

# Showstopper 2024 *Finals*

## Rules and Regulations

### ***Welcome to Showstopper!***

Don't risk being disqualified! Please read the Rules and Regulations carefully!

**Visit your Showstopper Teacher/Studio account at [goshowstopper.com](http://goshowstopper.com) for 2024 entry prices and easy registration.** You will find all of your Regional entries displayed and will be able to easily choose, edit and submit your Finals entries.

- Finals entries and payments must be received no later than 18 days prior to the event. No payments will be accepted at a Showstopper event.
- ENTRIES REGISTERED AT THE REGIONAL SHOWS ARE ELIGIBLE TO ENTER OUR FINALS. However, contestants may only register for one Finals.
- For 2024: Studios DO NOT need to compete at a regional to register for the Finals.
- *Dance studios must submit all entries. Independent entries will not be accepted.*
- Entries will be accepted on a first come, first served basis and will be limited to the amount of performance time available. Most of our events sell out quickly, so please send your entries in early.
- A \$5 charge will be issued for any changes made 5 days prior to the event.
- Be precise. When registering for a competition, enter Music Titles and Participant Names exactly as they should appear in the Showstopper Program.
- Dancers' birthdates must be entered correctly or they will not be able to see their personal schedules and parents will not be able to download their videos.
- A \$10 non-refundable deposit per routine is required to reserve or register an entry. This deposit will be applied to the balance for those registrations. Deposits are non-transferrable to other events.
- The deadline to enter new routines and make a deposit is 21 days (3 weeks) prior to the competition, unless it sells out prior to the deadline. Routines may not be added after this date. At this time, studios will have 3 days to make any changes, pay fees, and upload music to complete their registrations.
- 18 days prior to the competition, registrations must be completed, or they will not be populated in the show schedule. To be considered complete, 1) all routines must be entered correctly, 2) payment must be made in full, and 3) music must be uploaded online.
- All registration fees become non-refundable and non-transferable 21 days prior to the event, except in the case of an illness or injury with a written doctors' excuse.

### **TYPES OF ENTRIES**

- Solo
- Duet/Trio (Duets and Trios compete against each other)
- Small Group (4 to 9 dancers)
- Large Group (10 to 19 dancers)
- Super Group (20 or more dancers)

### **COMPETITION LEVELS**

#### **Performance**

- Dancers who take a total of ***less than three hours*** of combined dance and/or acrobatics lessons per week.
- *Please note* that it is not mandatory to enter the Performance level if you take three hours or less. You may also enter Advanced or Competitive level. However, if a Duet/Trio or Group has one or more dancer(s) taking more than three hours of dance/acrobatics per week, it must enter a higher level.

## Advanced

- Dancers on the rise between Performance and Competitive.
- Advanced includes dancers taking **three to five hours** of dance and/or acrobatics per week with limited competition experience, and not yet ready to compete at the highest level.
- If a dancer competes in the Advanced Level as a soloist they must remain in the Advanced Level for all solos. The dancer cannot move down and perform in any Performance Level routines. However, the same dancer can move up and perform in a Competitive level duet, trio and group.
- If a Duet/Trio or Group has one or more dancers taking over five hours of dance/acrobatics per week, it must enter the Competitive Level.

## Competitive

- The highest and most competitive level of dancers.
- Competitive Level includes:
  - 1) All dancers taking **over five hours** of dance and/or acrobatics per week,
  - 2) Performance level dancers that wish to compete at a competitive level, and
  - 3) Advanced level dancers that wish to compete at a competitive level.
- Any entries wishing to compete for Cash Awards, the highest Overall Honors, the Crystal Award and the America Loves to Dance show at Finals, must compete in the Competitive Level.
- **Dancers competing at the Competitive level as a soloist must remain in the Competitive Level for all other solos, duet/trios, and group routines performed at that competition.** Teachers must use their own sound judgment when determining the number of hours of practice per dancer and in which level contestants should be placed. Routines that are obviously under-placed may be placed in a higher level by the judges.

## Shine

- Shine is a new level for dancers with special needs or disabilities
- At least one dancer in each Shine-level routine must be registered at the Shine-level
- Shine level dancers may perform in other levels (Performance, Advanced, Competitive) without affecting the level of those routines.

