



# Dakota Aerial Championship Official Competitor Packet

Current Version: 4.0

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#### 2026 Updates:

4.0: 2026 dates, fees, and rules updated. Scoring changed to a 100-point scale. Plagiarism and rigging requirements updated. Advanced time requirements updated, stage testing times edited. In-person judging changed to live judging. View packet for full updates.

#### 2025 Updates

3.1 - 2025 dates, fees, and registration updated.

New divisions and levels updated. Minor edits to restrictions on skill categories. Added About us and Why sections. Updated judging scale to be out of 50 points. In-person Apparatus schedule updated.

3.2 - Group studio registration info added.

3.3 - Date corrected for live person event in 2025 - link to studio sign-up added

This packet outlines all of the information you will need to know to compete in the Dakota Aerial Competition hosted by South Dakota Aerial & Arts. Have questions about the packet or the event? Email [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com). Please include "DAC" in the email headline so we can answer your questions appropriately.

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# About Us:

## *About South Dakota Aerial & Arts:*

South Dakota Aerial & Arts was founded in January 2023 by Ashley Premer and Katie Critzer in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Together, they envisioned a dedicated space for aerial and alternative fitness — one that celebrates students of all backgrounds, skill levels, and genders. Their mission is to provide safe, inclusive, and empowering fitness opportunities for everyone.

In addition to offering a wide range of aerial and bungee fitness classes, Ashley and Katie also established Sioux Falls' first circus performance group. This talented collective brings the wonder of circus arts to the community through public performances, private events, ambient entertainment, and interactive try-it sessions.

At South Dakota Aerial & Arts, our goal is to foster a welcoming community where everyone can feel empowered, motivated, and supported. We believe fitness should be fun, challenging, and accessible to all. Through dynamic classes, open gym sessions, private parties, competitions, and specialty workshops, we aim to create a space where everyone can thrive — both as athletes and as individuals.

Whether you're here to explore a new hobby, advance your skills, or simply have fun, we want you to love aerial arts and bungee fitness as much as we do. This is your space to learn, grow, and be unapologetically yourself.

## *Our Why:*

The Dakota Aerial Championship was established in 2023 alongside the opening of South Dakota Aerial & Arts, an aerial fitness and performance studio based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

After participating in various aerial competitions across the region and country, our founders saw the need for a local event that prioritized community, camaraderie, and meaningful opportunities for growth. The Dakota Aerial Championship was created to offer an inclusive, welcoming competition experience where aerialists of all ages, levels, and backgrounds can showcase their skills, connect with others, and receive expert coaching and constructive feedback.

From its inception, the Dakota Aerial Championship has been committed to accessibility and inclusivity. We believe aerial arts are for everyone, and every ability should be recognized and celebrated. To extend this mission beyond our local community, we introduced virtual competition options that allow aerialists from anywhere to participate, share their artistry, and benefit from professional evaluations that support their continued growth.

Whether performing in person or virtually, every competitor is an important part of our growing aerial family. We are proud to provide a platform that uplifts, inspires, and connects aerialists across the region and beyond.

# General Competition Information:

## *Important Dates:*

### **2026 Competition Dates:**

**Live:** November 12-15, 2026 | **Virtual:** October 1-24, 2026

#### **Registration Timeframe:**

- Early Bird Registration: June 1 - August 12, 2026
- Standard Registration: August 17 - October 11, 2026

Approximate In-Person Performance Capacity: 240 Performances

#### **In-Person Schedule Overview:**

- Thursday, November 12 - Open Gyms and Registration
- Friday, November 13 - Open Gyms, Aerial Competition and Workshops (Tentative)
  - Competition may start as early as 12 PM CST, exact times TBD
  - Up to 60 in-person performances
- Saturday, November 14 - Aerial Competition
  - 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM
  - Up to 120 in-person performances
- Sunday, November 15 - Aerial Competition, Awards, Workshops (Tentative)
  - 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM - Competition
  - 4:00 PM - Awards
  - Up to 60 in-person performances

The tentative in-person schedule will be released by October 15, 2026

#### **Virtual Schedule Overview:**

- Virtual Video Submissions Open: October 1, 2026
- Virtual Submission Deadline: October 24, 2026

**Music Submission Deadline:** October 16, 2026

## *In-Person Competition Venue:*

South Dakota Aerial & Arts  
1200 E 3rd Street, Suite 113  
Sioux Falls, SD 57103

South Dakota Aerial & Arts is located in the Global Square building. This building is an old elementary school with a full mezzanine and 26-foot ceilings. To get to the studio, enter through Door F on the south side of the building - additional parking is on the north side and on the street.

Note: The Dakota Aerial Championship Team is exploring other venue options. The final venue will be within the Sioux Falls Metro Area, and will be announced by July 6, 2026.

# General Competition Information:

## *Registration & Fees:*

You can register online at <https://www.sdaerialarts.com/dakota-aerial-championship>. Registration must be completed before submitting any virtual entries.

### **Registration Fees:**

- Early Bird Registration: June 1 - August 16, 2026
  - Solo (In-Person) - \$120.00
  - Solo (Virtual) - \$105.00
  - Duo - \$175.00
  - Group (Per Person, Minimum of 3 Performers) - \$80.00
- Standard Registration: August 17 - October 11, 2026
  - Solo (In-Person & Virtual) - \$145.00
  - Duo - \$200.00
  - Group (Per Person, Minimum of 3 Performers) - \$90.00

Please register for each unique performance separately. No refunds will be issued after sign-up. You may not transfer your registration to another category.

