

Showstopper 2027 Finals

Competition Rules & Regulations

Please read carefully to ensure your routines are eligible for competition.

Visit the Studio Center for 2027 entry prices and registration.

Must-Know Registration Requirements:

These are the most critical rules to secure your spot and complete your registration.

- **First Come, First Served:** Entries are accepted in the order received and are limited by available performance time. Most events sell out before the deadline.
- **Studios Only:** All entries must be submitted by a dance studio. Independent entries are not accepted.
- **Reserve Your Spot:** A **\$25 deposit per routine** is required to reserve a routine spot. Deposits are non-refundable but are applied toward your registration fees.
- **Unused Routine Spots:** Remove unused **Finals routines by March 1, 2027**. Deposits from routines removed by the applicable deadline may be applied toward remaining registration fees. After the deadline, deposits on unused spots are forfeited.
- **Pay Early & Save:** Pay your registration balance **30 or more days prior to your event** to receive Early Pricing. After this deadline, the regular registration rate applies and all registration fees become non-refundable and non-transferable, except with a doctor's note for illness or injury.
- **Finalize Your Registration:** All registration details must be completed **18 days prior to the event**. After this deadline, no additional routine changes can be made and schedule creation begins. Complete registration includes:
 - All routines entered correctly
 - All participant and routine information finalized
 - Full payment received
 - Music uploaded online
- **Program Accuracy:** Enter music titles, participant names, and studio names exactly as they should appear in the Showstopper Program.
- **Birth Dates:** Dancers' birth dates must be entered correctly to ensure accurate personal schedules and dancer photo/video access.
- **No Payments at the Event:** All balances must be paid in full by the **18-day registration deadline**. No payments will be accepted at a Showstopper event.
- **No Regional Required for Finals:** Studios are not required to attend a 2027 Regional competition to register for the 2027 Finals.
- **Easy Transfers:** Routines from a Regional competition can be transferred to any Finals location without re-registering.

► ENTRY TYPES & LIMITS

All entries must be submitted by the studio; independent entries are not accepted.

Types of Entries

- **Solo:** 1 dancer
- **Duet/Trio:** 2 or 3 dancers (Duets and Trios compete against each other)
- **Small Group:** 4–9 dancers
- **Large Group:** 10–19 dancers
- **Super Group:** 20+ dancers

Time Limits

- **Solo, Duet/Trio, Small Group:** 3:00 minutes
- **Large Group, Super Group:** 4:00 minutes
- **Production:** 8:00 minutes
- No additional time may be purchased.
- A 15% grace period is allowed for machine calibration error.
- Deduction: 0.1 points per judge for every 15 seconds (or portion thereof) beyond the allotted time plus grace period.

Solo Limits by Level

- Competitive Level: Max 2 solos per dancer, per event
- Advanced Level: Max 1 solo per dancer, per event
- Performance Level: Solos not allowed (encouraged to enter Rising Star)
- Shine Level: Max 1 solo per dancer, per event
- Rising Star: Max 1 solo per dancer, per event

► AGE DIVISIONS

Clear age guidelines ensure fair and consistent placement for all routines.

How Ages Are Calculated:

All ages are determined **as of January 1** of the competition year.

- **Solos:** The dancer's age on January 1 determines their division.
- **Duet/Trios & Groups:**
 - Average the ages of all dancers as of January 1.
 - If the average includes a decimal, **round down** (drop the decimal).

Oldest Dancer Rule:

Duet/Trios and Groups are placed by **average age**, but may not compete more than **one age division younger than the oldest dancer** in the routine. If the average age falls more than one division below the oldest dancer, the routine will be moved up to the **lowest age in the next eligible division**.

Example: A group includes an **18-year-old dancer (Senior)** but has an **average age of 10 (Junior)**. Since the routine cannot compete more than one division below its oldest dancer, it must compete in **Teen**, the division directly below Senior. The lowest Teen age is **12**, so the routine will compete as **Teen, age 12**.

Production Exception: Productions are exempt from the Oldest Dancer Rule and will continue to be placed by **average age**.

