

# Palm Springs Winter Break Choreography Contest Rules

Please read these rules thoroughly. **Bold, purple font** indicates substantive changes from last year.

## 1. Eligibility

- a. Open to any choreographer.
- b. Entry must be original choreography (or original co-choreography).
- c. Each contestant is allowed to enter a maximum of two (2) dances in each division.
- d. Contestants who do not follow the published rules will be disqualified.
- e. Entries are to be emailed to [PSWBcontest@gmail.com](mailto:PSWBcontest@gmail.com) on or before September 30, 2025.
- f. Entry fees (\$10 per dance) are to be paid on or before September 30, 2025. Online ([www.palmspringswinterbreak.com/shop](http://www.palmspringswinterbreak.com/shop)), mailed in (see registration form on website), or Venmo (contact [PSWBcontest@gmail.com](mailto:PSWBcontest@gmail.com) for details) accepted.
- g. Entries are to include:
  - i. Contestant name, email address, and phone number
  - ii. One of the following statements, as applicable:
    - > If selected as Winner, I will accept monetary compensation for teaching at PSWB 2025 and understand this may disqualify me from competing in amateur contests run by certain organizations.
    - OR
    - > If selected as Winner, I will NOT accept compensation (monetary or otherwise) for teaching at PSWB 2025.
  - iii. Indication of division being entered
  - iv. Demo Video link
  - v. Stepsheet (as attachment, not a link)
  - vi. Instructional Video link (see division requirements below)

## 2. Stepsheet Guidelines

- a. Stepsheets should be submitted in Word (.docx or .doc) or Google Docs format, on one page (if possible), with a minimum font size of 11.
- b. Level of dance must be consistent with the guidelines in Section 3, Level of Dance.
- c. Stepsheets are not to contain mis-spellings or typos.
- d. Stepsheets must have the dance name, song name and artist with notation of any special remix or version, count-in directions, and understandable, clear description of steps, as determined by the judge designated to evaluate stepsheets for this contest.

### **3. Level of Dance**

- a. Determining factors such as music beats per minute (BPM) and direction of travel should be considered in setting the level of dance.
- b. Beginner/Improver Division
  - i. Beginner/Improver Division entries cannot have more than 64 counts.
  - ii. Beginner/Improver Division entries cannot be distinctly phrased (ABC); Beginner/Improver entries shall have a single sequence of choreography (line dance) that repeats through the song, not separate sequences (Part A, Part B) that change in their order of execution. The only exceptions are for a restart or minor tag/bonus, as follows:
    1. A restart that occurs once and does not require any modification of steps to be executed, is allowed.
    2. A tag that is 8 counts or less and occurs once, is allowed.
    3. Either of the above two exceptions are allowed, but not both within a single entry (i.e., a Beginner/Improver Division entry may have either a tag or a restart, not both).
  - iii. The following steps will exclude eligibility in the Beginner/Improver Division:
    1. Applejacks, Arabesque, Attitude, Boogie Walk, Camel Walk, Count “a”, Mashed Potatoes, Moon Walk, Roger Rabbit, Running Man
    2. Spins and turns:
      - a. Any spin on one foot turning greater than 1/2
      - b. Greater than 1/4 Turning Sailor Step
      - c. Greater than 1/4 Monterey Turn
      - d. Greater than 1/2 Triple-step (aka Shuffle) Turn
      - e. Greater than 1/2 Cross-Unwind
  - iv. The following steps are allowed in “Improver” level dances:
    1. Coaster Step, Développé, Gallop, Heel Jacks, Knee Pop, Lock Step, Mambo Step written in syncopated timing, Pony, Rondé, Sailor Step, Samba Step (Botafogo on ‘&’ timing, not ‘a’ timing), Scissor Step written in syncopated timing, Skate, Sugar Foot, Susie Q/Grind Walk, Swivet, Syncopated Switches, Twinkle, Vaudeville, Wizard Step
    2. Spins and turns:
      - a. Any spin on one foot turning greater than 1/4 but less 1/2
      - b. 1/4 Turning Sailor Step
      - c. 1/4 Monterey Turn
      - d. Progressive Turns
      - e. Greater than 1/4 Triple-step (aka Shuffle) Turn
      - f. Greater than 1/4 Turning Jazz Box
      - g. Greater than 1/4 Chase Turn
      - h. Greater than 1/4 Cross-Unwind
  - v. The steps explicitly listed in this Section 3, Level of Dance, are not exhaustive of all choreography combinations. For steps not listed, contestants are to use common practice and generally accepted understanding to determine appropriate dance level.

