
6. Pre-choreographed routines, and entrances or exits are not allowed.
7. Dancers must maintain their own physical contact with the floor during partner weight support moves (at least one foot on ground).

Strictly Swing 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.

Open Strictly Swing:

1. Open to all competitors except Champions.
2. Competitors who have placed 1st-5th in a Champions or Invitational J&J held at qualifying major event **may not** dance in this division.

Champions Strictly Swing:

1. Competitors may, but are not required to, dance in this division if they have any earned Professional (PRO), Champions (CHMP), Invitational (INV) or Teachers (TCH) points.
2. Competitors who have placed 1st-5th in a Champions or Invitational J&J held at qualifying major event must dance in this division.

GNDC Pro-Am Divisions

The Pro-Am divisions are designed to give the amateur the opportunity to be showcased with their professional instructor for critique and feedback.

Pro-Am SWING Lead/Follow General:

1. Amateurs may enter in one Division Level: Novice or Intermediate
2. Each professional shall have no more than 5 Amateurs in each Division Level (Novice and Intermediate)
3. A student/teacher relationship must exist between the competitors defined as at least one hour of private instruction in the previous 6 months.

Specific

1. Length of performance is at the promoter's discretion. Music will be chosen by the DJ.
2. Costumes are not allowed. However, matching or complementary outfits suitable for social dancing are acceptable. This division will be danced in heats.
3. Couples must maintain physical contact except for spins, turns, short break-a-ways, and recoveries. 5.Pre-choreographed routines are not allowed.
5. Dancers must maintain their own physical contact with the floor during partner weight support moves (at least one foot on the ground).

Pro-Am SHAG Lead/Follow General:

1. Amateurs may enter in one Division Level: Amateurs or Novice.
2. Each professional shall have no more than 5 Ams in each Division Level (Amateur and Novice). 3. Junior, Non-Professional, Senior, or Master competitors who have WON any national shag dance competition are encouraged to dance as the PRO.
4. A student/teacher relationship must exist between the competitors defined as at least one hour of private instruction in the previous 6 months.
5. Competitors are encouraged to assign themselves to the appropriate classification using the honor system.

Specific

1. Length of performance is at the promoter's discretion. Music will be chosen by the DJ.
2. Costumes are not allowed. However, matching or complementary outfits suitable for social dancing are acceptable
3. This division will be danced in heats.
4. Couples must maintain physical contact except for spins, turns, short break-a-ways, and recoveries.
5. Pre-choreographed routines are not allowed, but mirror steps may be performed.
6. Dancers must maintain their own physical contact with the floor during partner weight support moves (at least one foot on the ground).

GNDC Pro-AM Routine Spotlight

Pro-AM Routine Spotlight General:

This Division is designed to spotlight an amateur swing dancer in a choreographed routine with one partner being a Professional Swing Dancer the other an Amateur Swing Dancer. Amateurs should be experienced and skilled in the basics of Swing Dancing. The Pro is expected to spotlight the am in a routine appropriate to their skill ability.

1. Competitors must consist of one “amateur” and one “Professional”.
2. The maximum and minimum number of entries is at the Event’s discretion.
3. Guidelines for expected swing content are 70%. It is at the judges’ discretion to determine that the swing content requirement has been met.
4. Each professional shall have no more than 3 amateur routines.
5. An “amateur” is defined as someone who does NOT teach dance, nor earn income as a dance teacher, and has not competed as an All- Star or Champion.
6. Pros with multiple Amateurs must accept their drawn dance order with each Am. If they have 3 entries and the dance order indicates back to back they must be prepared to dance the order drawn and not cause contest delays.

Pro-Am Routine Spotlight Specific:

1. Performance time is a minimum of 2 minutes and maximum of 3 minutes. The clock begins when the performance starts as determined by the chief judge.
2. Competitors select their own music.
3. Costumes are allowed and encouraged.
4. Time and judging starts at first movement of performance with or without music.
5. Separate entrances are permitted but must come together within thirty-two (32) beats of the music intro.
6. Max of 3 Lifts are allowed but not required.
7. No props.
8. Break-a-ways and side-by-side patterns are permitted, no longer than eight (8) beats.
9. Maximum five (5) partner weight support moves with at least one foot on the ground.

GNDC Cabaret

This division is considered “open” to any style of dance other than swing. However, a slight amount of swing is permitted.

