



MegaCon Live

# Masquerade Rules



**Guild of Nerds**

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## Helpful Links/Resources

### [Guild of Nerds Blog](#)

[Calculating How Much of my Cosplay is Made](#)

[Stage Ninjas 101](#)

[Entering Competitions as a Group](#)

[Different Types of Masquerade Performances](#)

[Brainstorming Masquerade Performances](#)

[Everything you need to know about MP3's and MP4's](#)

[Progress Books 101](#)

### [Progress Book Template](#)

### [Behind the Curtain Column](#)

[Submit Questions for the Column](#)

## Summary

- All cosplays must adhere to the convention rules in regards to dress and props.
- There are three classes, Bard, Adventurer and Artificer. There are slightly different requirements for each.
- Adventurer entries must have made 50% or more of their cosplay, and Artificer entries must have made 80% or more of their cosplay.
- Bards must have bought, thrifted, commissioned or made less than 50% of their cosplay and have a performance plan.
- Digitally submitted progress books are required for Adventurers and Artificers, but are not judged competitively.
- Best in Show and Best Adventurer are weighted 35% Craftsmanship, 35% Accuracy/Creativity and 30% Performance.
- Only one entry per person per event.
- Groups are capped at 6 people and qualify for all categories/prizes depending on their class.
- Entries must be 16 or over for the Artificer class.
- Performances are not automatically accepted, and the Cosplay team reserves the right to reject performances that are unfit for the Masquerade.
- All performances must be under 2 minutes.
- Performances must be family friendly and safe for the audience and performer. Cosplayers must be able to move on the stage unassisted, or have their own handler attending with them.
- Good sportsmanship is required. An entrant can be removed from the Masquerade or disqualified from future shows for poor sportsmanship.
- You must complete an online pre-check before the show, and sign in on the day at the cosplay zone by 1pm or at your pre-judging slot.
- An advanced waitlist system will be operated once registrations are full. There will be no on-the day registrations, but no-shows spots can be given to waitlisted entries attending the show.
- By entering the competition you agree that your photo and video may be taken by attendees while onstage and in the stage area, and that MegaCon Live, Guild of Nerds and other subsidiaries of these entities may use your image for advertising or sponsor purposes.

## CLASSES

We've introduced experience classes to the judged Cosplay Masquerade, ensuring that crafters of similar skill levels are able to compete against each other. We're detailing the requirements for the Adventurer and Artificer classes below. There is also the Bard Class which is a performance based class for cosplayers who have not made 50% or more of their cosplay.

Experience classes help to level the playing field between brand new entrants and those who have been competing longer. By assigning yourself an experience class when you sign up for the competition, you can be sure you will be judged against entrants of a similar level to you, giving you more chances to win and be recognised for your cosplay!

All classes operate on an application system, and applications open 6-8 weeks before a show, and are reviewed as a batch 4 weeks before a show.

Groups of up to 6 entrants can enter either category, with the class generally based on the most experienced member of your group. Groups will be eligible to win any available award, including 'Best Adventurer' or 'Best in Show', depending on their class.

If not everyone in your group meets the minimum made percent for the Artificer or Adventurer class, please apply for the Bard class.

Best Adventurer and Best in Show (Artificer) will be with the following weighting:  
35% Craftsmanship, 35% Accuracy or Creativity and 30% Performance.

Best Bard is weighted at 100% Performance

Remember, Performance is a part of all classes, as it makes up 30% of the overall scoring in Adventurer and Artificer. As it is 100% of the scoring in Bard, Bard Class entrants must have a performance plan.

## Class Requirements and Identity Questions

Questions Our classes are self-assigned, although you can contact the Guild of Nerds if you need help selecting a class to enter in! The Requirements are firm, and you must meet the requirements of the class to enter that class. Sometimes though, you qualify for multiple classes, and that's where Identity Questions come into play. You don't need to identify with all of the identity questions, but see which class you identify with the most.