### **Individual Registration:**

You can register online at <https://www.sdaerialarts.com/dakota-aerial-championship>. **You must pay a registration fee for each apparatus you wish to compete in.** Registration must be completed before submitting any virtual entries. Studios can register as a team by filling out the spreadsheet on the Official Dakota Aerial Championship main page. Studio registration sheets must be sent to [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com), and an invoice will be sent for all performers following registration validation.

### **Register as a Team:**

Studios may register by filling out the [studio registration form](#). Once filled out, the final document must be submitted to the Dakota Aerial Championship at [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com). Once validated, an invoice will be sent for the full fee. Teams that are registering 10 or more performances through the studio registration form are eligible for a 5% discount. Registration must be done all at the same time to receive the discount. Participants who register as a team and compete virtually will have any awards sent to their studio.

### **Live Competitor List:**

The live competitor registration list will be shared via the Dakota Aerial Championship Official Site once registration opens. If you see an error in your registration, please reach out to [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com) to resolve any errors.

### **Change & Late Fees:**

- Music Change Fee (Before October 16) - \$30.00
- Late Music Submission Fee (Between October 16 - November 8)- \$40.00
- Category/Level Change Fee - \$40.00
  - Level changes can be made once at no cost any time before September 19, 2026
  - Absolutely no level changes will be honored after November 1, 2026.
- Award Resend Fee - \$5.00 per Award + Shipping
  - This applies to teams/participants who supply insufficient shipping information for awards or lose awards after the in-person award ceremony

## *Spectator Tickets:*

All spectators to the event are required to purchase a ticket to attend.

- **Kids Under 5:** Free
- **Pre-Sale Online Tickets - Available Through November 7, 2026:**
  - Kids 6-9 Years Old: \$15.00
  - Individuals 10+: \$20.00
- **Tickets at the Door:**
  - Kids 6-9 Years Old: \$18.00
  - Individuals 10+: \$25.00

Tickets are valid for the full length of the event. Accessible seating and entrances are available upon request. Request an accessible seat by emailing [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com).

### **Where to Purchase Tickets:**

#### **Tickets For Coaches:**

Coaches are eligible for a free pass only if a competitor lists them as their coach at registration. There is a maximum of 4 free coaches per studio (one per apparatus). All coaches who are not listed by a student in their registration need to purchase a spectator ticket.

# Rules and Guidelines:

## 1. Waivers:

All competitors, workshop participants, coaches, and assistants are required to read and sign the waiver provided by South Dakota Aerial & Arts. All minors are required to have their parent/legal guardian fill out and confirm their waiver. The waiver can be found here: <https://www.sdaerialarts.com/liability-waiver>. If you have filled out the waiver previously, you do not need to fill it out again.

## 2. Code of Conduct:

- 1. Drugs and Alcohol:** Competitors and workshop participants are not allowed to consume any alcohol, illegal drugs, or medical drugs that impair their ability to perform. If an individual is displaying indications of alcohol or drug consumption, you will be asked to leave the event and competitors will be disqualified.
- 2. Treatment of Others:** No bullying, harassment, or other threats toward competitors, competition attendees, coaches, judges, staff, workshop participants, or others related to this event will be tolerated. This includes in-person and online behaviors, including emails, text messages, phone calls, in-person comments, social media posts, or messaging, etc. Anyone who violates these terms will be asked to leave the competition; and will not be welcome back without a formal, written apology and acceptance by the Dakota Aerial Championship team.
- 3. Safety:** All rules must be followed below throughout the course of the event
  1. All competitors and workshop participants are required to sign a waiver.
  2. All participants, both virtual and in-person are required to use a crash pad/mat.
  3. No participants nor coaches may touch the rigging throughout the course of the event.
  4. No additional people are permitted on stage with competitors from the time the music starts until it ends, except for approved human props.
- 4. Level:** Competitors are expected to be honest in representing their competitive level and abilities. We reserve the right to switch competitor divisions depending on their presented skills based on the performance requirements.

## 3. Photography/Videography:

- Photos will be taken over the course of the event. Photo packages will be available for purchase upon registration of the event.
- No flash photography is permitted during the event.
- All routines will be videoed and shared with competitors via YouTube and/or Google Drive after the event.
- Photos and videos are permitted by the crowd at the event as long as they do not utilize flash or impede judging, the performer or staff.

## 4. Ways to Compete

Individuals can compete in the DAC in person or virtually.

Virtual submissions can be submitted between October 1 - 26, 2026.

All virtual competitors agree to submit a one-take video of their performance - make sure to follow all of the virtual submission rules listed below. The DAC staff will be reviewing all videos to make sure that they were taken within the designated submission period and were recorded specifically for DAC.

In-person competitors will compete at South Dakota Aerial & Arts at their specified time per the competition schedule between November 13-15. In-person performers will be given optional open gym time and stage testing time prior to performance.

