

Palm Springs Winter Break Choreography Contest FAQs

Why does this contest exist? (The origin story)

This contest is a full-circle moment. Palm Springs Winter Break Event Coordinator Bracken Heidenreich got her lift into the line dance world by entering a choreography contest. Her winning dance, “Under Your Spell,” was picked up and toured by an established international instructor (Rachael McEnaney)—and that single opportunity helped launch her into the broader dance circuit. This contest is Bracken’s way of giving that same lift to others.

Think of it as a runway for rising choreographers, a spotlight for fresh creativity, and a chance for the next dance (and dancer) to take flight!  

General Questions

Who can enter?

Anyone with choreography to share! If you’ve got a dance and a dream, you’re in. 

How many dances can I submit?

Up to three dances per division. Bring your best (and maybe your second-best, too).

What do I need to submit?

- Contact info
- Division selection
- Demo video link
- Instructional video link
- Stepsheet (attached, not linked)
- Compensation statement

When is the deadline?

All entries and fees must be received by September 30, 2026. No flamingo fashionably late entries—plan ahead and strut it in on time.  

Do I have to attend the event if I win?

Nope! You do not need to attend the event to enter or win. If you are unable to attend your title as a winner still stands and your free pass (if accepted) can be transferred. Don’t let travel plans clip your wings—enter anyway. 

Judging & Scoring

How are dances judged?

Each dance is evaluated in three categories: **Choreography & Musicality (15 points)**; **Floor Filler Potential (10 points)**; **Flow & Floorcraft (10 points)**

In simple terms: Is it well-crafted? Does it move well? Will people actually dance it again?

What is “Floor Filler Potential”?

We’re looking for dances that stick in your brain, feel good to dance again and again, and get requested, replayed, and remembered. Not every dance needs to be flashy—but the best ones make people think: “Ooooh... let’s do that again.”

Does a dance need to be high-energy to score well?

Not at all. Smooth, groovy, emotional, funky—every style has a place.

We’re not chasing hype—we’re looking for connection and staying power.

How are ties broken?

If scores are tied, they are broken in this order: (1) Choreography & Musicality, (2) Floor Filler Potential, (3) Flow & Floorcraft.

Will I receive feedback from the judges?

Judges are encouraged to provide comments. Some will write detailed notes, some will let their scores do the talking—but any comments received will be shared with you after results are announced.

Videos & Stepsheets

Is the instructional video judged?

Nope! Your instructional video is used only to help judges learn the dance and verify accuracy. It is **not scored**, and your teaching style is **not evaluated**.

Why include an instructional video at all?

Because judges need to learn your dance accurately. The instructional video helps ensure your choreography is understood correctly and evaluated fairly. Think of it as your dance’s translator—not a performance.

What should my demo video include?

Keep it clean and clear, with your full body visible (head to toe), consistent execution, and realistic viewing perspective. No cinematic flamingo drone shots required.  

What if my stepsheet needs revisions?

If something needs fixing, you’ll be notified and given time to revise. There’s no hard limit on revisions—but keep it clean, clear, and competition-ready. 

Can someone else write my stepsheet?

Sure! Just make sure it accurately reflects your choreography.
(And no, we're still not volunteering. 😊)

 Divisions & Rules Clarifications

If my tag is longer than 8 counts, what happens?

That would place the dance into the **Open division**.

If a tag happens more than once, what happens?

Also Open division. Even if something *could* be considered improver in the wild, the contest draws a clear line for fairness.

 Contest Philosophy & Changes

Why doesn't the contest evaluate teaching anymore?

Because this is a choreography contest—not a teaching audition. Teaching and choreography are different skill sets. Separating them creates a level playing field, removes bias from presentation or personality, and keeps the focus on the dance itself.

Why is teaching at the event no longer a prize?

In previous years, winners were awarded teaching slots. For 2027, those opportunities are being reimagined through the **Flamingo Fortune Lucky Draw** (*more details coming soon*). This allows the event to give back in two meaningful ways: (1) The **Choreography Contest** celebrates those shining for their *creativity*, and (2) The **Flamingo Fortune Lucky Draw** gives opportunity—without prejudice—to those shining as *instructors*. It's not about removing opportunity—it's about **expanding** it.

Why the required declaration about accepting compensation?

Because not everyone wants the same path. Some choreographers want to receive prizes and compensation, while others want to maintain amateur eligibility for other competitions. This declaration gives you a choice, is not shared with judges, and does not affect scoring.

 Prizes & Recognition

What do winners receive?

Winners who accept compensation receive a full pass to PSWB 2027, a full pass to PSWB 2028, and a custom winner item (t-shirt or jacket).

What if I decline compensation?

You'll still be recognized as a winner—just without the listed prizes.

Will my dance be shared publicly?

Yes! By entering, you agree that your stepsheet and video links may be shared on the PSWB website after winners are announced.

 Technical & Miscellaneous

What if my video has music issues or is blocked?

If your video platform causes playback issues try another platform, adjust your upload settings, or recruit your favorite tech-savvy friend (Every flock has one).  

Who are the judges?

Judges will be announced along with the winners in December. (And no—strategic flamingo bribery is not recommended. 😊)

Can I ask questions about the rules?

Absolutely! Submit your questions by email.
Answers will be shared publicly (without names) so everyone benefits.

 Final Thought

This contest isn't just about winning.

It's about creating something that connects, sharing your voice as a choreographer, and maybe... just maybe...starting your own "Under Your Spell" moment.

So bring your best.

Bring your bold.

Bring your flamingo flair.  

Have more Questions?

Please send your questions to PSWBcontest@gmail.com.

Any question submitted will be posted, with the response, for all potential contestants to view on the website (www.PalmSpringsWinterBreak.com).