

# World Clown Association Competition Rules & Guidelines 2025

## **I GENERAL ELIGIBILITY**

Recognizing that comedy is often interpreted culturally, and realizing that the World Clown Association encompasses and embraces numerous world cultures and traditions, ...and recognizing that the World Clown Association also conducts numerous competitions to encourage excellence in clowning, ...we choose to evaluate and perpetuate the performance art and tradition of clowning that is based specifically on the foundation of European and American-based circus clowning from the 1900's to the present.

- Open to all clowns age 16 and up
- Must register for the convention at the full registration rate.
- All competitors must sign up for competition.
- Competitors will be directed to the convention photographer for a competition photo.
- No photo will be accepted after the competition date and no outside photo may be used in the WCA social media, website, Clowning Around Magazine or at banquet.
- Competitors must sign a release for those photos to be used. For Junior Joey Competition see Junior Joey Competition Rules and guidelines.

## **II RULES OF CONDUCT**

### **A. General Rules.**

1. All clowns will conduct themselves in such a manner as to be a credit and asset to quality clowning.
2. All clowns will totally abstain from the use of alcohol or other intoxicants prior to and during competition or any time while in make-up and wardrobe.
3. All clowns will refrain from the use of tobacco while in makeup and wardrobe and in public view.
4. All clowns will refrain from any props or items that might offend a general audience or embarrass the World Clown Association
5. Live animals are permitted in Variety Arts competition, but not in any other competitions.
6. Competitors are not allowed to speak with judges unless responding to questions or comments from the judges.

8. The use of any pyrotechnics is NOT permitted in ANY category. This includes but is not limited to lighters, candles, strikers, match or anything that has a flame.

**B. Failure to comply with the rules will result in expulsion from competition.**

### **III COMPETITION SIGN-UP AND CLOSING**

#### **A. On-site registration for competition**

A table in the convention registration area will be designated for competition sign-up. When registering for the convention, the WCA Awards Director will verify all qualification of competitors. Any individual or group not signed in by the close of designated sign-in period will be considered to have “withdrawn” from the competition. The closing of all registration categories will be posted at the convention site.

**B. Attendance at the official “Competition Meeting” at the convention is required of ALL competitors.** (An exception may occur if previous arrangements have been made with the Awards Director prior to the convention.)

### **IV JUDGING**

#### **A. Competition Awards**

1. Medallions will be award to first, second, and third place winners according to highest scores if there are five or more competitors in a category. In the place of a tie, the intent is to give duplicate awards for tied scores.
2. Where five (5) or less clowns are in specific competition, THEN the following rules will apply to the awards.
  - a. To receive a first place award, the top competitor must receive 85% or better of the available points.
  - b. To receive a second place award, the competitor must receive 70% to 84.99% of the available points.
  - c. To receive a third place award, the competitor must receive 55% to 69.99% of the available points.
  - d. If two competitors receive over 85% of the available points, then the highest score gets first place and the second highest score gets second place. This the same as if it were a competition with more than fire clowns.
  - e. If the top two clowns received over 70% but not over 85%, the tip competitor would receive a second place award and the second highest

score gets third place. In this example, the first place award would not be awarded.

f. If the top scoring clown receives over 55% but not over 69%, the competitor would receive a third place award. In this example, the first place and second place awards would not awarded.

3. Each competitor score sheet will be available to him/her at the conclusion of the awards banquet.

## **B. Judges**

1. The WCA Awards Director will select all WCA competition judges.
2. A minimum of three (3) judges will be utilized in each competition.
3. The following criteria will be considered for the selection of judges: A minimum of five (5) years extensive clowning experience, experience in public performances, experience in teaching the art of clowning or having medaled in a National Clown competition.
4. Each judge should fully review and understand the judging score sheets and criteria. Attendance at the convention judging meeting is mandatory.
5. Each judge will complete the appropriate score sheet for each competitor. Judges should write constructive comments and suggestions along with the numeric scoring.
6. All score sheets will be signed or initialed by each judge.
7. All score sheets will be tallied by two persons and turned in to the Awards Director.
8. Two-part carbonless forms will be used for the score sheets. The original is to be kept by the Awards Director for a period of one (1) year, and the other copy is given to the competitor at the conclusion of the awards banquet.
9. All judging will be in designated areas announced at the convention competition meeting.

