# Rules and Regulations

Please take the time to read the Rules and Regulations.

By submitting an entry it means that you have read and understood the rules and regulations.

We are very excited to be able to offer opportunities to **amateur** musicians/actors who qualify through their local festivals.

a. We are offering competitive classes for instrumental levels from Grade 1 to ARCT in Classical Brass, Classical Guitar, Classical Harp, Classical Lower Strings, Classical Piano, Classical Upper Strings, Classical Woodwinds - Flute, Classical Woodwinds - Reeds.
b. We are offering competitive classes for competitors ages 6 to 28 in Chinese Instruments, Classical Voice, Musical Theatre, Popular Instruments, Popular Piano, Popular Voice, Popular Voice Self-Accompanied, Songs from the Screen and More and Speech Arts.
c. We are offering classes for all levels of Chamber, Brass Concerti, Piano Concerti, and Woodwind Concerti.
d. We are offering classes for Amateur Adults 29 years and over in all disciplines.

## MANAGEMENT

1. The Ontario Music Festivals Association (OMFA) is managed by the OMFA Board of Directors and the designated Provincial Administrator.
2. All decisions of the OMFA Executive Committee regarding any Provincial Finals matter within or outside the rules or syllabus shall be final and binding.
3. Requests for further clarification or interpretation of these rules may be made, in writing, to the OMFA Executive Committee.

## ELIGIBILITY

4. Competitors must be 28 and under as of January 1, 2026. Amateur Adult competitors must be 29 and over. For the purposes of this competition, for age level classes, ages are based on the age of the competitor as of January 1, 2026.
5. Competitors must live or study in the Province of Ontario or in the Gatineau, Quebec area.
6. Competitors must play/sing/perform at least one of the selections they performed at the Local Festival for which they must have received a minimum mark of 85. The second (or third, if applicable) selections are the competitor's own choice but must be at the same grade/level. However, it should be noted that if competitors enter a Provincial Qualifying Class which requires 2 or more pieces, those pieces must be performed at Provincials.
7. All competitors must be amateurs. For the purpose of the OMFA Provincial Finals competition, an amateur shall be defined as any person whose principle means of livelihood is not obtained from the performance or teaching of music in the particular category in which they are competing, even though, from time to time, they may receive remuneration on an occasional basis (not full-time). Please click here for the full definition of Amateur vs Professional: omfa.ca/glossary
8. Competitors may only enter in one level of competition per discipline (i.e. only once in Classical Piano, only once in Popular Voice, etc.) at their correct instrumental grade or age level. Please note that Open entrants in piano who wish to play a concerto must enter in the appropriate Piano Concerto classes.

   For the purposes of this competition:

- Classical Piano, Piano Concertos and Popular Piano are *three different disciplines*.

- Classical Voice, Musical Theatre, Songs from the Screen and More and Popular Voice and Self-Accompanied Popular Voice are *five different disciplines*.

9. Open Level competitors must be performing at the ARCT/A.Mus. level or above but do not have to have attained their Associate degree.
10. If a competitor has completed the repertoire section and/or taken a partial Conservatory examination before January 1, 2026, they are not eligible to enter that graded level of the Provincial Finals.
11. Once a competitor has entered one level, they may not enter a lower level for the same instrument/discipline in future years.
12. If a competitor places first in an age or graded level, they may not enter the same level the following year for the same instrument/discipline except in Chinese Instruments, Musical Theatre, Songs from the Screen and More, Popular Classes, Speech Arts, Percussion, Piano Concerti, Brass Concerti or Woodwinds Concerti.
13. Repertoire cannot be repeated from year to year or if entering two different classes.
14. For duets, trios and chamber groups with 3 members - The original group must attend. Substituions are not permitted.
    For chamber groups with 4 or 5 members - one member may be substituted.

## FESTIVAL REGISTRATION INFORMATION

15. Registration will be available to competitors starting on the first day of their local festival and will continue for a period of 3 weeks (where possible) after the last day of the festival.
16. To register, click Sign Up in the top right corner of this page.
17. You may register at any point up to and including your registration date. Early registration is strongly encouraged.
18. You need to register and pay for your entry before your recommended festival's deadline. [omfa.ca/entry-deadlines](omfa.ca/entry-deadlines)
19. OMFA reserves the right to reject any entry for any reason.
20. It is the responsibility of every Competitor and/or Parent/Guardian to ensure that they have read and fully understood all parts of this Syllabus.

