

Berlin Fiddlers Convention

Berlin, MD, USA

Competition Rules and Regulations (Updated June 2017)

Category Guidelines:

YOUTH - 15 and under

ADULT - 16 and up

Youth may perform in adult categories. Adults not permitted, other than as an accompanist, in youth categories.

Competition categories include Fiddle, Banjo, Guitar, Mandolin, Band

Instrumental Guidelines:

1. Fiddle - Contest is for traditional four string, acoustic fiddles only. Standards such as "Listen to the Mockingbird," "Orange Blossom Special," or "Black Mountain Rag" are strongly discouraged.
2. Banjo - 4 and/or 5 string acoustic banjos okay. Standards such as "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," "John Hardy," and "Dueling Banjos" are strongly discouraged.
3. Guitar - Acoustic Steel String and Resonator Guitars only
4. Mandolin - Acoustic Mandolins, Mandolas/Bouzoukis only
5. Bass - Acoustic and/or electric basses allowed
6. Band - Must consist of a minimum of 3 members. Band contestants are only allowed to compete in ONE band. Same song restrictions apply.

NO DRUMS

NO SIX-STRING BANJO/GUITARS

Registration Guidelines

1. Contestants MUST sign in upon arrival at the judges table
2. No contestant is allowed to register after a category is completed
3. Judges are not permitted to enter or perform in any category either as a contestant or as an accompanist
4. Contestants must be ready and available to perform when their category is called. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
5. Tuning, warm-up, rehearsal, or any other audible actions MUST be done away from the stage, active competitor, and convention audience. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

Performance Guidelines

1. This is a Bluegrass and Old Time music event. Contestants are expected to choose music from these traditional genres for competition. Irish, Celtic, and Cajun styles are acceptable but not ideal for competition.
2. NO electric or amplified instruments will be permitted in ANY category (bass okay)
3. No drums or percussion permitted in ANY category
4. Contestants must play from memory. NO sheet music.

5. Contestants performing in individual performer categories may perform solo or with up to two (2) accompanists. Accompanists MAY NOT play melody or take solos.
6. Individual Contestants must perform two (2) songs
7. Band Contestants must be prepared to play (3) songs
8. Individual contestants must limit their total performance time to FIVE (5) MINUTES. Excessively exceeding this time limit will result in disqualification.
9. Band contestants must limit their total performance time to TEN (10) MINUTES. Excessively exceeding this time limit will result in disqualification.
10. One false start will be allowed. Allowances will also be made for broken strings and other un-controllable performance hitches.
11. Playing in such a manner as to render the melody of your chosen song unrecognizable will result in lost points.
12. INDIVIDUAL competitions are INSTRUMENTAL ONLY. NO SINGING.
13. Please introduce your songs. Furthermore, saying hello, thank you, and/or briefly addressing the crowd is okay.
14. BAND competition SINGING STRONGLY ENCOURAGED.
15. Contest organizers reserve the right to alter the time schedule, order of categories, or number of songs to be played, as needed.
16. Anything not covered in the rules will be decided by the judges and/or organizers.

Judging guidelines

Judging is based on a 100 point scale per song
In the event of a tie, a one song playoff will be held.

Evaluated Categories:

1. Rhythm and Timing
2. Creativity
3. Execution
4. Confidence

Contestant Decorum

The Berlin Fiddlers Convention is a fun, family event. By electing to be a competitor, you are choosing to represent not only yourself but the Berlin Fiddlers Convention, as well. Just as you would (or should) respect yourself, you are expected to respect the countless families, children, fans, volunteers, performers, and organizers that make this such a fantastic event. Foul, abusive, combative language and/or behavior will not be tolerated and will result in immediate disqualification.

Play well. Be positive. Be cool. Most importantly... Have fun.