



Pole Sport Organization Virtual Rules Document

Updated for 2026

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CATEGORIES, LEVELS, AND AGE GROUPS

GENERAL

Each category, level, and age group may not be available at all events. Please check each individual competition registration page for offerings.

Once you compete at a particular Level, you must stay at that Level, or move to a higher Level, within the next 12 months. You are only allowed to compete at one Level at an event (for example, you cannot compete in both Championship Level 2 and Dramatic Level 3 during the same event). This applies for both virtual and live events. You must also compete at the same level if you compete in both virtual and live events.

Age groups will only be separated out if enough entries in a particular category and level are received. Masters and Grand Masters will always be separated out from Juniors and Seniors. Masters and Grand Masters may be combined.

For virtual events only, only one member of a group or doubles must register and pay in order to be included in the event.

PSO is an 18+ event for performers. Spectators of all ages are welcome to watch. Viewer discretion advised for After Dark Categories.

The schedule of events and divisions is subject to change.

PSO reserves the right to move you into a different category, level or age group if it is found that you do not meet the requirement for the category, level or age group entered.

PSO reserves the right to require you to provide proof of meeting a certain Level criteria in order to assure organizers that you can compete at that Level safely.

As a competitor, you must be fair and truthful in your self-assessment of skills in determining your appropriate Level. Our definition of sandbagging is someone who goes down two levels from their actual skill level, in order to gain an unfair advantage against others. If you have a concern about another competitor, we ask that you notify PSO a minimum of 6 weeks before the competition so that we can process the concern. This ensures all competitors have adequate time to prepare their routines for the appropriate Level.

At any point in time before the competition, if a competitor posts or shares videos of moves which are two levels above the level that they have entered (ex. Someone at Level 2 posting

handsprings on their Instagram), that is considered sandbagging. Upon notification that this has occurred and checking that the video is of the competitor in question, PSO will move that person to the next level up or to Showcase for the event.

If you are entering 2 different categories at the same event, you must enter both at the same level. PSO will do our best to check for accuracy in this, but ultimately that's your responsibility. If you compete at different levels during an event, we will have to disqualify you from the lower level and give placements to the next competitors.

CATEGORIES

Category availability varies by competition.

Artistic

This is a combined category for all of the artistically scored categories. Dancers are judged on their ability to clearly communicate their concept or theme. This is a combined category for those doing Dramatic or Entertainment. Judging is based on the Artistic system.

Championship

This category is for those dancers wishing to compete with a traditional technical competitive program. The focus will be equally on the dancer's technique, artistry and routine difficulty. Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Judging is based on the Technical system.

[EXAMPLE](#)

Doubles/Groups

This category is open to doubles and groups of 6 people or less. Doubles and groups can be of the same gender or a mix. Judging is based on the Technical system. There are no Levels. Pole is required. [EXAMPLE](#)

Dramatic

This category is focused less on the difficulty of the tricks executed and more on the

dancer's ability to present a serious, emotional artistic interpretation of a piece of music. Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Judging is based on the Artistic system Pole is required..

[EXAMPLE](#)

Entertainment

This category is focused less on the difficulty of the tricks executed and more on the dancer's ability to interpret a piece of music to provide a comical or upbeat performance. Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Judging is based on the Artistic system. Pole is required.

[EXAMPLE](#)

Sensual

This category celebrates sensual movement and concepts. Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Slink, slide, body wave, and hip roll! Heels, socks, bare feet, or any other kind of footwear is welcome. You are not required to use the full pole height but pole is required. Low flow routines are acceptable in this category. Judging is based on the [Artistic system](#). [EXAMPLE](#)

EXAMPLES

- Level 1
 - [Conny Marie](#)
- Level 2
 - [Deus Exxx Machina](#)
- Level 3
 - [Mia](#)
- Level 4
 - [Erika](#)
 - [Justin Case \(Without Heels\)](#)

No Pole No Problem

This category is for non-pole movement-based performances. Think floorwork, couch, bed, doorway, or chair dances. Judging is based on the Artistic system. This category is a non-level category.

Edited Videos

This category is for dancers who want to add an additional artistic flair or story to their performance videos with clever and interesting editing. Pole is not required. This category is a non-level category. Judging is based on the Artistic system. *Please see the 'Competition Video Submission' section for what PSO constitutes as editing.* [EXAMPLE](#)

Showcase

This category is a performance (non-competitive) for solos, doubles and groups. No scoring nor feedback from judges will be given. [EXAMPLE](#)

LEVELS

The intention of Level guidelines are to:

- Ensure that someone can perform movements safely.
- Compare similarly advanced competitors to each other.

We agree that many people are “on the cusp” of a certain level. We expect there to be overlap between the highest skilled members of a level, and the least skilled members of the level right above. That means that someone could be both a highly skilled Level 2 AND a lower skilled Level 3, and the choice of what level to enter is theirs. The decision to enter a level should first be based on safety, and second, on deciding in what way you’d like to challenge yourself.

Therefore, our definition of sandbagging is someone who goes down two levels from their actual skill level, in order to gain an unfair advantage against others.

1 or 2 Poles?

We understand that you may not have access to a large space with multiple poles. You may use one or more poles, either on static or spin (or both), regardless of the level you are competing in. You are allowed to change your pole settings during your piece if you like. Pole not required for No Pole No Problem and Edited Video categories.

