

DANCING COMPETITION RULES
Adopted By The North American Feis Commission, 2015
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2016

1. In the case of all solo and team competitions in all grades, the age of a competitor on 1st January of the year in which the competition is held will determine the right of entry. For the purposes of this Rule a competitor whose birthday occurs on 1st January shall be deemed to be under the age attained on that date.

2. Competitions are open to all but those holding a TMRF, TCRG, or ADCRG designation. A Feis can only accept entries from pupils of teachers registered with An Coimisiún, regardless of their domicile, and where applicable, registered with both the IDTANA and the North American region in which they reside.

3. A competitor may be disqualified for any of the following reasons:

a) Conduct unbecoming a lady or gentleman.

b) Failure to report on time to compete. (Penalty: disqualification from said event)

c) Falsification of age or other important facts – i.e., teaching, award winning, competing under another competitor's name or number, etc.

Penalty for a) or c): Competitor will be disqualified from the Feis at which the occurrence happened and from all NAFC – registered Feiseanna for a period of one year beginning at the date of the occurrence.

4. Competitions may be closed if there are no competitors at the assigned stage ready to compete when the competition is scheduled or announced. May not pertain to a situation where competitors are involved in stage conflicts.

5. Solo competitors in First Feis (if offered), Beginner, Advanced Beginner, Novice or Open (Prizewinner) competitions:

a) Must compete in their own age group.

b) Must be prepared to perform two steps in each event.

c) Cannot change competition on the day of the Feis.

6. Steel taps or “bubble” heels on dancing shoes, display of awards, wearing of shorts or other unconventional dress is prohibited. Authentic Gaelic dress is desired. First Feis (if offered), Beginner and Advanced Beginner, aka Beginner I and II, must wear a class costume, or a skirt and blouse. All other categories are excluded from this rule. Modest attire is encouraged when a competitor is not dancing.

7. Competitor's number must be worn and visible to adjudicators when performing in all competitions, use of reflective plastic number covers is discouraged.

8. Awards will be determined in proportion to the number of entries in each competition and to the degree of proficiency shown.

9. Complaints regarding the running or rules of a Feis must be in writing, stating names and other factual information and signed by the complainant. A ten-dollar fee must be enclosed and presented to the Feis Chairman within one hour of the occurrence. The fee will be returned if the complaint is upheld.

10. The Feis Committee and any organization affiliated with same, will not be held responsible for personal injury, property loss or damage. Destruction of Feis property or rental property will be punishable by law.

11. The Feis reserves the right to reject any entry for cause, to cancel all or part of the Feis and to limit competitor's performing time. The decision of the Feis Committee is final in all matters connected with the Feis.

12. All Feiseanna must have a process to allow parents to request that their child or children's name(s) not be listed on the posted competitor list prior to the day of the Feis.

13. Competitors must answer all questions as required by the Feis Entry committee, including teacher's name, and enclose the entry fee when mailing. Failure to do so will result in a rejected entry. Entries must be received on or before the closing date or they will be subject to a late fee of \$10.00.

14. Entrants in any Championship event may not enter in any other (Grade) events, but may enter in Figure Dances. Entrants in Championships should specify, on the entry form, their choice of set dance. Entrants cannot change competition or category on the day of the competition.

- a) Dancers must qualify for open championship via the method now in place for preliminary championship, i.e. two 1st place wins.
- b) Dancers must compete in the preliminary championship competition in order to qualify for open championship
- c) The regional syllabus where the Feis is being held may have different qualifications for entry.

15. Combining male and female dancers in any age category is left to the discretion of each region of the IDTANA.

16. Preliminary Championships are open to those who, at any NAFC recognized Feis:

- a) Have won 1st place in both an open/prizewinner light and heavy shoe competition, and
- b) Have never won 1st, 2nd or 3rd in Open Championship. A dancer who wins two first place awards will move on to Open Championship at the next Feis they enter, or as soon as the second win is achieved, in any age category, in the following years. Only in the case of back-to-back Feiseanna (successive days), in which case the first win in the first Feis will not change the dancer's status for the second Feis. A dancer is required to perform a light shoe dance (reel or slip jig for ladies and reel only for men), and a hard shoe dance. A Feis can opt to offer either a) a set dance or b) a jig/hornpipe.
- c) The regional syllabus where the Feis is being held may have different qualifications for entry.

17. Championships and Preliminary Championships require at least three adjudicators.

18. First place winners in the Open Championship category cannot return to a Preliminary or Open (Prizewinner) competition. Placing in a Regional or National Oireachtas does not change the status of a competitor. A dancer who moves into open championship must stay a minimum of 2 years. If after 2 years they have not placed they are allowed to return to preliminary. An open championship dancer who places is not allowed to return to preliminary until 2 years after their last placement. The regional syllabus where the Feis is being held may have different qualifications for entry.

19. The status of the dancer does not change unless there are five or more dancers in a competition.

20. Each region may determine the system for moving dancers from one grade to another, as they see appropriate for their region. The syllabus is to contain all grade categories. A Feis Committee may *combine two consecutive age categories into the higher of the two categories within that grade* when less than five (5) competitors are entered.

21. Beginner Grade: A beginner is a competitor who has not yet taken a full year of Irish Dance lessons, thereby giving beginners a full year with such status. A Beginner must move into the Advanced Beginner category the next year.