## **V COMPETITION CATEGORIES**

### **A. Make up and Wardrobe Competition**

1. Classic Whiteface
2. Comedy Whiteface
3. Auguste
4. Tramp/Hobo
5. Character/Novelty
6. Clown Light

### **B. Performance Competition**

1. Single Skit
2. Group Skit
3. Parade Act (Paradeability)
4. Variety Arts

### **C. Skills Competition**

1. Balloon Sculpture
2. Face Painting

## **VI MAKEUP AND WARDROBE COMPETITION**

### **A. General Rules**

1. Makeup and Wardrobe competition is open to ALL clowns that meet the eligibility requirements.
2. The WCA Awards Director will assign the order of performance. The order will be posted prior to the competition.
3. Each Competitor must check in at the competition location 20 minutes before each competition to receive their number. If one does not check in onsite prior to the listed start time they will be considered withdrawn.
4. The WCA Awards Director will determine the order of category. (I.e. classic whiteface, comedy whiteface, auguste, clown light, hobo/tramp, character.)
5. Competitors will be judged on makeup, wardrobe, and timed performance.
6. Each Competitor will be judged according to the official WCA score sheet.
7. Only self-applied makeup will be allowed.

8. All clowns will be paraded before the judges in their respective group prior to the individual judging.

9. Performance and movement indicating character is allowed during the introductory parade (in front of the judges) and also during poses and performance segments. During the image evaluation, the clown needs to stand relaxed.

10. Each clown will be required to strike one (1) pose with the exception of the Clown Light category. Clown Light competitors will be asked to strike three (3) different poses to show their character through facial expressions and body language.

11. Each clown will be required to “perform” a “Funny Bit” (maximum of one minute) as part of the competition. Competitors will be given a warning when 10 seconds are remaining. Competitors will be penalized one (1) point per second per judge for exceeding the time limit.

12. Competitors will be allowed to carry a prop for use in their performance.

**B. Makeup and Wardrobe competition for each category will be judged on the following criteria:** (For all categories: Classic Whiteface, Comedy Whiteface, Auguste, Tramp/Hobo, Character, and Clown Light)

Makeup	25 points
Wardrobe	25 points
Performance	25 points
Total look	<u>25 points</u>
	100 points (per judge)

The point spread will be as follows:

1-5 points	Needs Improvement
6-10 points	Fair
11-15 points	Good
16-20 points	Excellent

## C. Categories

1. Classic White Face: The aristocrat of all clowns; an elegant clown, artistic, impressive, smart, and often sophisticated. The classic white face performance is skillful and may be done with a comedic or dramatic flair. (Pierrot, Harlequin and the European “neat” whiteface are examples.)

a. All exposed skin will be covered with white makeup. Minimal lining, color(s) and/or glitter will be used to express the features of the eyes, nose, and mouth. The classic Whiteface generally does not wear a comedy nose.

b. A white skullcap would be worn in lieu of a colored wig.

c. The styles of wardrobe may vary, but often are generally roomy and well fitted and may have a detachable collar.

d. A clown hat should fit the clown’s character/personality (short or tall cone hat, short cup or flat hat, or the typical Pagliacci hat)

e. Use of glitter, jewels, and additional accessories is acceptable.

f. Gloves should cover the hands and wrists and should be white or colored to fit the wardrobe.

g. Normal sized shoes (i.e. Ballet or dancing slippers) would be worn in lieu of large comedy shoes

2. Comedy White Face: Comedy White Face is today the most common White Face clown. When performing with the Auguste and/or Tramp, this clown will usually take charge, setting up the routine, throwing rather than taking the pie, slap, or kick. The Comedy Whiteface appears more exaggerated and cartoonish than the Classic Whiteface. (Priscilla Mooseburger, Frosty Little, Tammy Parish, and Ronald McDonald are examples.)

a. Face is completely covered with white base. Colors may be used to add features, highlights, and decorations.

b. Varying styles and colors of clown wigs are usually used in lieu of only the skullcap. The color of the wig is generally chosen to accent another color in the wardrobe.

c. Use of glitter, jewels, and additional accessories is acceptable.

d. Competitors can choose to have all skin covered by makeup and/or wardrobe. Although some of the Comedy White Face examples given do not wear gloves, judges may deduct marks if they think the wardrobe would be more complete with gloves.