Level 1 - The Beginner

"I'm a beginner poler who cannot invert, or I'm learning inverts, but cannot yet perform them consistently or cleanly. I'm not an instructor nor a paid performer."

Allowed:

- Floor only moves, not touching the pole, such as cartwheels, handstands, shoulder rolls, etc. are permitted.

Not allowed:

- No inverting allowed. Hips must be below the shoulders at all times when the competitor's entire body is on the pole.
- No kips, no press to arm only balances (forearm or handstand) with or without the pole.
- You may not be teaching pole nor performing pole for compensation within the past 6 months.

Other notes:

- May use both spinning and static poles, but is not required to use both.

Level 2 - The Floor Inverter

"I can invert confidently and cleanly from the ground, but cannot yet perform aerial inverts consistently or cleanly. It's ok if I'm an instructor or paid performer, but I do not teach inverts in my classes."

In all moves and transitions, dancers must maintain 3 points of contact with the pole while inverted, while the entire body weight is being supported by the pole. Ex. Handspring, which is a 2 points of contact move while inverted, would not be allowed.

Must use both spinning and static poles.

If you are an instructor teaching inverts, then you must be in Level 3 or higher. This includes teaching at a studio or online or on social media platforms.

Allowed:

- Descending inverts moving down the pole
- Moves and transitions with 3 points of contact with the pole while inverted, while the entire body weight is being supported by the pole
- Allowed moves that we often get questions about, so are listing them here for clarity:
 - Marley
 - No handed genie

- Apprentice to butterfly transition - depending on how this is executed, could potentially violate the descending inverts rule, but we have determined this transition is still appropriate for lower levels
- Cross ankle releases - this has 2 points but we have determined it is still appropriate for lower levels
- Holly drop - this has at least 3 points of contact during the transition

Not allowed:

- Moves with 2 points of contact while inverted with entire body weight supported by the pole
 - As a reminder, because this is often a deduction, butterfly flip is not allowed because it passes through 1-2 points of contact while inverted.
- Aerial inverts
- All shoulder mounts (including grounded, aerial, and descending)
- These specific extreme flexibility moves
 - Bird of paradise (upright and inverted)
 - Eagle (upright only)
 - Janeiro (closed variation)
 - Rainbow marchenko
 - Spatchcock
- Forearm/football grip/inverted flag grip handsprings/ayeshas. Please make sure that your transitions do not pass through this grip.
- Dangerous Bird - although can be performed with 3+ points of contact, this move is not allowed for Level 2.

Level 3 - The Aerial Inverter

"I can invert confidently from the air, but cannot yet hold handsprings consistently or cleanly."

In all moves and transitions, dancers must maintain 3 points of contact with the pole while inverted, while the entire body weight is being supported by the pole. Ex. Handspring, which is a 2 points of contact move while inverted, would not be allowed.

Must use both spinning and static poles.

If you are an instructor teaching inverts, then you must be in Level 3 or higher. "Teaching" includes teaching at a studio or via online/social media platforms.

Allowed:

- Moves and transitions with 3 points of contact with the pole while inverted, while the entire body weight is being supported by the pole
- Aerial inverts and descending inverts
- Shoulder mounts
- Allowed moves that we often get questions about, so are listing them here for clarity:
 - Marley
 - No handed genie
 - Apprentice to butterfly transition - depending on how this is executed, could potentially violate the descending inverts rule, but we have determined this transition is still appropriate for lower levels
 - Cross ankle releases - this has 2 points but we have determined it is still appropriate for lower levels
 - Holly drop - this has at least 3 points of contact during the transition
 - Dangerous Bird is allowed in any points of contact or grip combination

Not allowed:

- Forearm/football grip/inverted flag grip handsprings/ayeshas. Please make sure that your transitions do not pass through this grip either.
- These specific extreme flexibility moves
 - Bird of paradise (upright and inverted)
 - Eagle (upright only)
 - Janeiro (closed variation)
 - Rainbow marchenko
 - Spatchcock
- As a reminder, because this is often a deduction, butterfly flip is not allowed because it passes through 1-2 points of contact while inverted.

Level 4 - The Advanced Poler

"I can perform moves with 2 points of contact, such as handspring, ayesha, or cocoon. I may only be able to perform a single entrance or exit to my hardest moves. I have not yet mastered flips and regrips that require momentum to release essential contact points."

Must use both spinning and static poles.

If you have competed in a pro division or placed 1,2, or 3 in the semi-pro division for another competition organization, you must be in Level 5.

Not allowed:

- Release moves (complete release of all contact points) with torso rotation are not allowed. Ex. fonji or half-fonji.
- Moves which pass through 1 point of contact while inverted and body weight fully supported by the pole Ex. Elbow ayesha to cup grip ayesha, flick flack
- Regrips and flips that land back on the pole Ex. Montanaro flip, starfish drop

- Flips off the pole with more than 180 degrees of rotation after releasing the pole
- Deadlifts into handsprings or deadlifts into other fully pole-supported 2 points of contact moves
 - Phoenixes are acceptable as long as momentum is the primary mechanism of inversion. Phoenixes in which rotation ends and results in a deadlift to ayesha will receive a deduction.
 - An Iron X to ayesha combination is acceptable as long as the hips do not dip parallel or below before being lifted back into an ayesha.

