



THE COMPETITION *FOR DANCERS BY DANCERS*

2026 COMPETITION TOUR ENTRY INFORMATION

ENTRY FEES

Available to studios only. To view entry fees, log into the studio registration account. To set-up an account, go to reg.headlinersdance.com. New studio accounts must be approved by Headliners prior to registering for events.

FREE PHOTO & VIDEO FOR STUDIOS AND DANCERS - NO ADDITIONAL FEES!

Each Studio will receive UNLIMITED download access to ALL of their registered entries photos and videos. Approximately 2-5 *business days* after the event, each participants' media will be accessible via a link sent to the studio email provided in their online registration portal. The studio is responsible for distributing the link and password to the dance families.

Headliners provides HIGH RESOLUTION photos and 1920x1080 FULL HD videos of all routines. Due to the size of these files, media will be hosted online for the duration of the current season. Anyone requiring a print release for their photos will be able to obtain the most recent version online or by emailing media@headlinersdance.com.

THERE REMAINS ABSOLUTELY NO OUTSIDE PHOTOGRAPHY OR VIDEOTAPING ALLOWED DURING PERFORMANCES. THIS RULE WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED TO PROTECT THE DANCERS AND YOUR CHOREOGRAPHER'S WORK.

ENTRY DEADLINES

REGIONAL ENTRIES: Studios that qualified for pre registration rebates or discounts must complete both payment and registration at least 45 days prior to the first day of competition in order to retain those benefits. If either is missing by the 45 day deadline, any rebates or discounts will be forfeited.

Studios that did not qualify for pre registration discounts must also complete both payment and registration by the 45 day deadline. A 10 percent fee will be added to the cost of entry fees on any account not finalized by this deadline.

ENTRY CONFIRMATION

Studios have 24/7 access to their online accounts to review entries and ensure all information is input properly. Headliners First Confirmations will be emailed following the entry deadline date and include instructions as well as an itemized list of all entries and dancers submitted by the studio. *PLEASE READ THE EMAILS AND REVIEW THE ATTACHMENTS WHEN THEY ARE RECEIVED.* A Final Confirmation will be emailed with performance schedules approximately 10-14 days prior to each event. All changes/corrections/omissions must be received **via email** to info@headlinersdance.com prior to this time in order to avoid change fees.

LATE ENTRIES AND CHANGES

Entries are due online 45 days prior to each event. Entries received after the 45 day deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be accepted only if time permits and if the schedule is not adversely affected. Late entries accepted will be subject to a **\$20 PER ENTRY LATE FEE**. Changes accepted after the final changes deadline, will be subject to a **\$35 PER CHANGE LATE FEE**. Changes made the week of the event, will be subject to a **\$50 PER CHANGE LATE FEE**. A credit card will be required for processing (a service fee will apply).

PAYMENT OF FEES

Once a studio creates entries in the online registration portal, they are responsible for all entry fees associated with the entries in their studio account. Entry fees can be paid by studio check, money order, or credit card. Credit card payments are accepted directly through the studio account and will include a service fee.

Studios that pre registered must submit final payment at least 45 days prior to the first day of competition or any incentives will be forfeited. Checks are only accepted before the 45 day deadline. If payment is submitted after the 45 day mark, it must be made online by credit card and will include a service fee. Headliners does not refund for overpayment during the registration process.

NOTE: A \$25 charge will be issued for checks returned.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be issued in the event of a dancer injury and must be accompanied by a doctor's note. No refunds will be given if an event is rescheduled or if the location changes. All approved refunds will be processed and issued to the studio after the event has taken place, in case of additional changes or injuries. Doctor's notes must be submitted via email to info@headlinersdance.com. Notes or forms will not be accepted on site at events.

Headliners will not respond to refund requests submitted by parents. All communication must come directly from the studio.

ABOUT OUR SCHEDULE

SCHEDULING

Each event schedule is created based on the number and type of entries received. Events begin no earlier than 8:00 AM and end no later than 10:30 PM. Friday events begin after school hours. Headliners reserves the right to extend event hours if necessary.

