

2024 NBTA Solo Rules

SECTION 1 - FORWARD

Few activities provide a more wholesome and worthwhile outlet for the energies of today's youth than baton twirling. Sanctioned twirling contests are largely responsible for the growth, development, and advancement of twirling as a performance sport, performing art, and beneficial activity. Many of the keen traits found in today's twirlers can be directly credited to their participation in twirling contests, i.e., physical fitness, good sportsmanship, poise, showmanship, teamwork, personality projection, ambidexterity, and self-confidence. Baton twirling contests provide a place where baton twirlers can join together in friendly competition and share common interests- while participating in a program for baton boosters and the public to view.

NBTA's large network of baton twirling contests is an important part of the national and world baton twirling picture. There is usually greater interest and a higher level of twirling proficiency found in areas where there are top-level competitions.

MOTTO AND PLEDGE OF HONOR

NBTA's motto is "winning is participating!" Accept new friendship as you extend your friendship to your fellow competitors. And remember, you are a part of the great HONOR SYSTEM that helps set apart baton twirling from many other sports. It is your responsibility to maintain accurate records and to compete in the proper classification and age divisions.

NBTA contestants are bound by the following code of honor:

MY PLEDGE – CODE OF HONOR

In order to substantiate advancement, I pledge responsibility, with the help of my parents and teacher, to accurately record my twirling contest participation, dates, locations, categories, age divisions, placements, and advancement. I agree to take an up-to-date record with me to contests in which I participate, for reference, should there be any questions about my status or eligibility.

KNOW THE RULES

An understanding of the contest rules and procedures can help you enjoy a productive participation in the wonderful world of contest baton twirling. Knowledge of the rules is the responsibility of each individual.

SECTION 2 – CONTEST SPECIFICATIONS

PART 1 - CONTEST CLASSIFICATIONS

Class AAAA – National Majorette Contest (USA citizens only)

"The Gold Standard for all NBTA sanctioned contests." For Preteen, Junior, and Senior divisions. Qualifying required.

Class AAA – National (USA citizens only) and/World Open Major Title Events

1. National Majorette Championships for Tiny Tot and Juvenile divisions (the Little Big One). Qualifying not required.
2. National Young Men's and Men's Championships. Qualifying not required.
3. National Championships for all events except Solo Twirling. Qualifying not required.
4. World Championship NBTA Competitions.

Class AA – State and Regional Championship events (USA citizens only)

1. State Championships establish State title and eligibility for eight advanced solo contestants for National Championships in three oldest age divisions.
2. Regional Championships establish Regional titles and eligibility for eight advanced solo contestants for National Championships in three oldest national age groups. Tiny Tot and Juvenile are NOT required to qualify for Little Big One.

Class A – Open Competitions

1. Open to all contestants without territorial limitations. When more than one country is involved, contest may be designated as "International Open."

Class B – Competitions

1. Both open and closed competitions with territorial limitations, e.g., city, state, bi-state. Included in this category are competitions limited to one level of competition. Example – "Novice Open."

Class C – Competitions

1. Includes high school competitions, local studio competitions, small practice contests, and contests where scholastic ratings are awarded.

PART 2 - CONTEST PROCEDURES

- A. **ENTRY FORM** – Obtain a contest entry form by contacting respective contest director. A list of sanctioned contests appears in *Drum Major Magazine*, published monthly, except August.
- B. **UNIFORM** – There are no uniform requirements other than a contestant shall be in uniform of good taste.
- C. **MUSIC** – Contestants will perform to march music provided by contest director of 128 to 132 beats per minute. Show twirlers use own music. Check with contest director for available methods of music (tape, CD, digital). The audio volume regulation for NBTA-sanctioned contests is as follows: Average 85 decibel - Maximum 95 decibel. In every case the volume at sanctioned contests is to be

held at a comfortable level. Excessive volume should be called to the attention of the contest director. An unheeded warning may lead to a 2-point maximum penalty by head judge. Music with foul language is not permitted and can result in a 2-point penalty.