Level 5 - The Elite Poler/Professionals

"I can perform many 2 points of contact moves, and have many entrances, exits, and combinations of my hardest moves. I can comfortably string together 3-5 of my hardest moves."

If you have competed in a pro division or placed 1,2, or 3 in the semi-pro division for another competition organization, then you must be in Level 5.

Must use both spinning and static poles.

Age groups are combined most times.

LEVELING UP

Leveling up does not apply for virtual events.

Since our virtual events are different from live events, placements in virtual events do not count towards level requirements at live events, nor do virtual events lead to Nationals.

AGE GROUPS

Junior/Senior will be separated from Master/Grand Master for all leveled events. Junior separated from Senior or Master separated from Grand Master will only occur if enough

competitors register for a certain category and level. Exceptions include Floorwork & Low Flow, Freedance, Professional and Level 5 Categories.

Junior

Between the ages of 18-29 by the first day of the competition.

Senior

Between the ages of 30-39 by the first day of the competition.

Master

Between the ages of 40-49 by the first day of the competition. Masters will always be separated out from Juniors and Seniors, but may be combined with Grand Masters.

Grand Master

Ages 50 and older by the first day of the competition. Grand Masters will always be separated out from Juniors and Seniors, but may be combined with Masters.

RULES

REGISTRATION, FEES, and REFUNDS

We are an inclusive event, meaning no submission videos, no prerequisites, and no required moves. Just sign up, and we'll see you at the show! Remember, spaces are limited, so we encourage you to sign up in advance of posted deadlines to make sure that you get a spot.

All competitors, judges and volunteers will be required to sign a liability release form prior to being allowed to participate in a Pole Sport Organization event.

Entry fees are not refundable and not transferable between events after certain dates. See transfer policy below. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis, and are limited to life or death scenarios (ex. pregnancy or death of an immediate family member). Any requests for refunds must be made in advance of the competition date.

Refunds by your request are limited to life or death scenarios (ex., pregnancy or death of an immediate family member). Any refund requests must be submitted before the competition date.

PSO will refund your entry fee if we determine that your division was judged incorrectly and that placement changes were not remedied before the end of the awards ceremony. The two areas that would qualify are either a deduction not applied correctly or the judging system not calculating scores correctly.

While we work hard to run events smoothly and to address behavior that violates our policies, we can't control every interaction, reaction, or variable that comes with performing and being judged alongside others in a live competition setting.

For these reasons, PSO does not offer refunds based on interpersonal experiences or situations that fall outside of policy violations. This includes, but is not limited to, dissatisfaction with results where we find no error in judging except as above; music playback issues that are corrected on-site; running ahead or behind schedule; performance reordering; and weather, flight delays, or road traffic.

If you have any outstanding fees, you may not be permitted to perform, or you may not receive your judging scoresheets until the balance is paid.

If any information supplied in connection with an entry is found to be false or inaccurate, competitors may be disqualified.

PSO organizers retain the right to combine categories, levels, age groups, and genders where practicable and at the organizers' discretion.

We may require you to confirm your date of birth prior to the event or at the event by showing a valid proof of identity i.e. Driver's license, state-issued I.D. card or passport.

PSO reserves the right to permit late registration, and the right to refuse any entry.

You must make yourself aware of all PSO terms and conditions prior to entry.

THE PANIC BUTTON GUARANTEE

You found the courage, signed up to compete, went to bed... and woke up the next day to an unexpected phone call. Maybe your best friend is calling to say she's getting married and her bachelorette is the competition weekend, or your job is gifting you the trip of a lifetime, or your doctor tells you you're pregnant and you're due near the competition weekend, or anything else that throws surprise plans your way. Bottom line is, you can't compete anymore but you literally just signed up yesterday! Argh!

Never fear, the Panic Button is here! Email us within 24 hours of signing up, and we'll refund you, no questions asked.

TRANSFER GUIDELINES

If you are signed up for a competition as a performer, and wish to transfer your registration to another person, you may do so up until the posted registration deadline for the competition. Please check the individual event sign up pages for exact dates. You must email us with the following information for the person you are transferring to, before the close of registration:

- Name of new competitor
- Stage name of new competitor
- Email address of new competitor
- Studio affiliation (if any) of new competitor
- Category and Level of new competitor
- Birthday of new competitor (including year)

Transfers are only for the same competition, for example, you could not transfer your registration for Pacific to a registration for Atlantic.

Transfer requests must be emailed BEFORE the registration deadline. Transfer requests made after the posted deadlines will not be accepted.

We are not responsible for facilitating payment between you and the person you are transferring to, and are not liable if that transfer person defaults on their payment to you.

If you want to transfer your spot, but don't have a particular person in mind, you are welcome to contact info@polesportorg.com and we can connect you with the next person on the waitlist (if a waitlist exists) for the event if possible.

POLES AND SETUP

1 or 2 Poles?

We understand that you may not have access to a large space with multiple poles. Everyone is doing their best with what they have. You may use one or more poles, either on static or spin (or both), regardless of the level you are competing in. You are allowed to change your pole settings during your piece if you like. Pole not required for No Pole No Problem and Edited Video categories.

Virtual rules for setup, filming, and submission can be found under the Photography and Filming section of this document.