    It is important to note the following reasons that will result in automatic disqualification:

    *For OMFA purposes "disqulification" means that the competitor is not eligible for placement or awards, however, the competitor will still receive a full adjudication and will also be able to participate fully in the workshop.*

    - Parents or Guardians must accompany minor competitors, who are under the age of 16, at all times.
    - Putting TBD, TBC, or TBA in any field.
    - Entry fee not paid by deadline.
    - Competitors must pay particular attention to the time limits indicated for their class. Playing time refers to the actual length of the music being played. Minimum or maximum performance time limits must be adhered to.

    **Live Festival Only**

- If a competitor arrives after their scheduled performance time, it will result in disqualification.
- Competitors mut provide full original scores for adjudicator.  Photocopies are not permitted.
- Needing to restart a performance selection.
- Adding spoken lines before or during a song that is not written in the original music presented (Musical Theatre and Songs from the Screen only).
- Competitors may not announce their pieces, where they are from, their local festival or who their teacher is.
- Photos, video and/or audio recording of competitors is strictly limited to family members. Anyone found recording a competitor without a direct connection to the competitor will be asked to delete the recording immediately.  Refusal to comply will result in the disqualification of the competitor associated with the person recording. The same will hold true for anyone recording the adjudicator's workshop.
- Approaching the adjudicator without permission
- Coaching from the audience.
- Not attending the workshop.
- Not attending the playoffs if selected to advance.
- Use of illicit substances (i.e. alcohol or non-medicinal drugs).
- Harassing, bullying or abusive behaviour.

## DEADLINE AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

21. Competitors MUST take the first recommendation they are given from a Local Festival. Once a recommendation for a particular grade/level has been accepted, it is not possible to be recommended for a higher grade/level at a later festival.  Failure to respond or accept the first invitation means that the competitor is ineligible to compete at Provincials even if recommended by another Festival.
22. You must follow the repertoire requirements as listed in the specific OMFA syllabus for your instrument/voice/speech arts. omfa.ca/festival
23. Completed registration forms must be submitted electronically using the online registration form and payment must be completed by 11:59 pm on the date of your local festival's entry deadline. Please refer to the Local Festival Deadlines page (omfa.ca/entry-deadlines) for your local festival's deadline date.
24. You must register and pay for your entry by your Local Festival's deadline (omfa.ca/syllabus/entry-deadlines).

    **Early registration is strongly encouraged.**
25. Final repertoire selection and payment must be completed by your festival's registration deadline.
26. The full entry fee for each competitor must be paid by e-transfer at the time of registration. **Please ensure that you include the invoice number in the message section of the E-transfer so that payments can be matched up with entries.**

    Because of fixed costs for the Provincial Finals, the entry fee is not refundable for any reason, except under circumstances where the entry is refused by OMFA. In these cases, OMFA will withhold a $25 processing fee. Refunds will not be given for failure to read and obey the rules and regulations.
27. Late applications will be accepted for a maximum of 3 days after your Local Festival's deadline. For festival's with a deadline of May 12, late entries will only be accepted for a maximum of 2 days. All entries and payments must be received before 11:59 pm. An entry or payment received after this time will be considered a day late and will incur a $25 late fee charge per day.

    Please refer to the Entry Deadlines page for your local festival's late entry deadline (omfa.ca/entry-deadlines).

There will be no exception to this rule.

28. If you wish to make changes to your repertoire after you have submitted and paid for your entry, you may request a change by contacting the OMFA office at mail@omfa.ca.

    Changes will not be accepted after May 1, 2026 for festivals with registration deadlines on or before May 1. For festivals with registration deadlines after May 1, the final date to request repertoire changes is May 12, 2026.

    If the office approves your change, there will be a charge of $25 (per change) that must be paid by the competitor. The change will not be made until an e-transfer has been received (sent to mail@omfa.ca).