## AGE DIVISIONS

- Ages for Solos, Duet/Trios, and Groups are as of January 1st.
- For Duet/Trios and Groups, the ages of all contestants as of January 1st must be averaged together. If there is a decimal, round down and drop the decimal.
- Contestants will compete in the following age groups:
  - (4 & under), (5-6 years), (7-8 years), (9-10 years), (11 years), (12 years), (13-14 years), (15-16 years), (17-19 years), (20-29 years), (30-39 years), (40-49 years), (50-59 years), (60-69 years), and (70 & over).
- Contemporary, Tap, Jazz, Lyrical Jazz, Open, Musical Theater, Hip Hop and Production categories **ONLY** age groups are:
  - (4 & under), (5 years), (6 years), (7 years), (8 years), (9 years), (10 years), (11 years), (12 years), (13 years), (14 years), (15 years), (16 years), (17 years), (18-19 years), (20-29 years), (30-39 years), (40-49 years), (50-59 years), (60-69 years), and (70 & over).
- **Overall** recognition and medals will be given in the following five age divisions:
  - Mini: 8 years & under
  - Junior: 9-11 years
  - Teen: 12-14 years
  - Senior: 15-19 years
  - Adult: 20 years and over
- Duet/Trio and Group entries cannot compete in an age division more than one age division younger than the oldest dancer's age as of January 1st regardless of the average age.
  - *For example*, an 18 year-old (senior) dancing in a group with an average age of 10 (junior) would be moved into the teen category (one age division younger than senior). In this example, because the average age is 10, the group would be placed into the lowest age group in that division. Here, that would be age 12.

## **CATEGORY POINT DEDUCTIONS**

- The ballet and pointe dance categories can contain no gymnastic/acrobatic tricks. A one-half (.5) point deduction per judge will be made for any gymnastic/acrobatic tricks in these categories. Tricks not allowed are movements that pass through or stop at a fully inverted (upside down) position with both feet off the floor (the torso passing or stopping directly over the top of ones head/shoulders). The only exceptions to this are forward, backward and shoulder rolls, and acrobatic tricks in lifts (a lift being defined as being supported by another dancer with any body part).
- The following dance categories can contain no more than three gymnastic/acrobatic tricks, Tap, Jazz, Lyrical Jazz, and Clogging. A one-half (.5) point deduction per judge will be made for any gymnastic/acrobatic tricks in these categories over three. A gymnastic pass will be counted as the number of tricks in the pass.
- If dance movements, music lyrics, or costuming are deemed to be too suggestive or otherwise inappropriate for our family audience, or if the music contains vulgar or inappropriate lyrics, the routine will be scored lower by the judges or disqualified from the competition.

## **DANCE CATEGORIES**

### **Hip Hop**

- Routine consisting primarily of Hip Hop Technique. The judges will score music containing inappropriate lyrics lower or routine disqualified from the competition.
- Any number of Acrobatic tricks are allowed in this category.

### **Musical Theater**

- Routine featuring any style of dance that interprets a song from a Broadway show or movie musical.
- Any number of Acrobatic tricks are allowed in this category.

### **Jazz**

- Routine must consist of primarily jazz technique.
- Three gymnastic/acrobatic tricks are allowed.

### **Tap**

- Routine must contain tap technique and primarily tap work. It is preferred that tap sounds not be prerecorded in music.
- Three gymnastic/acrobatic tricks are allowed.

### **Ballet**

- Routine must consist of ballet technique. Must include classical steps and movements.
- No pointe shoes allowed.
- No gymnastic/acrobatic tricks are allowed.

### **Pointe**

- Routine must consist of pointe/toe technique.
- No gymnastic/acrobatic tricks are allowed.

### **Lyrical Jazz**

- Routine should demonstrate balance, extension, isolations and control utilizing the lyrics or mood of the music.
- Three gymnastic/acrobatic tricks are allowed.

### **Song & Dance**

- Must contain both singing and any listed category of dancing. Judging will be based on both singing and dancing.
- There must be no other lead voices anywhere in the prerecorded music (0.5 point per judge deduction).
- All performers will be judged on both singing and dancing. A one point deduction per judge will be incurred if any special microphones or sound equipment is hooked up by Showstopper for any reason.
- Two handheld wireless microphones only will be available for your use.