Standard Age Divisions

- 5 & under
- 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
- 70 & over

Special Age Divisions

For Contemporary, Tap, Jazz, Lyrical Jazz, Open, Musical Theater, Hip Hop, and Production categories only:

- 5 & under
- 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
- 70 & over

Overall Awards Age Groups

For Performance, Advanced, Competitive, and Shine levels:

- **Little:** 5 years & under (***NEW in 2027!***)
- **Mini:** 6–8 years
- **Junior:** 9–11 years
- **Teen:** 12–14 years
- **Senior:** 15–19 years
- **Adult:** 20 years & over

► COMPETITION LEVELS

Studios must use their best judgment when placing dancers based on experience, training hours, and skill level.

Competitive Level

The highest and most challenging level.

- Dancers taking **over 5 hours** of dance and/or acrobatics per week.
- Includes Performance or Advanced dancers who wish to compete at the highest level.
- Required for any routines competing for:
 - Cash Awards
 - Top Overall Honors
 - The Crystal Award
 - All-Star Qualification
- Soloists in this level must remain in the Competitive Level for **all** solos, duet/trios, and group routines at the same competition.

Advanced Level

For dancers ready for more than recreational competition but not yet at Competitive Level.

- Dancers taking **3–5 hours** of dance and/or acrobatics per week.
- Limited competitive experience.
- Soloists must remain in the Advanced Level for all solos.
- Cannot compete in a Performance Level duet/trio.
- May move **up** to a Competitive Level duet, trio, or group.
- Duet/Trios or Groups with **any dancer taking over 5 hours/week** must compete in the Competitive Level.

Performance Level

Designed for recreational dancers with limited training and competition experience.

- Dancers taking **fewer than 3 hours** of dance and/or acrobatics per week.
- Entry in this level is optional — dancers may choose Advanced or Competitive instead.
- Duet/Trios must move to a higher level if **any dancer** takes 3 or more hours/week.
- **Solos are not allowed** in the Performance Level. Soloists at this level may perform a solo as part of the **Rising Star Program** or are encouraged to register their solo in the **Advanced Level** for a competitive experience.
- When Performance-level groups include dancers who also perform at the Advanced level, the **Advanced Dancer Allowance*** rules apply.

****Advanced-Level Dancer Allowance in Performance-Level Groups***

Performance-level group routines **may include some Advanced-level dancers without moving up a level:**

- **Limit:** 1 Advanced dancer for every 5 Performance-level dancers.
- **Example:** A group of 10 Performance-level dancers may include **up to 2 Advanced dancers**.
- **Small Groups:** Groups with exactly 9 dancers may include **up to 2 Advanced dancers**.

Rising Star Program

A special level for dancers gaining solo experience while building confidence and performance skills.

- Open to dancers in the **Little, Mini, Junior, Teen, and Senior** age divisions.
- For dancers taking **less than 3 hours per week** and would typically qualify for the Performance Level.
- Each dancer may perform **one solo** in this program.
- **Dancers will not compete directly against each other or be ranked against each other – there are no overalls.** The program goal is **personal achievement** and **individual accomplishment**.
- Rising Star dancers may perform in duet/trio or group routines at **any level** without affecting that routine's level.

Shine Level

For dancers with special needs or disabilities who want to showcase their talents in a supportive and inclusive environment.

- Open to dancers of **all ages** with diagnosed special needs or disabilities.
- At least one dancer in each routine must be registered in the Shine Level.
- Shine dancers may perform in duet/trio or group routines at **any level** (Performance, Advanced, or Competitive) without affecting that routine's level.
- Studios may enter Shine dancers in solos, duet/trios, and groups without restriction on the number of routines

DANCE CATEGORIES

Please review our dance category descriptions and requirements carefully to ensure each routine is placed in the appropriate category. Incorrect placement may result in deductions or category adjustments by the judges.

Routines may compete in any of the following categories: Acrobatic Dance, Ballet, Baton, Character Routine, Clogging, Contemporary, Folkloric, Hip Hop, Jazz, Lyrical Jazz, Musical Theater, Open, Pointe, Pom Pon, Production, Song & Dance, Tap, Teacher.

