



WORLD DANCE MASTERS COMPETITION RULES 2025/2026

<i>Summary of Rule Changes</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Divisional Information</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Solo</i>	<i>6</i>
Division and Age Categories	6
Boogie Babies.....	6
Shining Steps.....	6
Tiny Tots.....	6
Rugrats.....	6
Starter.....	7
Newcomer.....	7
Novice.....	8
Intermediate.....	8
Advanced.....	8
Allstars.....	8
Solo Rules Summary	9
V & V Rule - Vanilla & Variation	9
Solo Movement Limitations	10
<i>Pro-Am</i>	<i>11</i>
Divisions and Age Categories	11
Starter.....	11
Newcomer.....	12
Novice.....	12
Intermediate.....	12
Advanced.....	13
Allstars.....	13
Pro-Am Dances – Basic Timing	14
<i>Couples.....</i>	<i>15</i>
Age Categories & Divisions.....	15
Starter.....	15
Newcomer.....	15

Novice	15
Intermediate	16
Advanced	16
Allstars	16
Couples Dances – Basic Timing	16
<i>Duos</i>	<i>18</i>
Ages & Rules Summary	18
Duos	18
Elite Duos	18
Showcase Duos	19
Charity Duos.....	19
<i>Other Divisions</i>	<i>21</i>
Partners Ages & Rules Summary	21
Quads Ages & Rules Summary	21
Country Classic Team Ages & Rules Summary	22
Team Ages & Rules Summary.....	22
Choreography	23
<i>Costume & Footwear Rules</i>	<i>25</i>
Costume	25
Footwear	25
Additional Rules.....	25
<i>General Rules</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Further Information</i>	<i>28</i>

Summary of Rule Changes

A summary of changes to the rules for this dance year can be found below. Please note, you must still read the full rulebook before competing at a World Dance Masters event.

- * Starter and Newcomer Solo dancers may not request a dispensation to remain in Starter/Newcomer for an additional year if they have consistently reached finals at qualifying events, European Masters, and/or World Masters. This also applies if they have reached a semi-final at Worlds if there have been more than 15 dancers in the division.
- * Cowboy boots and hats are optional for West Coast Swing and Street solos, regardless of music played.
- * Cowboy boots and hats are optional for all duos and quads divisions, regardless of music played.
- * Overhead lifts are not permitted in Allstars PA
- * A Boogie Babies division has been added. This will not be judged. A track will be played for competitors to dance to and all participants will receive a medal.
- * A Shining Steps division has been added. This is an open division for any dancer with addition support needs. This division will not be judged. One beginner dance will be offered in this division. All participants will receive a medal.
- * Couple categories are now in line with Pro-Am categories (Starter to Allstars)
- * Advanced and Allstars solo competitors may not compete in regular duos divisions (Junior, Teen, Open). The exception to this is Senior Duos.
- * In Elite Duos, only one dancer need be at Advanced level or above.

Divisional Information

The competition year begins on the 1st of September and ends on 31st of August. Your age on 1st September determines which division you will dance in for the competition year. If, through a relevant birthday, you are eligible to dance in an older age division, you may only move if you will be in the older age category for the majority of the year, and should request a dispensation from WDM to sanction this. Moving between divisions is allowed although once you have moved into a higher- level division, you cannot move down to a lower division.

Dancers may request to move to a younger age division. Please note, once a competitor has requested and been granted a dispensation to dance down an age division, they must stay in that category for the remainder of the competition year.

If a dancer has been unable to qualify for World Dance Masters Championships due to ill-health or other reasons, a dispensation may be available. Dancers, however, should prove that they were unable to attend the specified number of qualifiers and where applicable, supply medical evidence. Dancers should also have registered for the qualifier they require a dispensation for. Dispensations must be applied for in writing. World Dance Masters' decision will be final. Dispensations will only be granted in the case of serious and unexpected circumstances. Dispensations will not be granted if there is another later event at which a dancer can qualify.

For World Dance Masters Championships, the division in which you last qualified will be the division in which you must dance. Dancers will only have to move into a higher-level division in the following competition year if they have won three or more competitions where there are 3 or more competitors dancing, a European Dance Masters Title* or a World Dance Masters Title*, although this qualification criteria does not apply to Allstars - see Recommendations and Promotional Rules for further information. Dancers cannot enter more than one solo dance division at an event. (*This only applies if there are three or more competitors in the division).

Championship Qualification

Dancers from the UK & Ireland: must compete at 2 regional competitions to qualify for the World Dance Masters Championships in Solos, Pro-Am and Groups. Pro-Am dancers must dance a full program in order for it to class as a qualifier. Tiny Tots, Rugrats, Starters and Couples competitors currently only need compete at 1 regional event. All dancers must compete at 1 regional competition to qualify for the European Dance Masters. European Dance Masters is a qualifying event for the World Dance Masters Championships.

Dancers from any country outside the UK & Ireland: must compete at 1 regional competition to qualify for the World Dance Masters Championships in Solo/Pro-Am/Groups. Dancers do not have to qualify for the European Dance Masters. European Dance Masters is a qualifying event for the World Dance Masters Championships. If there is not a qualifying event in your country, you do not need to qualify for the World Dance Masters Championships.

