



E S E N C I A

**JACK & JILL**



## **ESENCIA JACK & JILL COMPETITIONS: GUIDE FOR COMPETITORS**

This document is designed to provide competitors with information about Jack and Jill competitions.

Jack and Jill competitions are based on social dancing but are not exactly the same. They involve improvising a dance with a randomly assigned partner and song.

For example, in competition, you will be judged on various elements, including style, resources, and how you present your dance. This means that your visual aesthetic is more important in competitions than in social dancing. You also need to be mindful of other aspects, such as engaging with the audience, in addition to technique, timing, and connection, which are fundamental pillars of social dancing. This indicates that even great social dancers may need to adjust their dancing to excel in competitions.

Jack and Jill competitions are also a mix of luck and skill. Skill is demonstrated by meeting competition criteria. Luck comes into play in terms of who you are paired with, when the judges are observing you compared to others, and the songs accompanying your dance.

### **ACROBATICS**

**Dips** (where at least one foot of each partner remains on the floor) are allowed.

**Lifts** (where both feet of one partner leave the floor and their weight is supported) are not allowed in any division and will result in immediate disqualification (for preliminary rounds) or last place (in finals).

### **TIMELINESS & COMPETITOR MEETINGS**

Events may disqualify participants who fail to register for their competition on time for any reason or do not attend mandatory competitor meetings held by the organizers. The flexibility of these policies is at the discretion of the event organizer and competition staff. Once a competitor is eliminated from the competition, they will not be reinstated.

### **NUMBER PLACEMENT**

**Followers** must wear their numbers on the lower back or over the glutes.

**Leaders** must place their numbers at the center of the upper back.



It is crucial to place numbers in these locations to allow judges to quickly identify them and help competition staff distinguish leaders from followers on the dance floor. Numbers should not be placed on the front or side of the body. Keep your number, as you'll need it if you advance to the next round.

## **DRESS CODE**

In addition to stage presence and dance presentation, attire can also affect your score. Points may be deducted for inappropriate clothing, similar to the "Costume or Presentation" element in some categories. While wearing a costume is not required for Jack and Jill, the following dress code guidelines apply:

### **Footwear**

Shoes are mandatory in all categories. Dancing barefoot or in socks will result in disqualification.

"Foot Undeez" and socks are not considered shoes. This rule exists for both appearance (demonstrating professionalism as an EJJ competitor) and hygiene/safety.

Followers are encouraged to wear high heels, as they reflect a higher level of difficulty, but they will not be penalized for wearing flats. Leaders will not receive extra points for wearing heels, as they are expected to remain grounded and stable for followers during complex moves.

### **Accessories and Costumes**

Accessories and costumes are not allowed in EJJ competitions. This includes any detachable item intentionally used as part of the dance. Wearing accessories will result in immediate disqualification.

Items like hats, jackets, sunglasses, or other unreasonable dancewear are considered costumes and are prohibited in all categories.

Clothing or accessories must not be removed or exchanged between partners during the competition. From the start of the music to the end of your round or finals, removing any item is strictly prohibited.

Adjusting clothing to avoid exposure of private areas is allowed and will not result in disqualification or point deductions.

If in doubt, ask the event staff before competing. Microphones and/or earbuds are not permitted during any routine.



## CLOTHING GUIDELINES

To maintain a professional and respectful environment, competitors must follow these clothing guidelines:

### **Permitted Attire:**

Jeans, trousers, classic or modern shorts, skirts with safety shorts, dresses, or tops that adequately cover the chest (for women). Outfits should allow for free movement and highlight the competitor's lines and technique.

### **Prohibited Attire:**

Sleeveless shirts. Dirty, smelly, or damaged clothing. Garments that expose private areas such as the buttocks, groin, or chest (for men or women). Inappropriate clothing for a public setting, such as swimwear, gym attire, cargo shorts, or sweatpants.

### **Penalties for Non-Compliance:**

Failing to adhere to these guidelines will not result in disqualification, but judges may lower your Presentation score if your attire is deemed unprofessional or inappropriate.

### **Additional Recommendations:**

Competitors should ensure their attire reflects professionalism, as this contributes to the quality of the event. Participants are encouraged to choose clothing that enhances their confidence and personal presentation.