Acrobatic Dance

Routine using controlled acrobatic moves such as walkovers, limbers, handstands, chest rolls, etc., and may contain gymnastic passes.

- Majority of the routine must be acrobatic moves, otherwise it will be scored lower.
- May also include flexibility or contortionist moves, but must contain dance choreography.

Ballet

Routine must consist of ballet technique and include classical steps and movements.

- No pointe shoes allowed.
- No gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.
- A trick is any movement that passes through or stops at a full inverted (upside-down) position with both feet off the floor, with the torso passing or stopping directly over the head/shoulders.
- Exceptions: forward rolls, backward rolls, shoulder rolls, and acrobatic tricks performed in lifts (a lift is when the dancer is supported by another dancer).

- A gymnastic pass counts each trick in the pass.
- Deduction: 0.5 points per judge for each trick performed.

Baton

Routine using baton(s) and baton technique.

- Judged on both baton technique and dance choreography.
- Any number of gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.

Character Routine

Routine portraying a recognizable character from a play, movie, television, Broadway, or a stereotype (farmer, police officer, etc.).

- Character must be listed on the entry form and will appear in the program book.
- May include dance or acrobatic techniques.
- Any number of gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.

Clogging

Routine utilizing either traditional or contemporary style clogging technique.

- **Maximum of 3 gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.**
- A trick is any movement that passes through or stops at a full inverted (upside-down) position with both feet off the floor, with the torso passing or stopping directly over the head/shoulders.
- Exceptions: forward rolls, backward rolls, shoulder rolls, and acrobatic tricks performed in lifts.
- A gymnastic pass counts each trick in the pass.
- Deduction: 0.5 points per judge for each trick over the limit.

Contemporary

Routine utilizing contemporary style to show extension and balance, and may combine lyrical, modern, and concert techniques.

- Any number of gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.

Folkloric

Routine using an ethnic style of dance such as Spanish, Hawaiian, polka, etc.

- Any number of gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.

Hip Hop

Routine consisting primarily of Hip Hop technique.

- Any number of gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.
- Music containing inappropriate lyrics will result in a lower score or disqualification.

Jazz

Routine consisting primarily of jazz technique.

- **Maximum of 3 gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.**
- A trick is any movement that passes through or stops at a full inverted (upside-down) position with both feet off the floor, with the torso passing or stopping directly over the head/shoulders.
- Exceptions: forward rolls, backward rolls, shoulder rolls, and acrobatic tricks performed in lifts.
- A gymnastic pass counts each trick in the pass.
- Deduction: 0.5 points per judge for each trick over the limit.

Lyrical Jazz

Routine should demonstrate balance, extension, isolations, and control, utilizing the lyrics or mood of the music.

- **Maximum of 3 gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.**
- A trick is any movement that passes through or stops at a full inverted (upside-down) position with both feet off the floor, with the torso passing or stopping directly over the head/shoulders.
- Exceptions: forward rolls, backward rolls, shoulder rolls, and acrobatic tricks performed in lifts.
- A gymnastic pass counts each trick in the pass.
- Deduction: 0.5 points per judge for each trick over the limit.

Musical Theater

Routine featuring any style of dance interpreting a song from a Broadway show or movie musical.

- Any number of gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.

Open

Routine combining any listed categories or dance styles.

- Any number of gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.

Pointe

Routine must consist of pointe/toe technique.

- No gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.
- A trick is any movement that passes through or stops at a full inverted (upside-down) position with both feet off the floor, with the torso passing or stopping directly over the head/shoulders.
- Exceptions: forward rolls, backward rolls, shoulder rolls, and acrobatic tricks performed in lifts.
- A gymnastic pass counts each trick in the pass.
- Deduction: 0.5 points per judge for each trick performed.

Pom Pon

Routine incorporating the use of pom pons.

- Must use precise, definite movements.
- Any number of acrobatic tricks allowed.
- No stunts, tosses, or pyramids taller than one person (Deduction: 1 point per judge).
- Judged on both pom pon technique and dance choreography.

Production

Routine using a group of at least 10 dancers, incorporating any style(s) of dance or acrobatics.