If a dancer qualifies from Advanced Teen at the end of a competition year, they are technically eligible to dance in Allstars Junior Teen. The age requirements have now changed

for Allstars Junior Teen – dancers must stay in this division until the year they turn 18, at which point they may move to the Young Adult division. If dancers do not wish to remain in Allstars Junior Teen until they are 18, they may move to Advanced Young Adult.

Heats & Combining Divisions

If there are not a sufficient number of competitors at a competition, World Dance Masters reserve the right to take heats to a final of 5, rather than 7. If there are not sufficient entries in age divisions, or in male & female divisions, age categories and/or genders will be combined, at the discretion of World Dance Masters.

Solo

Division and Age Categories

Boogie Babies	Age 0-2
Tiny Tots	Age 0-4
Rugrats	Age 0-6
Primary	Age 0-9
Junior	Age 0-12
Teen	Age 13-15
Young Adult	Age 16-24
Open	Age 25-34
Crystal	Age 35-44
Silver	Age 45+
Gold	Age 60+
Platinum	Age 70+

Recommendations and Promotional Rules for Competitors:

Boogie Babies

This division is only for beginner dancers aged 0-2.

This division will not be judged. A track will be pre-released, and all registered competitors will be invited onto the floor to dance. No set dance will be required. Only 1 dance will be offered in this division.

Shining Steps

Open age division. This division is for dancers with additional support needs only.

This division will not be judged. One beginner dance will be offered in this division. Variations are not permitted. The emphasis on this division is on fun, enjoyment and inclusion.

Tiny Tots

This division is only for beginner dancers aged 0-4

Emphasis is on fun and enjoyment of the dance and to encourage our younger dancers to compete. Dances will be of a very basic level and only 1 dance will be offered in this division.

Rugrats

This division is only for beginner dancers aged 0-6

Emphasis is on fun and enjoyment of the dance and to encourage our younger dancers to compete. Dances will be of a very basic level and only 1 dance will be offered in this division.

Starter

This division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is for dancers who are brand new to competing. Dancers who have previous dance experience, or have competed in any other organisation or in any other dance style are not permitted to enter this division, it is for brand new dancers who are new to competition. The standard in this division is not necessarily determined by the length of time the dancer has been dancing, but by their ability. The emphasis in this division is fun and to try out competing in a friendly and encouraging environment.

Two beginner level dances will be offered in this division. Dancers may only stay in the division for 1 competition year, then they should move to the Newcomer division. If a dancer or their instructor feel that they are not of a standard to move out of the Starter division, they may apply to World Dance Masters (providing proof if required) to stay in the Starter division. Starter dancers may not request a dispensation to remain in Starter if they have consistently reached finals at heats/EDM/WDM. If dancers are deemed to be too advanced for this division, they may be asked to move up a division, at the discretion of World Dance Masters

If there are not sufficient entries, the Event Directors may choose to combine age divisions. Variations are not permitted in this division. The official step sheet must be strictly adhered to. Dance teachers of any form of dance may not compete at this level. If dancers are deemed to be too advanced for this division, they may be asked to move up a division, at the discretion of World Dance Masters. If dancers who are deemed to be too advanced for this division dance at a final, they risk being disqualified. Dancers who compete in Novice or above in pro-am may not compete in this division.

Newcomer

This division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is recommended for beginner dancers or dancers who have never competed before. The standard in this division is not necessarily determined by the length of time the dancer has been dancing, but by their ability. If a Newcomer competitor wins three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year. Variations are not permitted in this division. The official step sheet must be strictly adhered to.

Dance teachers of any form of dance may not compete at this level. Dancers who compete in Intermediate or above at any other organisation may not enter at this level. Dancers may only dance in Newcomer for one competition year. If they do not feel that they are ready to move to Novice at the end of this year, they may ask for a dispensation to remain in Newcomer for an additional year. Newcomer dancers may not request a dispensation to remain in Newcomer if they have consistently reached finals at heats/EDM/WDM. If dancers

are deemed to be too advanced for this division, they may be asked to move up a division, at the discretion of World Dance Masters.

Novice

This division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: 0-9; Junior: 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+

This division is recommended for dancers who have been dancing for over 1 year, or who have some previous dance experience. Emphasis in this division is on correct vanilla footwork and technique. Variations are allowed in this division. If a Novice competitor wins three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year. Any Novice dancer who places top 3 at an event with 20 or more competitors MUST move to Intermediate in the next dance year.

Intermediate

This division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is recommended for dancers who have been dancing for 2-3 years, or who have three or more years of other dance training. Dance teachers who are new to competition are recommended to begin in this division. If an Intermediate competitor wins three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year. Any Intermediate dancer who places top 3 at an event with 20 or more competitors MUST move to Advanced in the next dance year.

Advanced

This division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is recommended for experienced and accomplished dancers who have been competing for over 3 years, or who have an extensive dance background. A high level of technique and performance is expected at this level. Dancers who win a World Dance Masters Championships title at this level may opt to move to Allstars. Dancers who have won a European Dance Masters title as well as at least 2 regional qualifiers. All of the above applies with 5 or more competitors in the division. If there are not 5 competitors, dancers will be graded. In the event of a dancer receiving a majority of Gold Graduate grades they may also graduate to Allstars.