## 5. Virtual Rules and Guidelines for Submission:

- **All virtual submissions must be recorded in one take.** Our goal is to make the competition as fair as possible for all competitors. If we determine that this video does not comply with the rules below, it will be grounds for disqualification.
- Virtual submissions can be submitted by individuals in any country.
  - Note: Awards to non-USA-based performers may be subject to additional shipping and handling fees paid for by the performer
- You must announce your routine on camera before the competitor performs. This can be done by standing in front of the camera, or if done in a showcase setting, it can be completed by an off-stage MC. No voice-overs are permitted for performer announcements.
- The competitor or spectator must introduce the performer using the following script: **"Presenting [Performer Name] on [Apparatus Name] on [Date]"**. This will allow us to identify the performer and confirm this entry was created specifically for the Dakota Aerial Championship.
  - You are welcome to arrange a performance date with DAC for your full performance team. This will allow you to remove the date from the performer announcements.
- Videos can be submitted via the Virtual Submission Form (<https://www.sdaerialarts.com/dakota-aerial-championship/virtual-entry>). The video should be uploaded to a Google Drive [preferred], YouTube, or Vimeo, and the link or folder should be recorded in the Virtual Submission Form. Videos submitted via email or sent over social media will not be accepted.
- Once a virtual submission is submitted, you will not be able to resubmit your entry for that apparatus. If there are any issues with viewing the video, a member of the DAC team will reach out via email. Deductions may be recorded if the rules for submission are not followed.
- All Virtual Performers must utilize an 8-inch or thicker mat that measures at least 4x6 feet. Deductions or disqualifications will occur if these standards are not followed. Foam floors can be submitted for approval in lieu of crash mats, but must be approved by the DAC Staff.
- A routine is considered complete when the competitor executes their final bow off of the apparatus. Routines that do not include a final bow will receive a 2 point deduction.
- As long as the routine follows the division and apparatus rules listed below, the apparatus set-up and height do not need to match the specific criteria of the in-person competitors. If you have a concern about your aerial set-up, please contact the DAC team at [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com).
- Awards will be mailed to the competitors post-competition. Feedback will be provided via email from [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com).

## 6. Divisions:

- Ages 9 & Under
- Ages 10-12
- Ages 13-15
- Ages 16-19
- Ages 20+

Age divisions are determined by the competitor's age as of **November 1, 2026**.

Divisions may be combined or further segmented at the discretion of the Dakota Aerial Championship staff to maintain competitive fairness. Divisions with more than five competitors may be subject to splitting. When divisions are split, placement will be based on competitor age and birth date as provided during registration.

All division adjustments and splits will be reflected in the Current Competitor List.

Divisions may also be separated into virtual and in-person categories when necessary.

Due to the inherent complexity of group, duo, and specialty routines, division placement may require additional review.

All group and specialty routines will be evaluated by the Dakota Aerial Championship team. Routines and competitors will be matched to divisions based on age, routine composition, and competitive equity. When routines include mixed ages or levels, placement will be determined in a manner that best supports fair judging and division integrity.

Final division placement remains at the discretion of the Dakota Aerial Championship team. The DAC team reserves the right to adjust placements when necessary.

## 7. Apparatus:

- Silks
- Hammock/Sling
- Lyra
  - All performers on lyra must be done on a single-point aerial hoop utilizing a spanset.
- Specialty (All doubles routines will be judged in the specialty division)
  - If there are at least 3 competitors in any given level and division performing on the same apparatus, this will be split into its own category
- Group
  - Can be done on a singular apparatus or multiple apparatuses at one time.

Standard equipment will be provided for all divisions. Competitors are welcome to bring and perform on their own equipment, provided it is approved and deemed safe by the Dakota Aerial Championship staff.

## 8. Performance Levels

1. Emerging Performer
2. Rising Performer
3. Seasoned Performer
4. Advanced Performer
5. Showcase - No Awards/Placings

Competitors should select the level that most closely reflects their abilities, skills, and overall aerial experience. If you are uncertain, please consult your coach.

All solo routines must be registered under the correct apparatus and performance level at the time of submission.

Performance levels will not be combined during the competition.

Competitors who are the sole participant in their division and level may, at the discretion of the Dakota Aerial Championship team and in consultation with their coach, be offered the option to compete at the next highest level. Participation in a level adjustment is voluntary.

### **Level Reviews:**

If a routine is identified for level review by at least two coaches or members of the Judging Oversight Team, the participant or their coach will be contacted regarding a category adjustment.

Level reviews are conducted only in limited circumstances and are intended to preserve competitive fairness and appropriate division alignment.

Any placement adjustments are made to ensure routines are evaluated within divisions that best reflect the overall skill and technical execution demonstrated.

### **Special Cases:**

- Instructors may not compete in any Emerging (Level 1) division, even if the apparatus is new to them.
- If you are impacted by injuries, illness, pregnancy, or other life events that reduce your skill level, you may be granted entry in a less advanced division. This request should be made in writing via email to [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com)
- Coaches cannot compete against their students in any division or on any apparatus

## 9. Grip Aids:

Grip aids are permitted for use during workshops and competitions. Grip aids will not be permitted if they compromise the apparatus or leave residue that stains or impacts the apparatus.