    It is important to note that all repertoire information must be submitted correctly and completely at the time of registration. **If the office is required to contact you regarding incorrect or incomplete repertoire information** (for example: missing movements, missing composer names, pieces entered at the wrong grade level, or repertoire that does not meet the requirements of the category being entered), **the registration will not be considered complete until the issue has been corrected.**

    **Please note that a $25.00 administrative fee will be charged for each correction that must be made**. E-transfers for these corrections must be sent to mail@omfa.ca. If the required fee is not received, the registration will not be approved.

29. Please ensure that you take the time to fill out the registration form completely, correctly and with ALL of the requested information. Putting "To Be Decided" in any field will not be accepted. Failure to provide all information required will result in disqualification.

30. **For instrumentalists:** names of composers, movements and opus numbers of works (if relevant) must be included on the registration form.

31. **For Musical Theatre, Songs from the Screen and Speech Arts**: name of piece, source (i.e. name of musical or name of anthology), author and/or composer and lyricist must be included on the registration form.

32. Time limits indicated within each discipline syllabus are "maximum" time limits. In most classes there is not a minimum time limit, however, in all Open Level classes the minimum performance time is 15 minutes. This means the actual PLAYING TIME must be 15 minutes. Playing for less time than this will result in disqualification.

    If competitors need to do a costume change (i.e. in Musical Theatre, Songs from the Screen and Speech Arts), please add a maximum of 5 minutes change time into your total declared time.

33. Entry forms must be complete to be accepted. Please use proper punctuation and **do not use all caps**. Full and accurate information must be included in all fields, including: Complete titles of pieces to be performed with the composer's first and last name. **It is important to note that if the Festival office has to contact you because of incomplete information (i.e. missing movements, songs submitted at the wrong grade level or in the wrong category, etc.) a $25 charge will be issued.** Failure to pay the charge will result in disqualification.

34. Entry fees cover the competitor's participation in the Provincial Finals only and DOES NOT include collaborative pianist (accompanist) fees.

35. Accompaniment may be acoustic piano only. The only exception to this rule is for accompaniment for Popular Voice which can also be by pre-recorded piano or instrumental back-track without vocal

backtracks. For the Popular Self-Accompanied class accompaniment may be on acoustic piano, keyboard, guitar or ukulele.

36. Original music for each selection must be presented at the welcome desk for use by the Adjudicator on the day of competition.

    An original score of the music or purchased digital music with attached receipt showing title and price (not a cover page or subscription to a sharing website) are acceptable. The teacher's name must not be visible anywhere on the music or on the receipt.

    Measure numbers should be clearly marked in the music for all instrumentalists. Measure numbers are not required for any voice classes.

## JUDGING/ADJUDICATING

37. Judging/Adjudicating will be by a qualified adjudicator in each discipline and all decisions made will be final. Criteria for judging/adjudicating will be for overall artistry but other aspects that will be considered are musicianship, musicality and expression, choice of repertoire, communication, presentation, and proper attire. In Classical Voice, Musical Theatre, Songs from the Screen and More, and Speech Arts, voice quality, diction, characterization and acting will also be taken into consideration.

## SCHEDULING OF LIVE PERFORMANCES

38. By submitting an entry form, the competitor agrees to perform at any time between the beginning and the end of the Provincial Finals.
39. OMFA reserves the right to reschedule from the published schedule without advance notice.
40. **Requests to change the scheduled date and time will not and cannot be considered.**
41. OMFA will endeavour to arrange the schedule so as to avoid conflicts in playing time of collaborative pianists (Accompanists). Your Collaborative Pianist's name MUST be provided on the entry form. If you do not have your Collaborative Pianist lined up at the time of your registration you will be permitted to submit this information no later than May 1st for festivals with deadlines before this date. All other festivals with deadlines after May 2nd will have until May 12th. It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure that this information is provided by the deadlines as noted above. Failure to list your Collaborative Pianist could result in scheduling conflicts that OMFA will not be able to fix.
42. The scheduled times of performances for the Live Festival will be posted on the OMFA website and will be forwarded with instructions to each competitor as soon as possible after the final entry deadline. Competitors will be reminded of all rules and advised of all known changes to the published schedule.