Allstars

This division is offered in the following categories:

Junior Teen: Age 0-17; Young Adult: 18-24; Open 25+; Crystal 35+ (pending) Silver: 45+; Gold 60+

This division is for advanced dancers and is by qualification only. Dancers may only qualify to Allstars from the Advanced divisions. Advanced Junior and Advanced Teen will qualify for Allstars Junior Teen. Advanced Young Adult will qualify for Allstars Young Adult. Advanced Open will qualify for Allstars Open and Advanced Silver will qualify to Allstars Silver. Crystal and Gold dancers are also now eligible to qualify for Allstars, under the criteria listed above (5 or more competitors/majority of GG grades). In the event that Crystal and Gold competitors meet the requirements for Allstars, they will be combined with the Allstars Open (Crystal) and Allstars Silver (Gold) divisions until there are a sufficient number of qualified Crystal and Gold Allstars competitors, at which point the divisions will be split. Dancers must have won an Advanced World Dance Masters Championships title OR have won a European Dance Masters title as well as at least 2 qualifying heats at Advanced level before they are eligible for this division. Wins are eligible only if there are 5 or more dancers in the division, or if they have received a majority of Gold Graduate grades for their dances. In divisions with less than 5 competitors, all dancers will be graded.

Competitors from other organisations who wish to enter at this level should contact World Dance Masters to ensure that they are eligible to enter this division. If you have not competed in the Allstars division at WORLD DANCE MASTERS for three or more years, you may not be eligible to dance in this division. Please check with World Dance Masters if this is the case.

Solo Rules Summary

- Male and Female competitors will dance in separate or combined heats. If there are not sufficient entries (less than 3 competitors), age groups and/or male & female divisions may be combined.
- Dancers will NOT be counted in, apart from the following divisions: Tiny Tots, Rugrats, Starter, and Newcomer.
- Introductions are not permitted. Movement before the dance starts may be penalised.
- Dancers must dance all dances offered in their division at any event they attend in order for the event to be classed as a qualifying event. Dancers will need to dance all specified dances to qualify for a placing.
- If a dancer leaves the floor for any reason, he/she may be disqualified from that dance; under the rules of the scoring system, this means they would be ineligible for an overall placement.

V & V Rule - Vanilla & Variation: Dancers must dance the first TWO walls as vanilla (unless otherwise specified on the official step sheet). You may use your hands, arms, head and body, but you cannot change any of the steps, they must be performed exactly as the official step description issued. You will be penalised if the official step sheet is not strictly adhered to. On the third, fifth and all following ODD walls you may introduce variations. Variations must flow in the same direction of movement as the Vanilla. On the fourth, sixth

and all following EVEN Walls you must dance vanilla with styling (unless indicated otherwise on the official step sheet).

Exceptions to the V&V Rule as follows:

Tiny Tots, Rugrats, Starter & Newcomer: Variations are not permitted at all in these divisions. Newcomer dancers must dance the dance exactly as written – no variations are allowed.

Vanilla Patterns: All vanilla patterns must be performed exactly as written on the official step descriptions, available from www.wdm.dance. Dancers must keep to the basic footwork and direction of the dance. No additional turns or variations may be added. Hand/arm/skirt/hat work and body styling/movement is allowed. Competitors will be disqualified if they include their own version of the dance during the vanilla walls.

Solo Movement Limitations

Starter and Newcomer

Overstyling of vanilla patterns is not permitted in these divisions. Adding in excessive movements to the vanillas (for example: flicks, kicks, hitches, jumps etc.) will be penalised. Dancers who are able to add this level of styling to the vanilla patterns should move to the Novice division.

Novice

Dancers in the Novice division are not allowed to complete more than half a turn on one foot (unless explicitly stated on the stepsheet). Knees are not permitted to touch the ground at any point.

Intermediate

Knees are not permitted to touch the floor at any point.

Advanced

Splits are not permitted in this division. Knees are allowed to touch the floor. Any knee work done that is deemed dangerous or unsafe will be penalised.

Allstars

Splits are permitted in this division. Dancers have a maximum of 4 beats exempt from acrobatic rule restrictions to recover from the splits. Knees are allowed to touch the floor. Any knee work done that is deemed dangerous or unsafe will be penalised.

Pro-Am

Divisions and Age Categories

Rugrats	Age 0-6
Primary	Age 0-9
Junior	Age 0-12
Teen	Age 13-15
Young Adult	Age 16-24
Open	Age 25+
Crystal	Age 35+
Silver	Age 45+
Gold	Age 60+
Platinum	Age 70+

Definitions

Pro – A Pro/Professional is someone who is actively teaching/working in couples dance in any dance community and who earns part or the whole of their income through couples' dance.

Am – An Am/Amateur does not teach dance for monetary reward, although may assist with dance teaching. Am/Amateurs who dance in Intermediate and above may dance with Starter or Newcomer dancers, under the guidance of their own Professional.

Recommendations and Promotional Rules for Competitors:

****Please note – dancers must compete with a full program in order to class that event as a qualifier.****

Music will be between 1 minute and 1.5 minutes in length, depending on the number of pro-am entries at the event.

Dancers may register as either a leader or a follower. A leader will lead the dances and a follower will follow the leader. Please ensure you select the correct division when entering.

Starter

East Coast Swing

This division is offered in the following categories:

Rugrats: 0-6; Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; ; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is for dancers who are brand new to competing. The emphasis in this division is fun and to try out competing in a friendly and encouraging environment. Dancers may only stay in the division for 1 competition year, then they should move to the Newcomer division. Starter dancers who consistently receive Honours or Gold Graduate grades may not request a dispensation to remain in Starter and must move to Newcomer.

