

Competition Rules

The Basics

Arena (A) - Compete in the arena

Hand In (H) - Completed at home and handed in

Structure (S) - Criteria based on appropriate nail structure

Art (Ar) - Criteria based on creativity

Non-Divisional (ND) - All levels compete together, 1st, 2nd, 3rd places

Divisional (D) - Novice and Veteran are separated, 1st, 2nd, 3rd places for each level

Exclusive (E) - All levels compete together for ONE trophy

Veteran (V) - HAVE placed in a divisional competition (ARENA vs HAND IN), 1st, 2nd, 3rd places

Novice (N) - HAVE NOT placed in a divisional competition (ARENA vs HAND IN), 1st, 2nd, 3rd places

Arena Competitions	Hand-In Competitions
Salon Success - A, S, D	Hand Painted - H, Ar, D
Aspiring - A, E	3D - H, Ar, D
Artsy Extreme - A, S, D	Fantasy - H, Ar, D
Gel Polish - A, E	Nail Photographic - H, E
Pandora's Box - A, ND	Ultimate Extreme Nail - H, E
Tag Team - A, E	Limitless - H, E
Lash Tint & Lift - A, ND	Lash Photographic - H, E
Salon Lash - A, ND	Ultimate Extreme Lash - H, E

Divisions Placement Guide

Category	Previous Placement	Division
Structure	Placed before in any Structure competition	Veteran – Structure
Structure	Never placed in Structure competition	Novice – Structure
Art	Placed before in any Art competition	Veteran – Art
Art	Never placed in Art competition	Novice – Art

Key Reminder

- Structure and Art are judged **separately**
- You can be in **different divisions at the same time**

Example Scenario	Structure Division	Art Division
Placed in Structure, never in Art	Veteran	Novice
Never placed in Structure, placed in Art	Novice	Veteran
Placed in both	Veteran	Veteran
Never placed in either	Novice	Novice

Aspiring vs Salon

These categories are almost identical and run at the same time. If you are less than 24 months certified or are currently completing your course, you have the option of entering the Aspiring. You may enter Salon at any level but **MUST** have completed certification.

*Once you have received the Aspiring award you are no longer eligible to re-enter.

Arena Specific

1-1 General Rules

1. Competitors must use professional products unless stated otherwise.
2. All items specific to each competition must be in the workspace prior to the start of the competition. Competitors may not reach into their kits after the start time. Please have all containers appropriately labelled. Unauthorized materials may be confiscated as deemed fit by the floor judge until the end of the competition, at which time the competitor may collect their items back.
3. No one may touch the model other than the competitor registered for the competition.
4. Competitors may enter the competition arena to set up during allotted set up times.
5. Competition briefing will begin 10-15 minutes before the start time.
6. Models **CAN NOT** touch the nails or lashes between the end of the competition and judging. Models may not leave the area for any reason until after judging.
7. All decisions made by the judges are final. In the case of a tie or any discrepancies, the head judge will make a final ruling.
8. If a competitor is unable to attend the awards, they **MUST** arrange for any trophies to be picked up. NMC is not responsible for left trophies or score sheets.
9. Models are competitors' choice, tech or non-tech, and may be used for multiple competitions. NMC will not provide models.

1-2 Arena Nail Rules

10. Gel and Acrylgel systems may be used. No liquid and powder acrylic at this time.
11. Competitors are to bring ALL items required for competition. The only things provided are a table and two chairs. Please bring an extension cord.
12. The model's natural nails must be prepared for product application prior to the competition starting, but product may NOT be applied until start time unless otherwise stated.
13. No molds of any kind may be used to form the sculpted nail. This includes but not limited to any nail tips, reverse forms, or molds.
14. Cleansing products (wipes, soaps, etc.) and moisturizing products (oils, creams, lotions, etc.) are allowed within reason.
15. Smile line cutters are not permitted. All smile lines must be done with a brush or reverse filing.
16. Pre-existing damage to a model's natural nails, cuticles, or hands must be disclosed to the floor judge. Any damage that has not been indicated or that occurs once the competition starts will result in point deduction.
17. Once the competition has finished, competitors must remove their hands from the model and models hands must go up immediately. Instructions for judging will be given at this time. Please listen carefully to instructions of where models should go for judging and be sure they have your number clearly showing on their bracelet. Models being used for the immediate following competition will be judged first.