SCHEDULING REQUESTS

All scheduling requests and conflicts must be submitted in writing using the comment box during online entry submission. We do our best to honor all requests, but they are not guaranteed. Refunds will not be issued for entries where scheduling requests could not be met.

Once the schedule is finalized and Final Confirmations are emailed, any routine that must be moved and cannot perform before its assigned award session will not be eligible for Overall Awards or Titles. These routines will still be eligible for adjudication and special awards.

SOLO REGISTRATION

Dancers may enter as many categories as they wish. Competitive and Intermediate soloists are limited to three solos per regional event and may not compete more than once in the same category (jazz, tap, etc.).

Novice soloists are limited to one solo per event. To compete with additional solos, they must move up to the Intermediate level.

DANCE CATEGORIES

ACRO: A combination of tumbling movements & passes incorporated with dance movements.

BALLET: Classical ballet style using ballet shoes.

CHARACTER: Dancers portray an easily recognized character.

CLOGGING: A routine showing clogging (or buck) technique using the full foot.

CONTEMPORARY: Inventive movements incorporating different styles with a classical foundation.

CULTURAL: A routine using ethnic style dance (i.e. Flamenco, Irish Jig, Hawaiian, Bollywood, etc.).

HIP HOP: A routine containing mostly hip hop or street style moves.

JAZZ: Classical jazz movements and technique.

LYRICAL: Dancers' movements should interpret the words and feelings of the song.

MODERN: Theatrical dance, not as restrictive as classical ballet; stylized, abstract movements.

MUSICAL THEATER: Portraying the feeling or character of a Broadway or movie musical song.

OPEN: Combines two or more forms of dance, or a second routine with 50% or more of the same dancers.

POINTE: Classical ballet technique wearing pointe shoes.

POM: The use of Pom Poms where dancers show patterns and uniform movements.

SHOWDANCE: A concept, story or theme. Can be any dance form or combination of dance forms, not including tap.

TAP: Characterized by rhythmic tapping of the toes and heels. (No pre-recorded tap sounds allowed on the tape.)

TWIRLING: Dancers incorporate batons into the routine.

ACROBATIC TRICKS IN ROUTINES: Acro is not allowed in ballet and pointe. Jazz, tap, and lyrical routines may have a maximum of three acro tricks. All other categories may include unlimited acro. A pass into an acro trick (i.e. round off back handspring) qualifies as a single acro movement.

COMPETITION LEVELS

LEVELS ARE BASED ON TECHNICAL ABILITY AND EXECUTION OF MOVEMENTS AS WELL AS CLASS TIME

ROUTINE LEVELS

Routine levels are determined by the levels assigned to each dancer during registration. The level of routines is automatically calculated as the average of the dancers' individual levels. Novice dancers are assigned a 1, Intermediate a 2, and Competitive a 3. Routines with an average of 1.2 or higher will dance in the Intermediate level. Routines with a level of 2.2 or higher will compete in the Competitive level. Example: A competitive dancer and novice dancer would compete in an Intermediate level routine together.

Regardless of level, dancers should be able to properly execute the movements presented. Routines consisting of technique suited to a higher level may be moved to the appropriate level, per the judges' discretion. Dancers will not be penalized for routines moving up.

NOTE: Dancers must compete in the same competitive level for all routines regardless of experience in each style of dance. For example: A dancer cannot compete with a lyrical solo in Intermediate and a tap solo in Competitive.

NOVICE:

12 & Under dancers only. For dancers with limited technical training with a focus on basic foundational movements. No more than 3 technique classes in the major forms of dance per week (ie: ballet, tap, jazz, lyrical, contemporary, hip hop, etc). Novice dancers are limited to one solo. Dancers/routines in this level will receive adjudicated awards and are eligible for special judge's awards. Overall awards will be presented.