If there are not sufficient entries, the Event Directors may choose to combine age divisions. Timing variations are not allowed in this division. Dance teachers of any form of dance may not compete at this level. If dancers are deemed to be too advanced for this division, they may be asked to move up a division, at the discretion of World Dance Masters. Dancers who compete in Novice or above in solos may not compete in this division.

Newcomer

2-Step, Cha Cha & East Coast Swing

This Division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; ; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is recommended for beginner dancers or dancers who have never competed before. If a Newcomer competitor wins three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year. Timing variations are not permitted in this division. Dancers who compete in Intermediate or above in solos at WORLD DANCE MASTERS or at any other organisation (solos or pro-am) may not enter at this level. Dancers may only dance in Newcomer for one competition year. If they do not feel that they are ready to move to Novice at the end of this year, they may ask for a dispensation to remain in Newcomer for an additional year. Newcomer dancers who consistently receive Honours or Gold Graduate grades may not request a dispensation to remain in Newcomer and must move to Novice.

If dancers are deemed to be too advanced for this division, they may be asked to move up a division, at the discretion of World Dance Masters.

Novice

2-Step, Cha Cha & West Coast Swing

This Division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is recommended for dancers who have been dancing for over 1 year, or who have some previous dance experience. Emphasis in this division is on good timing, footwork and technique. Timing variations are allowed in this division however at least 1, full, easily recognisable basic pattern must be executed per phrase of music. One footed spins, splits or aerial and weight support moves are not allowed in this division. If a Novice competitor wins three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year. If a Novice competitor receives a majority of GG grades at EDM or WDM they must move to Intermediate in the next dance year.

Intermediate

Waltz, 2-Step, Cha Cha, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing

This Division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is recommended for dancers who have been dancing for 2-3 years, or who have three or more years of other dance training. Dance teachers who are new to competition are recommended to begin in this division. Timing variations are allowed in this division however at least 1, full, easily recognisable basic pattern must be executed per phrase of music. One footed spins are permitted. Splits, aerials and weight supported moves are not allowed in this division. If an Intermediate competitor wins three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year. If an Intermediate competitor receives a majority of GG grades at EDM or WDM they must move to Advanced in the next dance year.

Advanced

Waltz, Polka, 2-Step, Nightclub, Cha Cha, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing

This Division is offered in the following categories:

Primary: Age 0-9; Junior: Age 0-12; Teen: 13-15; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25-34; Crystal: 35-44; Silver: 45+; Gold: 60+; Platinum: 70+.

This division is recommended for experienced and accomplished dancers who have been competing for over 3 years, or who have an extensive dance background. A high level of technique and performance is expected at this level. Timing variations are allowed in this division however at least 1 full easily recognisable basic pattern must be executed per phrase of music. One footed spins, splits and weight support moves are allowed in this division. Aerials are not permitted.

Allstars

Showcase Waltz, Showcase 2-Step, Medley (set by WDM)

This Division is offered in the following categories:

Junior Teen: 0-17; Young Adult: 16-24; Open: 25+; Silver: 45+

Dancers can only graduate to this division by winning the World Championships or Europeans (plus 2 heats with 3 or more competitors) in the Advanced division, with a majority of Gold Graduate grades. If a dancer does not achieve a majority of GG's, they may not move to Allstars. Dancers may only qualify to Allstars from the following divisions: Advanced Junior and Advanced Teen will qualify for Allstars Junior Teen. Advanced Young Adult will qualify for Allstars Young Adult. Advanced Open will qualify for Allstars Open and Advanced Silver will qualify to Allstars Silver. Dancers must have competed in one of those divisions in order to qualify for Allstars. A high level of technique and performance is expected at this level. Timing variations are allowed in this division however at least 1 full easily recognisable basic pattern must be executed per phrase of music. One footed spins, splits and weight supported moves are allowed in this division. Lifts are allowed, however, any overhead lifts are not permitted.

Music will be released every year for Waltz, 2-Step and a medley. Dancers will choreograph and perform their own routines to these tracks, subject to the rules above. The solo medley will be set and released by WDM. In the case of a tie break, the medley will be weighted.

Pro-Am Dances – Basic Timing

2-Step (Two-Step) <i>Alternative count</i>	123 5 or 123 567 or 12345 7 QQ S S or QQ S QQ S or QQ QQ S
Waltz <i>Alternative count</i>	123456 or 12345&6 (only for purpose of foot change) S S S S S S or S S S S Q Q S
Cha Cha <i>Alternative count</i>	1234&5678& or 12&34&56&78& S S S QQ S S S QQ or S QQ S QQ S QQ S QQ
East Coast Swing <i>Alternative count</i>	1&23&456 or 1&2345&678 QQ S QQ S S S or QQ S S S QQ S S S
West Coast Swing <i>Alternative count</i>	123&45&6 or 123&4567&8 S S QQ S QQ S or S S QQ S S S QQ S
Polka <i>Alternative count</i>	1&23&45&67&8 QQ S QQ S QQ S QQ S
Nightclub 2-Step <i>Alternative count</i>	12&34& S QQ S QQ

Couples

Age Categories & Divisions

Junior	Age 0-12
Teen	Age 13-17
Open	Age 18+
Gems	Age 45+

**If two dancers competing together fall into different age groups, they must dance in the division of the oldest dancer. Divisions may be combined, depending on number of event entries*

Starter

East Coast Swing

This division is for dancers who are brand new to competing. The emphasis in this division is fun and to try out competing in a friendly and encouraging environment. Dancers may only stay in the division for 1 competition year, then they should move to the Newcomer division. Timing variations are not allowed in this division. Dance teachers of any form of dance may not compete at this level. If couples are deemed to be too advanced for this division, they may be asked to move up a division, at the discretion of World Dance Masters. Dancers who compete in Novice or above in solos may not compete in this division.