### Bard Requirements

*For cosplayers who are performers at heart, but haven't made their cosplay.*

- Bought, thrifted or commissioned your cosplay
- Over the age of 16 years old
  - 12-15 year olds may enter if registered by a parent
- Complete an online application detailing a performance plan

### Identity Questions

- You have a performance in mind
- You're okay performing in front of a large audience
- You want to compete against other performers

### Adventurer Requirements

*For cosplayers with less experience competing or making cosplays, who are excited to get started!*

- Made 50% or more of your cosplay
- Over 16 years old
  - 12-15 year-olds may enter if registered by a parent
- Complete an online application
- Do not have professional experience or training in costuming/sewing

### Identity Questions

- You're new to making costumes
- You've never won a major award
- You haven't entered a cosplay competition, or have entered less than five

### Artificer Requirements

*For more experienced cosplayers who've been competing for a long time, have won awards, or have lots of making experience.*

- Made 80% or more of your cosplay
- Over 16 years old
- Complete an online application

### Identity Questions

- You've won a major award
- You consider yourself an experienced costume maker
- You've entered more than five competitions
- You have professional costuming training or experience

## HOW TO ENTER

- Applications for all classes open at the same time (6-8 weeks before a show) and remain open until 4 weeks before a show, at which point all applications are reviewed and pre-check forms are sent out.
- Once the initial application window closes, a waitlist will open for additional entrants.
- If there are more applicants than spots available, applicants will be chosen based on the completeness of their form, particularly how complete the information about their cosplay and performances are.
  - Please make sure your application is complete, and detailed to ensure you the best chance of receiving a spot.
  - If you do not receive a spot due to lack of space you will automatically be placed on the waitlist.
- If the selection committee feels you should be entering as a different class than you have selected, they reserve the right to move you to the appropriate class as space allows, and will contact you about this change.
- You will be unable to sign up on the day of the event. All entries must register or apply in advance online.
  - There will be a Cosplay Showcase you can enter on the day both days.
  - If you are still on the waitlist on the day of the competition, there will be a system in place for waitlisted entrants to claim last minute spots. Please check in at the cosplay zone before 12pm on the day to learn more.
- Only one entry is permitted per person per event. You cannot enter both Saturday and Sunday of the event.
  - If you enter as a part of a group one of the days, you cannot enter as a solo entry or as a part of a different group on a different day.
  - This rule is to maximise the number of cosplayers who can participate in the show, a secondary waitlist can be operated for those who wish to enter both days, but due to the number of entrants the shows receive it is unlikely that the

secondary waitlist will get a spot. Please contact the Cosplay Team for more info on the secondary waitlist.

- More information, including pre-check information, and information for the day of the show will be sent no later than one week before the event. On the day, you must sign in at the Cosplay Village by 1pm, otherwise you will be marked as a no-show and your spot may be given to someone on the waitlist.
  - There will be scheduled pre-judging slots in 30 minute increments, starting as early as priority entry to the show. If you miss your pre-judging slot, even if that slot is before 12pm, you may be marked as a no-show. Bard Class entrants do not do pre-judging.

## COSPLAY ELIGIBILITY

- Cosplays must be made by the entrant (person wearing the cosplay on stage), or in the case of group entries, by someone in the group for Adventurer and Artificer Classes. Bard class entrants should have a performance in mind and made less than 50% of their cosplay.
- The costumes must meet the made elements requirement for the class they are being entered in, ie. Less than 50% for Bard, 50% for Adventurers and 80% for Artificers. All costumes within a group entry must meet the made percent requirement for the class they are entering.
  - In the case of the Bard class, groups can enter with a mix of bought and made cosplays.
  - Unsure how to determine how much of your cosplay is made, modified or bought? [Check out this Guild of Nerds Blog Post.](#)
- Commissioned and bought costumes, or costumes mostly made up of general clothing, should be entered in the Bard class.
- All cosplays entered must adhere to the convention rules in regards to dress and props.
- The cosplay entered cannot have won a major award, at any previous cosplay competitions, unless the cosplay or performance is 50% different or modified.