Skill Recommendations: Novice level dancers execute beginner movements, phrases, and transitions in choreography. The choreography contains simple rhythms and understanding of musicality. Dancers are learning the use of dynamics and beginning to explore artistry. Headliners consider the following as examples of Novice level skills: single pirouette, chaine turns, pique turns, dancing on balls of feet in tap, and simple leaps.

INTERMEDIATE:

Dancers in this level should be able to properly execute basic dance skills, begin some advanced movements, and take no more than 5 technique classes in the major forms of dance per week (ie: ballet, tap, jazz, lyrical, contemporary, hip hop, etc). The Intermediate Level allows dancers to add small advances in technical application to the basics. Dancers in this level will receive adjudicated awards, and are eligible for special judge's awards. Overall awards will be presented. Dancers may choose to perform up in the Competitive Level to be considered for Scholarship Vouchers and Titles.

Skill Recommendations: Intermediate level dancers execute moderate movement, phrases, and transitions in choreography. Dancers have developing technical knowledge that is presented in their movement. The choreography contains some complex rhythms and understanding of musicality. Dancers have an average level of dynamics and display growing artistry in relation to emotion, energy, and approach. Headliners considers the following as examples of Intermediate level skills: double pirouettes, grand jetes, maxi ford turns, double stag leaps, an arabesque pitch, and attitude positioning.

COMPETITIVE:

In this level, it is expected that the dancers are technically aware of everything they are performing, have original and creative choreography and have developed the necessary skills to compete and excel in their chosen discipline. Their performances should be well rehearsed, polished and dancers groomed and costumed appropriately. Dancers in this level receive adjudicated awards (see trophy or charity option), are eligible for special judge's awards, and are eligible for Regional and National Titles. Overalls will be presented and will include medals, banners, cash vouchers and more.

Competitive level routines can be as simple or complex at the choice of the choreographer. Dancers have a high level of dynamics and display advanced artistry in relation to emotion, energy, and approach. Headliners consider the following as examples of competitive level skills: triple pirouettes, leg hold turns, switch leaps, fouette turns, turns a la seconde, calypsos, illusions, etc.

ADULT:

For routines with an average age of 20 or older. Routines in this division will be adjudicated, but are not eligible for Overall Awards.

JUDGING AND SCORING

SCORING

Dancers compete within an adjudicated scoring system and awards are presented that correspond to the scores received. (See Trophy or Charity Option to donate your trophy to charity.) Three judges are each allocated 200 points (100 for Technique, 100 for Presentation) for a maximum of 600 points.

Elite Gold:	570-600 (95+ points)
High Gold:	546-569.4 (91-94.9 points)
Gold:	522-545.4 (87-90.9 points)
High Silver:	498-521.4 (83-86.9 points)
Silver:	480-497.4 (80-82.9 points)

THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES IS FINAL.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Headliners judges are selected based on their extensive dance training and teaching experience. All judges receive a detailed written guide outlining our expectations and go through a thorough internal review process, including pre-screened critiques. All judges are personally scouted and evaluated by Headliners. Judges provide constructive, encouraging feedback that supports creativity and growth, regardless of a dancer's level of experience. Our goal is to foster a positive environment that inspires each dancer's personal development.

TECHNIQUE: Regardless of level, dancers should be able to properly execute the movements presented in their routine. Balance, control, positioning, stretch, fluidity of movement, agility, and musicality are some of the components reviewed. Other factors taken into consideration include whether the technical level is within the reach of all dancers.

PRESENTATION: The dancers' ability to capture the audience. This includes personality, emotional execution, enthusiasm, and energy. Makeup and grooming are also considered.

BUMP RULES

Headliners allows our Judges to move routines as necessary to a higher level. All three judges must unanimously agree in order for a level change to occur. If a routine is moved, a studio representative will be notified. If a soloist is moved, all of their already competed and remaining solos will move to the new level. All judge decisions are final. Neither Headliners Directors nor studio representatives may override a judge-determined level placement.

VIDEO CRITIQUES

Judges verbally critique each routine on Technique and Presentation. They will also offer comments on a variety of subjects that may not pertain to the scoring to help the students, teachers, and choreographers.

