

# EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT CONTESTS, BUT DIDN'T KNOW WHO TO ASK

District 50 Toastmasters

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This document, and the educational session, will hopefully help you to understand:

Why we have contests  
Procedures for each contest  
Contest dates & levels  
Contestant preparation  
Contest Chair preparation  
Contest Master preparation  
Contest Judges & Helpers

If you have any questions, or need any help, please don't hesitate to ask your Area or Division Governors, the Quality Contest Chair, or your District leaders.

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## Why do we have Contests?

To provide contest experience  
and to recognize our best speakers  
As a learning experience for all  
Public relations opportunities:  
Invite guests to your contests!

## A Contest should be:

Well-planned & well-organized  
Fair: Consistent, identical treatment  
for all Contestants, as much as is possible  
Fun!

## Which Contests are held when?

Every Spring: International Speech  
plus one other contest  
Every Fall: Two other contests  
Other contests: Evaluations; Table Topics;  
Humorous Speech; Tall Tales  
D50 tradition: Humorous every Fall,  
plus one other contest

## Ineligible to compete in any contest:

International Officers, Directors,  
and Candidates for those offices  
District Officers (Top Seven, Division Governors,  
Area Governors) *Note: Assistants CAN compete*  
Immediate Past District Governor  
Announced Candidates for District Offices  
Anyone presenting an educational  
session at the Conference  
Contest judges (until they are no longer competing)

Past World Champions cannot compete  
in International Speech

## Evaluation rules & procedures

Target Speaker – preferably unknown to all  
contestants, presenting an early CC speech,  
and NOT an accomplished speaker

All contestants evaluate same speaker

Any member in good standing of a club in  
good standing throughout the contest season  
is eligible (unless on ineligible list)

## Table Topics rules & procedures

One question for all contestants

Any member in good standing of a club in  
good standing throughout the contest season  
is eligible (unless on ineligible list)

## Humorous Speech rules & procedures

Substantially original 5-7-minute humorous story

NOT one-liners or stand-up routine, must  
have opening, body, conclusion

Any member in good standing of a club in  
good standing throughout the contest season  
is eligible (unless on ineligible list)

## Tall Tales rules & procedures

Substantially original 3-5-minute  
exaggerated humorous story

Should be highly improbable, with a theme or plot

Any member in good standing of a club in  
good standing throughout the contest season  
is eligible (unless on ineligible list)

## International Speech rules & procedures

Substantially original 5-7-minute speech

Substantially original: all quotes must be attributed; all sources credited

Eligibility for International Speech:

Member in good standing of a club in good standing throughout the contest season

Must have completed at least six Competent Communicator Manual speeches prior to club contest

**OR** be a charter member of a club that has chartered since July 1 of this Toastmasters year

## Process of International Contest

Semi-finals and finals will be held at the International Conference

Toastmasters International pays travel expenses for District contest winners

Up to and including the semi-final contest, contests can compete with same speech, but are not required to do so

All contestants must present an entirely new and different speech for International Finals than given at any International contest since Jan. 1 of that year

## Protests at contests:

On eligibility or originality only

Only Judges & Contestants can protest

Must be brought to the Chief Judge before winners are announced

## When are the contests?

Check District Calendar for exact dates!

**Club** Contests: ~ July to early Sept and Jan to Feb/early March

**Area** Contests: ~ Sept/Oct and March/April

**Division** Contests: ~ October and April

**District** Conferences/Contests: Friday & Saturday in November and in May

**International** Convention (International Speech Contest only): August

## Contestant preparation:

Are you eligible?

You can compete in any club contest, but **ONLY ONE AREA CONTEST** for each contest

Attend Judges' training; review the Judges' ballots

Attend contests – listen & learn!

## Contest Chair

The person who puts it all together (Competent Leader Manual Project)

Contest Chair Resources are on the D50 web site

**Contest Checklist** makes it so much easier!

**Contest Script** should be reviewed with your Contest Master

## Contest Master

Toastmaster of the Contest, keeps it fair, fun, and on time

Contest Master Resources are on the D50 web site

Contest Master How-To really helps

Contest Script should be followed!

## Contest Chief Judge & Judges

Judges & Chief Judges have received training through the District

District Chief Judge appoints Contest Chief Judges at least two weeks before contest date

Contest Chief Judges find Contest Judges

Current contestants cannot serve as a judge at the same level they are competing

International Speech rules require SIX judges at Area Contests, EIGHT at Division & District

## Contest Helpers

Great way to help your Area/Division/District

Fun and educational experience

Competent Leader Manual Project

Sergeants at Arms (1 per door plus extra for Evaluation & Table Topics contests)

Timers (2)

Ballot Counters (3 for International; 2 for other contests)

## Resources for help & answers:

Area Governors

Division Governors

Past Area & Division Governors

Contest Resources page at District Web Site: [www.d50toastmasters.org](http://www.d50toastmasters.org)

My Toastmasters site: [www.Toasties-Stuff.org](http://www.Toasties-Stuff.org)