Newcomer

2-Step, Cha Cha & East Coast Swing

This division is recommended for beginner dancers or dancers who have never competed before. If a Newcomer couple wins three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, they must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year. Timing variations are not permitted in this division. Dancers who compete in Intermediate or above in solos at WORLD DANCE MASTERS or at any other organisation (solos or pro-am) may not enter at this level. Dancers may only dance in Newcomer for one competition year. If they do not feel that they are ready to move to Novice at the end of this year, they may ask for a dispensation to remain in Newcomer for an additional year. If dancers are deemed to be too advanced for this division, they may be asked to move up a division, at the discretion of World Dance Masters.

Novice

2-Step, Cha Cha & West Coast Swing

This division is recommended for dancers who have been dancing for over 1 year, or who have some previous dance experience. Emphasis in this division is on good timing, footwork and technique. Timing variations are allowed in this division however at least 1, full, easily recognisable basic pattern must be executed per phrase of music. One footed spins, splits or aerial and weight support moves are not allowed in this division. If a Novice couple wins

three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year.

Intermediate

Waltz, 2-Step, Cha Cha, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing

This division is recommended for dancers who have been dancing for 2-3 years, or who have three or more years of other dance training. Dance teachers who are new to competition are recommended to begin in this division. Timing variations are allowed in this division however at least 1, full, easily recognisable basic pattern must be executed per phrase of music. One footed spins are permitted. Splits, aerials and weight supported moves are not allowed in this division. If an Intermediate couple wins three or more competitions, a European Dance Masters title or a World Dance Masters Championships title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year.

Advanced

Waltz, Polka, 2-Step, Nightclub, Cha Cha, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing

This division is recommended for experienced and accomplished dancers who have been competing for over 3 years, or who have an extensive dance background. A high level of technique and performance is expected at this level. Timing variations are allowed in this division however at least 1 full easily recognisable basic pattern must be executed per phrase of music. One footed spins, splits and weight support moves are allowed in this division. Aerials are not permitted.

Allstars

Showcase Waltz, Showcase 2-Step, Medley (set by WDM)

Dancers can only graduate to this division by winning the World Championships or Europeans (plus 2 heats with 3 or more competitors) in the Advanced division. A high level of technique and performance is expected at this level. Timing variations are allowed in this division however at least 1 full easily recognisable basic pattern must be executed per phrase of music. One footed spins, splits and weight supported moves are allowed in this division. Lifts are allowed, however, any overhead lifts are not permitted.

Music will be released every year for Waltz, 2-Step and a medley. Dancers will choreograph and perform their own routines to these tracks, subject to the rules above. The solo medley will be set and released by WDM. In the case of a tie break, the medley will be weighted.

Couples Dances – Basic Timing

2-Step (Two-Step) <i>Alternative count</i>	123 5 or 123 567 or 12345 7 QQ S S or QQ S QQ S or QQ QQ S
Waltz <i>Alternative count</i>	123456 or 12345&6 (only for purpose of foot change) S S S S S S or S S S S Q Q S
Cha Cha <i>Alternative count</i>	1234&5678& or 12&34&56&78& S S S QQ S S S QQ or S QQ S QQ S QQ S QQ
East Coast Swing <i>Alternative count</i>	1&23&456 or 1&2345&678 QQ S QQ S S S or QQ S S S QQ S S S
West Coast Swing <i>Alternative count</i>	123&45&6 or 123&4567&8 S S QQ S QQ S or S S QQ S S S QQ S
Polka <i>Alternative count</i>	1&23&45&67&8 QQ S QQ S QQ S QQ S
Nightclub 2-Step <i>Alternative count</i>	12&34& S QQ S QQ

Duos

Ages & Rules Summary

Duos

Junior	Age 0-12
Teen	Age 13-17
Open	Age 18+
Senior	Age 45+

** If two dancers competing together fall into different age groups, add together the dancers' ages and divide by 2. Whichever age category this age falls into is the age division in which the duos should dance.*

***Advanced solo dancers are not permitted to dance in these duos divisions (with the exception of Senior Duos).*

- Duos are two individuals – males, females, or mixed – dancing in any non-jointed movement.
- Hands or bodies may briefly touch but dancers cannot joint to execute any movement.
- Intermediate solo limitation rules apply to this division.
- A set piece of music will be pre-released to which Duos should choreograph their own routine.
- Several Duos will compete on the floor at the same time; therefore, dance floor etiquette must be followed.
- Dancers should start dancing when they choose; they will not be counted in.
- Dancers do not need to wear cowboy boots or hats, regardless of the music

Elite Duos

Open Age division

**In Elite Duos at least one dancer of the duo must be in Advanced or Allstars.*

- Duos are two individuals, males, females or mixed, dancing in any non-joined pattern.
- Hands or bodies may briefly touch but dancers cannot join to execute any movement.
- Advanced solo limitation rules apply to this division.
- Splits are not permitted in this division.