Video critiques and scores will be accessible on your online registration account within 2-3 business days after your event. Please contact info@headlinersdance.com for more information.

HEADLINERS CRITIQUE VIDEO POLICY

Video critiques of each routine from all judges are provided online via the studio's registration profile. These critiques are intended for the studio director/owner and are not for public consumption. They are strictly for educational purposes and should not be shared outside of the studio. Critiques may only be shared with the dancers for instructional use and are strictly prohibited from being posted on any social media platform or other websites. If the critiques are shared beyond the studio, the studio assumes full responsibility for any and all liability and holds Headliners harmless from any claims related to the critiques being shared or posted online.

DIVISIONS & TIME LIMITS

AGE DIVISIONS

Placement of dancers is based on their age as of January 1, 2026. Dancers/routines are listed in the program by the average age of the dancer(s) in the routine and are judged based on the age listed.

Mini: 6 & Under
Child: 7-9
Junior: 10-12
Teen: 13-15
Senior: 16-19
Adult: 20+

The age division for all duo/trios, groups, and classes is determined by the average age of the dancers in the routine. To calculate the average, the ages of all dancers are added together and divided by the total number of performers. Any decimal is dropped, not rounded.

TIME LIMITS

In order to stay on time we request adherence to the designated time limits.

Solos: up to 2:45 minutes
Duo/Trios: up to 3:00 minutes
Small Groups (4-9 dancers): up to 3:00 minutes
Large Groups (10-16 dancers): up to 3:30 minutes
Classes (17+ dancers): up to 4:00 minutes

EXTENDED TIME OPTIONS

For props or music extensions, Headliners provides an additional 30 seconds at a rate of \$25.

The maximum total extended time allowed is 10 minutes per routine.

Please note: If you do not indicate the amount of extended time needed in advance, you may be subject to additional fees or a deduction of points.

REGIONAL AWARDS

TROPHY OR CHARITY

During the registration process, participating studios have the option to generously donate the value of their adjudication award to one of eight carefully selected charities. This charitable initiative allows studios to choose to donate for all entries or select specific ones. Choose the charity from the drop-down box prior to submitting each entry. For more information on the program and charities, please visit: headlinersdance.com/charities

OVERALL AWARDS

Novice, Intermediate, and Competitive routines will be presented with overall awards at each session during Regionals, per age group. (Mini, Child, Junior, Teen, and Senior)

The amount of entries in each category and division will determine how many placements of overalls we present.

Competitive Overalls: Soloists will be awarded up to 10th place when there are 20 or more competing dancers. All other categories will be awarded up to 5th place.

Intermediate Overalls: Soloists will be awarded up to 10th place when there are 20 or more competing dancers. All other categories will be awarded up to 5th place when there are 10 or more routines in the division. If there are fewer than 10 routines, awards will be given up to 3rd place.

Novice Overalls: Soloists will be awarded up to 5th place when there are 20 or more competing dancers. All other categories will be awarded up to 3rd place.

In order to receive Overalls in the Competitive level, routines must earn an Elite Gold or High Gold. Intermediate routines must earn Elite Gold, High Gold, or Gold. All Novice routines are eligible, regardless of score, for Overalls.

We encourage dancers to dance up a level in order to be considered for more overalls.

REGIONAL TITLES

No additional fee is required to compete for Titles. To be considered, soloists must compete in the competitive level and achieve an elite gold or high gold score. Title winners are judges' choice and do not necessarily correlate to overall winners. Intermediate level dancers are not considered for Title.

PETITE HEADLINER	AGES 7-9
JUNIOR HEADLINER	AGES 10-12
TEEN HEADLINER	AGES 13-15
SENIOR HEADLINER	AGES 16-19

JUDGES AWARDS

Judges' awards will be presented at all awards ceremonies. These awards recognize special qualities the judges see, regardless of score.