- Cosplayers may not modify their skin colour or features through the use of make-up or prosthetics to that of another realistic or human ethnicity - see ruleset 10 below.
- Cosplays may not mimic the appearance of, or contain symbols of, hate groups, or promote hate of any kind.
- All cosplays should provide enough coverage to be worn in public and not simulate nudity.
- Cosplays must be suitable for a family-friendly audience.
- Cosplays can be from any media, including but not limited to, anime, gaming, film and television. Original characters are welcome, and concept sketches or other such references should be included in the progress books for original characters or costume designs.

## PERFORMANCES

- 'Best in Show' (Artificer) and 'Best Adventurer' both take performance into account at a weighting of 30%.
- All performances must follow the performance rules. Breaking of these rules can and will result in a ban from Guild of Nerds ran competitions.
- MegaCon Live is a family friendly event. This means strip-teases, simulated nudity, extreme violence, and swearing- live or recorded- are not allowed.
- Safety is important, as such, we do not allow the following things on stage:
  - Glass containers or other items that could break into dangerous shards such as ceramics.
  - Liquids of any kind, this includes fake blood in the form of liquid or gel, or blood capsules. Water and other beverages can be brought backstage in a sealable container, but cannot be brought on stage.
  - Strobes, flashes or lasers of any kind are prohibited as this poses a safety hazard to other entrants, the audience and judges.
  - Anything that could leave debris on the stage, or render the stage sticky or slick. This would include the use of bubble machines or solution, popping of balloons,



glitter, powders, confetti or the like. You are not allowed to throw things into the audience, or towards the judges, nor hand anything to the judges or audience members.

- Smoke machines, pyrotechnics, fireworks or anything that may produce a flame are prohibited.
- Entrants are not allowed to exit or enter the stage from the front or sides of the stage, you must use the ramp or provided stairs.
- You cannot enter the stage from the audience, or exit the stage into the audience at any point in your performance (beginning, middle or end).
- You should approach the edge of the stage with caution, as there is not a railing and falling could result in injury.
- If your cosplay impairs your vision, or mobility you should have a handler or stage ninja with you to help keep you from the edge of the stage. Please inform us on your pre-check application if visibility or mobility onstage are a concern.
- All performances must be under 2 minutes (120 seconds) This is from the time your audio starts or you walk onto stage, whichever happens first. A small buffer for placing and clearing props/set pieces will be allowed but must be within reason.
- Audio must be submitted in an MP3 format. As the show is not live-streamed or recorded for public release at this time, there is no restriction on origin of audio tracks.
- If a video screen is available for use, you'll be able to supply an image or video to be displayed on the screen during your performance. This must be supplied as an MP4 (even for still images) and should have your backing track within the MP4. You will still be asked to supply an MP3 of your audio as a contingency for screen issues.
- You are allowed to use a stage ninja in your performance. You can [learn all about stage ninjas here!](#)
  - Stage ninjas must be in all black or dark-coloured clothing if they will be onstage during the performance. They cannot be in costume while assisting you onstage, and are not allowed to have any dialogue lines, recorded or spoken.

- If they are simply placing or clearing props directly before or after your performance, they do not have to be in all black or dark coloured clothing.
- Stage ninjas may interact with the entrant during their performance, they may not interact with the audience as a performer, play a named character in the performance, and may not have lines.
- Some ways you might use a stage ninja is to pre-set your props/set pieces and clear them at the end of your performance, assist with props/set pieces on stage or with costume changes, act as a 'mannequin' within your performance or otherwise. Check out the linked article above for more ideas and info.
- You must recruit your own stage ninja and they will need their own ticket to MegaCon Live.
  - Our stage crew may be able to assist you minimally during the show with pre-setting props and the like, but this cannot be guaranteed and depends on many factors, so you may have to pre-set your own props and clear them if you do not have a stage ninja.
- The cosplay team has a right to intervene or stop a performance should a need arise or the performance is seen as too dangerous, or inappropriate to continue.
  - The cosplay team may decline a performance if it seems it may pose a safety risk or is inappropriate, and also must review any scripts or original lyrics.
- While mics can be requested, they must be requested in advance, they are handheld mics and mic stands are not available. The cosplay team cannot provide stage props, set elements or staff/volunteers to participate in performances.