- Time limit: 8 minutes.
- All Production Groups at Finals are automatically part of the ProductionMania!® show the evening before the final championship day, The America Loves to Dance Awards.
- **Production Exception:** Productions are exempt from certain routine participation restrictions. See ***Multiple Routines in the Same Category/Age Division** for details.

Song & Dance

Routine must contain both singing and any listed category of dancing. Judging is based on both singing and dancing.

- There must be no other lead voices in the pre-recorded music (Deduction: 0.5 points per judge).
- Two handheld wireless microphones will be available.
- Deduction: 1 point per judge if any special microphones or sound equipment are set up by Showstopper for the performance.

Tap

Routine must contain tap technique and primarily tap work. Tap sounds should not be pre-recorded in the music.

- **Maximum of 3 gymnastic/acrobatic tricks allowed.**
- A trick is any movement that passes through or stops at a full inverted (upside-down) position with both feet off the floor, with the torso passing or stopping directly over the head/shoulders.
- Exceptions: forward rolls, backward rolls, shoulder rolls, and acrobatic tricks performed in lifts.
- A gymnastic pass counts each trick in the pass.
- Deduction: 0.5 points per judge for each trick over the limit.

Teacher

For dancers aged 20+ who are teachers, assistant teachers, professional dancers, or have ever held those roles.

- Teachers may compete in any dance category.
- Any duet/trio or group with at least one teacher must compete in the Teacher category.
- Teacher groups are not eligible to appear on the final championship day, The America Loves to Dance Awards.

➤ CATEGORY POINT DEDUCTIONS

Certain rule violations may result in point deductions as outlined below.

Limits and Deductions by Category:

- **Ballet and Pointe:** No gymnastic/acrobatic tricks are allowed. A deduction of 0.5 points per judge will be made for each trick in these categories.
- **Tap, Jazz, Lyrical Jazz, and Clogging:** A maximum of three gymnastic/acrobatic tricks are allowed. A deduction of 0.5 points per judge will be made for each trick over the limit.
- **Hip Hop, Musical Theater, Baton, Pom Pon, Character, Folkloric, Open, Contemporary, and Production:** No limit on gymnastic/acrobatic tricks — no deductions apply for tricks in these categories.

A **gymnastic/acrobatic trick** is defined as any movement that passes through or stops at a full inverted (upside-down) position with both feet off the floor, with the torso passing or stopping directly over the top of the head or shoulders.

Exceptions (not counted as tricks): forward rolls, backward rolls, shoulder rolls, and acrobatic tricks performed in lifts (where the dancer is supported by another dancer). A gymnastic pass will be counted as the total number of tricks in that pass.

Important Notes:

- If a rule violation is not caught at one event, it may still be applied at another Regional or at Finals. Previous judging does not set a precedent.
- A violation found after an event may be addressed retroactively, with results and posted scores updated if deductions are applied.
- If dance movements, music lyrics, or costuming are deemed too suggestive or inappropriate for a family audience, or if music contains vulgar or offensive language, the routine will either receive a lower score from the judges or be disqualified (see Showstopper Appropriate).

****Multiple Routines in the Same Category/Age Division***

The same dancers **may not compete against themselves in multiple routines within the same category and age division**. Each additional routine must have a change in participating dancers.

Production Exception: Productions are exempt from this rule. A studio may enter multiple Productions in the same age division, even when the same dancers participate in more than one Production.

► SCORING CRITERIA & DEDUCTIONS

Routines are evaluated by judges in these core categories, with personalized written and audio feedback provided to help dancers grow:

- **Costume:** Creativity, appropriateness
- **Rhythm & Sound:** Timing, precision
- **Routine:** Difficulty, creativity, knowledge of routine
- **Stage Presence:** Expression, confidence, showmanship
- **Technique:** Basics, body lines, control, execution

All judging decisions are final. The time, manner, and method of judging are at the sole discretion of Showstopper's directors and producers.