REGIONAL SPECIAL AWARDS

STUDENT CHOREOGRAPHY

Headliners recognize routines choreographed by students at each regional. Please check the appropriate box and enter the student's name who choreographed the routine during registration. All recognized student choreographed routines are eligible to compete for Student Choreographer of the Year at Headliners Nationals.

HIGH SCORE NOVICE

This award will be presented at the end of the event to the highest scoring group routine from the Novice Level. Winners will receive a Platinum Ticket to compete at our Platinum Circle at Nationals!

HIGH SCORE INTERMEDIATE

This award will be presented at the end of the event to the highest scoring group routine from the Intermediate Level. Winners will receive a Platinum Ticket to compete at our Platinum Circle at Nationals!

HIGH SCORE COMPETITIVE

This award will be presented at the end of the event to the highest scoring group routine from the Competitive Level. Winners will receive a Platinum Ticket to compete at our Platinum Circle at Nationals!

ENTERTAINMENT AWARD

This award is based on the Staff's pick in recognition of outstanding emotional commitment, musicality, presentation, and staging. Novice, Intermediate, and Competitive routines can qualify for this award.

CREATIVE CONCEPTS

The Creative Concepts award celebrates outstanding originality and artistry in dance, recognizing dancers or choreographers who push boundaries and bring fresh, imaginative ideas to the stage. This award honors those with a unique creative vision and expressive depth that makes a lasting impact.

CHOREOGRAPHY AWARD

This award is based on the Judges' and Staff pick for choreography in recognition of innovative, imaginative and exciting choreography. Novice, Intermediate, and Competitive routines can qualify for this award.

SPIRIT

The Spirit Award is presented to the studio or group that exemplifies outstanding sportsmanship, positivity, and enthusiasm throughout the event. This recognition honors those who create a supportive environment, cheer on others, and embody the true spirit of the dance community.

ADCC STUDIO OF EXCELLENCE

Headliners is a member of the Association of Dance Competitions and Conventions (www.theadcc.org). This award is staff choice and based on the values of competition that we honor: good sportsmanship, kindness towards others, dedication toward education and overall excellence. At the end of the regional tour, all Studio of Excellence winners will be put to a vote online for the Studio of the Year award. A cash prize and banner will be awarded. The winning studio will also be recognized in ADCC promotions in print and social media.

PARTNERS AND AFFILIATES

NORWALK CONSERVATORY OF THE ARTS

Headliners is proud to partner with The Norwalk Conservatory of the Arts whose programs are designed to challenge and prepare students with the skills and tools needed for a career in the performing arts. Undergraduate degrees are available in 3 areas: Musical Theatre Performance, Musical Theatre Dance Performance and Television/Film Performance. In 2026 Norwalk Conservatory of the Arts representatives will once again be scouting at select Regionals and Nationals.

PERIDANCE CENTER

Headliners has partnered with Peridance, a premier dance training facility in the heart of NYC to provide dancers attending our events even more opportunities to work with professionals from Broadway, TV and film.

AMDA

With campuses in New York City and Los Angeles, AMDA is ranked as one of the top 5 colleges in the US for the Performing Arts. As a partner, Headliners will be offering scholarships to senior level dancers at select events.

For more information on all of our partners, please visit headlinersdance.com/partners

ADDITIONAL RULES AND INFORMATION

PROPS

Studios are permitted 60 seconds total for setup and teardown. Additional time is available in 30-second increments at a rate of **\$25 per 30 seconds**. This must be arranged and paid for in advance.

Any prop requiring extended setup or teardown time must be indicated in your registration portal to ensure adequate time is allocated. The use of props should never interfere with the timing of the competition. Deductions will apply for any props or sets that require unexpected extended setup or teardown time (that was not indicated or paid for during registration), or that require Headliners staff to pause the event for cleanup. Props must be able to fit through standard doorways. Headliners cannot guarantee accommodation for large or oversized props at all venues. Prohibited items include: ***special lighting, knives or sharp objects, fire, fog machines, aerosol sprays, baby powder, liquids, glitter, paint, confetti smaller than 1 inch, chalk, gel, helium balloons, live animals, or any other material that creates a mess or safety concern.*** Deductions are at the discretion of the Headliners Event Directors.