1-3 Arena Lash Rules

18. Competitors are to bring ALL necessary items for competition. This includes an esthetics/massage bed, overhead light, trolley, and extension cord.
19. The model's lashes must be prepared/cleansed prior to the start time, but undereye patches/tape may NOT be applied until start time.
20. Once the competition has finished, competitors must remove their hands from the model immediately and models must sit up. Instructions for judging will be given at this time. Models are to remain on the lash bed for judging. Please be sure they have your number clearly showing on their bracelet. Models being used for the immediate following competition will be judged first.

Artsy Extreme Shape - 1 hour and 30 minutes

1. See Arena Specific Rules.
2. Competitors will complete 3 different French style extreme nail extensions on one hand with art. Shapes can be any extreme shape desired but must be 3 different (Stiletto, Edge, Bridge, Arrow, Russian Almond, Lipstick etc. or a shape you have created).
3. Nails must be sculpted on forms. No tips allowed.
4. Completed nails must be a minimum of 2 inches long measured from cuticle to free edge.
5. Only 3/5 nails will be completed/judged on one hand (3 nails are ring, middle and index).
6. Embellishment(s) may be used and color is required to be used.
7. A maximum height of 1cm for any 3D embellishments. Any embellishments must be created onsite (with the exception of crystals; example - 3D flowers/bows must be created on site).
8. The nails created are to be in French-style (subject to interpretation). Art may be on top, bottom, sides, or embedded. This is an art competition!
9. Smile lines may be sculpted or painted on.
10. Higher points will be received when product is thinly applied near the cuticle area, reinforced at the apex, and tapered to the free edge. Nails should be approximately the thinness of a credit card with consistent c-curves and a flattering smile line.
11. Extreme shapes will be judged in the following categories: smile line definition, c-curves, cuticle area, shape, product control, surface structure, art ratio, art design and flow, use of color and embellishments, lateral structure, length, finished work, and overall impression.

Salon - 1 hour and 15 minutes

1. See Arena Specific Rules.
2. Competitors will complete a set of salon-style nail extensions on one hand (5 nails).
3. Nails must be sculpted on forms. No tips allowed.
4. The index, middle, ring, and pinky fingers must be French-style (pink or clear and white), finished to a high shine with a gel sealant. Regular nail polish is not permitted.
5. The thumb and middle fingers should be the same length. The index and ring fingers should be the same length and approximately 1mm shorter than the thumb and middle. The pinky should be approximately 1 mm shorter than the index and ring.
6. Finished nails should have a salon style c-curve of 30-40%.
7. There should be minimal to no curve through the spine of the nail from the apex to the free edge.
8. Embellishment(s) and art may NOT be used.
9. The thumb must be finished in a red gel polish. YOU MUST PROVIDE YOUR OWN (no shimmer, no sparkle). Base and top coats are allowed.
10. White must be built. Paint on white is NOT permitted.
11. Specific 2:1 (pink:white) ratio.
12. Higher points will be received when product is thinly applied near the cuticle area, reinforced at the apex, and tapered to the free edge. Nails should be approximately the thinness of a credit card with consistent c-curves and a flattering smile line.
13. Salon Success will be judged in the following categories: smile lines, c-curves, cuticle area, shape, product control, surface structure, lateral structure, length, 2:1 ratio, color application, finish work, and overall impression.

Aspiring - 1 hour and 15 minutes

Structure, Exclusive

1. See Arena Specific Rules.
2. Competitors will complete a set of salon-style nail extensions on one hand (5 nails).
3. Nails must be sculpted on forms. No tips allowed.
4. The index, middle, ring, and pinky fingers must be French-style (pink or clear and white), finished to a high shine with a gel sealant. Regular nail polish is not permitted.
5. Embellishment(s) and art may NOT be used.
6. The thumb must be finished in a red gel polish. YOU MUST PROVIDE YOUR OWN (no shimmer, no sparkle). Base and top coats are allowed.
7. White must be built. Paint on white is NOT permitted.
8. There is no specified pink to white ratio. Competitors will use the pink/white ratio which best compliments the model's hand.
9. Higher points will be received when product is thinly applied near the cuticle area, reinforced at the apex, and tapered to the free edge. Nails should be approximately the thinness of a credit card with consistent c-curves and a flattering smile line.
10. Aspiring salon competition will be judged in the following categories: flattering pink-white ratio for models hands, smile lines, c-curves, cuticle area, shape, product control, surface structure, lateral structure, length, color application, finish work, and overall impression.
11. Aspiring competitors MUST be less than 2 years certified from the date of the competition.

