

INSTRUMENTAL Guidelines for Instrumental Ensembles

Instrumental Division Read the General Information and General Rules.

Registrants in the Instrumental Division may submit entries in the following categories:

- Piano Solo
- Percussion Solo
- Percussion Ensemble
- Instrumental Solo
- Instrumental Ensemble
- Orchestra

General Instrumental Division Rules

1. These apply as general rules for all Instrumental Division Categories.
2. An instrumental ensemble/solo is the art of presenting a musical composition using only musical instruments.
3. An instrumental ensemble may be comprised by two to ten eligible students.
4. An orchestra is an instrumental ensemble exceeding 10 eligible students.
5. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for instrumental entries (except for Percussion Ensemble categories). There are 90 seconds allowed for setup and 90 seconds for teardown (except for Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary). The instrumentalists may use this time to tune their instruments or conduct a brief warmup. Orchestras have a three-minute setup a three-minute teardown.
6. Music must be memorized for all solo entries.
7. Participants must introduce their selection by stating the composer, arranger, and selection title. Introductory comments count toward the overall presentation time limit.
8. Ensembles and orchestras do not have to memorize their music. Using the musical score does not affect the evaluation.
9. A conductor or director is permitted for orchestra only. A conductor providing timing, cues, or cutoffs from the seat will result in a point violation.
10. To ensure consistent sound level, microphones, if used, are set prior to the Festival by an official sound technician. Participants may not ask for special sound settings. It is the responsibility of the participants to make sure the microphones are turned on and to move microphones to accommodate blend and volume.
11. Soundtrack levels may be adjusted to compensate for different recording levels.
12. A participant may play more than one instrument in an Instrumental entry as long as the setup and tear down time limits are not exceeded.
13. Use of pre-programmed or pre-recorded loops/software is not allowed; any looping or sequencing technology must function only in response to manual and live hands-on control.
14. Piano Solo and Percussion entries are not allowed accompaniment (either live or recorded).
15. Click tracks, metronomes, or other rhythmic stability assistance devices or technology are disallowed.
16. Accompaniment:
 - a. Instrumental entries may choose to have or not to have accompaniment (except for Piano Solo and Percussion).
 - b. An accompanist is not considered part of the entry.
 - c. The accompanist may be an adult or student.
 - d. Accompanists are allowed to use music.
 - e. Only a piano, keyboard, or acoustic guitar may be used for live accompaniment. (Guitar may not be used to accompany a Guitar Solo.) Only a piano is provided by the Festival.
 - f. If an accompaniment track is used, the instrument(s) played by the student(s) cannot be predominant on the accompaniment track.
 - g. Neither live nor recorded background vocals are permitted.

Instrumental Ensemble

1. Instrumental Ensemble is the art of performing an instrumental selection without lyrics.
2. Instrumental Ensemble entries may consist of two to ten eligible students.
3. Instrumental Ensemble entries have a time limit of 5 minutes with 2 1/2 minutes for setup and 2 1/2 minutes for tear down.
4. Instrumental Ensemble selections do not have to be original, but originality is encouraged.
5. A conductor or director is not permitted, except for Orchestra. Participants receiving rhythm, balance/blend or cut-off cues from coaches or directors seated in the audience will receive rule-violation point deductions.
6. All individuals who perform live in an Instrumental Ensemble must meet the age or grade requirements for their category register as participants and pay the appropriate registration fee.
7. Instrumental Ensemble entries do not need to be memorized. Using the musical score will not affect the evaluation.
8. A keyboard is provided; any additional keyboards must be provided by the participant. Any use of preprogramming or sequencing of keyboards is not allowed; the keyboard should function only in response to manual, hands-on control.

Instrumental Ensemble Evaluation Criteria

Each entry will be evaluated on criteria established by LCS Festival including the following:

• Selection

- o Appropriate—appropriate level of difficulty; appropriate for this festival
- o Christian message - presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
- o Overall arrangement – well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
- o Originality – use of creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach; creative in its concept and structure

• Communication

- o Posture – conducive for effective performance.
- o Expressiveness – appropriate musical interpretation; musical and facial expression.
- o Stage presence – command of stage and instrument; control, confidence and comfort.
- o Communicative skill – interprets the overall musical intent (i.e. emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
- o Communication – ability to connect with audience.

• Presentation/Technique

- o Dynamics – effective use of contrasting volumes.
- o Phrasing – interesting melodic and instrumental phrasing
- o Intonation – accurate pitch of the instrument, maintaining correct intervals.
- o Tone quality – clarity and accuracy of pitch, volume, and timbre
- o Rhythmic stability – evenness of rhythm (timing, vibrato, etc.)
- o Precision/accuracy – skillful exactness of the presentation.
- o Fingering – smooth dexterity in chords, scales, and patterns.
- o Control – command of the instrument(s) to produce desired tone and effect.

• Effectiveness

- o Evident ministry – evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
- o Understandable concept – the combination of music selection, communication, presentation/technique and effectiveness
- o Interpretation of clear thought - consistent interpretation of the musical style and lyrical line throughout the song
- o Relevance - music is in a style and form that connects with the listener