**Acrobatic Dance**

- A routine using controlled acrobatic moves such as walkovers, limbers, handstands, chest rolls, etc. may contain gymnastic passes.
- The majority of an acrobatic routine must be acrobatic moves, otherwise, the routine will be scored lower by the judges. Acrobatic Dance may contain flexibility moves or contortionist moves, however, it must contain dance moves, steps, and choreography.

**Baton**

- A routine using baton(s) and baton technique.
- Baton routines will be judged on Baton technique and dance moves, steps, and choreography.
- Any number of Acrobatic tricks are allowed in this category.

**Pom Pon**

- A routine incorporating the use of Pom Pons.
- Pom Pon routines must use precise and definite movement.
- Any number of Acrobatics are allowed. However, no stunts, tosses, or pyramids taller than one person is allowed or a one point penalty per judge will be incurred.
- The routine will be judged on both Pom Pon technique and dance steps, moves, and choreography.

**Clogging**

- A routine utilizing either traditional or contemporary style clogging technique.
- Three gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed

**Character Routine**

- A routine portraying a recognizable character throughout.
- May be from a play, movie, television, Broadway, or a stereotype such as a farmer, policeman, etc.
- The character portrayed must be listed on the entry form, and it will be published in the program book.
- May incorporate either dance or acrobatic techniques.
- Any number of Acrobatic tricks are allowed in this category.

**Folkloric**

- A routine using ethnic style of dance, such as Spanish, Hawaiian, polkas, etc.
- Any number of Acrobatic tricks are allowed in this category.

**Open**

- Any of our listed categories or combinations of listed category styles.
- Acrobatic tricks are allowed in this category.

**Contemporary**

- Routine should utilize contemporary style to show extension, balance, can combine lyrical, modern and concert style techniques.
- Any number of Acrobatic tricks are allowed in this category.

**Production**

- A routine utilizing a group of at least 10 dancers incorporating any style/styles of dance or acrobatic.
- Production category has a time limit of 8:00 minutes.
- All Production Groups entered at all *Finals* will automatically be part of our new "PRODUCTIONMANIA®" SHOW the evening before our championship webcast.

## **Teacher**

- Persons 20 years of age or over who are teachers, assistant teachers, professional dancers or persons who have ever been teachers, assistant teachers or professional dancers must compete in Teachers Categories.
- Teachers Solos, Duet/Trio, and Groups can compete in all types of dance listed above.
- All Duet/Trios or Groups with even one Teacher competitor must enter the Teachers' category.
- Teachers Groups are not eligible to appear on the America Loves to Dance show produced at the Finals.

## **ENTRY LIMITATIONS**

- Contestants may enter any Finals, regardless of the regional location at which you qualified. However, **contestants may only attend one Finals.**
- Dancers in the Competitive Level may perform up to two solos per dancer, per event. All other levels, Performance, Advanced, and Shine, are limited to one solo per dancer, per event.
- The dance studio must submit all entries. Independent entries will not be accepted.

## **PROPS**

- Fire, swords and knives on stage are prohibited. Simulated weapons with dull, safe edges are acceptable with approval of Showstopper.
- No liquid, paint, gel, aerosol, glitter, fog, smoke, powder, paint powder, ashes, or similar substance that would affect the dancing surface is allowed, unless specifically approved by Showstopper. If this occurs, the routine may be scored lower by the judges.
- Props are allowed, however they must be freestanding. Scenery or backdrops requiring the use of theater fly bars may not be used. Props, if used, must be prepared and set-up, and removed quickly. Judges may take excessive set-up or removal time into consideration.
- Helium balloons are not permitted.
- Safety is always our primary concern. If the stage is "littered" during a routine please be prepared to clean it up immediately after the routine is finished.