Approved Grip Aids: Midas Grip Aid, Natural Rosin Powder, Firm Grip Spray, Grip-IT Hand Spray, Tuf-Skin Grip Spray, Better Grip, and Mueller Grip Spray

## 11. Wardrobe & Prop Guidelines:

- All costumes and props must be family-friendly and age-appropriate.
- No stripping or removal of clothing with implied sexual/provocative intent. Clothing changes are allowed if they support the character/storyline in a family-friendly way.
- Props are any objects used to enhance a performance for part of the routine (e.g. hats, wings). Props are permitted and do not need to be approved before the event.
- Appropriate undergarments are required. Tights and aerial socks are permitted.
- Hair may be worn down, but deductions will apply if it gets stuck or disrupts the performance.
- No necklaces, anklets, rings, dangling earrings, or bracelets.
- No boots or shoes, as they obscure foot/toe point and control. (Automatic 2 point deduction)
- No handheld props are allowed on the mat or apparatus at any time. (Automatic 1 point deduction, up to 3 points if it disrupts the routine)
- No feathers, glitter bombs, confetti, or other items that leave debris in the performance area. (Automatic 2 point deduction)
- Performers are expected to have tested their costumes before stage testing to ensure malfunctions will not occur. Costume malfunctions that lead to indecent exposure or violation of any family-friendly rules will be subject to disqualification.
- Stuck costumes/athletes due to clothing or props will receive an automatic 5-point deduction. Stuck is defined as individuals who need coach or audience assistance to get down, or a prolonged time (10+ seconds) where a competitor is stuck in an unwanted position due to their costume/props. If competitors need to be lowered by the Head Rigger they will receive an 8-point deduction.

Props do not need to be reviewed/submitted before the competition. Large props for live competitors will need to be checked in at the equipment intake area and will be brought to the side stage/performance area by staff. No props can be placed on the mat/under the performer during their performance.

## 12. Music:

### **Music Guidelines:**

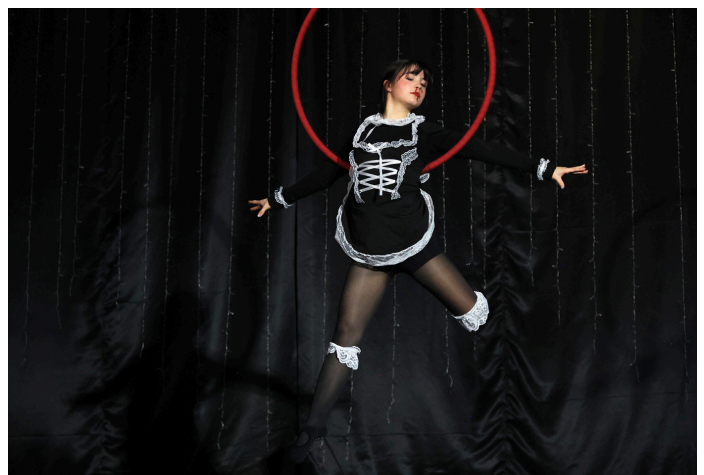
- You need to execute your full act (excluding getting off the apparatus) in the time allotted. You are not required to use the full time allotted. All requirements must be executed within the time allotted.
- The music will start once you hold your starting position.
  - If you would like to do floorwork prior to your music starting, you must include dead space/silence at the beginning of your music. Music will not be restarted in any circumstances unless there is a technical error that needs to be resolved by the DAC team.
  - If music is requested to be restarted before mounting the apparatus, the performer will incur an automatic 3-point deduction.
  - No music will be restarted once a performer mounts the apparatus.
- If your music exceeds the maximum length allotted for your division, you will incur a deduction.
- Competitors have 20 seconds to unwrap and dismount the silk after the music ends. The routine will be considered “completed” when the competitor bows. The unwrapping execution and exit will be considered when judging the routine. Over-exceeding your dismounting time allotment will result in a 2-point deduction.

- All music must be a clean or radio-edited version. Music containing profanity, explicit language, sexual content, drug references, or strong alcohol-related references will not be permitted. The Dakota Aerial Championship is a family-friendly event.
- The Dakota Aerial Championship **will not conduct music reviews** before the competition for in-person or virtual competitors.
- All music selections must be submitted in compliance with these guidelines. Coaches/Performers are responsible for reviewing lyrics, background vocals, and edited versions to ensure compliance.
- Routines using music determined to violate these guidelines will be subject to deductions. DAC reserves the right to disqualify a routine in cases of significant violations.

### Music Submission:

All music must be submitted in an Mp3 or M4A format.

- **Maximum Time Allowance:**
  - **Emerging Performer:** 3:00
  - **Rising Performer:** 3:30
  - **Seasoned Performer:** 3:45
  - **Advanced Performer:** 4:00
- Use the following naming convention when submitting your music:
  - **Performer Name\_Song Name\_Apparatus\_Division\_Studio Name**
- Music can be submitted by filling out the following form: **DAC Music Submission Form**
- When your music is received, it will be notated in the Live Competitor List. Individual music reviews will not be contacted by the DAC team. If you have concerns about your selected music, and if it may lead to deductions, please email [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com) with the Subject Line "Music Review Requested\_Name\_Apparatus". Music reviews will be conducted within 5 business days of receiving the request. These requests must be done by October 10, 2026.
- Virtual Competitors do not need to submit their music for approval; however, if their song does not fit the above criteria, this is grounds for deduction or disqualification
- **The Music Submission Deadline is October 16, 2026**
- Any music file revisions will be subject to a \$30 late fee.
- Any music not submitted/received, or revised between October 16 - November 8, 2026, will be subject to a \$40 late fee, no exceptions.



# 13. Judging:

## 13. A: Process (New in 2026)

- There will be a minimum of three judges for each competitive performance. All competition and showcase pieces will receive feedback for their performance. All competition routines will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined below.
- All in-person competitors will be evaluated by an in-person panel of judges located in front of the main stage.
- All virtual competitors will be evaluated based on the video they submit for judging review.
- There will be a designated judge processing deductions (New in 2026) to make sure all objective deductions are consistent for competitors
- All judging is final. No discussion or challenging of judges' decisions, scores or comments will be permitted. If explicit errors are found in the division criteria or judging, please submit a request immediately to [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com).
- Competitors, coaches, and parents will not request explanations, changes, or anything in relation to the given scores from the in-person judges. This is grounds for disqualification.