Cabaret General:

1. The maximum number of entries in each division is at the event’s discretion. The minimum number of entries for this division is 3.
2. An individual is not permitted to dance twice within the same division.
3. Props are allowed but must be approved by the event directors prior to the event.

Cabaret Specific:

1. Contestants must be 6 years or older by the end of the event to participate.
2. Performance time is a minimum of 2.5 minutes and a maximum of 4.5 minutes.
3. The performance must display a Cabaret element, which is not present in the other dance divisions.
4. Any style of dance other than swing is permitted however a slight amount of swing is permitted defined as a maximum of 32 beats of swing patterns.
5. Competitors select their own music.
6. Choreographed routines and costumes are required.
7. Any entry may consist of a solo performer or multiple performers (ex: team)
8. Lifts, aerials, acrobatic moves, drops, slides, break-aways, switching of partners, and reverse lead/follow are all allowed.
9. Theatre Arts routines are appropriate for the Cabaret Division.
10. Choreographed entrances or exits are allowed. The clock begins when the performance starts as determined by the Chief Judge.

NASDE Rising Star Tour Rules 2025

The objective of the Rising Star Tour is to provide a platform for amateur dancers to grow and improve their swing dancing skills in the context of choreographed routines.

Dancer Eligibility:

To participate in the 2024 Rising Star Tour (RST), each dancer must:

1. Be fifteen (15) years or older by the end of any qualifying event at which they are competing
2. Never have placed or made a qualifying final of a NASDE Classic or Showcase division
3. Not have Champion or Invitational points within the last ten (10) years
4. Never have won the RST top point award in previous seasons
5. Never have placed top three (3) in the Open Rising Star division **twice**
6. Dancers retain eligibility separately for each role, leader/follower
7. Event directors may participate as competitors in the tour, however they may not compete at the event that they run.

For rules specifically pertaining to the Rising Star Division, please see <https://risingstartour.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Rising-Star-Tour-Rules-2025.pdf>.

APPENDIX 1

The Wayne Bott Referee System – updated 1.17.2017(as voted by NASDE)

Overview of Referee System:

1. Review current NASDE and local competition rules for consistency.
 2. A Referee sits on the judging panel watching for rules adherence. The Referee uses a Referee Rules Checklist.
 3. If all couples Pass, a Panel Review is unnecessary.
 4. If any couple Fails, a Panel Review is necessary and should occur immediately or ASAP, after all judges have scored the contest.
 5. The event must have a video of each performance for review.
 6. A review panel is formed, consisting of the chief judge and two (2) other judges.
 7. The referee will have a checklist for each couple during their performance.
 8. If a referee flags a performance for review, the referee will acquire the video and review the video any number of times.
 9. If the referee determines a violation possibly occurred, the review panel will be assembled to review and determine final judgement
 10. The referee presents the video and possible violation to the review panel and will answer any questions from the review panel.
 11. The review panel reviews the video as many times as necessary to determine if violation occurred. Verbal interaction between panel members is encouraged. Be concise, get to the point, give opinion, and move on. At the conclusion, each panel member indicates “Pass” or “Fail” for each couple in question. There is no need for panel members to agree. Majority opinion (2 out of 3) carries. The results are recorded on a Panel Review Sheet and the couple is given an overall “Pass” or “Fail”.
 12. If couple “Fails”, the panel determines if the violation was an “error” or “penalty”. An “error” signifies that the violation was not a deliberate action against the rules. Errors include the drop already being part of the judges’ scores or a drop of up to two (2) placements. A “penalty” signifies that the violation was a deliberate action against the rules. Penalties include not being called-back for the next round or dropped to last place in a finals round.
 13. All Panel Reviews taking place should be noted on the scoring sheets with a “VR” (Violation-Review) when posting scores, even reviews that passed. Any drop in placement is noted with a “VP” (Violation-Penalty), on the posted scoring sheets, using VP1 or VP2 to further define the number of placements dropped.
 14. The details of the Referee Panel are NOT to be posted. All Panel Review Sheets and Referee Rules Checklist are turned into the chief judge to be included in the Scoring Book for future review and archiving.
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1. **Note: Swing Content** is the responsibility of each judge, NOT the REFEREE Judge. Any violations or warning regarding Swing Content is reflected in the individual judges score and noted on their individual score sheets. Any Swing Content Warnings and Violations are posted by the Scorer on Sunday.

*Author: Wayne Bott/created & implemented in 2006 for the US OPEN
Latest revision/John Lindo 3/3/2024*