



Speech Contest Rulebook

Explanation of Changes

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| Global change throughout the Speech Contest Rulebook: <i>Capitalization of Area, Division, and District, addition of the Oxford comma, and global editorial review for grammatical updates or inconsistencies.</i> | All instances of the words <i>Area, Division, and District</i> were capitalized. The Oxford comma was added in all lists of three or more items. The rulebook received a full editorial review. | These changes were made to align the <i>Speech Contest Rulebook</i> with recent changes to the Toastmasters International style guide and standards for capitalization and punctuation. |
| Global change throughout the Speech Contest Rulebook: <i>addition of parenthetical numerals next to all numbers that are fully spelled out.</i> | In all instances in which a number is spelled out, the corresponding numeral was added in parenthesis following the number. For example: three (3) or seven (7). | This change was made to align the <i>Speech Contest Rulebook</i> with standards applied to all other Toastmasters International Policy and Protocol. Parenthetical numerals provide added clarity regarding the number being referenced. |
| <p>Introduction</p> <p>Additional Resources. In this section, you'll find a list of additional manuals, articles, Web pages, and other helpful materials related to Toastmasters speech contests.</p> | <p>Introduction</p> <p>Speech Contest Materials and Additional Resources. In this section, you'll find a list of additional manuals, articles, Web pages, and other helpful materials related to Toastmasters sSpeech cContests speech contests each year.</p> | <p>Introduction</p> <p>The language in the introduction was clarified to more accurately indicate the types of additional resources available in the <i>Speech Contest Rulebook</i>.</p> |
| <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>A. To be eligible to compete in any official Toastmasters speech contest, a member must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. In addition, to be eligible to compete in the International Speech Contest, a member must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have completed six speech projects in the Competent Communication manual or earned certificates of completion in Levels 1 and 2 of any path in the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience. 1. However, a charter member of a club chartered less than one year before the club contest is permitted to compete without having completed this requirement. The club must have officially chartered before the area contest. | <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>A. To be eligible to compete in any official Toastmasters speech contest, a member must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. In addition, to be eligible to compete in the International Speech Contest, a member must: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have completed six (6) speech projects in the Competent Communication manual or earned certificates of completion in Levels 1 and 2 of any path in the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience. 1. However, a charter member of a club chartered less than one (1) year before the club contest is permitted to compete without having completed this requirement. The club must have officially chartered before the aArea contest. 2. <i>Only members who joined Toastmasters prior to the rollout of Pathways in their region can apply speeches from the Competent Communication manual to speech contest eligibility.</i> | <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>A specification was added regarding which members are eligible to apply awards from the Traditional education program toward Speech Contest eligibility.</p> <p>Members who joined Toastmasters after Pathways rolled out in their region were not eligible to work in the traditional program. To align with this, only those who were members prior to the Pathways rollout can apply speeches from the <i>Competent Communication</i> manual to speech contest eligibility.</p> |

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| <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>A. To be eligible to compete in any official Toastmasters speech contest, a member must:</p> <p>5. Contest chairs, chief judges, voting judges, tiebreaking judges, timers, counters, sergeants at arms, and test speakers may not compete in the contest at which they are serving.</p> <p>8. Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each club contest in which paid membership is held.</p> | <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>A. To be eligible to compete in any official Toastmasters speech contest, a member must:</p> <p>5. Contest chairs, chief judges, voting judges, tiebreaking judges, timers, counters, sergeants at arms, and test speakers may not compete in the contest at which they are serving in any of these roles.</p> <p>8. Toastmasters who are members in more than one (1) club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each the club contest(s) in each club in which they hold paid membership is held.</p> | <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>Language was added to provide increased clarity regarding the eligibility of contest officials. The addition of the phrase “in these roles” removes ambiguity as to what is referenced by “in the contest at which they are serving.”</p> <p>Changes were made to more clearly indicate speech contest eligibility for members who hold paid membership in more than one club. The member may participate in the contest(s) at each club if paid membership and all other speech contest eligibility requirements are met.</p> |
| <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>B. To be a chief judge, voting judge, or tiebreaking judge at a Toastmasters speech contest, you must meet all eligibility requirements identified below.</p> <p>2. At an area, division, or district contest:</p> <p>a) Be a paid member for a minimum of six months.</p> <p>b) Have completed a minimum of six speech projects in Competent Communication or earned certificates of completion in Levels 1 and 2 of any path in the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.</p> | <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>B. To be a chief judge, voting judge, or tiebreaking judge at a Toastmasters speech contest, you must meet all eligibility requirements identified below.</p> <p>2. At an aArea, dDivision, or dDistrict contest:</p> <p>a) Be a paid member for a minimum of six (6) months.</p> <p>b) Have completed a minimum of six (6) speech projects in Competent Communication or earned certificates of completion in Levels 1 and 2 of any path in the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.</p> <p>1. Only members who joined Toastmasters prior to the rollout of Pathways in their region can apply speeches from the <i>Competent Communication manual</i> manual to eligibility for judging.</p> | <p>2. Eligibility</p> <p>A specification was added regarding which members are eligible to apply awards from the Traditional education program toward eligibility for serving as a judge.</p> <p>Members who joined Toastmasters after Pathways rolled out in their region were not eligible to work in the traditional program. To align with this, only those who were members prior to the Pathways rollout can apply speeches from the <i>Competent Communication</i> manual to eligibility for serving as a judge.</p> |
| <p>3. Selection Sequence</p> <p>A. Club, area, division, district. Each club in good standing is permitted to choose its contestant for each area speech contest by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with the rules in this manual, and the contest result is final. The area speech contest winner then proceeds to the division contest, if applicable. The division winner then proceeds to the district contest.</p> | <p>3. Selection Sequence</p> <p>A. Club, aArea, dDivision, dDistrict. Each club in good standing is permitted to choose its contestant for each aArea speech contest by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with the rules in this rulebook manual, and the contest result is final. The aArea speech contest winner then proceeds to the dDivision contest, if applicable. The dDivision winner then proceeds to the dDistrict contest.</p> | <p>3. Selection Sequence</p> <p>An edit was made to align this rule with the passing of Proposal A in August 2019. Because Divisions are an official part of District structure, all speech contests will include a Division level. As a result, the clarification “if applicable” was removed to indicate that Division contests always apply.</p> |