## 13. B: Feedback

- Performance scores will be provided during the award ceremony. Formal feedback will be provided approximately **two weeks (14 days)** after the date of performance. Feedback will be provided in Excel or PDF format, and the name of the judge who provided each piece of feedback will not be specified.
- Scores and results will be posted online within 24 hours of the award ceremony, but feedback will be sent to the coach, studio, and/or performer's info provided during registration.
- The Dakota Aerial Championship team and judges will not respond to any specific questions, feedback, or criticism received in any form regarding judging.

## 13. C: Judging Criteria and Points (100 Point Scale)

- **1). Difficulty (35 Points)**
  - Difficulty of Skills and Combinations (25)
  - Difficulty and Uniqueness of Transitions (10)
- **2). Technical (35 Points)**
  - Body Lines & Movement Precision (25)
  - Apparatus Control (10)
- **3). Composition & Artistry (30 Points)**
  - Artistic Presentation & Storytelling (10)
  - Musicality & Timing (10)
  - Flow, Structure & Movement Variety (10)
- **Deductions**
  - Not meeting the criteria for a specific division
  - Inappropriate or unsafe use of rigging or touching rigging throughout the performance
  - Exceeding maximum performance time
  - Slips, locks, or falls (severity-based; judges may stop performance)
  - Props being placed on mats
  - Prohibited costumes
  - Performing a restricted move
  - Swinging off the performance mats

- **Ground For Disqualification**

- Plagiarism of choreography
- Use of explicit or inappropriate music
- Disrespectful language or actions towards or about judges, competitors, coaches, staff, volunteers, or schools
- Use of equipment in a virtual performance that is markedly different from the standards set out by this packet
- Intentional stripping

**Plagiarism Proceedings:**

- If a coach, performer or parent suspects plagiarism of choreography, they must immediately report this to the DAC staff.
- To report plagiarism, you must supply the following information:
  - Video of the plagiarized choreography/athlete prior to the Dakota Aerial Championship with the date of the video capture - please send this to [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com) with “URGENT, PLAGIARISM CONCERN”
- When a request is received, a 5-minute recess will be called for the competition to review the plagiarism concerns.
- Following proceedings:
  - If plagiarism is suspected, coaches and athletes performing both routines will be called into an official meeting to discuss the choreography’s origin and determine if disqualification or penalty will be incurred
    - Disqualification of the competitor will happen immediately
    - The coach/performer who plagiarized the choreography will incur a \$250.00 penalty that must be paid before any other members of their team are allowed to perform.
  - If plagiarism is not suspected, the reporting party and the coach/performer in question will be alerted of the allegation, and that penalty will not be incurred.

Please be mindful when putting your routines together and if you are uncertain about any of the deductions and disqualifications listed, please meet with your coach to discuss. If they continue to be uncertain, please reach out to [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com).

### 13. D: Score Calculations:

- Sum of all Judges’ Scores Divided by Total Number of Judges
- Final Score cannot surpass 100 points

# Event Flow and Information:

## *Before the Event:*

- All information, including music, virtual submissions, song reviews, etc. required to be sent according to the specified deadlines listed in the competitor packet.
- The 2026 Live Competitor List will be available for review once published
  - Once registration closes, this link will be updated with the tentative performance schedule
- When registering, please outline your performance availability - we will be expanding performances into Friday, Saturday, and potentially Sunday to accommodate as many performers as possible.
- Open gyms will be available before the competition to test rigging and the performance space.

## *Day of Event - Check-in/Getting Ready:*

- There are no dressing rooms currently available at the venue - **please come fully ready to the venue for your performance.** This helps keep our bathrooms available for spectators and performers.
- Please arrive early for stage testing based on the provided schedule. If your stage testing is missed, no additional time will be permitted. You must complete your stage testing during your allotted time.
- Sign the performance waiver online before stage testing: <https://www.sdaerialarts.com/liability-waiver>
- If you are the guardian of a minor, you are responsible for checking them in and signing all their waivers. A legal guardian is required to sign all forms for competitors under 18 years old.
- If you have equipment or large props that are being used to facilitate your performance, you will need to check in this equipment with our intake team. The individuals at the front desk can direct you to the equipment intake area.

## *Day of Event - Stage Testing:*

- Stage testing will be a maximum of 1 minute and 45 seconds for all aerial silks performances and 2 minutes for all other apparatuses. Please plan in advance for your stage testing. You will be asked to leave the apparatus once your stage testing time is completed.
- Your stage testing will include setting your height (if applicable) and familiarizing yourself with the apparatus and stage. You will not have enough time to go through your full routine.
- Coaches are permitted to accompany competitors for stage testing but are not permitted to touch the apparatus after the height has been adjusted.
- No competitors will be given additional time for stage testing; time will be taken away from your apparatus time for setting your height - no exceptions.
- Only one competitor and one coach are allowed in the stage testing area at a time (duo and group performances are exempt from this rule).

# Level Criteria and Rules Per Apparatus:

## Hammock

- A hammock is provided by the competition.
- Outside hammocks are permitted if approved by the competition staff and rigging team.
- Hammocks are approximately 8-10 feet and are tied on a single rescue 8 into a sling.
- Hammock competitors may specify the height from the stage of the lowest point of the hammock either at stage testing or before the event via email
- If the height is not specified via email or at stage testing it will automatically be set to approximately 60 inches from the ground
- Use of motors is not permitted. The use of pulleys to modify rig point height during performance is not permitted.
- Hammock rigged on O rings are not permitted, unless proper rigging plates that ensure hammocks are not triloaded are supplied by the competitor/competitor studio.