Every routine receives written and audio commentary from each judge. If commentary is missing or inaudible, **studios may request a review through the Studio Center within 14 days of the event.**

Point Deductions:

- 5-point deduction for routines not completed (unless due to a costume malfunction resulting in an immodest performance)
- 1-point deduction per judge if special microphones or sound equipment must be set up by Showstopper for a performance
- 0.1 points per judge for every 15 seconds (or portion thereof) beyond the allotted time limit plus the 15% grace period (see Time Limits)
- Violations of prop or safety rules may result in score deductions or disqualification
- Inappropriate costuming, choreography, or music may be scored lower or disqualified (see Showstopper Appropriate)

► MUSIC REQUIREMENTS

- Each entry must furnish its own music and upload it through the Studio Center at goshowstopper.com.
- Music must be uploaded **at least 18 days prior** to the competition or the routine will not be considered fully registered and may not be included in the show schedule.
- After uploading, studios must listen to confirm the correct file is matched with the correct routine.
- Music on cell phones or CDs is **not accepted**.
- A backup copy is strongly recommended on a flash drive in case of technical issues.
- Music left at the event will not be saved.

► PROP ALLOWANCE

- All props and set pieces must be safe, stable, and free from sharp edges or hazardous materials.
- Props must fit through the venue's standard backstage entrance and be able to be set up and removed quickly within the allotted time. Excessive set-up or removal time may be considered in scoring.
- Fire, swords, and knives on stage are prohibited. Simulated weapons with dull, safe edges are acceptable with prior approval from Showstopper.
- No use of liquid, paint, gel, aerosol, glitter, fog, smoke, powder, paint powder, ashes, helium balloons, or any similar substance that could damage the stage or affect the dancing surface, unless specifically approved by Showstopper. Use without approval may result in a lower score.
- Props must be freestanding; scenery or backdrops requiring theater fly bars may not be used.
- All props must be handled and placed on stage by the performing dancers and/or their studio staff.
- If the stage is littered during a routine, the performing studio must clean it immediately after the performance.
- Any prop or set piece deemed unsafe or likely to cause delays may be removed at the discretion of Showstopper staff.

► SHOWSTOPPER APPROPRIATE

We are committed to providing a family-friendly environment at all events.

This means:

- Costuming, choreography, and music lyrics must be suitable for all ages.
- Music containing vulgar or explicit language is not permitted.
- **Choreography that is overly suggestive or depicts inappropriate themes will result in a lower score or disqualification.**
- Judges' decisions regarding appropriateness are final.

Studios are responsible for reviewing routines before the event to ensure compliance.

► COMPETITION RULES & REGULATIONS

Participation Rules

- Dancers in Competitive Level solos must remain in the Competitive Level for all other solos, duet/trios, and groups at that competition.
- The same dancer(s) may not compete more than once in the same category and age group for solos, duets/trios, or groups – except for Production routines.
- Regional routines are eligible to enter any National Finals, but dancers may attend only one Finals event.
- Routines must perform in scheduled order; performing out of order may affect awards ceremony video playback.
- Routines must perform in their assigned awards session to be eligible for overall awards.
- Duet/Trios cannot win in Group categories.

General Competition Rules

- All routines must comply with Showstopper's rules for categories, levels, age divisions, props, and safety.
- If dance movements, music lyrics, or costuming are deemed too suggestive or otherwise inappropriate for a family audience—or if the music contains vulgar or inappropriate lyrics—the routine will be scored lower or disqualified.
- Videotaping and movie cameras are prohibited. Still photography is limited to taking photographs of your own child. No professional set-ups, tripods, or monopods are allowed.
- Air horns or similar devices are prohibited in the audience.
- Props must meet the guidelines in the Prop Allowance section and be safe for the stage environment.
- Music must be uploaded in advance per the deadlines listed in Music Requirements.
- All judging decisions are final.

► AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Every routine is recognized on stage and receives a trophy.

Every dancer in a group routine receives a category medal matching the group's trophy.

Category Awards

These awards are based on predetermined point ranges and are given in each category and age group. Multiple awards may be presented within the same age group and category.

- Crystal Award (Competitive Level only)
- Double Platinum
- Platinum
- Gold
- Silver Award

Production routines do not receive Category Awards at The Finals, but instead all routines are honored with a special ProductionMania! Crystal Trophy.