Gel Polish - 30 minutes

1. See Arena Specific Rules.
2. Competitors will complete a set of gel polish nails on one hand (5 nails).
3. The index, middle, and ring fingers must be French-style (pink or clear and white), finished to a high shine with a gel polish top coat. Regular nail polish is not permitted.
4. The pinky and thumb must be finished in an opaque red gel polish. YOU MUST PROVIDE YOUR OWN (no shimmer, no sparkle) finished to a high shine with a gel polish top coat. Regular nail polish is not permitted.
5. Gel polish MUST be applied to natural nails only. No extensions.
6. Finished nails should follow the shape of the natural nail.
7. Embellishment(s) and art may NOT be used.
8. White must be painted on in a ratio that suits the model's hands.
9. Higher points are received when product is thinly applied near the cuticle area and tapered to the free edge.
10. Gel Polish will be judged in the following categories: prep, pooling, cuticle area, arch, complexity/workmanship, red, smile lines, white ratio, shape, free edge, surface, shine, finished work, and overall impression.

Pandora's Box - 45 minutes

1. See Arena Specific Rules.
2. Competitors complete creative designs on one hand (5 nails) using only materials in the kit (provided by NMC) at the beginning of the competition.
3. The model must come with pre-existing nail extensions topped with solid black color and ready for design.
4. Nails can be any shape.
5. The nail extensions must have been completed by the competitor registered for the competition PRIOR to the start of the competition. Nail extension structure will be judged as part of the "overall" section but not structure specific sections.
6. The nails used must have been sculpted from forms. You may use your Artsy Extreme or Salon nails as long as they have been appropriately prepped.
7. Competitors are required to bring all products necessary to attach embellishments (gem gel, adhesive, top coats, brushes, tools, curing lamp, etc.).
8. No extra art supplies are permitted on the competitors table.
9. At the start of the competition, competitors are to open their kit and use ONLY these items to create their design.
10. At some point throughout the competition, Pandora's Box will be offered to the competitor for an extra 5 points to their final score.
11. Competitors will have 5 seconds to decide if they will keep Pandora's Box by placing their hand on top of the box. After 5 seconds, boxes without hands on top of them will be removed. Boxes must not be picked up or moved.
12. Pandora's Box MUST remain untouched until prompted by the floor judge.
13. If Pandora's Box has been chosen, competitors MUST use the item inside of it or face an even higher point deduction.
14. There is no limitation on how Pandora's item can be used.
15. Pandora's Box will be judged in the following categories: Use of Pandora's item, creativity, art/embellishment in ratio to nail surface, art flow, black color application, use/placement of embellishments, finished work and overall impression.

Tag Team - 1 hour

1. See Arena Specific Rules.
2. The Competitor Team will complete a set of nail extensions on one hand (5 nails).
3. Nails must be sculpted on forms. No tips allowed.
4. Each team will consist of 2 technicians and 1 model.
5. At random intervals, a buzzer will sound. At this time, Tech A must immediately take their hands off of the model and move to the side as Tech B sits and takes over. This switch will happen each time the buzzer sounds. The technician not currently with the model is not allowed to touch product, tools, or model in any way.
6. No warning will be given for the impending buzzer.
7. No individual timers will be allowed. All watches/phones and clocks must be removed from the table and stored out of sight.
8. Nails are NOT to be pink/white style French, they MUST be painted with a gel color.
9. Ring finger is required to have art. No embellishments will be provided. Competitors must complete art, 3D work and/or embellishments during the competition time.
10. Any shape and any length is allowed.
11. Higher points will be received when product is thinly applied near the cuticle area, reinforced at the apex, and tapered to the free edge. Nails should be approximately the thinness of a credit card with consistent c-curves.
12. Tag Team will be judged in the following categories: c-curves, cuticle area, shape, product control, surface structure, lateral structure, length, color application, art, finished work, and overall impression.