3. Auguste - Exaggerated, impish, cartoonish and prank-like with a more comic face than the White Face may define the Auguste. (Examples are Leon McBride, Michael “Coco” Polokavs, Aurora Krause and Roy “Cookie” Brown)

a. Base color of face is usually a flesh tone with pink or reddish hues.

b. Features are painted on or highlighted with red, black, white or other colors.

c. Features are also accented with white.

d. Competitors can choose to have all skin covered by makeup and/or wardrobe. Although some of the Auguste examples given do not wear gloves, judges may deduct marks if they think the wardrobe would be more complete with gloves.

4. Tramp/Hobo: May be either happy or sad. (Examples are Emmett Kelly, Otto Griebing and Red “Freddy the Freeloader” Skelton.)

a. Face has a flesh tone base that is accented with red, white, black, or gray. A dirty effect is sometimes created with the makeup.

b. Hobo may wear old clothes that are neatly kept or bright and colorful.

c. Tramp may wear old clothes that are more tattered, torn, and/or patched.

d. Female Tramp could be a Bag Lady character

e. Competitors may have skin not fully covered by makeup and/or wardrobe. (ie., wrists, fingerless gloves, neck)

5. Character/Novelty: This category usually displays a specific IDENTIFIABLE character in total clown makeup. (Examples: baseball player, sailor, nurse, chef, Keystone Cop, etc.)

a. Makeup must compliment the character and may be White Face, Auguste, Tramp/Hobo, or Clown Light.

b. The Character competitor is allowed to hold a prop during the “pose” part of the competition.

c. Competitors may have skin not fully covered by makeup and/or wardrobe.

6. Clown Light: This category features less makeup and lighter wardrobe features than traditional clown categories. (Examples are Kenny Ahern, Jim Dixon, Richard Snowberg, Kathy Keaton) It is popular in warmer climates and often used in Caring Clown situations such as hospital or nursing home visits.

a. This category is defined by clown character and clown actions rather than by traditional full-face makeup and full wardrobe. Makeup can be basic elements of White Face, Auguste, or Tramp/Hobo but is applied lighter and will have skin showing on face, neck, and/or arms.

b. Clown Light may or may not wear a false clown nose or a clown wig. Neither is required.

c. Each clown will be required to strike three (3) different poses to show the character through facial expressions and body language. Each clown will be required to perform a “Funny Bit” (maximum one minute allowed) as part of the competition. This Funny Bit should show the character and represent the comedic style of the clown.

d. Clown Light will be judged on the following 4 categories with 25 points per category: Makeup, Wardrobe, Performance, Total Look. Considerations for each category might include the following:

1. Make-up design: Is it light but clown-like for the category represented: white face, auguste, or tramp/hobo? Application: is it neat and attractive?

2. Wardrobe: Is it light but clown-like for the category represented: white face, auguste, or tramp/hobo? Do the accessories, (including but not required, such as a hat, shoes, gloves, false nose, or wig,) contribute to the light look of the clown?

3. Performance: Does the character of the clown show in the demeanor, poses, and performance done in this competition?

4. Total Look: Overall assessment of how well the lighter makeup and wardrobe has defined the clown character represented.