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| <p>4. Speech Subject and Preparation</p> <p>E. All contestants will speak from the same platform or area designated by the contest chair.</p> | <p>4. Speech Subject and Preparation</p> <p>E. Contestants must not reference another contestant, or a speech presented by another contestant, from the platform at the same contest in which they are competing.</p> <p>F. All contestants will speak from the same platform or Area designated by the contest chair.</p> | <p>4. Speech Subject and Preparation</p> <p>This rule was added to promote fairness and integrity in contests and ensure that contestants who are later in the speaking order are not provided with an advantage or an opportunity to attempt to sway judges by referencing an earlier contestant's speech.</p> |
| <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>A. At each level of a Toastmasters speech contest, a specified number of voting judges and officials are required.</p> <p>5. For the International Speech Contest, Region Quarterfinals, there must be a minimum of nine voting judges and one tiebreaking judge for each contest. The Immediate Past International President once removed will be the chief judge for all Region Quarterfinals. No voting judge or tiebreaking judge can be a member in the same region in which a contestant is a member. No voting judge or tiebreaking judge can be a member in the same club in which a contestant is a member.</p> | <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>A. At each level of a Toastmasters speech contest, a specified number of voting judges and officials are required.</p> <p>5. For the International Speech Contest, Region Quarterfinals, there must be a minimum of nine (9) voting judges and one (1) tiebreaking judge for each contest. The Immediate Past International President once removed will be the chief judge for all Rregion Qquarterfinals. If the Immediate Past International President once removed is unable to serve as chief judge, the First Vice President will appoint another Past International President. No voting judge or tiebreaking judge can be a member in the same region in which a contestant is a member. No voting judge or tiebreaking judge can be a member in the same club in which a contestant is a member.</p> | <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>Direction was added regarding who will serve as chief judge for region quarterfinals should the Immediate Past President once removed be unable to serve.</p> |
| <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>A. At each level of a Toastmasters speech contest, a specified number of voting judges and officials are required.</p> <p>7. At the World Championship of Public Speaking, there must be one voting judge representing each region. In addition to these judges, a contest chair, chief judge, five qualifying judges, tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed. No chief judge, voting judge, qualifying judge, or tiebreaking judge can be a member of any club in which a contestant is a member.</p> | <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>A. At each level of a Toastmasters speech contest, a specified number of voting judges and officials are required.</p> <p>7. At the World Championship of Public Speaking, there must be one (1) voting judge representing each region. In addition to these judges, a contest chair, chief judge, five (5) qualifying judges, a tiebreaking judge, three (3) counters, and two (2) timers are appointed. The Immediate Past International President once removed will be the chief judge for the World Championship of Public Speaking. If the Immediate Past International President once removed is unable to serve as chief judge, the First Vice President will appoint another Past International President. No chief judge, voting judge, qualifying judge, or tiebreaking judge can be a member of any club in which a contestant is a member.</p> | <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>Wording was added to specify who serves as the chief judge for the World Championship of Public Speaking®.</p> <p>To align with the protocol for the region quarterfinal level, direction was also added regarding who will serve as chief judge at this level should the Immediate Past President once removed be unable to serve.</p> |