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*Note: The steps listed in Section 3, Level of Dance, are acceptable line dance terminology at this time. If clarification is necessary for understanding a step listed or determining level of dance, please email [PSWBcontest@gmail.com](mailto:PSWBcontest@gmail.com).*

### **4. Music**

- a. Music must be readily available through legal sources in the United States.
- b. Music with foul language is NOT acceptable and will result in disqualification.

### **5. Judging**

- a. Stepsheets will be judged as either Acceptable or Unacceptable, per Section 2, Stepsheets.
  - i. If a stepsheet is deemed Unacceptable on or before September 25, 2025, the contestant will be notified immediately and given until the end of the entry period (September 30, 2025) to submit a revised stepsheet.
  - ii. If a stepsheet is deemed Unacceptable after September 25, 2025, the contestant will be notified immediately and given five (5) calendar days to submit a revised stepsheet.
  - iii. Only entries with Acceptable stepsheet scores will advance to the next stage in judging: Demo Videos.
- b. Demo Videos
  - i. Demo Videos will be judged in the following categories:
    - 1. CONTENT (variety, complexity, and originality of dance positions, moves, and sequences; selection of dance steps and their relationship to the music);  
15 points possible
    - 2. FLOW (flow of steps, including transition to different directions or between sequences, and use of space on the dance floor; timing, rhythm, and balance of dance);  
10 points possible
    - 3. EXECUTION (proper execution of basic step patterns, framework, and body movements in the choreography; alignment of executed steps to the written choreography);  
5 points possible
    - 4. ENTERTAINMENT (pride in dancing);  
5 points possible
    - 5. PROMOTIONAL VALUE (of or relating to the publicizing of a dance, to increase dancers' and instructors' awareness of the dance; will a reasonable portion of the dance community, in the judges' experienced opinions, be interested in this choreography);  
10 points possible
  - ii. The top three scoring entries for each division (scores in above categories added together; total 45 points possible) will advance to the final stage in judging: Instructional Videos.
  - iii. In the event of a tie for the top three scoring entries, all dances tied for the top three scores in each division will advance to the final stage in judging: Instructional Videos.

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### c. Instructional Videos

- i. Instructional Videos will be given an overall placement of 1st, 2nd, or 3rd (ranking), based on the following criteria:
  1. PRESENCE (confidence, pride in dancing, positivity)
  2. CLARITY (explanation of steps and dance flow, organized presentation of choreography, vocal proficiency, teaching competence)
  3. EXECUTION (proper execution of basic step patterns, framework, and body movements in the choreography; alignment of executed steps to the written choreography)
- ii. The ranked scores will be combined using the Relative Placement Scoring System (RPSS).
- iii. The top scoring entry for each division will be the winner of that division.
- iv. **In the event of a tie, the tie-break winner will be the entry with the highest points from the previous stage of judging: Demo Videos.**

### d. Judges

- i. A single judge will review stepsheets to determine Acceptable/Unacceptable.
- ii. A panel of judges, composed of an odd number, will score Demo Videos.
- iii. A panel of judges, composed of an odd number, will score Instructional Videos.