VIDEO TIMES AND DEADLINES

You are responsible for the quality and submission of your music and video. You should upload your video exactly as you want it played at the stream.

Video deadlines are listed in the competitor packets for each event.

Music mixes or mash-ups are permitted. Updated October 26, 2020, the use of the N word in your song is not allowed. Please remove it, bleep it out, or use a clean version of the song. There are no other music restrictions.

There is no minimum time requirement. The maximum length for each Level is:

- Level 1: 2:30 minutes

- Level 2: 3:00 minutes
- Level 3: 3:30 minutes
- Level 4: 4:00 minutes
- Level 5: 4:00 minutes
- Professional: 4:00 minutes
- Showcase or Showcase Plus: 4:00 minutes
- Doubles/Groups: 4:00 minutes
- Freedance: 4:00 minutes
- Edited Video: 4:00 minutes
- No Pole No Problem: 4:00 minutes

*For Floorwork and Low Flow: When you sign up through the Portal, you'll be asked to choose a Level 1-5. Choose the higher of the Levels for the group you would like to compete in (1, 3, or 5). This allows for the maximum music time length for your Level.

COSTUME AND SHOES

All intimate body parts must be covered.

Wearing or stripping down to pasties and thongs (No g-strings) is ok but all intimate body parts must still be covered.

Visible lower body genitalia, real or otherwise, is not permitted. Dance belts or lined shorts are highly recommended for male competitors.

You may wear boots, shoes or perform in bare feet.

Violation of the dress code requirement can lead to disqualification or point deduction.

PROPS

All props are ok. You are not required to submit props in advance.

Human props are allowed to enter and exit the camera during the performance. Human props may be of any age. Your human prop can touch you, but not the pole.

Pets are allowed to be props. Please be safe and respectful of your pets.

GRIP AIDS

You may apply grip to your pole.

DAY OF EVENT

You must conduct yourself appropriately at all times on any and all social media platforms, and during the video stream. You must act with decorum at all times and shall support the other competitors. There shall be no heckling or jeering of other competitors or the judges.

By submitting your video to the competition, you assert that you are medically fit to participate in the competition.

PLACEMENTS

The winner of each category will hold that title until the completion of the subsequent PSO competition.

Placements in an event are an honor reflecting the best of the best in the pole community and as such must strive to uphold the ideals of PSO. Failure to maintain a reasonable moral standard during the year of your reign may result in the loss of your title and ability to compete in other PSO events. Such reasonable moral standards include no publicly demeaning or denouncing any other PSO competitors, volunteers or judges.

PSO reserves the right to pursue damages should any title be used in any manner deemed to be damaging to PSO.

Prior placements at past live events do not apply for virtual competition levels and placements in virtual competitions do not apply for future live events.

PRIZES

Please refer to the competitor packets for a complete listing of offered prizes. Generally, prizes are an assortment of discounts, online products, and gift certificates to companies that sponsor us.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

General

All photography and footage, including any video you submit to us, remains the property of PSO. You have no right to compensation for photography and footage made as part of the competition.

As a competitor, you agree that all photography and footage can be used by PSO for promotional, advertising and commercial purposes. You may be required to appear on TV, film, print, or other media for the purposes of publicity and promotion. We will try to give advance notice if the media will be present at the event.

Our competitions are public events at which PSO, attendees, and members of the media may take photos and videos. We also respect that some people wish their pole journeys to be more private.

We select our marketing materials from competitors who have ordered from us, submitted videos for the virtual competitions, placed first in a Level 5 division, or already posted their materials online.

If you prefer not to appear in PSO's social media or other marketing materials, the best option is not to order photos or video from us and to refrain from tagging us in your social posts or stories. This will help ensure that there's no accidental amplification of content you would prefer to keep private.

Due to the number of competitors we work with and the complexity of the systems we use, we are unable to guarantee individual requests not to be shared. However, we can remove posts upon request.

Competition Video Submissions

You must submit a video that was filmed between the day that you register for the event and the video entry deadline. Videos filmed prior to your registration date are not allowed.

Filming must be done in landscape, 16:9 ratio (default mode for most phones). Please film from the best possible angle for your space. You need to have at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of your body in frame for the entire video, except for the Edited Video category.

Videos not submitted in a 16:9 aspect ratio or videos submitted in portrait orientation will not

receive a deduction, but please note that your video may not look as polished when played during the competition stream.

If a competitor submits more than one video for the same category, PSO will consider the latest submission as your final piece.

You may start either in position or off-camera.

As a competitor, you agree to have your video streamed online.

Tips for filming!

- Remove any clutter or unnecessary items in the background to avoid distraction.
- Test your audio! Please make sure that your music is audible as you film. You may also overlay your music on top of your video if you wish. Note: overlaying music on top of videos does not fall into the Edited Video category.
- Test your lighting so that you are clearly seen in your video. If you are using natural light, note the best time of day to film. Pro tip: if there's a window, use the window as front or side, rather than putting it behind you.
- When filming on a phone, selfie mode (front camera) is usually filmed at a lower resolution, so we recommend using the rear-facing camera instead.
- Do not include watermarks or remove watermarks.

Editing Your Video - Allowed in All Categories

Any edits, revisions, or additions not listed below are not allowed in standard PSO categories. Videos submitted for any category that is NOT the Edited Videos category that are altered outside of these guidelines will receive a deduction.