Category Age Divisions

- **All Categories:** (5 & under), (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), (70 & over)
- **Contemporary, Tap, Jazz, Lyrical Jazz, Open, Musical Theater, Hip Hop Only:** (5 & under), (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), (70 & over)

Overall Awards

Overall recognition is given to the Top 10 routines in each of the following age divisions*:

- Little: 5 years & under
- Mini: 6–8 years
- Junior: 9–11 years
- Teen: 12–14 years
- Senior: 15–19 years
- Adult: 20 years & over

Overall Awards Presentation

1st Overall: Trophy

2nd–10th Overall: Medal

****Overall Divisions with 100+ Routines***

When an overall age division has 100 or more entries, Showstopper will **divide the age division into smaller age groups for Overall Awards**.

When a division is split, routines will be separated by age, beginning with the **oldest age group** and continuing as needed based on the number of entries.

Example: A Teen division of 100+ routines will be divided by separating age 14 into its own Overall Awards division. If an additional split is needed, age 13 may also be separated.

* Special Case – For Seniors, 19 yrs will be grouped with 18 yrs dancers.

Rising Star Awards

Rising Star routines do not compete for category or overall awards. Instead, they are scored using a three-tier system—**3-Star, 4-Star, or 5-Star**—based on performance. Within each tier, dancers are further evaluated on a slider scale to highlight progress and development without numerical scores or direct comparisons to others.

Each Rising Star dancer is honored on stage and receives:

- Rising Star Trophy (with their star-tier ranking)
- Rising Star Medal
- Certificate of Accomplishment

Advanced Level Awards

Top Solo

- Full Showstopper Convention Scholarship – Top Overall Soloist in each age division
- Partial Accelerate Acro Dance Convention Scholarship – Top Overall Soloist in each age division
- Showstopper Magazine Print & Online Feature – Top Overall Senior Soloist

Competitive Level Awards

Top Solo

- \$50 Cash Prize + \$50 Showstopper Gift Certificate – Top Overall Soloist in each age division
- Showstopper All-Star Dancer Recognition & Opening Number Invitation – Top 4–10 Overall Soloists (based on event size) in Junior, Teen, and Senior divisions
- Full Prodigy The Dance Team Convention Scholarship – Top Overall Soloist in Senior & Teen divisions
- Full Showstopper Convention Scholarship – Top Overall Soloist in each age division
- Partial Accelerate Acro Dance Convention Scholarship – Top Overall Soloist in each age division
- Showstopper Magazine Print & Online Feature – Top Overall Senior Soloist

Top Duet/Trio

- \$50 Cash Prize + \$50 Showstopper Gift Certificate – Top Overall Duet/Trio in Mini, Junior, Teen, and Senior divisions

Top Small Group

- \$100 Cash Prize + \$100 Showstopper Gift Certificate – Top Overall Small Group in Mini, Junior, Teen, and Senior divisions

Top Large Group

- \$100 Cash Prize + \$100 Showstopper Gift Certificate – Top Overall Large Group in Mini, Junior, Teen, and Senior divisions

Top Super Group

- \$100 Cash Prize + \$100 Showstopper Gift Certificate – Top Overall Super Group in Mini, Junior, Teen, and Senior divisions

Top Teacher Award

- Special trophy for the highest scoring Teacher routines in Solo, Duet/Trio, and Group divisions

Top Adult Award

- Special trophy for the highest scoring Adult (20+) routines in Solo, Duet/Trio, and Group divisions

Please Note: All cash prizes with gift certificates are mailed to the Studio Director or Teacher after the competition. No cash awards are given in the Rising Star, Performance, Advanced, or Shine Levels.