Lash Lift and Tint - 45 minutes

1. See Arena Specific Rules.
2. Competitors will complete a lash lift and tint on one model (both eyes).
3. Lashes must be tinted black.
4. Lash Lift and Tint will be judged in the following categories: evenness of curl, lash separation, direction, color saturation, symmetry, cleanliness of work, finished work, overall impression.

Salon Lash - 2 hours

1. See Arena Specific Rules.
2. Competitors will complete a full set of volume lash extensions on one model (both eyes).
3. The competitor is to choose whichever lash style/pattern would suit their model the best.
4. Premade fans and pre-mapped under eye patches are not allowed.
5. Salon Lash will be judged in the following categories: direction, isolation, mapping, proper attachment, workmanship, dimension and depth, finished work, and overall impression.

Hand in Specific

General Rules

1. Competitors may submit more than one entry but must pay a registration fee for each entry.
2. The competitor is to complete their entry at home and turn in entries themselves, have someone else turn them in or entries can be mailed in. Details on how to hand in competitions will be emailed after registration.
3. Mail in pieces must be mailed at minimum 2 weeks prior to the competition. NMC is not responsible for packages not received in time and those pieces will not be included.
4. After registration, techs will be emailed a Write-Up Template. This is to be filled out, printed, and handed in with your piece. It includes the title, the story sharing the inspiration behind the art, products used, and special techniques or key elements to point out about the art.
5. DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME OR LOGO ON ANYTHING. There is a form that will be filled out as the piece is being handed in. Every piece will receive a number that corresponds to the competition entry.
6. Tip size, color or shape does NOT matter (unless otherwise stated).
7. Embellishments for nail competitions may be used, but must NOT exceed 25% of the overall design. You must create a minimum of 75% of your pieces.
8. Basic internal armatures, supports, foundations, and hidden construction materials are permitted and are not included in the visible surface calculation. However, excessive use of internal supports or covering full items is not permitted.
9. Competitors must create an original design. No recreating any copyrighted art, design, or logo.
10. UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED IN A SPECIFIC CATEGORY: Completed tips and lash strips must be ready for display and judging. They must be SECURELY and CLEANLY fastened to a 6x8, 5x7 or 8x10 inch flat canvas board (found at a dollar store or on the NMC website). Any board that does not meet this requirement may not be accepted for entry. In the case of Photographic Nails or Lashes, art must be photographed on a model and your photo printed as 8x10 inch.
11. Canvas boards can be either white or black with no decoration unless otherwise stated.
12. All art pieces MUST be handed in inside of an opaque (not see-through) box with a removable lid (shoebox or box from a dollar store) and opaque unfolded envelopes for Photographic entries. This is to ensure anonymity when pieces are judged. You will be asked to complete an information card upon drop off.
13. The theme must be apparent in artwork and story.
14. All pieces must be original and can not have been submitted for any other previous competition. This includes Photographic entries. Competitors cannot use the same piece for a hand in and photographic piece.
15. Entries are not allowed to be posted ANYWHERE prior to judging.
16. Record (photos and videos) of the process of creating art pieces.

Hand Painted

1. See Hand In Specific Rules.
2. Hand Painted flat art entry must be completed on full size individual manufacturer tips. Original tip color, shape or size does NOT matter.
3. Novice and Veteran level entries will consist of 5 tips.
4. All hand painting must be done with acrylic paints, gel paints/polish or watercolor.
5. Gel top coats may be used.
6. The nail surface must be smooth with no texture.
7. Hand painted flat art will be judged in the following categories: creativity, visual interest, use of color, presentation, balance, design, dimension & depth, overall impression, complexity, workmanship and theme interpretation.

3D

1. See Hand In Specific Rules.
2. 3D Nail Art entry must be completed on full size individual manufacturer tips.
3. Competitors have a maximum of 1 inch working space from the surface of the nail tip to build and sculpt. Anything over 1 inch from any edge will result in points deduction.
4. Both Novice and Veteran level entries will consist of 5 tips.
5. The theme must be seen throughout all nails.
6. Professional nail products must be used to create the majority of the design, although embellishments are allowed (acrylic, gel, polish, rhinestones, glitter, etc.)
7. 3D Nail Art will be judged in the following categories: creativity, visual interest, use of color, presentation, balance, dimension, overall impression, complexity, workmanship and theme interpretation.

