



North American Brass Band
Championships
Official Rules Handbook

Philosophical Statement on Brass Band Contesting in North America

It is our hope that competing bands will make decisions pertaining to their contest participation — and their entire season — in accordance with the spirit of promoting the growth and development of brass bands in North America.

Specifically, NABBA bands strive to:

- Promote awareness of brass bands and brass banding by being highly visible through frequent performances in their home region. The best way we can further music education and advance the public's appreciation of brass bands is for people to see and hear them in their local community throughout the year.
- Do their best to recruit, train, and develop players for their roster from within their region. The ideal is for each band to sustain a full player roster without the need to share players with other NABBA bands. Despite all the growth North American brass bands have enjoyed, it still can be challenging to accumulate a contest roster entirely of local brass band musicians. Our best opportunity to grow as a movement is to convince more musicians to try playing in brass bands.
- Keep contesting an amateur activity. Paying players for their services, either directly in wages or indirectly through subsidized expense remuneration, undermines the long and admirable tradition of brass bands creating incredible musical performances with a roster of players who are not paid to perform.
- Support other individual NABBA musicians and member bands enthusiastically. The brass band community in North America is composed of a diverse set of talented individuals and ensembles, all of whom share their passion for the brass band movement freely. While players and bands may espouse different missions or methods, all share a common goal of developing a passion for brass bands here and abroad. NABBA is proud of the mutually supportive camaraderie, friendship, and appreciation displayed for fellow competitors on an annual basis.

Band Competition

Adjudication, Points, and Awards

1. Adjudicators will assess bands on technical and artistic achievement and assign point scores using the adjudication rubric.
2. Bands will be assessed by a panel of three adjudicators. An independent Judge administrator and score tabulator will also be on site.
3. Point scores for each band will be assembled from each adjudicator. A final contest score will be calculated according to the contest tabulation formula.
 - 3.1. Band point scores will be weighted as follows:
 - 3.1.1. 60% for the required test piece
 - 3.1.2. 40% for the own-choice program.
 - 3.1.3. Equal weighting for each adjudicator
4. Final band scores will be out of 100 points. The raw scores calculated above will be scaled down to a 100 point scale - see the scoring sheet for more information.
5. Adjudicators will provide audio comments recorded in real-time during each performance.
6. Awards will be presented for first place through third place where applicable.
7. In the event of a tie:
 - 7.1. The band with the highest combined point total in the test piece will be declared the winner.
 - 7.2. In the event that the test piece scores are also tied, the band rated higher on the test piece by two of the three adjudicators shall be declared the winner.

Band Rules and Regulations

1. The Contest Committee Chair, in consultation with the Contest Committee, is the authority in hosting and running the NABBC.
2. All rules interpretations and rules decisions will be determined by the Contest Coordinator in consultation with members of the Contest Rules Committee.
3. NABBC Band competition entries are limited to bands from North America. Entrants must be registered as Full Member Bands with NABBA
 - 3.1. Bands competing in Championship, First, Second, Third, Youth Championship, and Youth First sections may only contain the following instruments: E-flat Soprano Cornet, B-flat Cornet, B-flat Flugelhorn, E-flat Tenor Horn, B-flat Baritone Horn, Tenor Trombone, Bass Trombone, B-flat Euphonium, Tuba, and percussion as needed by score
 - 3.1.1. E-flat and B-flat bass parts may be played on tubas of any key.

- 3.2. Bands competing in Open and Youth Open sections may include any brass instrument and percussion as needed by score.
4. Conductors and players in competing bands must be individual members of NABBA.
 - 4.1. Players in competing bands must be residents of a country in North America.
 - 4.2. Conductors are not required to be residents of North America.
5. Bands will be limited in the number of players on stage. A conductor is not allowed to play any instrument with the band they are conducting, unless necessitated by the score. Any violation in the number of players will result in disqualification.
 - 5.1. Entries in the Championship, First, Second, and Third Sections are limited to 28 brass players, up to 5 percussion players (as required by the score) plus the conductor on the competition stage at any time.
 - 5.2. Entries in the Youth Championship and Youth First Sections are limited to 40 brass players, percussion players as needed, plus the conductor on the competition stage at any time.
 - 5.3. Entries in the Open and Youth Open Sections are limited to 50 players on the stage at any time, plus the conductor.
6. Members of bands in the Youth Section must be:
 - 6.1. 17 years of age or younger, or
 - 6.2. Enrolled in a primary or secondary school (K-12) on the day of performance. Any violation in qualification of youth players will result in disqualification.
 - 6.3. Youth Section performers are not required to be individual NABBA members.
7. No band member is allowed to play more than one brass instrument per piece unless necessitated by the score. It is permissible for a brass player to also play a percussion instrument. Any violation will result in disqualification. This information must be disclosed on the submitted contest roster.
8. Bands are permitted to share players subject to the following restrictions:
 - 8.1. A “shared player” is a player that plays with two bands at the same contest. Shared players may play in no more than two bands.
 - 8.2. Bands may use a maximum of three brass shared players and two percussion shared players.
 - 8.3. No scheduling considerations will be made for shared players or conductors.
9. Emergency Player Rule - In the event that a member of a competing band is unable to perform due to an emergency that arises during the contest weekend, the affected band should propose a replacement player to the Contest Coordinator. Members of the Contest Rules Committee will assess the situation and make a final decision on whether the substitute player will be permitted to compete with the band.
10. A Contest Program will consist of a required test piece (which must be performed first) and an own-choice program.
 - 10.1. Required test works for the current contest year are not eligible for use in own choice programs during the same contest year, regardless of section.