# RULES

While many of these rules have been summarised in previous sections, please read the full rules below to ensure you are in line with the rules of the competition.

1. All cosplays entered must adhere to the convention rules in regards to dress and props.
2. Classes are self-identified, and entering the show is via an application system, and applications will be reviewed as a batch when the applications close.
  - 2.1. We may bump you to Artificer if we feel you qualify for that category and there is space in the class.
  - 2.2. If there are more applicants than spots, then spots will be given to those with the most complete application, including, but not limited to, the quality of your performance description, and how far along you are in your build process.
  - 2.3. A waitlist will be operated for both classes, and in the case of drop outs waitlisted individuals will be contacted to fill the spots.
3. Adventurer entries must have made 50% or more of their cosplay, and Artificer entries must have made 80% or more of their cosplay. This rule does not apply to the Bard class, which is for performance based entries where the cosplay is not made. Bards should have made less than 50% of their cosplay. This is to make sure there is enough space in the Bard class for those who don't qualify for the other two classes.
  - 3.1. 50% made is defined as 50% or more of the cosplay is hand crafted, with raw materials, i.e. acquired material, cut or shaped, and sewn or glued together to create a finished piece. At least half of the costume should be made or significantly altered for the Adventurer class, and 80% must be made or significantly altered for the Artificer class. Typically shoes, undergarments, and wig bases are not expected to be made.
  - 3.2. Artificers and Adventurers are required to bring documentation of their build process for the cosplay. The minimum requirements for this documentation is that it shows multiple steps of the build process for the various parts of the

cosplay. It should contain photos, and can be submitted digitally during pre-check. This is not a competitively judged portion of your entry, but may hinder the judging process if the judges are unable to assess hidden parts of your costume, eg. undergarments and finishing. This is called a Progress Book.

- 3.3. If the validity of your entry is called into question you will be required to present definitive evidence that you have made 50% (Adventurer) or 80% (Artificer) or more of the cosplay. We reserve the right to refuse entry to all future contests if you have passed another's work or a purchased cosplay off as your own work.

- 3.3.1. Definition of 100% hand crafted for the purposes of this contest: Item was designed (patterned, 3D modelled etc), cut/shaped, assembled and finishing details were all done by you the creator. You can read more on determining how much of a cosplay you have made in this [Guild of Nerds blog post](#).

4. Progress books are required for Adventurers and Artificers, and should be submitted digitally during online pre-check. The contents of your progress book are to inform the judges decisions and the physical progress book is not judged itself.

- 4.1. Made costumes that are based on a reference are judged for Accuracy. Made costumes based on an original design, or multiple references (i.e mashup cosplays) will be judged based on Creativity. This is up to the judges discretion. The judges are looking to award as many points as they can and will select the category that best reflects the cosplay origins, which can be a combination of both categories.

5. Pre-Judging slots for Adventurers and Artificers will be pre-booked during the online pre-check in. Up to 8 entrants within a 30 minute block. You must arrive at your Pre-Judging slot at the start of your 30 minute block.

- 5.1. If you miss your pre-judging block (arrive more than 25 minutes late to your block) the cosplay team will do what we can to accommodate you, but there is a very high risk that you will be unable to compete in the show.

- 5.2. Pre-Judging is timed, and based on experience class. Artificers get 5 minutes,

Adventurers get 3 minutes, and all group entries will receive an additional 3 minutes on top of their class given time. (i.e an Artificer group gets 8 minutes, and an Adventurer group gets 6 minutes)