Advanced Beginner Grade: An advanced beginner who wins 1st, 2nd or 3rd place will advance to the Novice category in that particular dance. Competition dances are reel, light jig, slip jig, traditional treble jig and traditional hornpipe, as a minimum requirement.

Novice Grade: A novice who wins a 1st place will advance to the Open (Prizewinner) category in that particular dance.

Open Grade (Prizewinner): A competitor who does not qualify as a beginner, advanced beginner or as a novice.

Adult Beginner: An adult beginner is a competitor who never took Irish dancing lessons as a juvenile and is over 18 years of age.

22. Musicians and adjudicators cannot be approached during a competition by anyone except the Feis Committee. No one can approach them while a competitor is performing.

23. Musicians employed by the Feis Committee will be solely under the direction and management of the Feis Committee on Feis day.

24. Teachers or team captains are responsible that their teams are complete and in position when the competition is announced. Competitors may compete in the next higher age group. A competitor may compete in no more than two different age groups for any one category (4-hand, 8-hand, etc.)

25. In matters pertaining to adjudication, the decision of the adjudicators is final.

26. Adjudicators are to monitor the quality of music at the stage(s) to which they are assigned.

27. First Feis (if offered), Beginner, and Advanced Beginner dancers are required to dance at traditional speeds. Novice and Open/Prizewinner dancers may choose between traditional and Oireachtas speeds. Adult dancers are allowed to dance traditional or Oireachtas speed dances in the novice and prizewinner grade levels, but this does not apply to contemporary set dances.

28. The length of 2 hand and 3 hand dances in competition are to be 48 bars of music plus an 8 bar introduction

29. In consideration of safety and in fairness to dancers performing at a Feis, photography of any kind which has the capability of capturing a dancer's image while in motion is strictly forbidden.

A Feis may elect to allow in motion photography for publicity purposes, but the pictures are considered the sole property of the Feis and solely for Feis use only; these are not to be used for personal gain through commercial use or sale, and under no circumstances can they be published on any website or other areas, without the express written permission of the persons involved.

Additionally, a professional photographer may be formally contracted by a Feis to capture non-motion photographs, such as portrait photography, awards ceremonies, etc. and/or in motion photography provided it is taken at a vendor station or suitable location: (a) away from the dancing stages and, (b) requested by a consenting parent, guardian, or dancer (over the age of 18).

30. No block, en Pointe, toe walking movements, stationary or moving is allowed to be performed for all ages up to and including the under 12 age group. However, after September 1 of each year an exception is made for those dancers who are 11 dancing in the under 12 age group.

31. Make up is prohibited on a dancer in the first three grades (First Feis (if offered), Beginner and Advance Beginner or their equivalent) up to and including the under 12 age group.

32. Any competitor found to be using artificial carriage aids and subsequently refuses to remove same, will be subject to disqualification from that particular competition. Medically prescribed aids (proof of which may be required) will be exempt from this rule.

33. Each Feis is required to list their adjudicators on their syllabus and/or website. If adjudicators are not listed on the syllabus, they must be posted on the Feis website a minimum of three weeks prior to the Feis. Once the Feis has closed for entries the adjudicators names may be removed from the Feis website. One third of the adjudicators are to be from outside the region where the Feis is being held.

34. Competitors in girl's competitions at the First Feis (if offered), Beginner and Advanced Beginner Grade will wear only the competitor's dancing School costume or a skirt and blouse.

35. No substance that can become airborne should be used on any dance floor in an attempt to improve traction.

ADDITIONAL RULES AS PER IDTACE

1. Boys and girls must be combined in all levels.

2. Competitions with four (4) or fewer solo or team entries (a full team being a single entry) must be combined with the next highest age group. Exempt from this rule are: Beginner level competitions (effective Jan 1 2014) and Open Championship Under 9 (effective Jan 1 2012). A maximum of two age groups may be combined.

3. Advanced Beginner, Novice and Prizewinner competitions with 15 or more entries and figure dancing competitions with 25 or more entries shall be split to single age groups (effective Jan 1 2017), and should one side of the split have four or fewer entries, it will not be re-merged. Double-aged competitions with four or fewer entries will not be merged.

4. Preliminary and Open Championship competitions with 25 or more competitors must be split by year of birth (or exactly in half in the case of senior level age groups) (effective Jan 1 2017).
5. Competitions not reaching the thresholds noted above may not be split.
6. Entries received after splits/mergers have been approved by the Feis Liaison and communicated to the Feis Chair shall not mandate further adjustments (effective Jan 1 2017).
7. Preliminary Championship: In addition to the NAFC definition, a Preliminary Championship dancer in the ECR is “one who has achieved 1st place in one light dance (reel or slip jig), AND 1st place in one heavy dance (treble jig or hornpipe) in the Prizewinner grade.”
8. Dancers in Under 8 and Under 9 competitions must dance a traditional set dance from the An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha approved list. Such will be danced three at a time (except for Open Championship, which will be danced one at a time) where stage size permits; otherwise, they will be danced two at a time.
9. All dancers (solo and teams) must be in full costume and Irish dance shoes for award presentations.
10. There is to be an 8-bar break between lines of dancers in Beginner competitions.
11. All speeds MUST be listed on the feis syllabus as shown in the regional syllabus.
12. Feiseanna may apply on an annual basis for additional age groups for grade level competitions and/or single age groups for Preliminary and Open Championship events.