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| <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>A. At each level of a Toastmasters speech contest, a specified number of voting judges and officials are required.</p> <p>9. The contest chair may appoint a contest Toastmaster to perform any of the chair’s duties. In such cases, the term, “contest Toastmaster” should be considered synonymous with “contest chair.” A contest Toastmaster is also ineligible to compete in the contest at which they are serving.</p> | <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>A. At each level of a Toastmasters speech contest, a specified number of voting judges and officials are required.</p> <p>9. The contest chair may appoint a contest Toastmaster to perform any of the chair’s duties. In such cases, the term, “contest Toastmaster” should be considered synonymous with “contest chair.” A contest Toastmaster is also ineligible to compete in the contest at which they are serving.</p> <p>10. Contest officials must not serve in more than one (1) role for the same contest at the Area (when practical), Division, District, region quarterfinal, semifinal, and final levels.</p> | <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>This rule was added to promote fairness in speech contests, contribute to a wide distribution in contest official roles, and provide as many leadership opportunities as possible. Because this rule may be impractical at specific levels, it does not apply to club-level speech contests, and only applies to Area-level contests when practical.</p> |
| <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>F. For the International, Humorous, and Tall Tales contests, introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant’s name, speech title, speech title, and contestant’s name.</p> <p>1. For Table Topics contests, introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant’s name, topic, topic, and contestant’s name.</p> <p>2. For Evaluation contests, introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant’s name twice.</p> | <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>F. For the International, Humorous, and Tall Tales contests, the contest chair must introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant’s name, speech title, speech title, and contestant’s name.</p> <p>1. For Table Topics contests, the contest chair must introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant’s name, topic, topic, and contestant’s name.</p> <p>2. For Evaluation contests, the contest chair must introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant’s name twice</p> | <p>5. General Procedure</p> <p>The language added here clarifies the contest chair is the official responsible for introducing speech contestants.</p> |
| <p>7. Protests and Disqualifications</p> <p>A. Protests are limited to eligibility and originality and must only be lodged by voting judges and contestants. Any protest must be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chair prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s).</p> <p>B. The chief judge, contest chair, voting judges and contestants must not consider protests from audience members.</p> | <p>7. Protests and Disqualifications</p> <p>A. Protests are limited to eligibility, and originality, and reference to another contestant’s speech and must only be lodged by voting judges and/or contestants. Any protest must be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chair prior to the announcement of the winner(s) and alternate(s).</p> <p>B. The chief judge, contest chair, voting judges, and contestants must not consider protests from audience members.</p> | <p>7. Protests and Disqualifications</p> <p>Wording was added to clarify how the new rule in “4. Speech Subject and Preparation” will be enforced. Should a contestant not follow this rule and reference another contestant’s speech, this is grounds for a contestant or voting judge to raise a protest.</p> |