- D. **BATON** – A baton must have a rubber ball and tip. Any props must have floor protection guards.
- E. **ORDER OF APPEARANCE** – Contestants will appear in order indicated by contest director. Contestant is allowed time period of 15 minutes before required to perform again.
- F. **LINEUP ADJUSTMENT** – With permission of judge and contest director, a change in order of appearance to facilitate efficient operation of competition is permitted. (Starter and runner must be notified.)
- G. **NO LESSONS** - “Teaching” lanes at a contest are not allowed. Rating lanes are permitted.
- H. **WARMING UP** – During competition, contestants are not permitted to “warm up” or practice in front of judges. All practicing should be done in designated area away from sight line of judges.
- I. **ENTRY AND EXIT** – Contestant shall start with music and March, walk, or strut to middle of competition area. Upon completion of performance, contestant shall walk or strut to original starting point.
- J. **PERFORMING AREA** – A designated twirling area of at least 15’ by 15’ will be provided Solo contestants. Strutting, Duet, and Trio contestants will be provided 30’ by 20’ when possible.
- K. **CLOSING A DIVISION** - After final contestant in a division has performed, the division will be formally closed and not reopened. A judge must close a division before starting to judge another one.
- L. **ADJUSTING TO CONDITIONS** – Conditions vary with each facility. Therefore, contestants are required to adjust to the individual facility provided.
- M. **PHOTO EVENTS** - Photo-type events are not permitted.
- N. **ADDITIONAL ATHLETE ITEMS** - The individual contest and venue will determine whether or not chairs, blankets, or changing tents may be used. Under no circumstances shall any of the above block walkways or interfere with the safety of contestants and spectators.

PART 3 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF ATHLETES AND SPECTATORS AT A COMPETITION

- A. **KNOWLEDGE OF RULES** - It is the responsibility of the contestant, parent, and coach to make certain that all statements concerning residence, age, and status are factual and to take appropriate steps to assure that entry is accurate on day of events. Knowledge of rules is direct responsibility of individual contestant.
- B. **HONOR SYSTEM** - Any falsification on the part of a contestant may lead to permanent suspension from NBTA-sanctioned events.
- C. **CORRECT ENTRIES** - Contest director shall correct entry information when a contestant reports advancement regardless of preprinted program. Any arbitrary contest requirements pertaining to contestant’s status level or finality of results shall not be enforced.
- D. **GOOD CONDUCT** - While attending a competition, a contestant is expected to conduct himself/herself as a gentleman or lady. Good sportsmanship and dedication to the wholesome advancement of baton twirling should be evident. Conduct unbecoming to a lady or a gentleman may result in suspension or disqualification. Anyone who flagrantly disrupts a contest may be asked to leave, including parents.
- E. **ACCURATE PUBLICITY** - Competition wins shall be referred to accurately by rightful names, age division, and titles. Only those events classified as NBTA Advanced World, National, Regional, or State Championships shall be known as official NBTA Championship events. It is the responsibility of both parent and coach and twirler that any banners, printed matter, clothing, regalia and lettering include complete accurate age, status level and title. Miss Majorette of America title is solely reserved for advanced status pageant contestants. Beginner and intermediate pageant winners are required to refer to their title as Beginner or Intermediate State or Regional Pageant Winner.
- F. **INTERFERENCE** - Interference on behalf of a contestant or by a contestant may result in contestant’s disqualification from a contest. In the case of accidental interference by an athlete or spectator where (any) resulting penalties (or penalties as a result of ie. drop, break, slip, out of step, etc.) occur, at the judge’s discretion, the penalty(s) will not be assessed.
- G. **MISHAP** - A mishap shall be defined as any incident hindering the performance of a contestant, baton breaking, end flying off, uniform tearing, illness, etc. A contestant may, however, substitute another baton for a faulty or un-retrievable baton, but no time shall be allowed for substitution. In the case of a mishap, timing will continue, and overtime assessed. A chief judge may take appropriate action in the case of a safety/health emergency. Should a music or power failure occur during a performance, the individual will have a choice of continuing from the place of power failure or starting over from the beginning. This does not cover when the march music ends and just needs to be restarted.
- H. **FLASH PHOTOGRAPH** - The taking of flash pictures of contestants performing or about to perform is not permitted.
- I. **VIDEOTAPING** - In the spirit of safety, courtesy, and fairness to all, videotaping is limited to:
 - 1. Parent videotaping own child.
 - 2. Teacher videotaping own student.

3. Group Director/Appointed Person videotaping own group or corps.
4. Safety first applies: no tripods, extension cords, or artificial lights. Common sense prevails.

No videotaping is permitted in area directly behind or around judges' or contest officials' tables. A designated area will be provided off competition floor when possible. No judging is permitted by video.

- J. **APPROACHING JUDGES** – Parents and spectators (including judges not employed at competition) are not permitted to approach judges while judges are in act of judging. Any inquiries should be given to contest director.
- K. **FAMILY RULE** - Under no circumstances shall a contest official, relative, teacher, or parent officiate or clerk in a division or on a lane in which their child or family member is competing.
- L. **STARTING AREA** - A coach or parent shall not accompany a contestant to starting area.
- M. **HIGH-POINT** - Some contest directors may choose to award advance contestant points for their placements. Twirlers acquiring the most points during a contest day are acclaimed High-Point winners. Points are generally given as follows: 1st Place – 5 Points, 2nd Place – 4 Points, etc. Corps and team are not included in High-Point count. No High-Point events are held for Novice, Beginner, or Intermediate.

