



EEDA Couples Showdance Competition Rules

Approved by the EEDA Board on 17 July 2026 and entering into force immediately.

Rule 1 Entry and categories

- 1.1 A couple comprises two individuals who can freely choose whether they dance as leader or follower without regard for gender.
- 1.2 Ideally, the Showdance Couples competition should be offered in three dance-gender categories: men's, women's and open-gender. The men's and/or women's dance-gender category may be withdrawn at the discretion of the competition organisers if there are fewer than three couples entered in that category. Any couples who had been entered in the withdrawn category can still compete in the open-gender category.
- 1.3 Rule 2.5 of the EEDA Equality Dancesport Competition Rules applies for the definition of dance-gender categories in Couples Showdance.
- 1.4 Where all three dance-gender categories are offered, a couple may choose to compete in the open-gender category and either the men's or women's category, provided they meet the relevant dance-gender category definition.
- 1.5 As couples are awarded numerical marks and not ranked against each other, each couple will only dance once and the same marks, awarded in accordance with Rules 6 and 7, will be used to determine the placings in all dance-gender categories.
- 1.6 All entrants must be 18 years of age or older.
- 1.7 Only one Showdance Couple entry per dance-gender category per person is permitted.

Rule 2 Music and dances

- 2.1 Couple Showdance entries must be based upon and exhibit one or more recognised Standard Ballroom, Latin or other syllabus partner dance (including but not limited to waltz, quickstep, tango, cha cha cha, jive, Argentine tango, salsa, foxtrot and Viennese waltz)
- 2.2 Entries that do not exhibit a significant element of a recognised syllabus partner dance may be disqualified.
- 2.3 Elements from other dance forms, including lifts and physical movement, may be used to enrich and complete the choreography.
- 2.4 The whole performance consists of the entry to the dance floor, the main part and the exit from the dancefloor. Any entry or exit performed without music, are not judged and should not exceed 15 seconds each.



- 2.5 The performance can start at any place at the floor. A clear sign or agreement with the DJ to start the music must be arranged during the Rehearsal.
- 2.6 The main part of the performance, which is judged, begins with the start of the music and finishes when the music stops. The duration of the total music must be a minimum of 3:00 minutes and a maximum of 5:00 minutes.
- 2.7 Music must be supplied as a single track on Compact Disc (CD), USB stick or memory card or uploaded as a music file or any other widely available format as agreed in advance with the organiser.

Rule 3 Rehearsals

- 3.1 The chair of the adjudicators, or another suitably qualified person appointed by the chair, must attend rehearsals and warn couples of any breach of these Rules. If the Rules are breached during the competition, the chair may disqualify the couple(s).
- 3.2 Adequate arrangements must be made for couples to rehearse. Where possible, rehearsals should be conducted without the public being present.
- 3.3 An equal amount of time of at least 10 minutes must be allocated to each couple in the hall with appropriate music.
- 3.4 During the rehearsal the entire choreography including entry and exit must be performed at least once with music to promote conformity with these Rules.
- 3.5 The dance routine and music performed or practised at the rehearsal are the only movements and music permitted during the competition.
- 3.6 Notification of the rehearsal time slot for the couple shall be given in advance by the competition organisers.
- 3.7 Any feedback from the chair (or their delegate) on compliance with these rules shall be given to each couple immediately following their rehearsal and sufficient time for the feedback shall be included in the rehearsal timetable.

Comment: For the purposes of Rule 3, the rehearsals are not considered part of the competition as the rehearsals are not judged.

Rule 4 Rounds and Order of Dancing

- 4.1 The order of dancing will be drawn by ballot on the day of the competition.
- 4.2 A semi-final, and other preliminary rounds, will be danced if in the view of the chair of the adjudicators there are sufficient couples. In this case, no general look will be danced.
- 4.3 Semi-finals and other preliminary rounds will be judged in accordance with the skating system with the judges marking though to the next round the number of couples specified by the chair of adjudicators. Couples that receive a mark from the majority of the adjudicators will dance in the next round.



- 4.4 If, in the view of the chair of adjudicators, there are not enough couples to dance a semifinal or other preliminary rounds, a general look shall be danced.
- 4.5 The aim of the general look is for adjudicators to assess the range of the standard of dancing exhibited by the couples to help them in awarding marks in the final. The general look may be danced without the costumes and makeup used in the final, but any props and functional costumes (i.e. items of costume that the dancers put on or take off during the performance) must be used.
- 4.6 Final rounds will be marked according to Rule 6.

Rule 5 Other Restrictions

- 5.1 During entrance, performance and exit the couple must be alone on the floor.
- 5.2 Use of props should be limited to the props that are used as part of the routine. The props must be carried on to the floor by the dancers at the start of the routine and carried off the floor by them at the end.



Rule 6 Marking System for the Final

6.1 For the final, marks will be awarded for:

6.1.A Technical Merit Caption (A)

6.1.A.i The technical quality of the dancing

6.1.A.ii Demonstration and use of Standard Ballroom, Latin or other syllabus partner dance technique

6.1.B Artistic Impression Caption (B)

6.1.B.i Choreography (is it used to express the music/theme to its fullest extent?)

6.1.B.ii Musicality (how well is the performance related to the music?)

6.1.B.iii Use of theme (choreography, performance style, choice of costume, music, etc)

6.1.B.iv Originality of the idea (does the choreography display clever and musically related ideas?)

6.1.C Entertainment Value Caption (C)

6.1.C.i Entertainment and emotional value

6.1.C.ii Audience appeal

Rule 7 Judges' marking criteria

7.1 The range of marks will be between 1 (lowest) and 7 (highest) in each Caption. Marks are to be awarded as whole integers only i.e., 1, 2, 3. etc

7.2 Each Judge will give a mark in each Caption (A), (B) and (C)

7.3 Marks for Captions A and B will each be doubled and added together with the mark for Caption C and a placing allocated to each couple, with the highest total receiving 1st place, the second highest receiving 2nd place, etc

7.4 In the event of a tie, the marks in Captions (A) and (B) combined will decide the result. If a tie still exists then the highest total of Caption (A) scores will decide the result.

7.5 The above marking system will apply only to the final. In the event of preliminary rounds the skating system will be used.

7.6 The marks of the judges will be final.



Rule 8 Special Needs

8.1 Competitors with any special needs should notify the organisers in advance

Rule 9 Awarding of EEDA European Championship titles

- 9.1 For the winners of a Couple Showdance Competition to be eligible for the title of the EEDA Couple Showdance European Champions, these Rules must be followed in their entirety. For all other events, competition organisers may, at their sole discretion, choose to deviate from these Rules provided they give the competitors as much advance notice of any such deviations as is reasonably possible under the circumstances.
- 9.2. Taking account of Rule 1.2. and the number of entries, the EEDA Board may, at its sole discretion, grant European Championship titles in any of Men's, Women's and Open-Gender Couples Showdance categories.
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