

INSTRUMENTAL Guidelines for Piano Solo

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.

Piano Solo 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 Arrangement/Composition – a well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
- o Originality – if written or arranged by the student, use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach

- **Communication**

- o Posture – conducive for performance.
- o Expressiveness – appropriate musical interpretation
- o Stage presence – command of stage and instrument; control, confidence and comfort.
- o Interpretive 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 – produces complete musical sentences.
- o Rhythmic stability – evenness of rhythm
- o Precision/accuracy – skillful exactness of the presentation.
- o Chording technique – if the piece is improvised, skillful use of various chords, progressions, inversions, etc. to enhance the arrangement
- o Fingering – smooth dexterity in chords, scales, arpeggios and patterns.
- o Modulating technique – accurate key changes (if it is improvised, the effective use of chords, progressions, scales, and arpeggios, etc. in making key changes).
- o Control – command of the instrument to produce desired tone and affect.

- **Effectiveness**

- o Evident ministry – evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
- o Preparation – an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
- o Memorization – complete knowledge of the piece from memory
- o Overall effectiveness – the combination of music selection, communication, presentation/technique, to achieve overall effectiveness