SHOWSTOPPER ALL-STAR DANCER QUALIFICATION

All-Stars are selected from **Competitive-Level Junior, Teen and Senior Soloists** at each qualifying event. The number of All-Stars selected is based on the total number of entries at the event:

- **Up to 900 entries:** Top 4 Competitive Soloists
- **901–2,000 entries:** Top 6 Competitive Soloists
- **2,001–2,500 entries:** Top 8 Competitive Soloists
- **2,501+ entries:** Top 10 Competitive Soloists

Showstopper All-Stars are invited to participate in the **All-Star Opening Number at Showstopper Finals**. To qualify for the **2027 Finals Opening Number**, a dancer must either:

- Be selected as a Showstopper All-Star at a **2027 Regional Competition or the 2026 Holiday Dance Classic**, or
- Receive an **Opening Number Wild Card Invitation**.

Dancers do not need to attend Finals with their studio to participate in the Opening Number.

Wild Card Application Process

The Wild Card program gives additional Competitive-Level soloists an opportunity to be considered for the Finals Opening Number.

To be eligible to apply, a dancer must:

- Have attended a **2027 Showstopper Regional Competition or 2026 Holiday Dance Classic**
- Have received a **Crystal Award for a Competitive-Level solo**
- Compete in the **Junior, Teen or Senior** age division
- **Not have already qualified** as a 2027 Showstopper All-Star

Eligible dancers must complete the **Opening Number Wild Card submission form**. All Wild Card submissions are personally reviewed by Showstopper.

A limited number of invitations are awarded, and submitting an application does not guarantee selection. All selections are final, and dancers receiving a Wild Card Invitation will be contacted individually.

Opening Number Participation Requirements

All qualified All-Stars and Wild Card **recipients must complete the Opening Number registration process by June 6, 2027**, and agree to all applicable registration, rehearsal, costume and performance requirements. Additional information and deadlines will be provided to participating dancers prior to Finals.

► PERFORMING FOR ADJUDICATION

Routines must be performed during their scheduled set (when routines in the same age group and dance category perform) and before the awards session for that set.

If a routine cannot perform during its scheduled time, it may perform for **Adjudication**.

In this case:

- The routine will be announced on stage at the end of the awards session as an Adjudication.
- The routine will receive a trophy based on its score within our award scale (Double Platinum, Platinum, Gold, Silver) and receive judges' comments.

► PRODUCTIONMANIA!®

EVENT OVERVIEW

A championship event featuring every Production entered at The Finals. All Productions automatically participate—no qualification or callback is required. ProductionMania! takes place on the final day of regular Finals competition, prior to The America Loves to Dance Awards Championship Day.

OPENING CELEBRATION

ProductionMania! begins with a Pink Carpet Walk for participating teachers and studio owners, celebrating the studios behind the week's Productions before competition begins.

EVENT FORMAT

ProductionMania! serves as the official competition session for all Productions at The Finals. Productions from all eligible age divisions and competition levels—Performance, Advanced, and Competitive—perform back-to-back in one high-energy set in a predetermined performance order. This is each Production's one competition performance at The Finals.

Produced as a high-energy live show, the event features **live studio interviews, backstage segments, special production elements, and an exciting awards ceremony** to close out the final day of regular Finals competition.

TEACHER MEETING

Teachers with Productions participating in ProductionMania! must attend the required ProductionMania Teacher Meeting (time and location on the week's schedule). The meeting will review performance order, staging, check-in, Pink Carpet details, and awards procedures. Meeting time and location will be listed on the week's schedule.

AWARDS

Productions compete for **Overall Awards within their respective competition level and age division**. Top Productions in each division will be recognized during the ProductionMania! Awards Ceremony.

Every Production participating in ProductionMania! will receive a **special ProductionMania! Trophy**, ensuring every participating studio leaves with a ProductionMania! award.

Regular category, adjudication, and age-division awards are not presented during ProductionMania!.

► THE AMERICA LOVES TO DANCE AWARDS

EVENT OVERVIEW

Our championship day LIVE show where the week's top Competitive-Level groups in the Mini, Junior, Teen, and Senior age divisions return to compete once more in front of our full panel of judges (from all rooms) and our largest audience of the week—streamed live to an average of 10,000 viewers.

OPENING CELEBRATION

The day begins with a Pink Carpet Walk for graduating seniors and teachers/studio owners, followed by the prestigious All-Dancers Opening Number performance.