## PERFORMANCE AND PARTICIPATION

43. Competitors in instrumental classes must play the pieces as listed in the **CURRENT** Royal Conservatory of Music or Conservatory Canada syllabus, if relevant, (e.g. if two movements are required then two movements must be played or if it is complete, then all movements must be played, etc.).
44. Repertoire may not be used if the competitor has performed all, or parts, of a piece at any previous Provincial Finals. For Chamber Groups, repertoire may not be used if more than one member of the group has performed it at the Provincial Finals in previous years.
45. Competitors are advised to reflect a variety of styles and periods in their choice of selections.
46. The playing of repeated sections in instrumental music is optional - but encouraged.

    In vocal classes, if the lyrics are the same, it is not necessary to sing the repeated section.

**Accurate timing MUST be indicated on the entry form**. Adding or deleting repeated sections after an entry form is submitted is not permitted. Do not guess at the timings or make them up.

47. Music stands will not be provided.
48. Competitors must be on time for all scheduled events - being late could result in disqualification.

    a) Competitors, with their scores, must check in at their competition venue **a minimum of one hour before** their scheduled performance time.

    b) Competitors must be ready to perform at their competition venue at least 15 minutes prior to the start of their performance.

    c) Warm-up space will be provided, whenever possible, at each competition venue. Times will be assigned when the competitor checks in and are based on fair use for all competitors. The warm-up room will be available for 10-15 minutes approximately 45 minutes before the competitor's performance time. Warm-up rooms are for competitors only and should not be used for rehearsals of any kind. (i.e. accompanists, teachers, parents are not allowed). No rehearsals are permitted in the halls used for the competitions.

    If you require rehearsal facilities, OMFA will have information regarding the rental of rehearsal on the website as of May 2026. Competitors must book and pay for their own rehearsal space.

    d) Workshops occur after the final performer. **Competitors must participate and be on time for their workshop**. Competitors who do not participate in the workshop are not eligible for placement unless they have another workshop at the same time. Please inform the OMFA office of any conflict.

    e) Competitors are encouraged to attend the entire day of competitions.
49. Competitors must provide original full scores, music or text for the Adjudicator. Full original scores or texts must be presented to the Welcome Desk at check-in.

    a) All copyright laws must be observed. Photocopies or digital copies will not be accepted unless they show legal authorization from the publisher or copyright holder or proof of purchase (Front pages with competitors names are not receipts - please print receipts from your account showing title of selection and payment.)

    b) OMFA reserves the right to disqualify any competitor presenting an unauthorized copy.
50. Instrumental competitors must neatly mark the bar numbers at the beginning of each line of music in the original score, if not already noted in the score.
51. Competitors requiring an collaborative pianist (accompanist) must provide and pay for their own collaborative pianist.

    a) A list of collaborative pianists (accompansits) who are available to accompany at the Provincial Finals is provided on the OMFA website: omfa.ca/collaborative-pianists-accompanists

    b) Individual collaborative pianists (accompanists) may only play for a maximum of EIGHT (8) performers per day between two disciplines and a maximum of SIX (6) performers per day if playing for three or more disciplines. It is important to note that voice, musical theatre, songs from the screen and popular voice are separate disciplines. To avoid competitor disappointment and scheduling problems, please ensure that the collaborative pianist (accompanist) is in compliance with this regulation.
52. In a year when a new Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) or Conservatory Canada (CC) syllabus is

introduced, the previous syllabus may be used for one year only. For reference, all RCM and CC syllabi are available online.

53. Competitors must perform selections listed in their registration forms. Selections may be performed in any order.
54. No introductory remarks or comments are to be made by the competitor from the stage during music performances.
55. **Workshop and Playoffs** - There will be a workshop with the adjudicator at the end of each day. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn, have fun and meet your peers from across the Province. Many competitors find this to be a highlight experience of their time at the Provincial Finals. **Attendance is mandatory to be eligible for awards.** Placements and Honourable Mentions are announced after this workshop. Written comments are handed out at the conclusion of the workshop. This 1 to 1 and a half hour workshop usually takes place sometime between 3 to 6 pm each day.