## Silks

- Silks are provided by the competition
- Silks will be approximately 24 feet tall with a two-foot tail. If you require a different tail length or height, please specify at stage testing. Note: **silks cannot exceed 24 feet at the performance venue.**
- The provided silks is a Low-to-medium stretch Nylon tricot fabric, approx 108 inches wide
- Silks are tied to a stainless-steel rescue 8 and hung from a single swivel, attached to a single rig point
- Use of motors is not permitted. The use of pulleys to modify rig point height during performance is not permitted.

## Lyra

- A tabless 32", 35" and 36" single point lyra made out of approximately 1" stainless steel will be provided on a 6-foot spanset - double point lyras must be registered in the specialty category. Supplied lyras are taped with hockey tape.
  - All other lyra sizes must be provided by the competitor and approved by the competition rigging team during or before stage testing.
  - No other lyras will be provided by the competition.
  - All other spanset lengths and variations must be provided by the competitor and will not be provided by the Dakota Aerial Championship rigging team
    - If other spansets are needed or requested on the day of the competition other than a 6 foot spanset, the performer will receive an automatic 3-point deduction
- Lyra heights will be set during stage testing and marked by the stage manager in charge of rigging. If height is not specified or the standard height is requested, the apparatus will be set to 60 inches from the ground
- Use of motors is not permitted. The use of pulleys to modify the rig point height during performance is not permitted.

# Specialty

Specialty apparatuses include any apparatus that is not listed in the above categories and all duo/group performances.

- Competitors must bring their own unique apparatus to use for specialty performances. If a duo/group performance is being performed on a standard apparatus (hammock, silks, or lyra) the standard equipment list above can be used for the performance.
- Each apparatus is subject to safety and integrity testing by the DAC team.
- No refunds will be given due to faulty or unriggable apparatuses
- All apparatuses will be hooked into a swivel that is provided by the competition. Tri-loading of carabiners is strictly prohibited by the DAC. Any rigging plates or specialty rigging needs must be provided by the studio/competitor. DAC will not be supplying specialty rigging solutions.
- Specialty performer **MUST** attend stage testing
- If a specialty division contains a minimum of 3 performers on the same apparatus, that apparatus will be listed as its own separate division

# Group

Group performances are routines that contain 3 or more performers. These routines may utilize multiple different apparatuses and may use other props or flow arts to enhance this performance. Due to the unique nature of these performances, we will not be publishing established criteria for each division. All groups will be judged against each other to the best of our judges' abilities.

- The studio performing the group routine must supply all apparatuses and additional rigging equipment needed to enable their performance. Up to 7 rig points are available. These points are all located in a horizontal line across the performance venue. Specific configurations are not available for group routines.
- 10 minutes of stage testing and rigging will be permitted for each group routine
- Please contact [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com) if your studio or group would like to perform a group routine.



# Hammock Rules

Category	Emerging Performer	Rising Performer	Seasoned Performer	Advanced Performer
<b>Performer Description</b>	An Emerging Hammock Performer is considered beginner-level in both skill and performance. Instructors may not perform at this level. Performers should show awareness of the audience and match their skills to music.	A Rising Hammock Performer is one who is comfortable with basic inverted skills in the air. They do not need prior experience performing. Rising Performers are expected to show level-appropriate strength, flexibility, and flow. Rising Performers are expected to interact with the audience and show awareness of the crowd.	A Seasoned Hammock Performer has a solid command of intermediate-level aerial hammock skills, with moderate performance experience and prior competition participation. They should demonstrate level-appropriate strength, flexibility, flow, and create a clear, engaging character or story within their routine.	An Advanced Hammock Performer has a comprehensive command of aerial hammock skills, often with teaching and significant performance experience. They are expected to demonstrate dynamic movement, strong flow, level-appropriate strength and flexibility, and present a well-developed, clear character or storyline.
<b>Required Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>- Performers may come down from the apparatus fully within their routine</li> <li>- Demonstrate proficiency in the bottom of the hammock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-Performers may come down within their routine</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least one drop</li> <li>- Demonstrate proficiency in the bottom and middle of the hammock</li> <li>-Inversion from the floor is required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-Performers may come down within their routine</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least 2 drops</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least one aerial, straight leg invert</li> <li>- Demonstrate proficiency in the bottom of the hammock, and standing in the hammock</li> <li>- Spinning is required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-Performers may come down within their routine</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least two drops from different drop families</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least one aerial, straight arm, and straight leg invert</li> <li>-Must use the full height of the hammock</li> <li>-Spinning is required</li> <li>-Must demonstrate at least one dynamic skill</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum Music Length</b>	3:00	3:30	3:45	4:00
<b>Restrictions</b> *Higher level rules apply to all lower levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Only Single drops permitted</li> <li>-No aerial inversions</li> <li>-No climbing permitted</li> <li>-No neck or ankle hangs</li> <li>-No open wrap drops</li> <li>-No kamikaze drops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No open wrap drops</li> <li>-No kamikaze drops</li> <li>-No more than two rotations in a drop are permitted</li> <li>-No more than one aerial invert permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No open wrap drops</li> <li>-No kamikaze drops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No kamikaze drops</li> </ul>