6. Best in Show and Best Adventurer are judged based on three categories. 35% Craftsmanship, 35% Accuracy/Creativity and 30% Performance.
  - 6.1. Best in Show and Best Adventurer does take performance into account, so please plan your entry accordingly.
7. Only one entry per person per event. You cannot pre-register for both Saturday and Sunday at the same event.
  - 7.1. Groups can enter and are capped at 6 people. Groups are eligible for all categories/prizes, depending on their class.
  - 7.2. You can be waitlisted for a second day of the event, if there are extra spots available on the second day you may be able to compete both days. You would be on a secondary waitlist. The primary waitlist (for those who weren't able to get a spot for either day) take precedence over the secondary waitlist.
  - 7.3. Waitlist spots will be given as spots become available in the order that one joined the waitlist. You will have 24 hrs to respond to a waitlist invite before the spot gets passed onto the next person on the list.
8. Cosplays that have been entered in previous contests, at any event that have won a major award cannot be entered competitively again, unless you can show that major alterations or improvements have been made on the cosplay.
  - 8.1.1. A major award being a placed award such as 1st, 2nd or 3rd, Best in Show, or Best [blank] or runner up to a major award. Judges Choice does not count as a major award.
  - 8.1.2. Major alterations/improvements would be 50% different from the show it was entered and won a major award at. These updates/modifications can be in the cosplay itself or the performance.
  - 8.1.3. If you are entering a cosplay that has won a major award before, and has been modified to be at least 50% different in performance or

craftsmanship, these updates must be documented in your progress book.

- 8.1.4. Bard Class entrants who have won a performance based award before must have a 50% different performance to enter again.

- 9. Entries must be 16 or over. Under 16's must be registered by a parent or guardian.

- 9.1. You must be 16 or over to enter the Artificer Class.

- 9.2. Adventurer and Bard class is open to 12-15 if they meet the class requirements and are registered by a parent or guardian.

- 9.3. Minors may not compete with cosplays or performances from 18+/TV-MA source material or other such adult content.

- 10. Performances are not automatically accepted, and the cosplay team reserves the right to reject any performance they deem unfit.

- 10.1. Performances must be family friendly and safe for both the audience and cosplayers. No strip teases or simulated nudity, and no live or recorded swearing.

- 10.2. Cosplayers must be able to move on the stage unassisted by an assistant, or have their own handler with them who allows them to move safely onstage.

- 10.3. Strobes, flashes or lasers of any kind are prohibited as this poses a safety hazard to other entrants, the audience and judges.

- 10.4. You are not allowed to throw items into the audience or towards judges.

- 10.5. Nothing should be left on the stage after your performance, such as glitter or confetti. The stage should not be made slippery or sticky during your performance as this poses a safety risk. This means anything that could leave debris on the stage, or render the stage sticky or slick are not allowed. This would include the use of bubble machines or solution, popping of balloons, glitter, powders, confetti or the like.

- 10.6. No liquids of any kind, this includes fake blood in the form of liquid or gel, or blood capsules are allowed on stage. Water and other beverages can be brought backstage in a sealable container, but cannot be brought on stage. Glass containers or other items that could break into dangerous shards such as

- ceramics are not allowed on stage.
- 10.7. Entrants should be mindful of the edges of the stage so as not to fall off. There is a risk to safety if a performer is too close to the edge of the stage.
  - 10.8. If you need mobility assistance please make the Guild aware of your needs in advance.
  - 10.9. The cosplay team has the right to stop or intervene in a performance should a need arise, or if they believe the costume or cosplayer is too dangerous or inappropriate to perform on stage.
  - 10.10. While mics may be available, they must be requested in advance, and are handheld mics. The cosplay team can not provide any stage props or set elements. Those must be supplied by the entrant. The cosplay team also cannot supply stagehands. Any large set or stage props must be moved by the cosplayer or their stage ninja.
  - 10.11. All performances are strictly capped at 2 minutes. Audios will be cut at the 2 minute mark if necessary. This is to ensure we have time for all entries to compete.
    - 10.11.1. Please be prepared to upload your audio as an MP3 during online pre-check, and ensure the audio is under 120 seconds.
  - 10.12. Invited performers or specialty performers, intermission acts, or other performances at the show, cannot compete on the day they perform as an invited performance.
  - 10.13. Should any of these rules be broken, or be deemed to have been broken, the Guild reserves the right to disqualify an entrant from the competition, and refuse entry to them for previous competitions entirely.
- 11. Good sportsmanship is required. An entrant can be removed from the show, or disqualified from future shows for poor sportsmanship if the cosplay team deems it so.
    - 11.1. Cosplay Village volunteers are not allowed to compete in the masquerade.
    - 11.2. Megacon Live staff and crew are not allowed to compete in the masquerade, or other persons connected with the masquerade, e.g. prize sponsors, judges and

their agents.