PART 4 - COMPETITION TABULATION

- A. In all cases when multiple judges are used, the judge's final score for each contestant will serve to arrive at placement points for each contestant. Placement points are added together. Lowest placement points win. In case of a tie, results will be determined by adding together score sheet scores. When five or more judges are used, high and low judgements will be eliminated.
- B. **TIES**
1. Ties will be broken whenever possible.
 2. Ties may be broken by means of an official tie-breaking twirloff called by judge concerned. Tie-breaking twirloff win DOES count towards advancement.
 3. In no case shall a contestant who has just competed be required to participate in a twirloff within 15 minutes of the time he or she last performed.
 4. At discretion of judge concerned, another registered NBTA judge who is employed at same competition may be called in to break a tie.
 5. In case of a tie, duplicate awards shall be made when possible.
- C. **SWEEPSTAKES STRUT-OFFS/TWIRL-OFFS** - A Sweepstake Strut-Off/Twirl-Off is a fun event that combines winners of all ages from the national standard age grouping (0-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16 & over) and within the same skill level. A Strut-Off /Twirl-Off win in a Novice, Beginner or Intermediate level competition does not count toward advancement.
- D. **COMPETITION STRUT-OFF/TWIRL-OFF** - A Competition Strut-Off/Twirl-Off is an event that uses preliminary round(s) and a final to determine the winner of the national standard age and within the same skill level division. If there is a Novice, Beginner or Intermediate Strut-Off/Twirl Off offered at a competition, the preliminary round serves only as a qualifier and therefore does not constitute a win towards advancement. The final round placement "win" counts towards advancement.

SECTION 3 – TWIRLING AGE, STATUS LEVELS AND RESIDENCY

PART 1 - YOUR TWIRLING AGE

September 1 is the beginning of each new contest year. Your actual age on September 1 determines your competitive age for the entire contest year from September 1 through August 31.

PART 2 - STANDARD AGE DIVISIONS

Sanctioned contests shall employ the following age-division plans:

- A. **Official Mandatory Divisions for National, State, and Regional Championship Contests: U.S.A.**
Senior – ages 16 and over / **Junior** – ages 13 through 15 / **Pre-teen** – ages 10 through 12 /
Juvenile – ages 7 through 9 / **Tot** – ages 0 through 6
- B. **Single Age Plan – Optional for Open Class A, B, or C Contests:**
0-6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 & over
Optional: 0-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16-19, 20 & over
- C. **Duets Age Categories:**
0-18, 19-24, 25-30, 31 & over. (Combine ages to determine age group.)
- D. **Trios Age Categories:**
0-10.9 Juv., 11-13.9 Jr., 14 & over Sr. (Average ages to determine age group.)

PART 3 - FOUR STATUS LEVELS FOR CONTESTANTS

A high purpose of the NBTA advanced process is to help twirlers realize their personal goal by graduating to the advanced class of competition. The following four contestant status levels are mandatory for A, AA, AAA Solo (Women and Men) competitions and are optional for all other events.

- **Novice Class** – A contestant will be a novice contestant until receiving **five** first-place Novice wins.

- **Beginner Class** – A contestant is a beginner until receiving **five** first-place Beginner wins in a contest category. She or he then advances to the Intermediate class.
- **Intermediate Class** – A contestant is an intermediate until receiving **eight** first-place Intermediate wins in a contest category. She or he then graduates to the Advanced class.
- **Advanced Class** – A contestant has reached the highest and most prestigious competitive level.