## **COMPETITION RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- Time limits allotted per dance:
  - Solo, Duet/Trio & Small Group entries: three minutes (3:00)
  - Large Group & Super Group entries: four minutes (4:00)
  - Production category entries: eight minutes (8:00)
  - Additional time cannot be purchased.
- Please note that there may be a variance in the time a recording device saves music and the time the music is played on a different device. For performance time, an allowance of 15% of the allotted time per dance will be given for machine calibration error. A deduction of one tenth of a point (.1) per judge will be made for every 15 seconds (or any portion thereof) in excess of the allotted time limit and 15% grace period.
- Contestants must enter the same dance category in which you qualified at the regional level.
- Substitutions and adding of dancers from the qualifying entry are allowed. There must be at least 50% of the original dancers from the original qualifying entry. However, if there are any substitutions at Finals, the age will be re-averaged as of the first day of the Finals. If there is a decimal, round down and drop the decimal.
- Reduced size groups are also acceptable at Finals. If a group goes down to 2 or 3 Contestants, the routine automatically becomes a Duet/Trio and must perform during the duet/trio section of the event or perform for adjudication only.
- Duet/Trios cannot go down to Solo, however a dancer can be substituted so that it remains a Duet/Trio.

- Performance or Advanced level soloists may enter finals at the Competitive level. However, **dancers competing at the Competitive level as a soloist must remain in the Competitive Level for all other solos, duet/trios, and group routines performed at that competition.**
- The same contestant(s) cannot compete more than once in the same dance category and age group in Solo, Duet/Trio, or Group competition. This means that contestants must never compete against themselves in the same age group and dance category.
- Competitive soloists are limited to two solo performances.
- Performance, Advanced, and Shine soloists are limited to one solo performance.
- Contestants may enter any Finals, regardless of the regional location at which you qualified. However, contestants may only attend one Finals.
- Routines are expected to perform in the order they are scheduled. If for any reason a routine performs out of its listed order, video playback of that routine during the awards ceremony cannot be assured.
- Routines must be performed during the awards session in which they are scheduled. If the routine cannot perform during the awards session in which they are scheduled for any reason, it can be performed for judges' comments only. The routine would not be eligible for overall awards. However, if it were performed for judges' comments, it would be announced on stage at the end of the regular awards and given the appropriate medal or trophy.
- Videotaping and movie cameras are prohibited.
- Still photography is limited to taking photographs of your own child. No professional photography set-ups/tripods/monopods allowed.
- If dance movements, music lyrics, or costuming are deemed to be too suggestive or otherwise inappropriate for our family audience, or if the music contains vulgar or inappropriate lyrics, the routine will be scored lower by the judges or disqualified from the competition.
- Air horns or similar devices are prohibited.
- Routines that are obviously under-placed into the wrong skill level may be placed in a higher level by the judges.
- Any studio that makes an enrollment/routine change 3 days prior to the event, it is subject to a \$5 fee for each change.
- Duet/Trios cannot win in Group categories.

### **Scores & Deductions**

- A panel of competent judges will judge contestants. All entrants agree that the time, manner, and method of judging the contest shall be solely within the discretion of the directors and producers of Showstopper and that all decisions of the judges are final.
- If dance movements, music lyrics, or costuming are deemed to be too suggestive or otherwise inappropriate for our family audience, or if the music contains vulgar or inappropriate lyrics, the routine will be scored lower by the judges or disqualified from the competition.
- A 5-point deduction will be made for routines that are not completed unless due to a costume malfunction that would result in an immodest performance.
- Ties will not be broken.
- A one point deduction per judge will be incurred if any special microphones or sound equipment is hooked up by Showstopper for any performance.

### **Music Requirements**

- Each entry must furnish its own music marked with the contestant number on a clean CD, iPod, flash drive or music may be uploaded through your Showstopper Teacher account on our website.
- For your registration to be completed, music must be uploaded 18 days prior to the competition or routines will not be populated in the show schedule. Please listen to your music once it is uploaded to ensure the right music is with the correct routine.
- Music on cell phones is not accepted.
- It is recommended that you bring a second copy as a backup in the event of malfunction of original on a flash drive
- Music left at the event will not be saved.

## **AWARDS**

- Double Platinum, Platinum 1st Place, Gold 1st Place, and Silver Awards will be decided by a predetermined range of points for each place.
- In the Competitive Level, dance routines are also eligible for the Crystal Award.
- There may be multiple Double Platinum, Platinum 1st places, Gold 1st places, and Silver Awards in each age group and category.
  
