

Country Western Dance Council (CWDC)



COMPETITION RULES 2009

Coming into effect as from 1st May 2009

Divisional Information

The competition year begins on the 1st March and ends on 28/29th February. Your age on 1st March determines which division you will dance in for the competition year. If, through a relevant birthday, you are eligible to move into an older age division, you may move up an age category during the year, however this is not compulsory. Moving between divisions is allowed although once you have moved into a higher-level division, you cannot move down to a lower division, the exception to this is if you have moved up an age category - it would be acceptable, for example for a Division 2 Junior Dancer to move into a Division 3 Teenage. For all finals, 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 you have won three or more competitions or a CWDC European Title during the dance year, although this does not apply to Division 1 Allstars Advanced (see *Recommendations and Promotional Rules* for further information). Dancers cannot enter more than one line dance division at an event.

Line Dance Age Categories and Divisions

Category	Age	Category	Age
Rugrats	0 - 6	Crystal	30+
Primary	0 - 8	Silver	40+
Junior	0 - 12	Gold	50+
Teen	13 - 17	Diamond	60+
Open	18+		

Recommendations and Promotional Rules for Competitors:

Newcomer

*This division is offered in the following categories:
Primary, Junior, Teen, Open, Crystal and Silver*

This division is recommended for beginner dancers or dancers who have never competed before. Dancers may compete in this division a maximum of **FIVE** times, they then must move to Division 4 Novice or one of the relevant age divisions. If a Newcomer competitor **wins** three or more competitions or a CWDC Europeans 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.

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 one dance will be offered in this division.

Division 4 Novice

This division is offered in the following categories:

Primary Age 0-8, Junior Age 0-12, Teen Age 13-17, Open Age 18+, Crystal Age 30+ and Silver Age 40+

This division is recommended for dancers who have been line dancing for over one year, or who have some previous dance experience. Emphasis in this division is on correct vanilla footwork and technique. Minimal variations are allowed in this division, however dancers may not execute any turn/spin of more than 180 degrees on one foot. If a Division 4 Novice competitor **wins** three or more competitions or a CWDC Europeans overall title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year.

Division 3 Intermediate

This division is offered in the following categories:

Junior Age 0-12, Teen Age 13-17, Open Age 18+, Crystal Age 30+ and Silver Age 40+

This division is recommended for dancers who have been line 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 a Division 3 Intermediate competitor **wins** three or more competitions or a CWDC European overall title during the competition year, he/she must move into the next highest, relevant division for the following competition year.

Gold/Diamond

These divisions are offered to dancers who fall into the relevant age categories, as outlined above. Dancers, who fall into these categories, can alternatively choose to dance in the Open age division.

Division 2 Advanced

This division is offered in the following categories:

Junior Age 0-12, Teen Age 13-17, Open Age 18+, Crystal Age 30+ and Silver Age 40+

These divisions are recommended for experienced and accomplished dancers who have been line dancing for over 3 years or who have an extensive dance background.

Division 1 All-Stars Advanced

*This division is offered in the following categories:
Teen Age 0-17, Open Age 18+*

This division is for advanced dancers and is by qualification only. Dancers must have won at least 10 line dance championship events, at least Intermediate/Advanced level OR hold a Division 2 Advanced CWDC European Title PLUS 5 wins at Advanced level before they are eligible to this division. (*please note: you will be required to provide proof of Championship wins and should check with the event director beforehand*).

Country Classic Division

*This division is offered in the following categories:
Teen Age 0-17, Open Age 18+*

This is a Country Western Division, one dance should be offered, to be danced to Country music. The emphasis of this division is on the 'Country' aspect; therefore all competitors must wear western wear, cowboy hats and cowboy boots (see under costume restrictions for further information). The V & V rule applies in the division, after the first two walls dancers may add a turn to replace a vine or a shuffle, but any variations added outside of general social variations will be penalised. Competitors must show good footwork and enjoyment of the dance.

Event director may offer some or all of the dance divisions. Please check with the event Director

Line Dance Rules Summary

- Male and Female competitors may dance in separate or combined heats, except in CWDC Europeans where they will dance separately.
- Dancers may choose to dance one or any combination of dances offered in the division. However, dancers will need to dance all specified dances to qualify for a placing. At least one dance in each line dance division will be danced to Country music.
- Dancers will be counted in
- V&V Rule – Vanilla and Variation: Dancers must dance the first TWO walls as vanilla. You may use your hands, arms, head and upper 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.

Exceptions to V&V Rule as Follows:

Newcomer: Variations are not permitted at all in this division. Newcomer dancers must dance the dance exactly as written – no variations are allowed.