PART 4 - RULES REGARDING STATUS LEVELS

- A. **STATUS LEVEL BY EVENT** - Contestants will compete in earned status level (Nov-Beg-Inter-Adv.) in each event. Example: A contestant may be Advanced in Solo, Beginner in Strut, and Intermediate in Two-Baton. Contestant is required to move up to next higher status level upon achieving the designated number of first-place wins.
- B. **PROTECTION RULE** – Should a Novice, Beginner, or Intermediate open, state, or regional (not national) solo, strut, 2-baton, etc. contestant not demonstrate first-place ability, the judge may use 1st place “Protection Rule” to prevent win from counting towards advancement. Protection Rule may be used in Individual pageant categories (solo, strut, and model) but not overall title. Awards will be presented as advertised. “1st Place Protection” must be clearly recorded on score sheet by judge and on results sheet by tabulator. Protection Rule may not be applied in advanced events. Contest directors will not instruct judges to use Protection Rule.
- C. **SELF-ADVANCEMENT** - At any time, contestants may advance themselves to a higher status level. By doing so, they are permanently elevated to that higher status level.
- For Little Big Ones only: 0-6, 7-9 (all status levels) – Beginner and Intermediate contestant may enter Little Big One without penalty of advancement; however, winning first permanently elevates contestant to advanced status.
- D. **DOUBLE ENTERING** – Contestant may double enter in open contests only and compete in a higher status level. Double entering is permitted only when contestant also enters contestant’s true status level (Nov-Beg-Inter-Adv.) Caution: Competing at a higher status level without competing at current status level automatically advances contestant to higher level. Double entering is not permitted in State/Regional/National NBTA championship contests. If the athlete wins first place at the higher level, the athlete is elevated to the higher status.
- E. **WHEN MULTI-STATUS LEVELS ARE NOT AVAILABLE** – Winning first place in a contest that does not provide multi-levels (Nov-Beg-Inter-Adv.) shall be counted only toward a contestant’s current NBTA status level. Winning first place in an official NBTA State/Regional/National Championship contest that does not provide multiple status levels, advances contestant to an advanced status in that type of competition.
- F. **MULTI-EVENT STATUS LEVEL** - Twirling status determines level of competition in all multi-event contests.
- G. **MULTI-EVENT WINS** – In any multi - level pageant type event where pageant status is determined by twirling level, all 1st place wins in individual events (solo, strut and model) shall be counted towards the accumulated number of wins in the athlete’s current status level for that event unless 1st place protection rule is applied. No protection rule shall not be used in any advanced level pageant
- H. **DIVISION SIZE** - One contestant constitutes a division. Wins count unless protection rule is used.
- I. **ALL WINS COUNT** – The wins of all organizations count towards advancement in NBTA contests. A contestant is ethically bound to enter NBTA competitions at actual status level. Only wins not recognized are those strictly involving all studio events and practice events.
- J. **OTHER TWIRLING ORGANIZATIONS** - Twirlers from other organizations should enter a NBTA contest at same status level they twirl at in the other organization.
- K. **OPTIONAL DIVISIONS**
- First Contest Solo Twirling Division. Ribbons only. Win in this class does not count toward status advancement.
 - Special Novice Solo Twirling Division. Open to all who have never won a first in any solo-twirling event regardless of affiliation. Ribbons only. Win does not count towards advancement.
 - Collegiate. May be offered for solo and strut participants and is optional for other events. Must be currently enrolled in an educational pursuit beyond high school.
- L. **DISPUTES** - Board of Governors has authority to rule on any dispute

PART 5 - ELIGIBILITY RULES

- A. **OPEN DOOR** - NBTA has an open-door maximum opportunity policy. NBTA competitions are open to all competitors regardless of race, creed, color, gender, competitive status, affiliation or marital status. Class B and C open competitions may limit eligibility for things except for race, creed, color, gender, competitive status, affiliation or marital status. Any open competition limitations must be stated in the brochure.
- B. **GENDER DIVISIONS** - Men may compete against girls in all contests except Solo, Strut, Rhythmic Twirl and Model.
- C. **MULTI-DAY EVENTS** - No win shall change a contestant’s status on same day or on any day of a successive multi-day event but will be in effect at the next competition. Contestant must compete at same solo status level during a multi-event and/or multi-day event.

- D. **JUDGES & TEACHERS** - Twirling teachers are permitted to compete except when serving in an official capacity (clerking, starting, competing against own students, etc.). NBTA certified judges are not permitted to compete. A NBTA registered judge is not permitted to revert back to competitive status. Failure of a registered judge to annual reregister does not permit judge to return to competitive status.
- E. **RATING LANE** - To perform in Solo twirl or Strut rating lane, contestant must compete in regular or pageant Solo or Strut event at same contest. Other rating lane events have no requirements. Fee must be minimal. Awards limited to ribbons only. Rating judge will evaluate rating performance on appropriate NBTA score sheet giving no score; however, checks and circles are permitted. Rating awards are not counted toward advancement.
- F. **MULTIPLE DUET/TRIOS** - Duet or trio member may compete in multiple duet/trio events but may not compete against themselves. During world qualifying years, an advanced duet member may only compete in one advanced duet age group. Should a member of a world qualifying duet be unable to attend the world championships, the next qualifying duet gains eligibility!
- G. **NATIONAL MAJORETTE CONTEST QUALIFICATION** - Only top eight Solo winners of a State or Regional contest are eligible for National Majorette Contest. No exceptions. State and Regional contest directors must award first (1st) through eighth (8th) place. No alternate beyond 8th place. A solo contestant may enter both State and Regional qualifying competitions during a contest year. A double winner doesn't relinquish any awards or titles.
- H. **RHYTHMIC TWIRL QUALIFICATION** - Only twirlers who place in top three of their rhythmic twirl age divisions at a State or Regional competition are eligible to advance to World Open Rhythmic Twirl competition. Eligibility is not passed beyond 3rd place.
- I. **AYOP CHAMPIONSHIP ALTERNATES**
 - 1. Should a National Majorette Contest Top 6 Finalist(s) be unable to compete in his/her Top 6 Finals, Top 6 Twirl-off eligibility IS NOT passed beyond Top 6.
 - 2. Should a National Majorette Contest Top 20 Semi Finalist(s) be unable to compete, eligibility IS passed to next competitor.
 - 3. Should a World Open Top 5 Preliminary Round Finalist(s) be unable to compete in World Open Finals, eligibility IS passed beyond 5th to next eligible competitor(s).