- Contestants will compete in the following age groups:
  - (4 & under), (5-6 years), (7-8 years), (9-10 years), (11 years), (12 years), (13-14 years), (15-16 years), (17-19 years), (20-29 years), (30-39 years), (40-49 years), (50-59 years), (60-69 years), and (70 & over).
- Contemporary, Tap, Jazz, Lyrical Jazz, Open, Musical Theater, Hip Hop and Production categories **ONLY** age groups are:
  - (4 & under), (5 years), (6 years), (7 years), (8 years), (9 years), (10 years), (11 years), (12 years), (13 years), (14 years), (15 years), (16 years), (17 years), (18-19 years), (20-29 years), (30-39 years), (40-49 years), (50-59 years), (60-69 years), and (70 & over).

## **PERFORMANCE, ADVANCED, & SHINE LEVEL AWARDS**

Overall recognition and medals will be given in the following five age divisions:

- Mini: 8 years & under
- Junior: 9-11 years
- Teen: 12-14 years
- Senior: 15-19 years
- Adult: 20 years and over

\*No cash awards are given in the Performance, Advanced, & Shine Level.

\*Contestants are not eligible to perform in the America Loves to Dance Championship Show.

## **COMPETITIVE LEVEL AWARDS**

Overall recognition and medals will be given in the following five age divisions:

- Mini: 8 years & under
- Junior: 9-11 years
- Teen: 12-14 years
- Senior: 15-19 years
- Adult: 20 years and over

**Please note:** All cash prizes with gift certificates are mailed to the Studio Director or Teacher after the competition. Also, no cash awards are given in the Performance, Advanced, & Shine Level.

### **Top Solo**

- \$250 plus a \$250 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the soloist in the Mini: 8 years & under, Junior: 9-11, Teen: 12-14, and Senior: 15-19 age groups receiving the highest overall score.
- \$150 and a \$150 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the second place overall soloist in these age groups.
- \$100 and a \$100 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the third place overall soloist in these age groups.
- If a contestant performs two solos, only the highest scoring one counts for the top overall awards. An overall trophy will be given to the Top Soloist in the Adult 20 & over age division.

### **Top Duet/Trio**

- \$250 plus a \$250 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the Duet/Trio in the Mini: 8 years & under, Junior: 9-11, Teen: 12-14, and Senior: 15-19 age groups receiving the highest overall score.
- \$150 and a \$150 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the second place overall duet/trio in these age groups.
- \$100 and a \$100 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the third place overall duet/trio in these age groups.
- An overall trophy will be given to the Top Duet/Trio in the Adult 20 & over age division.

### **Top Small Group**

- \$500 plus a \$500 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the Small Group in the Mini: 8 years & under, Junior: 9-11, Teen: 12-14, and Senior: 15-19 age groups receiving the highest overall score.
- \$200 and a \$200 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the second place overall small group in these age groups.
- \$100 and a \$100 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the third place overall small group in these age groups.
- An overall trophy will be given to the Top Small Group in the Adult 20 & over age division.

### **Top Large Group**

- \$500 plus a \$500 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the Large Group in the Mini: 8 years & under, Junior: 9-11, Teen: 12-14, and Senior: 15-19 age groups receiving the highest overall score.
- \$200 and a \$200 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the second place overall large group in these age groups.
- \$100 and a \$100 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the third place overall large group in these age groups.
- An overall trophy will be given to the Top Large Group in the Adult 20 & over age division.

### **Top Super Group**

- \$500 plus a \$500 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the Super Group in the Mini: 8 years & under, Junior: 9-11, Teen: 12-14, and Senior: 15-19 age groups receiving the highest overall score.
- \$200 and a \$200 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the second place overall super group in these age groups.
- \$100 and \$100 Showstopper gift certificate will be awarded to the third place overall super group in these age groups.
- An overall trophy will be given to the Top Super Group in the Adult 20 & over age division.

### **Top Teachers Solo, Duet/Trio, and Group**

- An overall trophy will be awarded to the soloist, top duet/trio, and top group in the Teachers category receiving the highest overall score.