These guidelines apply equally to men and women to maintain a professional standard for all involved.

## JUDGING CONFLICTS

EJ prohibits judges from evaluating their current or former dance/life partners, immediate family members, or ex-partners. While most judges aim to remain impartial, this rule ensures competitions are as fair as possible.

Judges are also expected to disclose potential conflicts of interest, such as judging close friends, team members, or instructors from their school. In such cases, where possible, a non-conflicted judge should evaluate that role.



## UNDERSTANDING SCORE VARIATIONS

It's not uncommon to see a wide range of scores in competitions. One judge might rank a pair first, while another might rank them tenth. This is especially common in tightly contested divisions.

Significant score differences often indicate a closely matched competition. Because relative ranking does not use raw scores, the difference between first and tenth place can be significant or negligible—sometimes less than two points in total!

## PRIZES

Prizes are awarded at the discretion of the event. Most events provide a trophy, medal, or sash for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places. Cash prizes, gift certificates, and event passes may also be awarded. Prizes are solely determined by the event organizers.

## FEEDBACK

Some judges are open to providing support and feedback, even offering advice as part of a private lesson. You can also hire a professional to review your performance (live or via video) for feedback. This is a personal arrangement between you and the judge or professional.

## COMPETITOR CONFLICTS

To maintain a safe and respectful environment, the following rules address potential conflicts between competitors:

1. **Reporting Pre-Existing Issues:** Competitors aware of conflicts with another participant (e.g., allegations of harassment or assault) must inform the event organizer beforehand. Failing to report such issues may result in disqualification and a refunded registration fee if complaints arise later.
2. **Separation in Preliminary/Semifinal Rounds:** Event organizers can ensure affected competitors are not paired together during early rounds by using multiple heats.
3. **Random Pairings in Finals:** Pairings in finals remain random unless the alleged behavior is criminal and proven in court.
4. **Event Organizer Discretion:** Event organizers have the authority to apply these measures at their discretion. The judging panel will not make decisions regarding competitor conflicts.



These rules address significant issues that may cause trauma or distress based on prior experiences with another competitor. They do not apply to emotional grievances or discrimination based on protected characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, age).

## JUDGING CRITERIA IN JACK & JILL COMPETITIONS

Judges evaluate competitors based on the following criteria:

1. **Dance Technique**
  - **Posture and alignment:** Good body posture and controlled movements.
  - **Technical connection:** Accurate leader-follower connection, effective communication without anticipation or excessive resistance.
  - **Timing:** Executing movements in sync with the music and partner.
  - **Smooth transitions:** Seamless execution of steps and patterns.
2. **Musical Interpretation**
  - **Musicality:** Creative interpretation of rhythms, melodies, and changes in the music.
  - **Dynamics:** Variations in intensity, speed, and style to match musical nuances.
  - **Phrasing:** Proper use of musical phrases to emphasize key moments.
3. **Partner Connection**
  - **Empathy and communication:** Working as a team with comfort and chemistry.
  - **Adaptability:** Adjusting to the randomly assigned partner's style and level.
  - **Teamwork:** Balance between leader and follower contributions.
4. **Creativity and Style**
  - **Originality:** Unique moves and patterns that suit the music and partner.
  - **Personal style:** Maintaining individuality while adapting to the partner.
  - **Improvisation:** Creative use of steps without appearing choreographed.
5. **Presence and Attitude**
  - **Confidence:** Secure yet humble demeanor on the dance floor.
  - **Emotional expression:** Conveying enthusiasm and emotions through dance.
  - **Audience projection:** Connecting with the audience and judges while enjoying the performance.
6. **Error Management**
  - **Recovery:** Handling inevitable mistakes like disconnections or timing issues.
  - **Teamwork:** Collaborating to correct errors without disrupting the dance flow.



## SCORING DISTRIBUTION

Judging criteria are generally evaluated as follows:

- **Technique:** 30-40%
- **Musicality and Interpretation:** 20-30%
- **Connection and partner work:** 20-30%
- **Creativity and style:** 10-20%

This scoring distribution is a general guideline and may vary by event.