PART 6 - RESIDENCY

- A. **CITIZENSHIP** - You are by birth or naturalization a citizen of your country. For World championship contests, a national's passport determines the country to be represented.
- B. **US CITIZENS** - US citizens residing outside the United States may directly enter USA championship contests. District of Columbia is given 'contestant at large' open status.
- C. **NON-US CITIZENS** - A contestant temporarily residing outside of own country may compete in NBTA events, strictly for the purpose of accessing proficiency. Contestant will not receive placement except for in World Open events at AYOP. Permanent Resident Card (Green Card) holders are legally permitted to live and work in the United States but retain citizenship in another country. Therefore, athletes with green card status are permitted to compete in State, Regional and National Championship contests but are not permitted to represent the United States in World competition. Eligibility passes to the next USA citizen athlete. (To be a member of the USA World Team, athletes must possess a US passport.) An athlete with dual (or multiple) citizenship must elect to represent only one country.
- D. **STATE RESIDENCY** - Residency status is determined by where a contestant attends school. Six month's residence is needed for eligibility to compete in NBTA-sanctioned events. However, if contestant can prove that new residence is permanent, less than six months shall be acceptable. Establishment of P.O. Box does not establish an official residence. Competing in two NBTA Regional or two NBTA State preliminaries in same contest year will result in disqualification in both competitions. If your state does not have a State contest and your region does not have a Regional contest, you may proceed directly to Nationals.
 - 1. **DUET/TRIO** – When duet members are from different states, duet has option of selecting which state to represent but may compete for only one title. Trios – When competing for State or Regional title, a majority of members must be from that titled state or region.
 - 2. **COLLEGE RESIDENCY** - A college contestant attending a university in another state or region attempting to qualify for National Championships may choose to: (a) compete in university's state and region or (b) compete in home state and region, but only one.
- E. **USA WORLD TEAM** - All contestants (solo, duet, team corps, etc.) must be a USA citizen in order to participate in qualification competition for the USA World Championships. No waivers will be granted. International athletes are eligible to compete in all AYOP World Open events and advance to the final round but are not eligible to qualify for the USA World Team. Eligibility is passed to the next USA athlete.

SECTION 4 – EVENTS AND PENALTIES

STANDARD PENALTIES

- A. **NBTA SAFETY FIRST RULES** - In the interest of safety for all contestants and to help preserve the integrity of baton twirling as a freestanding art/sport/physical activity, the following gymnastic stunts are disallowed from all NBTA-sanctioned competitions:

1. Body aerials
2. Walkovers
3. Cartwheels
4. Butterflies
5. Somersaults on floor
6. Body mounts and body tosses are also disallowed. An illegal mount is defined as anybody toss or form that is two stories or more. A body is defined as a person's height, ½ story is defined as a person kneeling, sitting, or lunging.

Penalty: Disqualification.