## **VII PERFORMANCE COMPETITION**

### **A. Single and Group Skit and Variety Arts Competition Rules**

1. The WCA Awards Director will assign the order of performance. The order will be posted prior to each competition and also available at the check-in table.
2. Each competitor **may only compete in either Variety Arts OR Single skits**. They may not compete in both.
3. Each Competitor must check in at the competition location 20 minutes before each competition to receive their number. If one does not check in onsite prior to the listed start time they will be considered withdrawn.
4. Each individual or group must perform in succession according to the number assigned. If single or group is not prepared to perform when their number is due, that individual or group will be disqualified.
5. Each single or group is responsible to fill out a form for set-up if needed. Stagehands will be available to help with set up and clean up. This form should be handed in at the convention competition meeting.
6. Performance time for Individual, Group Skits and Variety Arts is limited to five (5) minutes. Any performance exceeding the five minutes will be penalized one (1) point per second per judge for exceeding the time limit.
7. One minute before the time limit will expire (4 minutes into the skit), a warning will be given to inform the performer of the time remaining.
8. Any skit or performance determined to be offensive to the general audience will be disqualified. The WCA Awards Director will make this decision.
9. Any performance that causes injury to a spectator or judge will be disqualified.
10. Performance music and sound effects:
  - a. The WCA will provide a CD player and operator.
  - b. Competitors may supply their own music and/or sound effects on IPODS, *phones, computers and CD's plus* connecting cords. If using cassette tapes, the competitor should plan to supply *their own* sound system as well.
  - c. It is the responsibility of the contestant or their representative to test their *music/sound* prior to the competition performance date/time. *Note: Some home-burned CDs will not play in all other equipment.*

d. It is the responsibility of the individual or of the group representative to have the CD labeled to identify the owner. All music CDs must have track numbers identified. Written clear communication is to be given to the CD operator concerning cues. The operator is not responsible for missed cues, etc.

e. Each clown performer may have a sound tech advisor positioned with the official competition sound operator during the clown's performance to coach the proper timing of the various musical cues. This is not expected, but it is allowed.

11. Timing for the skit BEGINS when the audio begins or when a Competitor first appears on stage, whichever comes first. Timing will END when the individual or entire group has exited the stage or at the specific part of the skit for which pre-arrangements have been made with the WCA Awards Director. If any Competitor continues to perform in any way, timing will be continued until all Competitors have exited the stage. This includes waving to the audience or any other action deemed as performing.

12. All individuals or groups will be judged according to the WCA Skit Score Sheet.

## **B. Single Skits**

1. Open to all clowns that meet the general eligibility requirements
2. Single skits will consist of only ONE CLOWN. The clown may be White Face, Auguste, Tramp/Hobo, Clown Light, or Character.
3. Use of audience members and/or stagehands during the skit is prohibited. Use of the audience is defined as the performer verbally soliciting a response from the audience such that the skit cannot continue without said solicited audience response. (i.e., Clown should not ask the audience questions.)
4. Competitors may enter only one Single Skit in this category.

## **C. Group Skits**

1. Open to all clowns that meet the general eligibility requirements.
2. A group skit may include Junior Joeys as long as other clowns that meet the general eligibility requirements are also performing.

- a. Group Skits will consist of two (2) or more clowns on stage. All clowns in the Group Skit must be listed when the sign-up application is written and registered. The clowns may be White Face, Auguste, Tramp/Hobo, Clown Light, or Character
- b. Use of audience members and/or stagehands during the skit is prohibited. Use of the audience is defined as the performer verbally soliciting a response from the audience such that the skit cannot continue without said solicited audience response.
- c. Competitors may enter only one Group Skit in this category.

#### **D. Variety Arts Competition**

1. Open to all clowns that meet the general eligibility requirements
2. Variety Arts Competition may consist of one or more clowns.
3. Use of audience members and/or stagehands during the skit is allowed. Use of judges is not allowed.
4. Variety Arts Competition includes clown performances of juggling, magic performance, ventriloquism, puppetry, balloon sculpture, acrobatics, unicycling, singing, etc.
5. This competition score may be used in All-Around Clown Competition rather than the Single Skit category if the Variety Arts performance is performed as a solo clown.

#### **E. Parade Act Competition (Paradeability)**

1. Open to all clowns that meet the eligibility requirements.
2. This is a SINGLE clown competition.
3. Competitors may have only one entry.
4. Competitors will have a maximum of 30 seconds to perform before the judges.
5. Along the “parade route,” a specific area will be clearly marked as the “judging area.” When the competitor crosses the “starting line” the official timing will begin.