- Knees are allowed to touch the floor. Any knee work done that is deemed dangerous or unsafe will be penalised.
-
- A set piece of music will be pre-released to which Duos should choreograph their own routine.
- Several Duos will compete on the floor at the same time; therefore, dance floor etiquette must be followed.
- Dancers should start dancing when they choose; they will not be counted in.
- Dancers in this division may not compete in any of the standard duos divisions. They may compete in Showcase Duos.
- Dancers do not need to wear cowboy boots or hats, regardless of the music

Showcase Duos

Open Age division

- Duos are two individuals, males, females or mixed.
- In Showcase Duos, couples may join and/or use elements of couples/partner dancing. This division is exempt from Acrobatic Restrictions, however, any moves that are deemed by the judges to be dangerous will be penalised.
- Costume rules do not apply in this division.
- A set piece of music will be pre-released to which Duos should choreograph their own routine.
- Several Duos will compete on the floor at the same time; therefore, dance floor etiquette must be followed.
- Dancers should start dancing when they choose; they will not be counted in.
- Dancers in this division must sign a disclaimer otherwise they will not be allowed to compete.

Charity Duos

Open Age division

- World Dance Masters will pick a charity at the start of the dance year. All monies raised from this division at World Dance Masters run and owned events will be donated to this charity at the end of the dance year.
- Duos are two individuals, males, females or mixed.

- In Charity Duos, couples may join and/or use elements of couples/partner dancing. This division is exempt from Acrobatic Restrictions.
- The emphasis in this division is on audience entertainment. Interaction with the audience and other duos is permitted.
- Costume rules do not apply in this division.
- A set piece of music will be pre-released to which Duos should choreograph their own routine.
- Several Duos will compete on the floor at the same time.
- Dancers should start dancing when they choose; they will not be counted in. Dancers in this division must sign a disclaimer otherwise they will not be allowed to compete.

Other Divisions

Partners Ages & Rules Summary

Junior Teen	Age 0-15
Open	Age 16+
Gems	Age 45+

** If two dancers competing together fall into different age groups, add together the dancers ages and divide by 2. Whichever age category this age falls into is the age division in which the partners should dance. Divisions may be combined, depending on event entries.*

- Partners are two individuals, males, females or mixed, dancing in a joined pattern. Dancers must stay joined (in the specified hold) unless explicitly stated in step sheet/video. Variations must be joined for the majority of the variation wall.
- A step sheet/video of the Partner dance will be released. Partners must follow the V&V rule in that they must execute the vanilla steps for 2 Walls, they may then do their own choreography for a wall (unless specified on the stepsheet). The variations must flow in the direction of the original dance. Any choreography that interferes with other competitors may be penalised.
- Several Partners will compete on the floor at the same time; therefore, dance floor etiquette must be followed.
- Dancers will not be counted in.
- The music for each partner dance will be approximately 2 minutes in length. Dances will be danced back-to-back.
- As per all other divisions, acrobatics are not allowed. In addition, lifts are not permitted (this is where one partner supports the other to have both feet off the floor).
- Intermediate solo limitation rules apply to this division.
- Dance floor etiquette for partner dancers will be as follows - overtaking is permitted, slower moving pairs must move towards the outside of the floor to allow faster moving pairs to pass on the inside. However, this should only be done if absolutely necessary.

Quads Ages & Rules Summary

Junior Teen	Age 0-15
Open	Age 16+

**If the dancers competing together fall into different age groups, add together the dancers ages and divide by 4. Whichever age category this age falls into is the age division in which the Quad should dance.*

- Quads are four individuals, males, females or mixed, dancing in any non-joined pattern.
- Hands or bodies may briefly touch but dancers cannot join to execute any movement.
- Intermediate solo limitation rules apply to this division.
- A set piece of music will be pre-released to which all quads should choreograph their own routine.
- Several quads will compete on the floor at the same time; therefore, dance floor etiquette must be followed.
- Dancers should start dancing when they choose; they will not be counted in.
- No competitor may dance in more than one quad at an event.
- Dancers do not need to wear cowboy boots or hats, regardless of the music

Country Classic Team Ages & Rules Summary

Open Age Division

- There must be a minimum of 5 dancers in this team division; there is no maximum limit on the number of dancers in the team. Dancers may be any combination of ages.
- Solo dance rules apply in this division.
- Intermediate solo limitation rules apply to this division.
- A line dance will be selected which teams must perform. Dancers will be required to dance the first two walls as vanilla, then may perform the 3rd, 5th and all odd numbered walls as variations (unless otherwise specified on the stepsheet). Variations do not need to flow in the direction of the vanilla steps, however, vanilla walls must be performed to the correct wall. Teams are permitted to change formation within the variation walls but must stay in formation for all vanilla walls. Introductions and endings are permitted in this division.
- Country Classic teams will compete separately; there will not be more than one team competing on the floor at a time.
- All dances selected in this division will be to country music.

Team Ages & Rules Summary

Standard Team; Cabaret Team

Open Age Divisions

- Teams must consist of **at least SIX** members for each routine and involves individual dancers dancing any combination of dances. They may touch and join to create a formation or initiate a turn or movement. Teams may include sequences from a line dance, partner dance or from couples dance styles. Lifts, drops and weight bearing moves are not permitted in Standard Teams, but are allowed in Cabaret Teams.
- Standard Teams - Intermediate solo limitation rules apply to this division.
- The order in which teams dance will be selected by the Event Director in a random and impartial fashion.
- Acted themes, pantomime or comedy performances of any kind are allowed in the Cabaret Teams but NOT in Standard Teams.
- Cabaret Teams may use any dance style or combination of dance styles appropriately presented with a theme and may use any music. Props are allowed. Cabaret/themed costumes are allowed. Audio/verbal sounds are allowed. Acrobatic moves are permitted, and therefore a disclaimer must be signed by the Team Captain/Organiser.