- You are allowed to add an audio track over your video.
- You are allowed to cut the beginning and the end of your video. Ex. You can remove yourself starting the camera and walking to the pole, or you walking from the pole to turn the camera off.

- You may have someone else film you and move around the room, as long as you are in frame the entire time. “In frame” means that we can see at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of your body.

Editing Your Video - Allowed ONLY in the Edited Video category

This is not an exhaustive list of editing options; rather, it is a list of common edits you could choose to make or include.

- Stopping your video to change pole settings and restarting with new pole settings. Not allowed for any category except for Edited Video.
- Cropping your video.
- Cutting together multiple takes.
- Adding text to your video.

Video Deadlines

You are responsible for the quality and submission of your music and video. You should upload your video exactly as you want it played at the event, and should upload files by the deadline in .MOV or .MP4 format. Your video should be in landscape (16:9) only to be played ideally on the stream. If you submit a video in portrait format, we will still play it, but it will not look as good on the screen.

The video submission deadline is listed in your competitor packet. There is a button in your Portal dashboard to upload your video.

Any video file uploaded with a timestamp that is beyond the maximum permitted time will not be accepted or will be edited to fit at PSO's discretion.

Late submissions can not be accepted.

TRANSGENDER INFORMATION

All genders compete together in all divisions except for Professional. You may enter as the gender you most identify with and are currently living as. Any inquiries, questions, or comments by competitors will be kept confidential.

CONDUCT

When PSO Gets Involved

We focus on what happens at the event because that's where we have responsibility, visibility, and authority. We can't fairly regulate or investigate private interactions, but we can address how behavior shows up in shared spaces.

We take reports of harm seriously. A report of harm does not automatically mean a policy violation occurred. We evaluate concerns based on our policies, patterns of behavior, and impact on the broader community, and we respond accordingly.

As a rule of thumb, PSO will only address incidents:

- That occur, or are likely to occur, within the event environment, or
- That occur on platforms that we control, such as our email or our Instagram account
- When we know the identity of the person submitting the complaint

This boundary allows us to address concerns consistently, and within the limits of our role as the event organizer.

Examples of When We Would Not Intervene

- A person who competed against you last year is sending you a series of unkind DMs on your personal Instagram account. PSO would only step in if it began impacting a PSO event. In that case, we would recommend that you use the tools at your disposal, like blocking or restricting those accounts.
- A report is submitted alleging "generally inappropriate" behavior towards a competitor without clear examples. Without enough detail to reasonably assess what occurred or allow the accused to respond, we cannot take action beyond encouraging the person impacted to come forward with specifics.

Example of When We Would Intervene

- An audience member at an event becomes disruptive, refuses to follow directions, and the situation escalates into a verbal altercation in the lobby. In this case, the Admin Team would follow up with the audience member to address expectations and may take

additional action, such as issuing a warning or suspending event access.

- We understand that not all studios get along, or that studios have split within their lifetimes, which can leave some hard feelings between owners, staff, or the student base. When reported to us in a timely manner before the event, we will make an effort to email both studios to remind them of sportsmanlike conduct, and preemptively keep judges from each of those studios off each other's panels as much as possible within the confines of judge availability. Such reporting needs to be made to us on an event-by-event basis, as we can't practically keep track between events about how local communities are interacting.

Anonymity

If you raise a concern about someone else that we feel we need to address based on the above, we will speak with the other party directly to understand their perspective.

To ensure fairness, we must share enough information about the situation for the other party to meaningfully respond. This includes describing the specific incident or behavior that prompted the concern.

Because we are a small community, anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Anonymous accusations in which the Admin Team does not know the identity of the reporting individual will not be acted upon. This policy exists to prevent misunderstandings and ensure accountability on all sides.

Investigations

An investigation is PSO's process for understanding what most likely occurred and determining whether any corrective or disciplinary action is appropriate. Investigations are not legal proceedings and do not determine absolute guilt or innocence.

An investigation may occur in cases involving:

- Claims of discrimination
- Allegations of harassment (Behavior that is unwelcome, persistent, or severe, after being told to stop)
- Ongoing or repeated professionalism concerns (Conduct that does not rise to the level of harassment, but that may create an uncomfortable or unproductive environment)

An investigation may include:

- Speaking with involved parties or witnesses

- Reviewing emails, messages, or other relevant documentation
- Reviewing prior complaints or video footage, when applicable

Investigations will only be conducted when the involved parties are current customers of PSO or individual workers hired directly by PSO. When outside vendors, volunteers, or non-customers, are involved, PSO may choose not to investigate and may take action, up to and including ending the relationship at our discretion.

To ensure clarity, anyone who is the subject of an investigation will receive a written summary outlining the nature of the concern being reviewed.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

PSO reserves the right to disqualify you, and/or bar you from entry to a future competition, if you breach the rules and regulations of the competition.

PSO reserves the right to make modifications to the rules, regulations, terms, and conditions of the competition at any time.

If a change is deemed necessary for safety reasons, it will take place immediately and PSO will make every effort to inform you as soon as possible either orally or in writing.

PSO will not be held liable for any expenses incurred by your participation in the competition. PSO is not liable for any injury or damage incurred by you during any stage of the competition.

PSO will not be held liable to you for any loss or expenses suffered either directly or indirectly resulting from a breach of PSO terms and conditions.