Props are the sole responsibility of the studio. Headliners is not obligated to accommodate, store, transport, set up, or provide assistance for any prop at any time. We will not move or modify our equipment, staging, or event flow to facilitate prop use. If your routine requires special handling or accommodations, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with us in advance. If we cannot safely or reasonably accommodate your prop, it may not be used.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in a post-event charge. If you do not notify us of the need for extended setup or teardown time in advance and it disrupts the event, Headliners reserves the right to enter your registration account and apply an additional fee after the event.

MUSIC

All music must be uploaded through your registration portal at least 3 weeks prior to the event. This is a required part of the registration process and ensures your routines are properly prepared for showtime. In addition to uploading music in advance, we ask each studio to bring a backup of all music files to the event on a clearly labeled USB flash drive or iPad. Backups should be organized and easily accessible in case of technical issues. Flashdrives are the sole responsibility of the studio and will not be kept by Headliners.

Tap routines must not contain any recorded tap sounds in the music track. Judges must be able to clearly distinguish the dancer's live sounds without confusion.

Studios are responsible for verifying the quality, cuts, and clarity of their music tracks. Headliners is not responsible for issues arising from poor audio quality, incorrect edits, or missing files. Please double-check that all music is correctly labeled with the routine title and entry number.

CHECK IN

A studio representative should check in at the merchandise table upon arrival to pick up the teacher program and any event information. Dancers should arrive 1.5 to 2 hours prior to their scheduled performance time and be prepared to perform at least 30 minutes early. Please check in backstage a minimum of 5 routines before your scheduled performance. Routine order changes will only be considered in cases of injury or illness. Requests to move routines for any other reason may result in the performance being ineligible for overall awards.

REMOVAL OF CONTESTANTS/AUDIENCE

The failure of performers or audience members to act appropriately or the continued breaking of rules will result in disqualification of the routine and/or ejection from the event. Contestants and audience members are responsible for adhering to venue policies and regulations. Any offender will be held liable for any damages or consequences incurred by the actions of the offender(s). No coaching from the wings or audience allowed. Dancers and audience members are restricted from sitting near the judges table.

VIDEO AND PHOTOGRAPHY CAMERAS

As a reminder, studios and dancers receive photo and video of all their performances for FREE. Recording of routines and photography of on-stage performances is prohibited at all Headliners events. A warning will be given to the studios and second offenses will result in Headliners Event Director discussing potential point deductions. At Nationals, routines will become ineligible for overalls.

Studios are responsible for advising their dance families and enforcing this rule on site. Photo and Video of routines by audience members may result in deductions.

By participating, all studios, parents, and dancers grant Headliners permission to use photography and videography of their performances for promotional purposes, including advertising, publicity, and social media posts. Dancers and their parents or guardians also consent to the use of their images and videos for these purposes.



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LIVESTREAM

Live streams will be available on a city-by-city basis, depending on the capabilities of each venue. Streams of events are not guaranteed. We stream in high-definition quality to provide the best possible viewing experience. To ensure you receive the highest quality feed, please confirm your browser settings and internet connection before viewing.

SMOKING/FOOD/DRINKS

Smoking is prohibited on the premises of all schools. Food and drink should be confined to the lobby areas. Please use trash cans to properly dispose of food, drink or other garbage.

APPROPRIATENESS

Dance, as any art is subjective. What may be offensive to one person can be completely harmless to another. However, inappropriate movements, costuming and/or music choice are subject to point deductions by our panel of judges.

RIGHT TO EXTEND

Entries are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Headliners reserves the right to extend an event to accommodate additional entries or to close registration prior to the posted deadline if the event reaches capacity. We also reserve the right to reschedule or relocate any event as necessary.

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS DURING EVENTS

Should anyone have any questions, we ask that they immediately seek out a Headliners Event Director on site to have it addressed.

Updated June 5, 2025