## **6. Video Guidelines**

### a. Demo Video

- i. Contestant must perform dance in submitted video link.
- ii. Other dancers are encouraged, but not required, to be in the video.
- iii. Keep video angles to mimic what one person would view during an in-person demo (for example, no moving drone shots or switching between people or points of view that cannot be done naturally by the normal human eye). Following typical in-person and online line dance demos, it is recommended the contestant face the camera to start the demo.
- iv. Video is to show full contestant (head to toe) at all times.
- v. With respect to time length:
  1. If the dance does not have a tag, restart, or phrasing, then the video is to show at least four walls, from the beginning of the music track.
  2. If the dance has a tag(s) or restart(s), then the video is to show through all tags or restarts but no less than four complete walls, from the beginning of the music track.
  3. If the dance is phrased, then the video is to show through the final phrase change.
- vi. Acrobatic moves are not allowed at any time. These movements include:

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1. Any move where both legs are above the waist height of the contestant.
  2. Any move where the contestant's weight is on one or both hands.
  3. Any move where a contestant sits or lies on the floor. (This includes splits.)
- vii. Proper execution is important and makes it easier for judges to evaluate the dance.
- viii. Vulgar or crude movements are not allowed. Movements beyond the point of flirtation, humor, or comedy will result in dance being penalized.
- b. Instructional Video
- i. Contestant must be the person teaching the dance.
  - ii. Other dancers are allowed, but not required, to be in the video.
  - iii. Video is to show full contestant (head to toe) at all times.
  - iv. Contestant is encouraged to include instruction by counts and by call (words).
  - v. Contestant is encouraged to face away from the camera to mimic typical in-person teaching for line dance.
  - vi. Instructional video is NOT for the submitted choreography. To allow for more equitable judging, the instructional videos for each division will be for the same dance.
    1. Beginner/Improver Division
      - a. Contestants are to submit an instructional video for the dance "COUNTRY BUMP" (choreographed by Darren Bailey). Stepsheet is available online here: <https://www.copperknob.co.uk/stepsheets/132100/country-bump>.
      - b. Contestants are encouraged, but not required, to use the original music (Country Music Made Me Do It - Carlton Anderson). Judges will be instructed that use of alternate music is not to impact scoring.
    2. Open Division
      - a. Contestants are to submit an instructional video for the dance "RAISED LIKE THAT" (choreographed by Darren Bailey). Stepsheet is available online here: <https://www.copperknob.co.uk/stepsheets/154113/raised-like-that>
      - b. Contestants are encouraged, but not required, to use the original music (Raised Like That by James Johnston). Judges will be instructed that use of alternate music is not to impact scoring.
- vii. Instructional video is to include dancing to music for a minimum of 4 walls.

## **7. Understanding**

- a. Winners will be announced in December 2025.
- b. Winners will be awarded a teaching spot at the 2026 event.
- c. Contestant will indicate, during contest entry, if the contestant will or will not accept compensation for teaching if selected as a Winner.
- d. If compensation is accepted, as indicated during contest entry, each Winner will be awarded:

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- i. a free weekend pass to PSWB 2026,
  - ii. a free weekend pass to PSWB 2027,
  - iii. a customized PSWB Winner t-shirt or jacket (winner preference), and
  - iv. compensated shared lodging (check-in Thursday; check-out Monday; at location arranged by Event Director) for PSWB 2026.
- e. If a winner cannot attend the PSWB 2026 event, then one of the contracted PSWB 2026 instructors will teach the winner's dance at the event.**
- f. If a winner cannot attend and has indicated during contest entry that compensation will be accepted, then the free weekend pass to PSWB 2026 can be transferred to another person. The lodging part of the compensation will not be transferred.**
- g. Winner is responsible for his/her own travel and any and all other expenses.
  - h. Winner may teach his/her winning entry or another dance. If teaching another dance, it is subject to approval by the Event Director, and the stepsheet must be submitted to the Event Director no later than January 3, 2026.
  - i. All decisions of the Judges and Event Director are considered final.
  - j. In the instance an entry is disqualified, no refunds will be issued.
  - k. All entered stepsheets and demo video links will be posted on the PalmSpringsWinterBreak.com website after winners are announced in December 2025.
  - l. Contestants will privately receive their individual scoring results after winners are announced.

### **8. Questions**

- a. All questions are to be submitted in writing to [PSWBcontest@gmail.com](mailto:PSWBcontest@gmail.com).
- b. Any question submitted will be posted, with the response, for all potential contestants to view on the website ([www.PalmSpringsWinterBreak.com](http://www.PalmSpringsWinterBreak.com)).