SHOW FORMAT

Produced like a live TV broadcast (inspired by our nationally televised *American Dance Championships*—a 5-time Emmy-nominated series), the event features live studio interviews, backstage segments, epic award ceremonies, a top solo and duet/trio showcase, and high-energy performances packed with confetti and excitement.

QUALIFYING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Groups who qualify are announced during the week at their award ceremony. Teachers from qualifying studios attend a pre-show meeting the night before (time and location on the week's schedule) to determine the performance order by draw, review guidelines, and enjoy a celebratory champagne toast.

QUALIFICATION & AWARDS

Small Groups: Top 10 overall in Mini (8 & under), Junior (9–11), Teen (12–14), and Senior (15–19) age groups (*no dancer overlap allowed within the age group*).

- 1st Place: \$500 | 2nd Place: \$250 | 3rd Place: \$100
- Compete in the morning before lunch break.

Large Groups: Top 10 overall in Mini (8 & under), Junior (9–11), Teen (12–14), and Senior (15–19) age groups (*no dancer overlap allowed within the age group*).

- 1st Place: \$500 | 2nd Place: \$250 | 3rd Place: \$100
- Compete in the afternoon after lunch break.

Super Groups: Top 5 overall in combined Mini/Junior (11 & under) and combined Teen/Senior (12–19) age groups (*no dancer overlap allowed within the age group*).

- 1st Place: \$500 | 2nd Place: \$250 | 3rd Place: \$100

Ineligible Categories: Production, Teacher Groups, Adult Groups, Advanced Level, Performance Level, and Shine Level routines are not eligible for *the America Loves to Dance Awards*.

TIEBREAK PROCEDURE

If a studio has two groups with the same score and overlapping dancers, the advancing group will be chosen in the following order:

1. Highest total technical score.
2. If removing one group allows another group from the studio to advance, that group will be removed to allow the other group to qualify.
3. Group with the most dancers.
4. Highest total technical score plus highest total stage presence score.
5. Highest single technical score minus lowest rhythm & sound score.
6. Highest single technical score minus lowest routine score.
7. If still tied, the studio will choose which group competes.

QUALIFYING FOR THE FINALS

Though we encourage regional competition participation, studios **DO NOT** need to compete at a 2027 regional to register for a 2027 Finals event.

- You do **not** have to attend a 2027 regional to compete at the 2027 Finals.
- Routines from a regional can be easily transferred to any Finals location.
- To perform in the 2027 Opening Number, dancers must qualify as an All-Star at a 2027 regional, the **2026 Holiday Dance Classic**, or be selected through the **Wild Card Application** process.

PHOTOS & VIDEOS POLICY

Contestants and studios can purchase video downloads of their routines, available online at **goshowstopper.com** during the performance year they're recorded.

- Videos purchased during the competition season must be downloaded by **December 31** of that year. After that date, they will no longer be available.
- Videos and photos can be downloaded to up to **four** compatible devices, such as desktops, laptops, or Android devices.

By entering a Showstopper event, contestants and teachers grant permission for Showstopper to use their images, photographs, and likeness in videos, television, or other media for advertising, news coverage, or any other promotional or commercial use related to our events.

SAFETY FIRST

Participation in any dance competition comes with inherent risks, including but not limited to sprains, bruises, pulled muscles, and broken bones. By entering this event, participants accept these risks and agree not to hold **Showstopper® LLC, Showstopper American Dance Championships®,** its officers, directors, officials, staff, employees, or the hosting facility responsible for injuries sustained or illnesses contracted while attending or participating in any activity related to a Showstopper® competition.

Showstopper is not responsible for lost or stolen property. Do not leave valuables unattended in the event center, theater, or dressing rooms.

All props and staging elements must be safe for performers, audience members, and staff. Set pieces must be stable, secure, and free of sharp edges or hazardous materials. The use of fire, open flames, pyrotechnics, live animals, water, or other potentially dangerous materials is strictly prohibited.

Routines must be performed in a manner that minimizes the risk of injury to dancers and others on stage. Any violation of these safety standards may result in the removal of the prop, alteration of the routine, or disqualification at the discretion of Showstopper staff.