

Chief Judge

Contest Checklist

About this checklist:

The **Chief Judge** and Team are responsible for ensuring that the contest judging and timing and the processing and tabulation of completed Contest Judge ballots is performed fairly and accurately. Taking on the Chief Judge role in a contest is both challenging and exhilarating! The myriad of details that go into ensuring fair and accurate judging can be overwhelming. This becomes manageable by keeping track of what needs to be done and when. Hence this checklist.

Why put all this effort into a contest? Because everyone gains! You become even better at managing and motivating a team and helping organize and deliver an event with lots of moving parts. The contestants gain valuable – long lasting – knowledge and experience crafting and delivering their speeches and seeing how they do relative to the other contestants. The audience members enjoy the experience of listening to some – hopefully – memorable speeches and may decide to enter future competitions.

Note: This checklist conforms to the latest TI **Speech Contest Rule Book** but is NOT a replacement for it. The TI **Speech Contest Rule Book** must be your primary reference guide.

Rodney G. Denno, DTM

Rodney is an avid writer and sharer of his Toastmasters leadership and communication experiences. You can find more writings by him at <https://www.rodneydenno.com/toastmasters.php>



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Created by Rodney Denno, DTM and friends
in District 96 (British Columbia, Canada)

**The Chief Judge is responsible for ensuring that
the contest judging and timing and
the processing and tabulation of completed judge ballots
is performed fairly and accurately.**

Build Your Chief Judge Team:

Mentor/Coach – A Toastmaster who has already performed the Chief Judge role and is willing to mentor/coach you.

- If no-one in your club is capable and willing to mentor/coach you in the Chief Judge role you can ask your Area Director to help you find a mentor/coach. Your Club President will have the contact information for your Area Director.
- You can find information about what Area and District you are in - here <https://www.toastmasters.org/find-a-club> (click Search Options, enter the name of your club, click Submit Search, scroll down and click on your club name. The next screen will have your Club, Area, Division and District information)
- Your District website will also have contact information for your Area Director. Click here <https://www.toastmasters.org/leadership-central/district-websites> if you know your District number.

Contest Judges

- Appointed by the Chief Judge.
- The Contest Judges must be members in good standing.
- The Chief Judge must carefully brief the contest judges on the importance of not showing bias in the judging procedure.
- The duty of each Contest Judge is to – using the Judge's Guide and Ballot – select 1st, 2nd and 3rd place from among the contestants in the contest.

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- Upon completion of the ballot the Contest Judge will submit the – signed – ballot (sealed in an envelope) to one of the Ballot Counters.

Tie Breaking Judge

- Appointed by the Chief Judge.
- The Tie Breaking judge must be a member in good standing.
- The identity of the Tie Breaking Judge should only be known to the Chief Judge.
- The duty of the Tie Breaking Judge is to rank **ALL** contestants numerically on the Tie Breaking Judge's Ballot.
- Upon completion of the ballot the Tie Breaking Judge will submit the – signed – ballot (sealed in an envelope) to the Chief Judge, who will open and count it only in the event of a tie by the Contest Judges.
- In the event of a tie in any of the top three places, the contestant who ranks higher on the Tie Breaking Judge's Ballot will be awarded the contested place; the other tying contestant will be awarded the next lower place. No place higher than the tying position will be affected. (Example, if the tie occurs in second place, the tying contestant ranking higher on the Tie Breaking Judge's Ballot will be awarded second place. The other tying contestant will be awarded third place. First place is unaffected.)

Timers

- Two Timers are appointed by the Chief Judge.
- One is provided with a Stopwatch or Timing App, and the other with the Timing Lights OR Green-Yellow-Red Timing cards.
- Contestants must be able to clearly see the Timing Lights OR Green-Yellow-Red Timing cards.
- The Timer with the Stopwatch or Timing App must maintain – and deliver to the chief judge after all the contestants have finished competing - the written record of elapsed time of each speech on the Time Record Sheet.
- The Timer managing the Timing Lights OR Green-Yellow-Red Timing cards must follow the light procedure outlined on Instructions for Timers sheet.

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Ballot Counters

- Three Ballot Counters are appointed by the Chief Judge.
- At the conclusion of the contest speeches the ballot counters will collect the sealed ballots from the Contest Judges. The Ballot Counters and Chief Judge will proceed to the room/area designated for processing the ballots and tabulating the results. The Ballot Counters will post each speaker's points on the Counter's Tally Sheet previously prepared for that purpose. Counters will count *all ballots twice* to insure accuracy.
- In posting the points, counters will give three points for first place, two points for second place, and one point for third place. Any ballot which does not specifically designate first, second, and third places, or which does not contain the names of three speakers, or is not signed by a designated contest judge cannot be counted.

Planning and Preparation:

The Contest Chair and Chief Judge roles are the two most important roles. The Chief Judge and team (Contest Judges, Timers, Ballot Counters) are responsible for ensuring that the judging, timing and processing and tabulation of completed Contest Judge ballots is performed fairly and accurately.

Mentor/Coach

Contest Judges

Club Level – minimum of 5.

Area Level – minimum of 5 with equal representation of judges from each club in the Area that has provided a contestant.

Division Level – minimum of 7 with equal representation of judges from each Area in the Division that has provided a contestant. ALSO – at the Division level no chief judge, contest judges, tie breaking judge shall be a member of any club in which a contestant is a member.