- B. **STANDARD PENALTIES** - Penalties will not be given before opening salute. Penalties will be assessed during overtime before final salute.
1. **Drop** - .5 penalty per drop. Definition: Drop is when baton comes into contact with the ground and either full or momentary control is lost. Full control is defined as a grip where palm of hand comes into solid contact with baton. An intentional ground bounce or when a contestant is accidentally interfered with, causing a drop, are not counted as a drop.
 2. **Two Hand Catch** - .5 penalty for each infraction.
 3. **Fall** – Unintentional floor contact or fall - .5 per infraction.
 4. **Unintentional Breaks and Slips** - .1 penalty each.
 5. **Unintentional Off Pattern** - .1 penalty each.
 6. **Out of Position** - .1 penalty per trick executed before attempting to move back to designated lane or area. Maximum penalty 2.0.
 7. **Overtime, Undertime** - .1 penalty per second. Timing begins as opening salute hand leaves salute position after a two-count hold. Timing stops as baton comes to a stop in salute closing salute position.
 8. **Salute** – Failure to salute 1.0 penalty per violation. Improper salute .5 penalty per violation. A salute shall be executed respectfully. Back of right hand shall touch hollow of left shoulder with right elbow level with top of shoulder, palm out, fingers together, and baton shaft vertical and be held for 2 counts. Body must be in standing position, both feet in contact with floor, foot position is optional. Salute for flag, hoop, etc., is a two-count courtesy pose. In events where more than one member performs, at least one member is required to present a traditional salute. Multiple baton event contestants must salute with one baton in the traditional salute position and the remaining baton(s) in the opposite hand. .5 penalty improper salute
 9. **Intentional Contest Delay** – 2.0 penalty. The head judge, in consultation with other judges employed in that competition, may assess penalty if after a reasonable period of time (not to exceed five minutes) contestant does not appear in order indicated by contest director or lineup adjustment.
 10. **Rosin-Powder Penalty** – Contestants shall not apply rosin or other powders to performing area floor. 2.0 penalty.
 11. **Chief Judge** - Anyone violating any rule, part of rule, or violating any tradition or custom, or breach of contest etiquettes for which there is not specific rule provided shall be assessed for each violation of not less than 2.0 points nor more than disqualification at the discretion of the chief judge.

EVENT DEFINITIONS AND SPECIFIC EVENT RULES & PENALTIES

- A. **ONE-BATON TWIRLING** is the mainstay of all baton twirling and provides a competitor with the opportunity to perform an innovative routine, which is adjudicated for its variety, difficulty, speed, control, smoothness, gracefulness, presentation, and showmanship.
- B. **TWO-BATON TWIRLING** – A contestant performs with two batons. Both batons must be in action at all times, either in like patterns, alternating patterns, or in concert with each other.
- C. **THREE-BATON TWIRLING** – Contestant twirling three batons only. Penalty for twirling more than three batons in three-baton contest. 2 pts.
- D. **SUPER X-STRUT**
1. **Super-X Pattern** – Contestant shall perform individually within the prescribed floor pattern only once. Starting point shall be at upper corner of lane to judge's left. Direction of pattern shall be diagonally toward opposite corner, turning right at edge of lane, then straight to opposite edge of lane, turning right and proceeding diagonally to opposite corner, then turning left to center point of lane, turning left and proceeding in straight line toward judge for remaining required steps. Finish shall be at any point within designated 30' by 20' lane. Section 5 shall not extend beyond borders set by Section 1. Oblique movements are not allowed in first four sections. Retracing is permitted.
 2. **Basic Strut Portions** – A minimum of four forward consecutive steps of basic strutting shall be executed during four different intervals of floor pattern: first section, second section, third section, and fifth (final) section. They shall be performed immediately after opening salute and on first steps forward on other specified sections. No penalty for exceeding required minimum four basic steps.
 3. **Twirling not permitted** during strutting routine. From first movement to ending salute, twirling is not permitted in a strutting routine. Rolls, finger work, and baton releases are not permitted. Loops, swings and slides are allowed. Not more than two continuous revolutions from center of baton are allowed. Continuous revolutions limited to two at any one time. Baton must be a full-hand grip in one hand or another at all times during a strutting routine performance.
 4. **Salute** – A salute is required at beginning – after opening presentation and before first step forward. A salute also is required at end of routine. Timing and judging will begin with first movement and will end with final salute. Penalties will be assessed beginning with opening move and therefore will include any violations before opening salute. Performance shall cease with ending salute and contestant shall immediately leave the competition lane.
 5. **Floor Contact** – No part of body, other than feet, shall contact floor, intentionally or unintentionally.