In the event of a breach of contract by PSO, your remedies shall be limited to damages not exceeding the price of the entry fee you paid.

If you are using your own equipment, you are fully responsible for ensuring that it is secured and safe to dance/perform on.

PSO may license or subcontract all or any part of their rights and obligations without the competitors' consent.

PSO maintains their headquarters in the county of Los Angeles, in the State of California and any disputes or claims shall be made under California law and under the exclusive jurisdiction of the California courts.

Any issues not already addressed within this document or on the PSO website or associated

PSO materials will be made by PSO in due course. If any provision of these terms and conditions shall be invalid, void, illegal or unenforceable, the validity, existence, legality and enforceability of the remaining provisions shall not be affected, prejudiced or impaired.

Failure by the PSO to enforce any provision of these terms and conditions shall not be treated as a waiver of that provision, nor shall it affect PSO's right to subsequently enforce that provision.

GENERAL JUDGING PROCEDURE

[대한민국\(Korean\)](#)

GENERAL

In any artistic sport, there is a subjective element to the judging. If you have concerns about the judging, please contact the PSO organizers in a rational and cooperative manner.

NUMBER OF JUDGES & JUDGING SELECTION

Judging will be by an assortment of volunteer pole instructors, pole professionals and title holders, and local dancers and choreographers.

Judging panels will be made up of 3 judges. Panels will be selected based on relevant experience.

ANONYMITY

PSO keeps track of the judges per event on the back end, but does not share their identity with the competitors. This is to encourage judges to comment and score honestly.

ELEMENT SCORING

Judges will have 5-7 days to judge performances for virtual events. Each judge will receive a list of video submissions along with their own spreadsheet in which they can enter scores and comments for the competitors they are scheduled to judge. The scores will be entered into PSO's regular judging system to format them nicely and email to competitors.

Judges should be watching each video only once.

Since not everyone has access at the moment to a studio or a professional looking setup, we ask that judges base their evaluations on performance only and not take into account the environment. Everyone is doing their best with what they have.

- The individual element scores are to help decide the placement of the competitors (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) for each judge.
- Element scores also help the competitor identify what parts of the routine judges thought they did well and what parts needed improvement.

MAXIMUM TOTAL SCORES

- Total scores are out of 100 points

DEDUCTIONS

Deductions are only used when a competitor breaks a rule. Deductions will be regulated and cleared by the Judge Wrangler. All judges must agree in order for a deduction to be taken.

Deductions are subtracted from judge point totals by the master computer once all scores for that event are submitted. Point totals calculated and listed on the individual judging screens do not include deductions.

If a deduction is given, a deduction comment specifying which rule was broken is required.

COMMENTS

Comments are required. Competitors almost always find the comments to be more helpful than their scores in improving their performances. PSO asks judges to be constructively critical in the notes.

TIMING

PSO recommends that judges begin typing their notes during the performance in the comments section of the judging system, so that more information can be given to the competitor.

ORDINALS

Once the event is over and all competitors are scored by the judges, the computer assigns a value called an ordinal score, reflecting the placement that each judge gave the competitor. This calculation will be completed for all 3 judges.

1st place = 1 point
2nd place = 2 points
3rd place = 3 points
4th place = 4 points
Etc.

- Ordinals are statistically proven to reduce any potential judging bias.
- Ordinals emphasize the placement (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) of the competitor. What matters most is the placement of the competitor in comparison to other competitors in their group.

FINAL PLACEMENTS

The master computer will add the 3 ordinal scores. The competitor with the lowest total ordinal score wins (think golf). Placements are posted at the event.

The judges' decision is final.

TIE BREAK PROCEDURE

In the event of a tied ordinal score in any event, the following procedure will be used by the master computer to break the tie:

- Championship, Doubles/Groups and Professional category ties will be broken by the higher element score in Quality of Execution.

If at that point the competitors' ordinal scores are still tied, PSO will present competitors with the tied placement.

- All Floor All Day, Dramatic, DTF, Entertainment, Exotic, Freedance, and RX category ties will be broken by the higher element score in Clarity of Concept.

If at that point the competitors' ordinal scores are still tied, PSO will present competitors with the tied placement.

COMPETITORS RECEIVE FEEDBACK

PSO sends out the score sheets with comments and point totals to each competitor via email, within 30 days of the event.

POST-EVENT JUDGE FEEDBACK

PSO asks that judges do not speak to competitors about their routines publicly during the stream. After the competition weekend is over is the appropriate time for those conversations. If judges wish to give feedback, PSO requires that they first make sure the competitor is asked if they are open to receiving it.

Judges are not required to talk to the competitors about their routines outside of the competition if they do not wish to.

SAMPLE SCORESHEETS

We encourage you to recruit friends or instructors to watch your routine before the competition and mock judge you based on our scoresheets. Blank ones can be found [here](#).