6. The competitor needs to complete his total performance and cross the “end line” in less than 30 seconds. Competitors exceeding the 30 second time limit will be penalized one (1) point per second per judge.
7. Competitors are encouraged to do their paradeability performance for the audience numerous times along the “parade route” for the audience, but the only time when the competitor is judged is within the official “judging zone.”
8. Props and/or gimmicks may be used.
9. Performances must be in good taste.
10. Performance should not be harmful to anyone.
11. All Competitors will be judged according to the WCA Paradeability Score Sheet.

**F. Single and Group Skits will be judged on the following criteria**

Does the skit have a start, solid middle and a blow off/climax?	20 points
Pace and Timing	20 points
Make Up and Wardrobe	20 points
Does the performance create an emotional response?	20 points
Quality of props, music, or sound effect	<u>20 points</u>
Total possible points per judge in Single Skits	100 points

**GROUP SKIT ONLY**

Each clown’s participation in the skit	<u>20 points</u>
Total possible points per judge in Group	120 points

The point spread will be as follows:

1-5 points	Needs Improvement
6-10 points	Fair
11-15 points	Good
15-20 points	Excellent

**F. Variety Arts Competition will be judged on the following criteria**

Quality of skill demonstration?	20 points
Pace and Timing	20 points
Clown Make Up and Wardrobe	20 points.
Is it entertaining?	20 points
Quality of props, music, sound effect, or volunteer/audience interaction	<u>20 points</u>
Total possible points per judge in Variety Arts:	100 points

The point spread will be as follows:

1-5points	Needs Improvement
6-10 points	Fair
11-15 points	Good
15-20 points	Excellent

**G. Paradeability will be judged on the following criteria**

Appearance of the contestant: Makeup and Wardrobe	20 points
Quality of props and/or gimmick	20 points
Is the presentation original, clever, well-presented and repeatable, fit the character?	20 points
How does the crowd react to the contestant	20 points
What is your overall impression?	<u>20 points</u>
Total possible per judge in Paradeability competition:	100 points

The point spread will be as follows:

1-5points	Needs Improvement
6-10 points	Fair
11-15 points	Good
15-20 points	Excellent

**VIII SKILLS COMPETITION**

**A. Balloon Competition**

1. This competition requires a Competitor to submit ONE entry in EACH of the four following categories:

a. Single Balloon Sculpture: The single balloon can be #130, #245, #260, #280 or any size that can be defined as a PENCIL BALLOON

b. Multiple Balloon Creation-: A multiple balloon creation is a mixture of many balloons but ALL MUST BE THE SAME SIZE AND TYPE, REGARDLESS TYPE AND SIZE balloons. Example: use of all #260's.

c. Large Balloons Creation – A large balloons creation must use balloons that are three (3) inches or larger in diameter. A large balloons creation is to be more than one balloon and use only ALL OF THE SAME SIZE AND TYPE, REGARDLESS OF TYPE AND SIZE.

d. Specialty Balloon Category – ANY SIZE AND/OR TYPE of balloons are allowed. Other materials such as glue/adhesive, stick on eyes, etc. are allowed AS LONG AS IT IS ATTACHED TO THE BALLOON.

2. Open to all clowns that meet the eligibility requirements.
3. Each Competitor must furnish his/her own balloons & means of inflating them.
4. Time limit is ONE (1) hour.
5. Numbers will be assigned to each Competitor at check-in time.
6. Balloons may not be inflated, pre-cut, or prepared in any way prior to starting time. Competitors will be allowed to lay out equipment prior to starting.
7. Balloons may be inflated by mouth or pump.
8. Pre-printed balloons will be allowed provided they are commercially available on the open market to every Competitor. No custom printed balloons allowed.
9. Competitors must be in the competition area when competition begins. Competitors entering late will be disqualified.

## **B. Judging and Awards**

1. Judging will be in accordance with the Balloon Competition Score Sheet.
2. Points earned will be a combination of all 4 entries: Single, Multiple, Large, and Specialty
3. Spectators may be present during the competition, but in no way are they to coach or interfere with the competitor. Spectators are NEVER to touch a completed sculpture.
4. Judging will take place after the time limit has expired.
5. Competitors and spectators will not be present during judging.

6. If any balloon leaks or breaks during the judging, the balloon sculpture will be judged as is.

7. The WCA Awards Director will assign a Head Judge who is the only one allowed to touch or move a balloon entry during the judging, and with all the judges present, so that if something happens, all judges will have seen the entry before and after the move.