6. **Out of Step** – Contestant will receive a zero in timing when out of step on one or more complete sections of floor pattern or out of step on all required basic steps. In such case, out-of-step penalties shall not count in tabulation of penalties. (Other captions should receive scores.) Contestant may not be disqualified.
 7. **Freestyle Sections** - Freestyle moves when left foot does not hit the accented beat of the music are not considered out of step. However, contestant must re-establish proper timing or an out-of-step penalty of .5 will be assessed per each violation. If contestant does not correct self within eight counts, an additional .5 penalty will be assessed; penalty not to exceed .5 per eight counts of out of step. Movements must be synchronized with the tempo of the music. Lack of synchronization with the music shall be reflected in the Overall Timing caption.
 8. **Music** – Contestants shall perform to standard march music provided by the contest director.
 9. **X-Strut Penalties**
 1. Standard penalties will be assessed for drops, falls, unintentional breaks or slips, undertime and overtime, failure to salute, improper salute, intentional contest delay, and rosin powder on floor.
 2. **Out of Step**-.5 per infraction. If correction is not made, an additional .5 penalty will be assessed for each eight count of step.
 3. **Unauthorized Twirl** - .5 per infraction.
 4. **Failure to Perform Basic Steps** - .5 per floor pattern section.
 5. **Floor Contact** - .5 per infraction.
 6. **Performance after Ending Salute** - .5 Moving baton from salute to carry position is not considered a violation.
 7. **Incorrect Floor Patterns** - 1.0.
- E. **RHYTHMIC TWIRL** - Solo Rhythmic Twirl is a side branch of baton twirling in which twirlers coordinate their body movements to the music. Rhythmic Twirl is sometimes referred to as “interpretative twirling” and “synchronized twirling.” Unlike general twirling, in which music is used for accompaniment, a performer may vary the speed of the baton to coordinate with the music. As in other branches of twirling, it’s the ability within a style and not only the style itself that counts. All styles of interpretation are acceptable – within the bounds of good taste.
1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Advanced solo twirlers only; one baton only, no props.
 2. Standard penalties will be assessed for drops, falls, unintentional breaks or slips, undertime and overtime, intentional contest delay, and rosin powder on floor.
 3. **AGE DIVISIONS:** Ladies 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16+. Men 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16+. At Nationals, individual age groups may be held, followed by a twirl-off.
 4. **MUSIC:** Individually selected music. Judging begins with first note of music and ends with last note of music.
- F. **SHOW TWIRLING** – Show Twirling is interpretive, free-style twirling where contestants select their own music and use any combination of twirling instruments in order to display their total show performance. Props and twirling equipment are limited to that which can be hand carried in one trip by contestant only. **Electrical or battery-operated props are not permitted with the exception of lighted batons.** Penalty for exceeding prop ruling is 2.0.
- G. **FLAG TWIRLING** – A performer twirls and swings a baton shaft with one flag attached. One-baton score sheet can be used with logical interpretation if flag scoresheet is not available.
- Flag Twirl Penalties**
1. **All Flag Penalties** begin with opening salute and will be assessed during any overtime performance, before final salute.
 2. Standard penalties will be assessed for drops, falls, unintentional breaks or slips, undertime and overtime, failure to salute, improper salute, intentional contest delay, and rosin powder on floor.
 3. **.1 penalty each time** flag tangles on shaft. Twirling while flag is intentionally wrapped around the shaft does not constitute flag twirling.
 4. **.1 each time** flag shaft strikes floor. No penalty for flag sweeping the floor.
 5. **Releases** from flag ends are permitted.
 6. **2.0 penalty** for grossly undersize flag. Double flag not permitted.
 7. **Salute** is a 2-count courtesy pose with flag extended toward judge.
- H. **HOOP TWIRLING** – Hoop twirling provides still another opportunity for contestants to expand their repertoire. Proficient Hoop Twirling requires excellent coordination and dexterity as the number of twirls that can be executed with a hoop is limited, due to the shape of the hoop. Imaginative, innovative, and exciting combinations are encouraged. Intentional hoop floor rolls, etc., do not count as drops.
- I. **BASIC STRUT – MILITARY STRUT** – Basic/Military Strut implies straight marching in a square pattern with no footwork or legwork embellishment while carrying baton in either traditional or cradle position. In the case of military strut the traditional hi-low beat is required. Forward motion is mandatory. Consideration in judging will be appearance, posture, gracefulness, and timing. All styles shall receive equal consideration. Contestants will march in a follow-the-leader pattern or one-at-a-time according to judge’s instructions. Direction of square at discretion of judge. Contestants who stay in step will place above those with timing problems.
- J. **DUET AND TRIO** - Two contestants performing at one time is called a duet. Three contestants performing at one time is a trio. Contestants are judged on their ability to perform simultaneously and in concert with one another while employing exchanges and uniquely designed combinations. Each contestant is evaluated on the use of one baton. No credit is given for two batons.
- K. **CIRCLE T MODELING** – All modeling events will be performed in a Circle T pattern. Modeling performance begins directly in front of judge, turning either direction, left or right, at top of lane and then proceeding to chosen corner. Contestant executes a semi-

circle (away from judge) to opposite corner. Contestant returns to center front of judge's table and back to starting point. Timing and judging end at this point. If interview is included in performance, interview is not timed. Contestant will wait for judge's signal to approach table for interview. Judge will score first 3 captions before interview begins. The element of the interview should encourage contestant to talk about herself; her hopes, dreams, goals, and opinions. It is not the style but the ability within the style that is judged. All modeling styles within the bounds of good taste will be given equal consideration. Modeling time limit is 1:00 minute with timing begins with first movement and ends with final movement. Interview limited to two questions. **Required attire** for Novice/Beginner/Intermediate Circle-T modeling and other model-type events is twirling costume or strutting costume. Ineligibility for non-compliance. Advanced division contestants at open competitions may wear gown or costumes – as indicated by respective contest.