Tie Breaking Judge

Timers (2)

Ballot Counters (3)

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- Envelopes (1 for each judge)
- Private room/area where the Chief Judge and the Ballot Counters can process the Contest Judge ballots, tabulate the results, fill in the Results Form and ensure that the Calligrapher writes the correct name on each of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place Certificates.
- Download the appropriate Contest Kit here <https://www.toastmasters.org> (type the contest name into the search box)

The Kit contains:

For Use By Contest Chair	For Use By Chief Judge
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speech Contest Rulebook• Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality• Contestant Profile• Speech Contest Certificate Participant• Speech Contest Certificate 1st Place• Speech Contest Certificate 2nd Place• Speech Contest Certificate 3rd Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speech Contest Rulebook• Judge's Certification of Eligibility• Contest Ballot• Tie Breaking Ballot• Time Record Sheet• Counters Tally Sheet• Results Form• Notification of Winners

NOTE: Below I've listed only the forms that you and the Contest Judges, Timers and Ballot Counters will personally use in the administration of you duties.

Print Forms and Ballots for your Chief Judge role.

- Judge's Certification of Eligibility (1 for each Judge)
- Judge's Guide and Ballot (1 for each Judge)
- Tie Breaking Judge's Guide and Ballot
- Time Record Sheet (1)
- Counter Tally Sheet (3)
- Results Form

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- Notification of Contest Winner

Contestant Timing:

The Timing lights OR Green-Yellow-Red Timing cards should be placed so that...

1 - The contestants can easily see them, but

2 – The Judges should not be able to see them (so they are not influenced by the possibility of a speaker going over time. Judges should be focused solely on judging the contestant speech performances.)

- Obtain Timing lights OR Green-Yellow-Red Timing cards (If Timing Lights are your primary time indicator then have a set of Green-Yellow-Red Timing cards as backup in case the Timing lights fail)
- Obtain stop-watch or Timing App on smartphone

In the days leading up to the contest:

Email the Contest Judges the Speech Contest Rulebook, Judge's Certification of Eligibility and the Judge's Guide and Ballot. Ask the Contest Judges to review the appropriate portion of the Speech Contest Rulebook for that contest and the Judge's Guide and Ballot and to print, fill in and bring the – signed – Judge's Certification of Eligibility form to the contest.

20 minutes prior to contest starting:

Brief the Contest Judges, Timers and Ballot Counters

- Verify that all Contest Judges have provided you with a signed Judge's Certification of Eligibility form.
- Provide each Contest Judge with one envelope and instruct them that when the the Contest Chair asks them to complete their ballot they should do so and then put their completed – signed – ballot in the envelope, seal it, write their name on the front of the envelope and hand it to one of the Ballot Counters.
- Review the Time Record Sheet and Instructions for Timers with the Timers.
- Review the Judge's Guide and Ballot with the Contest Judges.

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Review Counters' Tally Sheet with the Ballot Counters.

During the contest:

A few minutes after the contest starts...

The Contest Chair will Ask You: "Chief Judge, have the contest judges, timers and ballot counters been briefed and are we ready to proceed with the contest?" *The Contest Chair will wait for an affirmative reply from you.*

After the last contestant speech the Contest Chair will state: "May we please have silence until all the ballots have been collected? Judges, please hold your ballots up when you have completed them."

You and the Ballot Counters will now collect the ballots as they are completed by the Contest Judges.

After all the ballots have been collected - proceed to the room/area chosen for processing the Contest Judge's ballots and tabulating the results. Fill in the Results Form and ensure that the Calligrapher writes the correct name on each of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place Certificates.

Note: While a protest is very rare - this is the most likely time for it to be lodged. It must be dealt with immediately. Protest can only be based on eligibility and speech originality and must be lodged with the Chief Judge and Contest Chair only by another contestant or by a judge. (See the section titled 'Protests and Disqualifications' in the Toastmasters International **Speech Contest Rule Book**.)

As soon as you have completed the Results Form and the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place Certificates - proceed back to the contest room and present the Contest Chair with these items.

Contest Wrap Up Paperwork:

Complete the Notification of Contest Winners form and send it to the next contest level...

Club Contest – send to Area Director

Area Contest – send to Division Director

Division Contest – send to District Chief Judge

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Rodney G. Denno, DTM



Since late 2006 I've spent a lot of time in the laboratory that is Toastmasters! It's a wonderful place to develop new skills and hone existing ones.

Through the years I've served in most of the club officer roles multiple times and as Area and Division Director, District 21 Public Relations Officer and District 21 Communications & Technology Officer.

In 2008 I led the effort to create and deliver the first Online Club Officer Training program in the Toastmaster world.

While I was busy learning, enjoying myself and giving back to Toastmasters I received the highest Toastmasters honors in District 21 and 96 (the province of British Columbia, Canada) - the **2009 District 21 Rookie of the Year Award** and the **2010 District 21 Toastmaster of the Year Award** and **2018 District 96 Toastmaster of the Year Award**.

I believe that in order for a society to grow and prosper we must give back more than we take. Over the years I've volunteered whatever time I could to various non-profit organizations. Since 2006 my volunteer efforts have been focused, through Toastmasters, on the development of leadership and communications skills in the almost 6,000 Toastmasters throughout British Columbia.

I write about what I'm involved with in Toastmasters so I can share it with other Toastmasters and hopefully make their Toastmasters journey more enjoyable and valuable to them and to the Toastmasters organization worldwide.

You can find more Toastmaster writings by me at <https://www.rodneydenno.com/toastmasters.php>

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