Fantasy

1. See Hand In Specific Rules.
2. Fantasy entry must be completed on full size individual manufacturer tips.
3. Both Novice and Veteran level entries will consist of 5 tips. They MUST be adhered to an 8" x 10" size board.
4. There are no height or width restrictions for this category.
5. The theme must be seen throughout all nails.
6. Professional nail products must be used to create the majority of the design, although embellishments are allowed (acrylic, gel, polish, rhinestones, glitter, etc.)
7. Your canvas board will act as the "costume" for your tips. Decorate your board to enhance your art but be careful to not overpower it.
8. Fantasy will be judged in the following categories: creativity, visual interest, color, presentation, balance, design, dimension & depth, overall impression, complexity, workmanship and theme interpretation.

Photographic Nails

1. See Hand In Specific Rules.
2. Create nails and develop an NMC magazine cover with your interpretation of the theme.
3. Photographic nails entry must be completed and photographed on a live model.
4. All nail art must be made from professional nail products and embellishments (acrylic, gel, polish, rhinestones, glitter, etc.)
5. The focal point of the picture must be nails. Any props and backgrounds can be chosen. One or two hands can be done.
6. Create a full editorial design to complete your photo.
7. The photo must be taken in HIGH QUALITY and PRINTED as an 8x10.
8. Photographic nails will be judged in the following categories: creativity, visual interest, editorial presentation, photo clarity, focus, structure, use of color, dimension & depth, workmanship, theme interpretation, concept development, finished work, and overall impression.

Ultimate Extreme Nail

1. See Hand In Specific Rules.
2. Create one nail that begins from a sculpted nail and ends with your imagination.
3. The nail must measure a minimum of 3 inches long (no maximum) and shows your interpretation of the theme.
4. The nail must be secured to an appropriate size board for your piece.
5. Competitors may hand paint and create 3D art.
6. Ultimate Extreme Nail will be judged in the following categories: shape originality, creativity, visual interest, use of color, presentation, balance, design, dimension and depth, overall impression, complexity, workmanship and theme interpretation.

Limitless

Exclusive

Hand-In Competition

1. See Hand In Specific Rules.
2. Extending from one nail, create a maze of sculpted shapes and designs from an entire 60g jar of NMC Architect Gel or tube of Acrylgel. The choice of product is up to the competitor. Product and shipping is included in your competition registration.
3. The entire design must stem from and be connected as one nail.
4. No other product is allowed. No top coat of any kind.
5. No art or painting. Just the one product of your choice. You must show your creativity in how far you can stretch your product as a limitless foundation.
6. You must show us your own theme
7. Limitless will be judged in the following categories: shape originality, creativity, visual interest, presentation, balance, design, dimension and depth, overall impression, complexity, workmanship and theme interpretation.

Photographic Lashes

1. See Hand In Specific Rules.
2. Create a full set of art lashes and develop an NMC magazine cover with your interpretation of the theme.
3. Photographic lash entry must be completed and photographed on a live model.
4. All lash glue must be professional grade.
5. The focal point of the picture must be lashes. Any props and backgrounds can be chosen. One or both eyes can be done. Embellishments and use of color is highly encouraged.
6. Create a full editorial design to complete your photo.
7. The photo must be taken in HIGH QUALITY and PRINTED as an 8x10.
8. Photographic lashes will be judged in the following categories: creativity, visual interest, editorial presentation, photo clarity, focus, structure, use of color, dimension & depth, workmanship, theme interpretation, concept development, finished work, and overall impression.

Ultimate Extreme Lash

1. See Hand In Specific Rules.
2. Create one extreme costume lash extension using extreme lengths and embellishments on a strip lash that shows your interpretation of the theme.
3. Ultimate Extreme Lash entry must be completed on a strip/practice lash.
4. The strip lash must be secured to the appropriate board size for hand in. Best use is taking half of a small styrofoam ball adhered to the board to hold the strip lash slightly off of the board and in a natural curve.
5. Classic or volume lashes and embellishments are allowed.
6. Any adhesive (professional or not) may be used.
7. Art embellishments may be used but must be securely adhered to the lashes. The lash extensions must be able to support embellishments. This means they cannot be weighed down and touching the board.
8. Ultimate Extreme Lash will be judged in the following categories: level of extreme captured, creativity, visual interest, presentation, balance, mapping, dimension and depth, overall impression, complexity, workmanship, and theme interpretation.