ELEMENT DEFINITIONS

[대한민국\(Korean\)](#)

Championship, Doubles/Groups, Professional

Quality of Execution (10 points) *Tiebreaker

- Movements are performed with confidence, intention, and precision
 - No unnecessary adjustments, steps, motions, wobbling, or sliding
- Making complex movements look easy and effortless
- Good form:
 - Straight knees, as appropriate for the move
 - Pointed ankles and toes or intentional foot flex, as appropriate for the move
 - Shoulders down and back or up and pushing, as appropriate for the move
 - Hips go over head smoothly during inversions
 - Form does not alter on spin pole
- Angles of movements are clearly regulated by the dancer
- Landings are soft and controlled unless intentionally performed otherwise
- Drops are stopped at an appropriate distance away from the ground
- On spin pole:
 - No hesitation at the takeoff
 - Pole spins cleanly through the entire pass, push off shows a knowledge of how

fast/slow the dancer is choosing to go

- For Doubles/Groups:
 - Dancers match or intentionally contrast each other's movements
 - Dancers move as a unit rather than as individuals

Difficulty of Individual Moves (10 points)

- Use of a combination of strength, power, and flexibility
- Minimal weight being supported by the pole
- Greater distance of hips and torso away from the pole
- Longer length of time spent in hold
- Low number of points of contact
- Increased extension through splits/backbends
- Moves performed higher up on the pole (if appropriate for the Category)
- Inversions (if appropriate for the Level)
- Release moves (if appropriate for the Level)

Difficulty of Transitions (10 points)

- Lifting up into moves rather than kicking or descending into them
- Switching between more dominant and less dominant sides
- Low number of points of contact
- Low number of regrips required

- Intentional very high or very low speed movements
- Intentional directional changes (right to left or vice versa)
- Spinning orientation reversals (forwards to backwards or vice versa)
- Incorporating inversions (if appropriate for the Level)
- Inability to bail out

Difficulty of Combinations (10 points)

- Large number of linked movements
- Length of time spent on the pole without utilizing the floor
- Range of contact points utilized
- Range of movement carrying dancer up/down/around pole
- Length of time spent moving up vs moving down the pole

Balance of Program (10 points)

- Appropriate use of entire stage area:
 - Use of pole height (if appropriate for the Category)
 - Use of floor space: upstage, downstage, center stage, sides of stage
- Similar level of difficulty in moves performed at beginning and end of routine
- For Doubles/Groups:
 - Alternating between roles as flyer/base
- Choreography seamlessly merges the different stage areas together

Variety of Movements (10 points)

- Demonstration of large movement vocabulary
- Range of shapes and transitions
- Range of movement speeds
- Knowledge and mastery of areas of movement that correlate with the level of the performance.
 - Level 1: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves
 - Level 2: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves, inverts from floor
 - Level 3: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves, inverts from floor, aerial inverts
 - Level 4: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves, inverts from floor, aerial inverts, fewer than 3 points of contact movements
 - Level 5: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves, inverts from floor, aerial inverts, fewer than 3 points of contact movements, release moves

Clarity of Concept and Musicality (10 points)

- Choreography demonstrates the routine's concept (emotion, storyline, and/or theme)
- Movement choices highlight accents and/or beats in music
- Movement choices match or intentionally contrast with cadence and crescendos/decrescendos in music
- Facial expressions effectively show emotion

- Overall movement quality clearly communicates the concept
- Props and costume choices add to the understanding of the concept

Flow and Fluidity (10 points)

- One movement transitions seamlessly into the next
- Set ups for moves are integrated into the choreography
- Good continuity and follow through during transitions

Stage Presence (10 points)

- Connection with audience
- Commanding attention
- High projection of energy
- Holding character the entire way through the routine

Uniqueness of Performance (10 points)

- Effective use of surprising or unexpected linking of movements
- Creative or unusual concept

Dramatic, Entertainment, Heels, Freedance, No Pole No Problem, Edited Videos

Clarity of Concept (25 points) *Tiebreaker

- Routine has a clear and understandable concept (emotion, storyline, and/or theme)
- Pole tricks are incorporated in a way as to help develop the concept
- Overall movement quality effectively communicates the concept
- Props and costume choices add to the understanding of the concept
- Facial expressions effectively show emotion
- Song choice is appropriate for the concept
- For Freedance: performance demonstrates a clear interpretation of the music and movement style choice is appropriate for the song played

Stage Presence (15 points)

- Connection with audience
- Commanding attention
- High projection of energy
- Holding character the entire way through the routine

Quality of Execution (10 points)

- Movements are performed with confidence, intention, and precision

- No unnecessary adjustments, steps, motions, wobbling, or sliding
- Making complex movements look easy and effortless
- Good form:
 - Straight knees, as appropriate for the move
 - Pointed ankles and toes or intentional foot flex, as appropriate for the move
 - Shoulders down and back or up and pushing, as appropriate for the move
 - Hips go over head smoothly during inversions
 - Form does not alter on spin pole
- Angles of movements are clearly regulated by the dancer
- Landings are soft and controlled unless intentionally performed otherwise
- Drops are stopped at an appropriate distance away from the ground
- On spin pole:
 - No hesitation at the takeoff
 - Pole spins cleanly through the entire pass, push off shows a knowledge of how fast/slow the dancer is choosing to go

Musicality (10 points)

- Movement choices highlight accents and/or beats in music
- Movement choices match or intentionally contrast with cadence and crescendos/decrescendos in music

Flow and Fluidity (10 points)

- One movement transitions seamlessly into the next

- Set ups for moves are integrated into the choreography
- Good continuity and follow through during transitions

Uniqueness of Performance (10 points)

- Effective use of surprising or unexpected linking of movements
- Creative or unusual concept