Division 4 Novice: The V&V rule applies in this division – however only minimal variations are allowed, dancers may not execute any turn/spin of more than 180 degrees on one foot.

- All vanilla patterns must be performed exactly as written on the official step descriptions. Dancers must keep to the basic footwork and direction of the dance. No additional turns or variations may be added. Hand/arm work and body styling/movement is allowed. Competitors will be disqualified if they include their own version of the dance during vanillas.

Duos Age + Rules Summary

Junior Age 0 – 12, Teen Age 13-17, Open Age 18+

- * If the two dancers competing together fall into different age groups, they must dance in the division of the oldest dancer.
- Duos are two individuals, males, females or mixed.
- Lifts and Acrobatic moves are not permitted.
- A set piece of music will be pre-released to which Duos should choreograph their own routine,
- Several duos will complete 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 Duo Team at an event.

Quads Ages + Rules Summary

Open Age Division

- * This combination of 4 dancers can be of any age or any mix of ages.
- Quads are four individuals, males, females or mixed.
- Lifts and acrobatics are not allowed. Weight bearing moves are permitted.
- 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 Line Dance Team at an event.

Team Ages + Rules Summary

Junior Age 0 – 12, Teen Age 13 – 17, Open Age 18+

- * If two or more dancers in a team fall into different age groups, then the team must dance in the division of the oldest dancers. One team member from an older age group is allowed to dance in a younger team category. You may not dance in more than one team in the same category at a competition, however you may compete once in a standard team and once in team cabaret. You may not compete in both a junior team and an adult team.
- 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.

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. 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. Any style of music is allowed in the cabaret division.

- **Team Music** must be clearly labelled with the team name and number and given to the DJ at least half an hour before they are scheduled to compete, or as directed. A back up copy must be available if required. Delays of a Teams' performance due to music unavailability may result in the team being disqualified.
- The order in which teams dance will be selected by the event director in a random and impartial fashion.
- Acted themes, pantomime, singing or comedy performances of any kind are allowed in the cabaret section but **NOT** in standard teams.
- Team 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.

Couples Age Categories & Divisions

- * Couples aged 16 and over must consist of one Male and one Female. Couples aged 15 and under may be any two dancers (males, females or mixed). If two dancers competing together fall into different age groups, then they must dance in the division of the oldest.

Division on offer are as follows:

Junior Teen Age 0 – 15

Dancers will score well for showing most of the popular and basic western dance positions and moves. Routines should have a combination of moves, incorporating basic patterns. Dancers should have a good standard of technique, including lead and follow and show personality and enjoyment of the dance. Dancers should have correct western dancewear, including some use of costume.

Division 4 Age 16+

Dancers will score well for showing the basic western dance positions/moves. Dancers should have a fair standard of technique including lead and follow. Dancers should show personality and enjoyment of the dance.

Division 3 Age 16+

Dancers will score well for showing most of the popular western dance positions & moves. Routines should have a combination of moves, incorporating basic patterns. Dancers should have a good standard of technique including lead and follow. Dancers should show personality and enjoyment of the dance.

Division 2 Age 16+

Dancers will score well for showing a good range of western dance positions & moves, showing a fair level of difficulty. Dancers should make up a large amount of the routine with combinations of moves, eliminating a large number of basic patterns, using unique moves and combinations. Dancers should show some interpretation of the dance theme and music including phrasing obvious musical breaks. You should have a high standard of technique including lead and follow. Dancers should show artistic interpretation, personality, enthusiasm and enjoyment of the dance. Couples should have coordinated appearance including some of the costume.

Division 1 Age 16+

Dancers will score well for showing an extensive range of western dance positions & moves. Showing a high level of difficulty. Making up the majority of the routine with combinations of moves, eliminating almost all of the basic patterns. Using unique moves and combinations. Interpret the dance theme and music including phrasing. Having an excellent standard of technique including lead and follow. Matching movements to different areas of the floor. Showing artistic interpretation, personality, enthusiasm and enjoyment of the dance. Having co-ordinated appearance including some use of costume, Dancers must have at least 10 Couples Championships before being eligible to compete in this division. *(Please note: you will be required to provide proof of Championship wins and should check with the event director beforehand)*

Pro AM

Newcomer

*This division is offered in the following categories:
Primary, Junior, Teen, Open, Crystal and Silver*

Division 4 Novice

*This division is offered in the following categories:
Primary Age 0-8, Junior Age 0-12, Teen Age 13-17, Open Age 18+, Crystal Age 30+ and
Silver Age 40+*