8. After judging, the balloons will be moved or left in the competition room for public display. If you do not want your balloon moved or displayed, inform the WCA Awards Director.

**\*Only those creations which are properly made will be given a score. If one of the competitors creations fail to meet the qualification and the rest DO meet the qualification then a score is given to the creation/s that DO meet the criteria, and a score of “zero” will be given to the one that does not.**

**C. Each balloon category will be judged on the following criteria**

Uniformity	5 points
Appearance	5 points
Degree of difficulty	5 points
Overall look of sculpture	5 points
Use of Color	<u>5 points</u>

Total possible points per judge: 25 points per creation

Totaling 100 points for all 4 categories

The point spread will be as follows:

1 points	Needs Improvement
2 points	Fair



3 points	Good
4 points	Very Good
5 points	Excellent

#### **D. FACE PAINTING COMPETITION**

1. Open to all clowns that meet the general eligibility requirements.
2. This competition requires a Competitor to submit one entry in EACH of the following categories:
  - a. Cheek art– the design must be small enough to fit on the cheek or hand. There is a 5 minute time limit for this category
  - b. Full Face – where 75% of the 4 facial quadrants must be painted. There is a 10 minute time limit for this category.
  - c. Creative – where anything goes category.
3. Competitors must furnish their own models, one for each category of the competition. Note: One model may be used for multiple categories (ie. Face and hand)
4. Competitors must furnish all their own supplies, including water.
5. Only cosmetic approved face paints for skin will be allowed. Tempura paints and acrylic paints, etc., are not allowed.
6. Trademark designs are automatically disqualified.
7. Glitter, jewels, feathers or other embellishments are only allowed in the Creative category. Use in the other categories is automatically disqualified.
8. Competitors must be in the competition area when competition begins. Competitors entering late will be disqualified.
9. Only one (1) design per category per model per competitor is allowed.
10. No reference photos or instructional materials are allowed during competition

10. Spectators may be present during the competition, but in no way are they to coach or interfere with the competitor.

**D. Judging and Awards**

1. Judging will be in accordance with the Face Painting Competition Score Sheet
2. Points earned will be a combination of all 3 Entries: Hand/Cheek Art, Full Face, and Creative.
3. Spectators are allowed to be present during the Competition but may not comment.
4. Competitors and spectators will not be present during judging

**\*Only those creations which are properly painted will be given a score. If one of the competitors creations fail to meet the qualification and the rest DO meet the qualification then a score is given to the creation/s that DO meet the criteria, and a score of “zero” will be given to the one that does not.**

**E. The design for each category will be judged on the following criteria**

Artistic ability	20 points
Creativity	20 points
Use of color	20 points
Does the design fit the area	20 points
Overall look	<u>20 points</u>
Total possible points per judge: 100 points	

The point spread will be as follows:

1-5points	Needs Improvement
6-10points	Fair

11-15 points	Good
15-20 points	Excellent

## **IX ALL AROUND CLOWN**

### **Requirements**

- A. Competitors must compete in the following three categories:
  - 1. Makeup and Wardrobe Competition
  - 2. Single Skit Competition or Variety Arts Competition (singles only)
  - 3. Parade Act (Paradeability)
- B. Open to all clowns that meet the general eligibility requirements
- C. Participants and scoring:
  - 1. If five (5) or more clowns compete for All Around Clown, the clown with the top total scores wins the award.
  - 2. Where five (5) or less clowns compete in this category, THEN the top competitor must score a minimum of 85% of the available points in each of the three required categories in order to earn the title "All Around Clown." If he/she scores less than 85% in any of the three categories, the award will not be given.
  - 3. The award is only given to one clown who receives the top score unless there is a tie.

### **Judging and Awards**

The score sheets from the three categories will be totaled and the Competitor receiving the highest score will be the winner.

## **X MASTER CLOWN**

This is considered the highest competition award in the World Clown Association. Competitors who have won All Around Clown two consecutive conventions will receive a Master Clown Award and may not compete for All Around Clown for the following two conventions.