Category Appropriateness (10 points)

- Choreography and concept are well suited to the Category
- For Freedance only: these 10 points will be scored using the same criteria as Musicality

Level Appropriateness (5 points)

- Knowledge and mastery of areas of movement that correlate with the level of the performance.
 - Level 1: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves
 - Level 2: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves, inverts from floor
 - Level 3: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves, inverts from floor, aerial inverts
 - Level 4: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves, inverts from floor, aerial inverts, fewer than 3 points of contact movements

- Level 5: tricks, spins/movement around the pole, floorwork/dance, strength moves, flexibility moves, inverts from floor, aerial inverts, fewer than 3 points of contact movements, release moves

Stage Etiquette (5 points)

- This piece contains elements of appropriate performance and professional stage etiquette, such as:
 - Acknowledgment of audience at the end of your piece - this is no longer required for virtual competitors starting September 1, 2026
 - Entering/exiting the stage with intention - this is no longer required for virtual competitors starting September 1, 2026
 - Appropriate hair and makeup choices
 - No unnecessary costume adjustments
 - Not wearing hair ties on wrist if not part of costume

DEDUCTIONS

Deductions are only given when a competitor breaks a rule. Rules that can be broken fall into the categories of:

1. Safety rules
2. General rules
3. Level rules
4. Costume rules

Safety Rules

Stoppage and/or disqualification is allowed if a majority of judges determine that the competitor is at risk to seriously injure themselves or others.

-20 points per judge for each occurrence

- Bailing out of a move that was too difficult for the skill level of the competitor during the performance.

-10 points per judge for each occurrence

- Contact points are not appropriate for move attempted.

General Rules

-25 points per judge for each occurrence, or disqualification at the discretion of the Judge Wrangler

- Human props intentionally touching the poles.
- Video recorded prior to registration date.
- Video editing in any category other than the Edited Videos category.

-10 points per judge for each occurrence

- Being out of frame. Competitors need to have at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of their body in frame for the entire video.

-5 points per judge for each occurrence

- Human props unintentionally touching the poles.
- Use of the N word in music.

Level Rules

For levels that have move restrictions, deductions are taken when a competitor intentionally or accidentally violates the restrictions.

-25 point points per judge for each occurrence

- Competitor clearly violates level restrictions (Ex. handsprings in Level 3)

-5 point points per judge for each occurrence

- Mild violation of level restrictions (Ex. head briefly dips below hips during a transition in Level 1)

Description of violations:

- Level 1 violations occur when a competitor inverts while the entire body weight is being supported by the pole (no body parts touching the ground). *Invert* is defined as when the competitor's head and torso are below the competitor's hips. Violations also occur if a competitor performs kips, presses to arm only balances (forearm or handstand) with or without the pole, or pirouettes/turns without the pole exceeding one rotation
- Level 2 violations occur when the competitor performs an aerial inversion (lifting hips above the head and torso) or an aerial shoulder mount, or when the competitor does not maintain three points of contact while in an inverted position, with the entire body weight on the pole. Level 2 violations also occur when the competitor does not maintain three points of contact with the pole while in an inverted position, with the entire body weight on the pole. Exceptions to the three points of contact rule: Marley and cross ankle releases are both allowed. Forearm/football/inverted flag grip handsprings/ayeshas are not allowed.
- Level 3 violations occur when the competitor does not maintain three points of contact with the pole while in an inverted position, with the entire body weight on the pole. Exceptions to the three points of contact rule: Marley and cross ankle releases are both allowed. Forearm/football/inverted flag grip handsprings/ayeshas are not allowed.
- Level 4 violations occur when the competitor performs release moves (complete release of all contact points) with torso rotation. Ex. fonji or half-fonji.
- There are no restrictions for Level 5, Professional, and Doubles/Groups, therefore there are no level violations in those events.

Costume Rules

-25 points per judge for each occurrence or disqualification at the discretion of the Judge
Wrangler

- Intentionally stripping to expose intimate body parts
- Competitor clearly violates all costume coverage rules with breasts uncovered (women only), thongs/G-strings, or costume pieces that are damaging to the pole finish.

-10 points per judge for each occurrence

- For all competitors: lower body genitalia becomes uncovered or is visible during a piece (unintentional)
- Costume hinders movement or creates an unsafe environment for competitor

-5 points per judge for each occurrence

- For women: 1 or more breasts become uncovered during a piece (unintentional)

-2 point per judge for each occurrence

- Mild violation one of the costume coverage rules.

What is NOT a deduction

Receiving a deduction means that the competitor broke a rule. If the competitor did not break a rule, then they should not receive a deduction.

Failing to point your toes, or failing to extend a leg is not a deduction. Judges will use the points system per element to score accordingly. For example, if a performer has shaky or awkward transitions, they would score lower on the Quality of Execution element of judging.

Non-completion of a Routine

- If someone falls/makes a mistake during a routine, but finishes, then judges will give the appropriate deduction (usually safety deduction) and score the rest of the routine.
- If someone does not finish the routine, then judges have the option to score all elements with 0.1 and offer comments only.

COMPETITOR PACKETS

Each event has its own competitor packet that will have information about the venue, stage diagrams, parking, travel, etc. This is the same packet that is linked in your Portal account. Click the link below and select your event.

[COMPETITOR PACKETS](#)