# Silks Rules

Category	Emerging Performer	Rising Performer	Seasoned Performer	Advanced Performer
<b>Performer Description</b>	An Emerging Silks Performer is considered beginner level in both skill and performing. Instructors may not perform at this level. Performers should show awareness of the audience and match their skills to music.	A Rising Silks Performer is one who is comfortable with a basic level of inversions. They do not need performance experience. Rising Performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, and flow. Rising Performers are expected to interact with the audience and show awareness of the crowd.	A Seasoned Silks Performer has a solid command of intermediate-level aerial silks skills, with moderate performance experience and prior competition participation. They should demonstrate level-appropriate strength, flexibility, flow, and create a clear, engaging character or story within their routine.	An Advanced Silks Performer has a comprehensive command of aerial silks skills, often with teaching and significant performance experience. They are expected to demonstrate a variety of different movement types and wraps, including dynamic movement, strong flow, level-appropriate strength and flexibility, and present a well-developed, clear character or storyline.
<b>Required Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Climbing is not required, but is encouraged</li> <li>-Demonstrate proficiency in the lower half of the height of the silks - must not go higher than 60% up the fabric</li> <li>-Must start on the ground</li> <li>-May utilize a knot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Demonstrate at least 1 aerial invert</li> <li>-Demonstrate more than 1 type of climb</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least 1 non-footlock skill</li> <li>-Proficiency in the lower <math>\frac{2}{3}</math> of the silks - May use the full length for the routine</li> <li>-Must start on the ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-At least 1 drop is required</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least 2 straight leg aerial inversions</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least 2 climbs, including at least one inverted climb</li> <li>-Proficiency in full fabric</li> <li>-Must include a moderate to fast spin</li> <li>-Must start on the ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At least 1 drop is required</li> <li>- 1 straight, straight arm invert is required</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least 2 distinct inverted climbs</li> <li>-Must include a moderate to fast spin</li> <li>-Must demonstrate at least one dynamic skill during the routine</li> <li>-Must start on the ground</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum Music Length:</b>	3:00	3:30	3:45	4:00
<b>Restrictions</b> *Higher level rules apply to all lower levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Up to one middle, bent-arm aerial invert is allowed</li> <li>- Only single drops are permitted</li> <li>-No inverted climbs</li> <li>-No double drops</li> <li>-No ankle drops</li> <li>-No intentional beats</li> <li>-No aerial wristlocks</li> <li>-No side aerial inverts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Only single drops, wrapped double drops and single slack drops permitted.</li> <li>-No open wrap drops</li> <li>-No neck hangs</li> <li>-No wrist-lock drops</li> <li>-No kamikaze drops</li> <li>-No wheeldowns</li> <li>-No straight arm inverts</li> <li>-No handstands</li> <li>-No single arm hangs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No open wrap drops</li> <li>-No single point neck hangs</li> <li>-No single arm hangs</li> <li>-Limited to 1 straight arm inversion</li> <li>-No catch and release, inlocates (armpit flips), dislocates, or handstands</li> <li>-No kamikaze drops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No kamikaze drops</li> </ul>

# Lyra Rules

Category	Emerging Performer	Rising Performer	Seasoned Performer	Advanced Performer
<b>Performer Description</b>	An Emerging Lyra Performer is considered beginner level in both skill and performing. Instructors may not perform at this level. Performers should show awareness of the audience and match their skills to music.	A Rising Lyra Performer is one who is comfortable with inverting to enter the hoop and with skills on or above the top bar. They do not need performance experience. Rising Performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, and flow. Rising Performers are expected to interact with the audience and show crowd awareness.	A Seasoned Lyra Performer has a solid command of intermediate-level lyra skills, with moderate performance experience and prior competition participation. They should demonstrate level-appropriate strength, flexibility, flow, and create a clear, engaging character or story within their routine.	An Advanced Lyra Performer has a comprehensive command of aerial lyra skills. These performers often are coaches or have significant performance experience. They are expected to demonstrate a variety of movements and skill types, including dynamic movement, strong flow, level-appropriate strength and flexibility, and present a well-developed, clear character or storyline.
<b>Required Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>- Must use bottom bar and show use of middle and side bars of the hoop</li> <li>- May come down and re-enter the apparatus as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-Proficiency in and under lyra</li> <li>- Demonstrate at least one type of invert</li> <li>- Demonstrate at least one move with only 2 points of contact</li> <li>- A spin is required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-Proficiency on top, in and under lyra</li> <li>-Must use the spanset for at least one move</li> <li>-Demonstrate a minimum of one drop</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least one straight leg invert</li> <li>- Demonstrate at least one move with only 2 points of contact</li> <li>- A spin is required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-Proficiency on full lyra and spanset</li> <li>-Demonstrate a minimum of two drops</li> <li>-Demonstrates at least one roll</li> <li>-Demonstrate at least one straight arm invert</li> <li>-At least one flare spin is required</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum Music Length</b>	3:00	3:30	3:45	4:00
<b>Restrictions</b> *Higher level rules apply to all lower levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No drops</li> <li>- No use of spanset allowed</li> <li>- No intentional beats</li> <li>- No inverts on the top of the apparatus - inverts to the top bar from seated are permitted</li> <li>- No standing or sitting on the top bar</li> <li>- No ankle, foot, toe or heel hangs</li> <li>-No rolls other than beauty or birdie rolls are permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A maximum of one drop is permitted</li> <li>- No no-handed foot, toe or heel hangs (candlesticks and walking man permitted)</li> <li>-Inverts in the spanset are only permitted if they are executed within the middle of the spanset</li> <li>-No catch and release moves permitted</li> <li>-No rolls other than beauty, glamour, Russian/monkey or birdie rolls are permitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No single point neck hangs</li> <li>-No open drops are permitted (top bar salto drops are permitted)</li> <li>-Drops must not surpass a single rotation</li> <li>-No more than one rotation in rolls of any variety. Multiple different types of rolls are permitted in succession.</li> </ul>	-No restrictions