- 11.3. Verbal or physical abuse against the judges, cosplay team, other entrants or show attendees will not be tolerated. Offenders may be removed from the venue.
- 11.4. Respectful interaction with other entrants is expected. Distasteful, rude, or discriminatory comments against other entrants are grounds for your removal from the contest. This extends to post contests as well and poor behaviour may disqualify you from future competitions.
- 11.5. Decisions for the masquerade prizes are decided by the judging panel. Their decisions are final.
- 11.6. Prizes are awarded per entry, not per person in a group.
  - 11.6.1. It can take up to 3 to 6 months for monetary prizes to be delivered.
- 12. Cosplays cannot be obscene or offensive. This includes the unnecessary or insensitive use of make up or prosthetics. Cosplays should not emulate the appearance of any form of hate or hate group, or endorse such groups.
  - 12.1. The use of make-up or prosthetics to change your natural skin tone or features to that of another realistic or human ethnicity is in violation of these rules.
  - 12.2. Cosplays should not endorse any form of hate or hate groups, nor should it emulate the appearance of any hate groups.
  - 12.3. Cosplays should not include symbols used by hate groups, even if it is in the original character design. If these symbols cannot be separated from the concept for the execution of the cosplay, then the cosplay is not suitable to be entered in this contest.
  - 12.4. Breaking rules within rule set 12 will result in immediate disqualification and removal from the competition, as well as being ineligible to compete at any and all future Guild-run competitions.
- 13. Entrants must complete pre-check online before the event. Pre-check will open 2-3 weeks prior to the show and must be completed by the deadline set in the pre-check email. Entrants will be contacted via email with more details on pre-check 2-3 weeks prior to the show.



- 13.1. Audio and visual for the performances are not guaranteed. The audio for a performance must be submitted as an MP3 and checked by the entrant during pre-check.
- 13.2. Failure to supply audio for a performance by pre-check or failure to complete pre-check will result in the entrant forfeiting their place in the Masquerade, and being moved to the waitlist.
- 13.3. We are not able to accommodate changes to an application, including audio, after pre-check closes.
- 13.4. You must also sign in at the Cosplay Village the day you are competing by 1pm. This is so we can confirm that you are at the show and still competing.
  - 13.4.1. If you do not check in on the day and do not pre-inform us that you will no longer be competing (known as a no-call no-show) you may face a penalty preventing you from registering at future shows.
- 13.5. Your stage order is determined after the pre-check is completed. You will receive your stage number on the day of the Masquerade.
  - 13.5.1. If you are stage ninja-ing for a fellow entrant competing on the same day as you, please inform the Guild in advance to ensure you are at opposite ends of the stage order.
- 14. If online sign ups fill up we will operate an advanced waitlist to fill slots freed up by drop-outs or no-shows.
  - 14.1. There will be two waitlists operated by the Guild: One for those who were unable to pre-register for either day, and one for those looking to enter a second day at the event. This system is intended to provide as many opportunities as possible for cosplayers to enter the show.
  - 14.2. On-the-day drops-out may be filled by waitlist applicants who have checked in at the Cosplay Village that day. More information on how to check in will be sent a few weeks before a show to those on the waitlist.
  - 14.3. There will be no on-the-day sign-ups available for the Masquerade, or on-the-day waitlist sign-ups.

15. By entering the competition you agree that your photo and video may be taken by attendees while onstage and in the stage area. You also agree that MegaCon Live, Guild of Nerds, and other subsidiaries of these entities may use your image for advertising or sponsor purposes, both from onstage and backstage.