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| <p>7. Protests and Disqualifications (Continued)</p> <p>C. Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the voting judges. A majority of the voting judges must concur in the decision to disqualify.</p> <p>D. The contest chair can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.</p> <p>E. All decisions of the voting judges and qualifying judges are final.</p> | <p>7. Protests and Disqualifications (Continued)</p> <p>C. Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, or for referencing another contestant's speech, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the voting judges. A majority of the voting judges must concur in the decision to disqualify.</p> <p>D. The contest chair can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.</p> <p>E. All decisions of the voting judges and qualifying judges are final.</p> | <p>(See previous page.)</p> |
| <p>International Speech Contest Rules</p> <p>1. The International Speech Contest begins at the club level, and proceeds through the area, division (if applicable), district, region quarterfinal, semifinal, and final levels.</p> | <p>International Speech Contest Rules</p> <p>1. The International Speech Contest begins at the club level, and proceeds through the aArea, dDivision (if applicable), dDistrict, region quarterfinal, semifinal, and final levels.</p> | <p>International Speech Contest Rules</p> <p>As with the change to "3. Selection Sequence," an edit was made to align this rule with the passing of Proposal A in August 2019. Because Divisions are an official part of District structure, all speech contests will include a Division level. As a result, the clarification "if applicable" was removed to indicate that Division contests always apply.</p> |
| <p>International Speech Contest Rules</p> <p>E. Every participant in the World Championship of Public Speaking must present an entirely new and different speech than the one presented during that year's semifinal speech contest or any previous year's semifinal and final-round speech contests.</p> <p>1. Winners of each semifinal contest at the International Convention will prepare and deliver to World Headquarters outlines of their semifinal-winning speech, which will be given to qualifying judges before the judge's briefing for the World Championship of Public Speaking.</p> <p>2. Qualifying judges will also be given a Speaker Qualification Sheet (Item 1186). On this sheet, qualifying judges will indicate whether the speech being delivered at the World Championship of Public Speaking is entirely new and different from the speech given at the semifinal contest.</p> | <p>International Speech Contest Rules</p> <p>E. Every participant in the World Championship of Public Speaking must present an entirely new and different speech than the one presented during that year's semifinal speech contest or any previous year's semifinal and final-round speech contests.</p> <p>1. Winners of each semifinal contest advancing to the semifinal level at the International Convention will prepare and deliver to World Headquarters outlines of their semifinal-winning speech. . If they have previously competed at the semifinal or final levels, contestants will provide World Headquarters with outlines from all speeches presented at these levels. Outlines from all semifinal winners will be given to qualifying judges before or during the judge's briefing for the World Championship of Public Speaking, which will be given to qualifying judges before the judge's briefing for the World Championship of Public Speaking.</p> <p>2. Qualifying judges will also be given a Speaker Qualification Sheet (Item 1186) qualification sheet. On this sheet, qualifying judges will indicate whether the speech being delivered at the World Championship of Public Speaking is entirely new and different from the speech given at the semifinal contest or any previous year's semifinal and final-round contests.</p> | <p>International Speech Contest Rules</p> <p>Wording was added to specify that contestants for the Semifinal level must provide World Headquarters outlines of all speeches ever presented at the semifinal or final level for qualifying judges to reference during the World Championship of Public Speaking. The process for how these outlines are used by qualifying judges is also further clarified here.</p> <p>These changes are to ensure that the rulebook clearly indicates how the rule outlined in "International Speech Contest Rules E." will be enforced.</p> |

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| <p>Evaluation Contest Rules</p> <p>1. At the beginning of this contest, a five- to seven-minute test speech will be presented.</p> <p>A. The test speech must be either a contest-type speech, a speech from one of the assignments in the <i>Competent Communication</i> manual, or a project speech from the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.</p> <p>E. Neither the manual project nor any objectives that the speaker may have can be made known to the contestants, chief judge, voting judges, tiebreaking judge, or audience.</p> | <p>Evaluation Contest Rules</p> <p>1. At the beginning of this contest, a five (5)- to seven (7)-minute test speech will be presented.</p> <p>A. The test speech must be either a contest-type speech, a speech from one of the assignments in the <i>Competent Communication</i> manual, or a project speech from the Toastmasters Pathways learning experience.</p> <p>E. Neither the test speaker's manual project nor any objectives that the speaker may have can be made known to the contestants, chief judge, voting judges, tiebreaking judge, or audience.</p> | <p>Evaluation Contest Rules</p> <p>Because members can no longer work in the <i>Competent Communication</i> manual, this option was removed from the list of speech types that members can present as a test speech for the Evaluation Contest.</p> |
| <p>Evaluation Contest Rules</p> <p>3. After five minutes have elapsed, no further preparation is allowed and with the exception of the first contestant, who is called back as first evaluator, all others must hand their copy of the Evaluation Contestant Notes sheet to the contest sergeant at arms. The Evaluation Contestant Notes sheets must be handed back to contestants as they are introduced to present their evaluation.</p> | <p>Evaluation Contest Rules</p> <p>3. After five (5) minutes have elapsed, no further preparation is allowed and with the exception of the first contestant, who is called back as first evaluator, all contestants others must hand their copy of the Evaluation Contestant Notes sheet to the contest sergeant at arms. The Evaluation Contestant Notes sheets must be handed back to contestants as they are introduced to present their evaluation.</p> | <p>Evaluation Contest Rules</p> <p>The exception for the first contestant to not provide their Evaluation Contest Notes to the Sergeant at Arms was removed. For consistency, all contestants must provide their notes to the Sergeant at Arms.</p> |
| <p>Chief Judge's Checklist</p> <p>2. Acting as chief counter, appoints three assistant counters, and provides each of them with the Counter's Tally Sheet (Item 1176).</p> | <p>Chief Judge's Checklist</p> <p>2. Acting as chief counter, appoints three assistant counters, and provides each counter of them with a copy of the Counter's Tally Sheet (Item 1176).</p> | <p>Chief Judge's Checklist</p> <p>Wording was changed to align the instructions in the Chief Judge's Checklist with the recent change to the number of required counters. Because club, Area, and Division contests are only required to have two counters, the indication of how many counters are to be appointed was removed from this checklist.</p> |