### **PRODUCTIONMANIA**

- All Production groups at all National Finals are automatically part of our "PRODUCTIONMANIA!®" live webcast show the evening before our America Loves to Dance show.
- Production groups will be competing in Mini, Junior, Teen, and Senior Age Divisions for the Cash Awards of \$500 plus a \$500 gift certificate Top Prize in each age division.

### **AMERICA LOVES TO DANCE AWARDS ® - Additional bonus event at all Finals!**

- The top scoring ten Small Groups\* in the Mini (8 & under), Junior (9-11), Teen (12-14), and Senior (15-19) age groups (\*with no overlap of dancers allowed within the age group) will compete at each event. First place will receive \$500, 2nd place will receive \$250, and Third Place will receive \$100.
- The top scoring ten Large groups\* in the Mini (8 & under), Junior (9-11), Teen (12-14), and Senior (15-19) age groups (\*with no overlap of dancers allowed within the age group) will also compete at each event. First place will receive \$500, 2nd place will receive \$250, and Third Place will receive \$100.



- The top scoring five Super groups\* in the combined Junior/Mini (11 & Under) age groups and the combined Senior/Teen (12-19) age groups (\*with no overlap of dancers allowed within the age group) will also compete at each event. First place will receive \$500, 2nd place will receive \$250, and Third Place will receive \$100.
- **Production category, Teachers Groups, Adult Groups, Advanced, Performance, and Shine Level are not eligible to perform on the America Loves to Dance Awards.**
- Note: Should a studio have two groups with the same score (a tie) and with at least one of the same dancers in both groups (an overlap), the group to perform in the **America Loves to Dance Awards** will be chosen by following these steps in order:
  - 1) The group with the highest total *technical* score. If both groups have the same total *technical* score, move to step #2
  - 2) If eliminating one group from the tie will allow another group from that studio to advance to the top ten, said group will be removed and the new group from that studio will advance. If eliminating a group will not advance another group within that studio, move to step #3.
  - 3) The group with the most dancers. If both groups have the same number of dancers, move to step #4.
  - 4) The group with the highest total *technical* score plus the highest total *stage presence* score. If both teams have the same total, move to step #5.
  - 5) The group with the highest single *technical* score minus the lowest single *rhythm* and *sound* score. If both teams have the same total, move to step #6.
  - 6) The group with the highest single *technical* score minus the lowest single *routine* score. If both teams have the same total, move to step #7.
  - 7) If none of the above steps succeeds in breaking the tie, then the dance studio will be asked to choose one of the tied groups to compete at the American Loves to Dance Championships.

### **WITHDRAWING/ADDING DANCERS**

The studio must make all withdraws and changes.

### **SHOWSTOPPER APPROPRIATE**

If dance movements, music lyrics, or costuming are deemed to be too suggestive or otherwise inappropriate for our family audience, or if the music contains vulgar or inappropriate lyrics, the routine will be scored lower by the judges or disqualified from the competition.

### **VIDEOS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE**

Participating contestants and studios may purchase video downloads of their routines. Videos will be available online at goshowstopper.com during the performance year they are recorded. Any videos purchased during the competition season must be downloaded by December 31st of that same year. Thereafter, they will no longer be available. You may download videos and photos to four compatible download devices, such as desktops, laptops, or Android devices.

### **SHOWSTOPPER'S VIDEO & PHOTOGRAPHY USE**

Contestants and teachers by virtue of entering a Showstopper event give their permission and consent to the Directors of Showstopper to use their images, photographs or appear in videos, television, or any other electronic media for advertising, news coverage or any other commercial use of our events.

### **BE SAFE**

- Any performer competing in dance competitions take certain inherent risks. These include, but are not limited to, sprains, bruises, pulled muscles, and broken bones.
- Participation in this competition indicates the acceptance of such risks by performers. Therefore by virtue of entering this event, it is agreed that participants will not hold Showstopper® Inc.; Showstopper American Dance Championships® or its officers, directors officials, staff or employees responsible for injuries sustained or illnesses contracted by them while in attendance and/or participating in any activity related to a Showstopper® Competition.
- Showstopper® Inc., Showstopper American Dance Championships® and the hosting facility are not responsible for personal injury to contestants or spectators.
- Showstopper is not responsible for lost or stolen property. Do not leave your property and valuables unattended in the event center, theater, or dressing rooms.