- 10.2. The own-choice program will be timed from the first note to the last note of the own-choice program; this includes all pause intervals, percussion changes, and applause/bows between pieces.
- 10.3. Any timing penalties will be assessed at a rate of a 1 point deduction from the final score (out of 100) per ½ minute over- or undertime or part thereof.
 - 10.3.1. (1-30 sec = 1pt)
 - 10.3.2. (31-60 sec = 2pts)
 - 10.3.3. Etc.
- 10.4. Minimum and maximum own-choice program times (from first note through last note of the own-choice program) are as follows:
 - 10.4.1. Championship Section: 13-21 minutes.
 - 10.4.2. First Section: 12-18 minutes.
 - 10.4.3. Second Section: 10-16 minutes.
 - 10.4.4. Third Section and Youth Championship Section: 8-14 minutes.
 - 10.4.5. Youth First Section: 7-13 minutes.
 - 10.4.6. Open and Youth Open Sections: 12-18 minutes. (For Open Section bands, because there is no required test piece, this time is measured from the first note to the last note of their entire program.)
11. All penalties will be assessed by the Contest Coordinator, in consultation with the Contest Rules Committee, after the adjudicator's scores have been turned in.

Registration

1. Registration must be completed via the online process. Registration will be posted on November 15th and due by the Close of Business on January 15th.
2. A band may enter only one of the following categories: Championship Section, First Section, Second Section, Third Section, Open Section, Youth Championship Section, Youth First Section, Youth Open Section.
3. NABBA band registration fees, band membership fees, and individual membership fees (all listed on the website) are non-refundable and non-transferable.
4. A completed performance roster must be submitted four weeks prior to the contest (as per the instructions online).
 - 4.1. Contest Coordinator, in consultation with the Contest Rules Committee, will oversee the NABBA band roster verification process. Any discrepancies between band members performing on stage and the names on the roster will result in disqualification.
5. Three (3) scores for each piece of the own-choice program must be sent to the official NABBA contest address, postmarked by January 15 (registration deadline).
 - 5.1. Scores must be originals, and measures must be numbered.
 - 5.2. For unpublished works, verified permission must be provided.
 - 5.3. Late submission of scores will be subject to additional penalties (payment of penalty fees must be included with late scores):
 - 5.3.1. Scores postmarked January 16-21 will be subject to an additional \$100 fee.
 - 5.3.2. Scores postmarked January 22-26 will be subject to an additional \$250 fee.

- 5.3.3. Scores postmarked January 27-31 will be subject to an additional \$500 fee.
 - 5.3.4. Scores postmarked February 1 or later will be returned to sender, the band will be disqualified, and **no contest entry fees will be refunded.**
6. The band contest performance draw will happen within 5 days of registration closing. The Executive Committee and Rules Committee will do the blind draw.
 - 6.1. For bands performing on multiple days, bands that have drawn in the first half for the test piece will not be included in the first half draw for the choice program, and bands in the bottom half on the test piece will draw for the first half for the choice program.
 - 6.2. Bands that performed first the previous contest year will be withdrawn for the first draw for the performance that they were the first draw.
 7. After registration closes on January 15th, no further registrations will be accepted and incomplete registrations will be rejected.
 8. Final payment amount and payment instructions will be provided upon completion of the online registration.

Contest Flow

1. Stages will be pre-set in a standard brass band configuration with the percussion instruments furnished by NABBC.
 - 1.1. A list of provided percussion and a diagram of standard brass band configuration will be posted at www.nabba.org.
 - 1.2. Additional percussion equipment may be requested from the Contest Percussion Coordinator, on or before January 15th. Supplemental equipment is not guaranteed to be provided.
2. Championship, First, and Second sections will perform their required test piece and own-choice program on separate days (Test Piece on Friday and Own-Choice Program on Saturday).
3. Bands should assemble in the designated area of the performance venue based upon the appointed times provided in the contest schedule.
4. Guides will be assigned to assist Bands from location to location.
5. Bands will first gather in a secure room to open and store cases until the conclusion of their competition performance. Roster verification will happen at this time. All Band personnel must be present for roster verification. (including percussion)
6. Bands will be escorted to a warm-up room at the scheduled time.
7. Bands should remain in their warm-up area until directed to move to the stage area. As the performing band on stage is concluding their performance, the stage manager and contest logistics guides will notify the stand-by band to travel to the stage.

8. Once the final brass player of the previous performing band has exited the stage, the stand-by band will be permitted to enter the contest stage, arrange percussion and chairs, and be seated.
9. Players may play during this set-up period.
10. After a signal from the stage manager (noting the adjudicators are ready) and a signal from the conductor, contest personnel will introduce the new performing band and announce its program. The band will then perform its contest program.
11. Bands in contest sections that perform both their required test piece and own-choice programs in a single performance must perform the required test piece first, followed by their own-choice program. Each band should familiarize themselves with timing considerations in the Rules and Regulations.
12. After the conclusion of each band's performance, bands must immediately exit the stage. If applicable, bands will then be offered guidance to the photo area. Pictures may be taken at this point at the discretion of the individual band.
 - 12.1. At the conclusion of a band's performance, bands are expected to begin moving personnel and equipment within two minutes.