Division 3 Intermediate

*This division is offered in the following categories:
Junior Age 0-12, Teen Age 13-17, Open Age 18+, Crystal Age 30+ and Silver Age 40+*

Division 2 Advanced

*This division is offered in the following categories:
Junior Age 0-12, Teen Age 13-17, Open Age 18+, Crystal Age 30+ and Silver Age 40+*

Couples Rules Summary

- No Competitor may dance in more than one Couples pairing at an event.
- Aerial Moves: Aerial moves are not permitted in any couples division. Our definition of an Aerial Move is as follows: An aerial move is where one dancer brings both feet off the floor **AND** a) one foot is above another dancers shoulder level **OR** b) both feet are above another dancers waist level. If Aerials are used where they are forbidden, you will not be recalled to the next heat or placed in the final.
- Lifts: Lifts are not permitted in any couples division. One definition of Lifts is as follows: A lift is where both feet of one dancer are off the floor **AND** weight is being supported by another dancer. If lifts are used where they are forbidden, you will not be recalled to the next heat or placed in the final.
- Dance Floor Etiquette for Couples Dancers as follows:
 - Couples Stationery Dances: (East Coast Swing, west Coast Swing, Cha Cha etc). Dancers must not interfere with the dance space of the competitors.
 - Couples Progressive Dancers: (2 Step, Waltz, Polka etc). Slower Moving Couples must move towards the centre of the floor to allow faster moving couples to pass.

Partner Ages & Rules Summary

Junior Age 0 – 12, Teen Age 13 – 17, Open Age 18+

*Two Divisions may be offered in Local Competition (Junior Teen 0-17 and Open 18+)
All Three Divisions will be offered at CWDC Europeans*

If the two dancers competing together fall into different Age Groups, then they must dance in the division of the oldest dancer.

- * Dancers will score well for performing the Vanilla Sequences as per the written step description. Dancers should show a good level of interpretation with many Variation Sequences containing different moves/styling; have a good standard of technique; show showmanship & styling relevant to the dance/music; have co-ordinated western dress; demonstrate the ability to dance as a pair and complement each other.
- Partner Dance consists of two dancers dancing with joined hands/arms.
- No individual competitor may dance with more than one partner, or in more than one Partner Division at an event.
- The V & V rule applies: Dancers must dance the First TWO and every following EVEN numbered sequence as Vanilla with styling. This means you can use your hands, arms, head and upper body to compliment the dance, but you may not change any of the steps, they must be performed exactly as the official step description issued. On the Third, Fifth and all following Odd sequences you may introduce Variations.
- Lifts and Drops are not permitted.
- Dancers will be counted in.
- Dance floor etiquette for Partner Dancers as follows - overtaking is allowed, slower moving pairs must move towards the centre of the floor to allow faster moving pairs to pass.

Showcase Duos Ages + Rules Summary

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.

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.

Costumes – All Divisions

General

Male: You must wear a shirt or shirt & waistcoat, trousers 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.

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

For both male and female: No form of name or advertising should be displayed on any part of the costume. If the cowboy hat, or any other item of costume, is dropped during the course of the dance, and not retrieved at the earliest opportunity you will be penalised.

Costume Restrictions

Tops i.e. Shirts, Blouses, etc

All costumes must have a visible yoke. The yoke must be visible from 2 metres. The yoke is defined as follows:

- **A VISIBLE PATTERN ON THE COSTUME, WHICH TRAVELS FROM ONE SIDE OF THE COSTUME TO THE OTHER.**
- **BELTS NOT DEFINED OR ACCEPTED AS A YOKE.**

Strapless tops or straps **responsible for holding a dress/top up** that are less than 1"/2.5cm wide are not allowed.

Open back dresses; tops should finish no lower than the natural waistline.

Skirts: Skirts should flare from the waist or hips. Cha-cha skirts are allowed in Cuban/Latin dances. All skirts are subject to the following rules: When standing still, NO part of the leg should be shown more than 4"/10cm above the centre of the knee. This is measured from the middle of the knee vertically to the hem of the skirt, at all angles. Fringing, lace and see-through/flesh-coloured material is not included in the measurement. Handkerchief hems and split skirts are measured from the shortest point. Tearaway skirts are not permitted, except in all team divisions.

Trousers: Regular design trousers are required. Hipsters are allowed. No splits, rips, cut-outs, holes, etc. Trouser legs should not be exceptionally wide, bootleg trousers are permitted: as a guide to the width of the trousers, when the bottom of the leg material is pulled taut it must not go past the competitors toe. Trousers must be ankle length. Pockets are not compulsory. Trousers may be decorated to match the costume.