Circle T Modeling Penalties

1. **Improper pattern:** 1.0
2. **Overtime:** .1 per second (see description of events, Circle T Modeling.)

L. COLLEGIATE SOLO EVENTS

College women and men will compete together. The highest placed female and the highest placed male at AYOP will receive gender specific titles: i.e., Women's National Collegiate Twirling Champion and Men's National Collegiate Twirling Champion. From the finals the overall highest placing twirler will be named Grand National Collegiate Champion.

Eligibility - College division is open to all contestants who are attending a college, university, or professional school and are furthering their education with either full-time or part-time active enrollment. Twirlers are eligible who have either:

- Graduated from high school and are attending a college or university or professional school.
- Graduated from high school and have received letter of acceptance and are enrolled and committed to attend college or university.
- Are currently attending a college, university (undergraduate or graduate) or professional school.

A college contestant must be able to show proof of enrollment or acceptance letter in order to be eligible to compete. Must be a resident of the USA to compete in the National Collegiate Championships at AYOP.

COLLEGIATE SOLO CHAMPIONSHIPS – The Collegiate solo will showcase the collegiate twirler's performance during a university's football halftime show demonstrating the athlete's ability to entertain an entire stadium audience through twirling skills, unique travel steps/moves, school spirit, coordinating all with band music. This includes a variety of audience appealing twirls/moves that are eye-catching and effective on the field, including travel steps synchronized with the music, giving total field coverage (not a 50-yard line solo). The Judge's adjudication will be from a spectator's point of view. One baton and multiple batons may be used. No fire, props or novelty. Any piece of equipment or material that is not a baton that can be used or removed, such as glasses, hats, cape, hoop batons, flag batons, etc., will result in a 2.0 penalty. Standard NBTA safety rules will be in effect. Time limit is 2:00 maximum. **Marching band music is required. Inclusion of a fight song is highly recommended.** The use of marching band music may include an announcer overlay. Any other music results in a 2.0 penalty. At AYOP, contestants will enter from the center (behind blue curtain), place baton(s) quickly and assume opening pose.

DOWN FIELD PERFORMANCE – A down field routine is a coordinated and well executed combination of twirling variety/body movements while traveling across the floor in step with the music. This unique event focuses on the athlete's ability to captivate the audience while moving in front of the band. The performance should be show oriented, leaving the viewers wanting more. Collegiate twirler begins at the starting line (judges left), marching, twirling, performing while moving across the floor to the boundary line (judges right), then returns to the center of the floor, entertaining as in a homecoming parade or pregame performance with the band moving across the football field. Forward motion is required with no stops or hesitations allowed. **A single feature twirl closing is allowed before exiting.** This event is not timed, due to forward motion requirement.

AYOP SKILLS CHALLENGE

SIGNATURE TWIRL - Every Collegiate twirler has a favorite crowd-pleasing twirl or school-spirit feature twirl. The signature twirl allows each athlete to show off his or her special twirl.

TIME LIMITS	ADV TIME LIMIT	INT TIME LIMIT	BEG TIME LIMIT	NOV TIME LIMIT	TIMING BEGINS	TIMING ENDS
SOLO TWIRL	2:20-2:30	1:50-2:10	1:30-2:00	:30-2:00	Opening Salute	Closing Salute
X STRUT	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	:30-2:00	First Move	Closing Salute
TWO BATON	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	:30-2:00	Opening Salute	Closing Salute
THREE BATON	:30-2:00	:30-2:00	:30-2:00	:30-2:00	Opening Salute	Closing Salute
RHYTHMIC TWIRL	1:30-2:00				First Note	Last Note
SHOW TWIRLING	Only one skill level - 1:30-2:00				First Note of Music	Last Note of Music
FLAG TWIRL	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	:30-2:00	Courtesy Pose	Courtesy Pose
HOOP TWIRL	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	:30-2:00	Courtesy Pose	Courtesy Pose
BASIC STRUT/ MILITARY MARCH	Forward Motion Required. No Time Limit Involved.					
DUET	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	1:30-2:00	:30-2:00	Salute	Salute
TRIO	2:00-3:00	2:00-3:00	2:00-3:00	2:00-3:00	Salute by Leader	Salute by Leader
CIRCLE "T" MODELING	1:00 Max	1:00 Max	1:00 Max	1:00 Max	First Movement	Last Movement
COLLEGIATE SOLO	Only one skill level - 2:00 max				First Note of Music	Last Note of Music