TEAM MUSIC

Music must be emailed to competition@wdm.dance at least 72 hours prior to the competition. A back up copy must be available if required. Delays of a team's performance due to music unavailability may result in the team being disqualified.

Music for Teams:

- **Standard Teams:** Music must be a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 5 minutes in length. Time starts with the first notes of the music and ends with the last notes. Any introduction or exit music **MUST** be included in the time allowance. Exceeding the time limits will result in a lower final placement. At least 50% of the music used for standard teams must be country (i.e. appeared in the country charts or performed by a recognised country artist or group).
- **Cabaret Teams:** Music must be a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 10 minutes in length. The time limit includes set-up and clear-up time. Time starts when the first prop/team member is on the floor and ends when the last prop/team member has left the floor. Exceeding the time limits will result in a lower final placement. Any style of music is allowed in the cabaret division. Cabaret teams must be family friendly. Any teams that present a performance that is not suitable for an audience of all ages may be penalized.

Choreography

World Dance Masters Choreography division is currently only offered at the World Championship and does not require qualification. This category is offered for dances in the following divisions.

Country	Absolute Beginner Improver Intermediate Advanced
Non-Country	Absolute Beginner Improver Intermediate Advanced

- Depending on entries, Non-Country and Country divisions and level divisions may be combined. A step sheet of the choreography should be provided.
- The choreographer of the dance/s entered must be available at the event to demo the dance in the competition. They may nominate someone else to demonstrate the dance for them, however, the choreographer must be in attendance at the event. A maximum of 8 dancers may demonstrate the choreography.
- Choreographers may not enter more than one dance per division. This is inclusive of lead and co-choreographed dances (i.e. a choreographer may be listed on a dance once per division, irrespective of whether they are listed as the main choreographer or a secondary choreographer). Only the lead choreographer (the name listed first on the spreadsheet) will be eligible for any prize(s).
- Music for each dance will be played up to a maximum of 2 minutes and may be faded at any time from 1.30. If the choreographer feels that the judges need to see more than this (for example if it is an ABC dance), they must advise the contest co-ordinator well in advance.

Costume & Footwear Rules

Costume

Male: You must wear a shirt, top or shirt & waistcoat, trousers, shorts or jeans. You must wear a cowboy hat when the dance is to country music (i.e. appeared in the country charts or performed by a recognised country artist or group), however, for non-country music; the cowboy hat is optional - please see individual step sheet for classification. If the cowboy hat is dropped during the course of the dance, and not retrieved at the earliest opportunity, you will be penalised.

Female: You must wear a) dress or b) shirt, top, leotard or blouse c) trousers, shorts, skirt, jeans, catsuit. You must wear dance pants with skirts and dresses. Dance tights must be worn. A cowboy hat is optional.

Tops/Leotards: Strapless tops are not allowed. Bare midriffs are not allowed. At no point should a costume top ride up to expose a bare midriff. If flesh/see through material is used to represent bare flesh, this may be penalized, at the discretion of the judges.

Skirts/Trousers: When standing still, no part of the leg should be shown more than 4"/10cm above the centre of the knee. Length is measured from the middle of the knee vertically to the hem of the skirt/trouser leg, at all angles. Handkerchief hems and split skirts are measured from the shortest point. Tearaway skirts are not permitted, except in all team divisions. Sheer skirts/trousers which are see through more than 4" above the knee are not permitted.

Footwear

- For all dances done to country music (i.e. appeared in the country charts or performed by a recognised country artist or group), competitors in Intermediate or above must wear cowboy boots. For dances done to non-country music, dance shoes may be worn.
- If the music is country and the dance style being performed is West Coast Swing, swing shoes or swing boots may be worn. If the dance style is classed as Street, then trainers may be worn.
- Primary, Junior, Teen and all Male dancers must not wear dance shoes with more than 1.5"/3.75 cm heel. All other dancers must not wear shoes with more than a 3"/7.5cm heel.
- Shorter ankle boots or lace up shoes may be worn in the Gold Divisions, or by petition if a competitor has any health problems that may prevent them from wearing boots.

Additional Rules

Allstar Costume & Footwear Rules

Dancers in this division must follow the general rules for costumes as outlined above, however dancers in this division are not obliged to follow the costume restrictions. Dancers in this division may wear a skirt/trousers/shorts/dress of any length. Bare midriffs are allowed in this division. All footwear rules must be followed. Dancers should remember that any costume which is a cause of embarrassment to judges or spectators, will be penalised. Allstars Pro-Am competitors must wear cowboy boots for all of their dances.

Rugrats, Starter, All Primary, Newcomer, & Novice Costume & Footwear Rules

Cowboy hats are optional for all dancers. Any suitable footwear may be worn (trainers are only permitted for street); however, no stiletto/high heels are allowed.