All Dancers, All Divisions, Male and Female. See-through or flesh-coloured material used in any part of a dancer's costume that gives an immodest view of underwear or body that may give cause for embarrassment to competitors, judges or spectators, is not allowed. Bare midriffs are not permitted. Costumes must be worn for Awards Ceremonies.

Footwear

For all dances done to country music (i.e. appeared in the Country charts,, or performed by a recognised country artist or group). Western style boots must have a minimum 1"/2.5cm heel and a minimum 6"/15cm shaft. The heel is measured with the boot standing on the floor. The shaft is measured from the top of the heel, to the top of the boot. Pull-up loops are not included in the measurement.

For dances done to non-country music, Latin shoes may be worn. Rugrats, Primary, Junior and all Male dancers must wear Latin shoes with no more than a 1.5"/3.75cm heel. All other dancers must not wear shoes with more than a 2.5"/ 6,25cm heel.

Shorter or ankle boots or lace up shoes may be worn in primary, Gold and Diamond Divisions.

Wearing trainers, stiletto heels, lace-up boots or western boots outside the measurements outlined above is not permitted.

Costumes & Footwear for Newcomer Division

The Dress Rules are relaxed for this division. Dancers are not required to have a yoke on their costume. Cowboy hats are optional for all dancers. Any suitable footwear may be worn, however no trainers or high heels are allowed.

Costumes & Footwear for Country Classic Division

Western Wear must be worn for this division – no lycra may be worn. A yoke must be apparent from all angles. All competitors must wear a cowboy hat and cowboy boots must be worn.

- Team Cabaret is exempt from costume regulations, although any costume, which is a cause of embarrassment to judges/spectators, will be penalised.
- All Divisions – costumes and footwear. If you are unsure of the legality of any aspect of your footwear, please check with the judges before you compete.

General Rules – All Divisions

- Gum Chewing is not allowed.
- Audio/Verbal sound/ singing is not allowed (except in Team Cabaret). Lip-synching is allowed.
- Talking - 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. These moves are defined as follows:
 1. Any move where both legs are above waist height of the competitor
 2. Any move where the competitor's weight is on one or both hands
 3. Competitors must support their own weight at all times.

4. Any move where a competitor sits or lies on the floor
5. Splits are not permitted, except in Division 2 Advanced and Division 1 Allstars Advanced. If splits are performed in any other division the competitor will be penalised. Advanced competitors may use 2 beats of music exempt from Acrobatic Rules Restrictions to recover from the splits.

Kicks are allowed, however kicks must not interfere with, or endanger, any other dancer on the floor. (Please note: Team Cabaret is exempt from Acrobatic Rules restrictions).

- 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.
- Props are not permitted (except in Team Cabaret)
- Vulgar, suggestive 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.

General Information

Competition Ethics: Competitors MUST NOT question or consult the Judges about the competition during the event. They may consult the Judges after the Awards and Presentations, but only with regard to their own performance.

Competitors' Meeting: It is each competitor's responsibility to attend the Competitors Meeting. For teams, at least one team member should attend. This is the time to clarify any queries on dress or footwear.

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 line dance step descriptions and costume regulations. Competitors should make themselves aware of competitors' registration and meetings. All competitors must be in the competitor's area 5 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 are to retrieve any item of costume dropped during the course of the dance as in Costumes – All Divisions above.

Judges: All judges who reside in the UK for more than 90 days consecutively must hold a CWDC licence in order to Judge under CWDC Rules. A minimum of 3 CWDC Licensed

judges is required at an event; five or seven judges are preferred, although any ODD number of judges may be used.

In Exceptional circumstances a non-CWDC licensed judge may be used on application to the CWDC: however the majority of the panel MUST be licensed CWDC 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/Teenage Competitors: Competitors aged under 18 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.

LINE DANCE: 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 eight 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 remain.

TEAMS: Preliminary heats must be held in all competitions with eight or more competitors in a division. 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. Request this from the registration staff or scrutineer. In the event of there being excessive numbers of requests for scores, they will be posted out after the competition.

Scrutineers: All Scrutineers must be licensed by the CWDC. Events are not sanctioned unless they are scrutinised by Licensed Scrutineers.

Step Descriptions: The Event Director must issue a step description for each line dance offered at the Event. The dances will not include any tags or options. The competitors are required to dance to this sheet only and **must request** the step descriptions from the Event Director. A step description from any other source is **Not Valid** for the purposes of the competition.

By competing at any CWDC 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 videotape 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".

- Please note – any competition that does not strictly adhere to these rules will not be classed as a CWDC competition
- Please note – these rules are subject to change at the discretion of the CWDC.