# Specialty Rules

Category	Emerging Performer	Rising Performer	Seasoned Performer	Advanced Performer
<b>Performer Description</b>	An Emerging Specialty Performer is considered beginner level in both skill and performing. Instructors may not perform at this level. Performers should show awareness of the audience and match their skills to music.	A Rising Specialty Performer is comfortable with basic skills on their chosen apparatus. They do not need performance experience. Rising Performers are expected to show level appropriate strength, flexibility, and flow. Rising Performers are expected to interact with the audience and show crowd awareness.	A Seasoned Specialty Performer has a solid command of intermediate-level specialty skills, with moderate performance experience and prior competition participation. They should demonstrate level-appropriate strength, flexibility, flow, and create a clear, engaging character or story within their routine.	An Advanced Specialty Performer has a comprehensive command of aerial specialty skills. These performers often have teaching and significant performance experience. They are expected to demonstrate dynamic movement, strong flow, level-appropriate strength and flexibility, and present a well-developed, clear character or storyline.
<b>Required Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-No free-hanging inverts are allowed on the apparatus, unless required for mounting the apparatus</li> <li>-Only single drops are permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-One aerial invert is required</li> <li>-Single drops are permitted</li> <li>-Spinning is required, unless not applicable on the apparatus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-One aerial invert is required</li> <li>-Single and double drops are permitted</li> <li>-Spinning is required, unless not applicable on the apparatus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Routine must start with at least one body part touching the ground</li> <li>-Full height of the apparatus must be utilized</li> <li>-At least one drop is required, unless not applicable to the apparatus</li> <li>-Spinning is required, unless not applicable on the apparatus</li> <li>-Must demonstrate dynamic movement and balance</li> </ul>
<b>Maximum Music Length</b>	3:00	3:30	3:45	4:00
<b>Restrictions</b> *Higher level rules apply to all lower levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No open drops</li> <li>-No ankle, heel, foot, toe or heel hangs</li> <li>-Must not be higher than 16 feet in the air</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No ankle, heel, foot, toe or heel hangs</li> <li>- No single point neck hangs</li> <li>-No open drops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No single point neck hangs</li> <li>-No open drops (unless approved by DAC staff)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No kamikaze drops</li> </ul>

# Day of Event – Live Competitor Information

## **Arrival & Check-In:**

- Arrive at least 1 hour before your scheduled performance time
- Arrive fully performance-ready; there are no dressing rooms at the venue
- Complete required liability waivers prior to stage testing, if under 18, ensure guardian completes check-in & waivers
- Check in any equipment or large props
- Report to stage testing at your assigned time, come to the designated area when announced

## **Important Information:**

- Schedules may run early, up to 30 minutes early
- Missed performance times cannot be rescheduled

## **Stage Testing Guidelines:**

- Silks: Maximum 1 minute 45 seconds
- All Other Solo Apparatuses: Maximum 2 minutes
- Group Routines: Maximum of 10 minutes
- Height adjustments count toward testing time
- Full routines cannot be performed
- No additional time will be granted
- Coaches may accompany competitors for stage testing
- Coaches may not touch the apparatus after height adjustments

## **Before Your Performance**

- Report downstairs when you are one of the next 3 competitors
- Confirm apparatus setup with the rigging manager
- Request height adjustments before the routine begins
- Be prepared for potential schedule shifts
- Perform when called

## **Music & Technical Issues:**

- If incorrect music plays, competitors must not start their performance and inform the DAC staff. If the incorrect was submitted by the performer or studio, they will not get to re-start their routine.
- If a verified technical disruption occurs, competitors may stop
- Routine restarts are permitted at DAC staff discretion

## **Awards Ceremony**

- Attend Sunday Awards Ceremony (if present). In-person competitors must pick up their awards in person or arrange for pick up by a coach or other individual present.

## **Awards Information:**

- All awards will be presented during the award ceremony via Livestream
- Livestream links will be shared via email and available on the South Dakota Aerial & Arts YouTube Channel
- Unclaimed awards may be shipped at additional cost
- Virtual awards will ship within 4 weeks of the competition

## **Final Results**

- Scores & placements will be posted on the Dakota Aerial Championship website within 24 hours

Thank you for reviewing the Dakota Aerial Championship Competitor Packet. Have any remaining questions? Email [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com). or call/text 605-215-1505

### **Want to Get Involved With the Dakota Aerial Championship?**

If you are interested in judging, teaching a workshop, sponsoring, or volunteering at the Dakota Aerial Championship, email [info@sdaerialarts.com](mailto:info@sdaerialarts.com) for more information. Additional information and details will be shared publicly about these opportunities by April 15, 2026.

Note: Judges must not reside in the state of South Dakota. All judges should have a minimum of 5 years of aerial experience. Judges may not be able to judge their own teams of studios that reside within a 100-mile radius of their current or previous studios. Judges will be compensated per performer, for lodging and travel to the competition. No judging will be done virtually in 2026.