**If you are unsure of the legality of any aspect of your costume or footwear, please check at the competitor's meeting or with the head judge before you compete.*

General Rules

- Gum Chewing is not allowed.
- Audio/verbal sound/singing is not allowed (except in Team Cabaret). Lip- synching is allowed.
- Competitors must not talk to other competitors, judges or the audience while dancing on the floor in competition. You risk not being recalled to the next heat or placed in a final.
- Acrobatic moves are not allowed at any point during the dance (this also includes the introduction and 'end poses'). These moves are defined as follows:
 - Any move where both legs are above waist height of the competitor
 - Any move where the competitor's weight is on one or both hands
 - Any move where a competitor sits or lies on the floor
- Splits are not permitted, except in Allstars, Showcase Duos and Cabaret Teams. If splits are performed in any other division the competitor/s will be penalised. Allstars competitors may use 4 beats of music exempt from acrobatic rule restrictions to recover from the splits.
- Kicks are allowed; however, kicks must not interfere with, or endanger, any other dancer on the floor
- Costumes must be worn for Award Ceremonies.
- Any costumes that may give cause for embarrassment to competitors, judges or spectators, is not allowed and will be penalised.
- All dancers must obey dance floor etiquette. If you are executing a move and by doing so cause interference with another competitor, you will not be recalled to the next heat or placed in a final. The offended competitor will not be affected. This also means that variations should flow in the direction of the dance.

- Allstar medleys, Charity Duos, Showcase Duos and Cabaret Team are exempt from acrobatic rules restrictions
- Props are not permitted, except in Cabaret Team or Allstar solo medleys.
- Vulgar or crude movements are not allowed. Movements beyond the point of flirtation, humour or comedy, will result in the dancer not being recalled to the next heat or placed in a final.
- **Competition Ethics:** Competitors MUST NOT question or consult the Judges about the competition during the event. Please do not approach the judges for feedback after awards. Judges should not be contacted after the event to comment on any previous performance.

Further Information

Competitors Meeting: It is each competitor's responsibility to attend the Competitors Meeting if one is called during the event. For teams, at least one team member should attend.

Competitors' Responsibilities: It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure they are fully up to date with the rules relating to their division. This includes official step descriptions and costume regulations. Competitors should make themselves aware of competitors registration and meetings. All competitors must be in the competitor's area 15 minutes before they are required to dance. Each competitor's number will be called twice and if the competitor is not on the floor ready to dance, they may be disqualified from the dance.

All teams must be ready to perform at the assigned time; delays may result in a lower placement.

All competitors are expected to behave in a professional and proper manner. Anyone acting in an unethical or unprofessional way may be disqualified from the event. If competitors do not abide by the published rules they will be disqualified. Improper behaviour, competition enquiries, protests or disputes must immediately be brought to the attention of the Event Director. All decisions of the Event Director, Contest Co-Ordinator, Judges and Scrutineers are final.

Competitors may ask judges for feedback directly after the awards for that competition (at the individual judge's discretion). Competitors may not contact judges for feedback after the event is over.

Judges: During the competition, judges/officials privy to competition scoring or results must not, under any circumstances or by any means, convey such information to the public or to a competitor. Judges & officials are not restricted from socialising at an event except whilst judging or carrying out official duties.

Judges Meetings: The reason for calling a judges' meeting and the result will only be conveyed to the dancers involved if necessary. If the Head Judge feels that a statement is required, then it will be made in general terms only and for the benefit/guidance of all competitors.

Junior/Teen Competitors: Competitors aged under 16 must be accompanied by an adult who is held accountable for their conduct at all times. It is the adult's responsibility to convey all the information, step descriptions, dress rules, etc., to the dancer in their care.

Preliminary Heats: Preliminary heats are used to eliminate dancers in order to get to a final. Scores from prelims will only be used to decide final placings if scores from the finals themselves are tied. There may be occasions when another heat is required because of a tie resulting from the judges' marks.

Solos/Duos/Quads: The scores of all dances will be added together and the overall highest scoring dancers will move forward to the next heat/final. Heats will be held in

all divisions with nine or more dancers. A percentage of the dancers in each heat will be recalled to dance again in the next heat until a maximum of seven competitors, or as many competitors as the Head Judge deems necessary, remain.

Teams: Preliminary heats may be held in all competitions with nine or more competitors in a division, unless otherwise deemed by the Head Judge. A percentage of the teams will be recalled to dance again in the next heat until a maximum of seven teams remain.

Scoring Analysis: A scoring analysis of your performance is available; they will be available online after the competition. It may take up to 14 days for the scores to be published.

Scrutineers: Events are not sanctioned unless they are scrutinised by Licensed Adjudicators.

Step Descriptions: The Event Director must issue a step description for each dance offered at the Event. Competitors are required to dance to this sheet only and must request the step descriptions from the Event Director or download from the website www.wdm.dance. A step description from any other source is Not Valid for the purposes of the competition.

Disclaimer: By competing at any World Dance Masters sanctioned event, you are agreeing to the following statement

"We agree to hold the organisers of this event and their agents harmless for all suits, claims or demands of every kind and character arising out of and in conjunction with this event. We hereby authorise the reproduction, sale, copyright, exhibition, broadcast and/or distribution of any event videography and photography without limitation. We understand the physical risks of entering dance competitions and social dancing and assume full responsibility for any injury or personal damages resulting from the event."

Any sanctioned event and competition that does not strictly adhere to these rules will not be classed as a World Dance Masters competition

These rules are subject to change at the discretion of World Dance Masters.