    It is important to note that If your class has been divided into more than one part, there will be a **Playoff** where a few competitors are asked to perform one selection again to determine final placements. **This will take place after the workshop.**

    **The absolute maximum time limit for playoff performances will be 10 minutes and the one piece to be performed will be chosen by the adjudicator.**
56. The Performance Rules have been devised to ensure fairness to all competitors, and failure to comply with any/all of the regulations listed in the rules or syllabus could result in disqualification from Provincial Finals.

## BEHAVOUR DURING THE LIVE PROVINCIAL FINALS

57. Competitors, teachers, accompanists, parents/guardians are prohibited from being in contact with any Provincial Adjudicator before or during the Provincial Finals week.
58. During a performance and while in attendance at the Workshop and/or Playoffs, competitors must wear clothing suitable for concert hall performance and promotional photographs. Informal clothing is discouraged.
59. Competitors will be disqualified and ejected from competition premises without refund if found to be possessing or if under the influence of drugs or alcohol. OMFA reserves the right to refuse future participation in the Provincial Finals.
60. A designated seat will be arranged in each competition venue for a parent/guardian/teacher to record or photograph their own competitor's performance. All other audio recording, video recording, or photographing of competitors and adjudicators during performances and workshops is prohibited and may result in the disqualification of the competitor.
61. Appropriate behaviour and consideration of other competitors is expected at all times and in all aspects of the Provincial Finals, rehearsals, and its areas. Competitors may be disqualified if their conduct is disruptive or in violation of OMFA Rules at the discretion of the OMFA Executive Committee.
62. **All competitors 16 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times.**

## RESULTS OF THE COMPETITIONS

63. Results will be announced on the date of your competition. Results will also be posted on our website (https://omfa.ca/) and on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ONTMUSFEST/) and Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/omfa.ca/) before the end of June.
64. No marks are awarded at Provincial Finals. Adjudicators will award First, Second and Third place winners as well as Honourable Mentions.

65. Winners who receive a monetary award MUST send a hand-written thank-you letter to the donor of the prize.Contact information details will be provided.

# Orchestras

**Full Orchestra Definition**
A large group of musicians who play together on various instruments, usually including strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion instruments.

**String Orchestra Definition**
A music group consisting solely of stringed instruments.

**Concerto Definition**
A piece of music for one or more solo instruments accompanied by an orchestra.

***Concertos are only permited in the Concerto Class.***

One of the selections must have been performed at the Local Festival and received a minimum mark of 85 and the recommendation of the local Adjudicator. If applicable, the second selection is the competitor's choice but must follow the rules of this category.

Selections must be musically contrasting. The Adjudicator will take selection choice into consideration.

Multiple movements from the same piece will count as one selection. For example, Britten's *The Simple Symphony*, Op. 4, contains four movements. Whether you perform all four movements, three movements, two movements, or just one movement, it will still be counted as a single selection.

A pdf of the original scores must be submitted with the registration.  It must be a complete original score in the correct key for all instruments in the performance.

Instrumentation should be indicated if it differs from the score.

If not already in the score, bar numbers should be placed at the beginning of each line of music in the original score.

**IMPORTANT – FOR SCHOOL CLASSES ONLY**

- Payment may be made by **cheque** instead of e-transfer. Cheques should be sent by priority post or courier to ensure they arrive at the Festival Office **by your festival's deadline**.
  Cheques MUST be made out to:
  Ontario Music Festivals Association (short forms will not be accepted by the bank)

and couriered to: 17 Pinemore Cres., Toronto, ON  M3A 1W5

- **All orchestra classes** must provide their **pieces, composers, and a PDF of the scores** at the time of registration.

- **Videos of performances** may be uploaded at any time, but must be received **no later than May 1** for festivals with deadlines before this date, or **May 12** for festivals with later deadlines.

**General Rules**
All competitors must be an **amateur**. Please click here for the full definition of Amateur vs Professional: omfa.ca/amateur-vs-professional

**Live Festival** - originals must be provided on the day of competition at the Provincial Finals. No announcement of name or selection is permitted prior to your performance.

**Virtual Festival** - a pdf of the music/or speech arts selection must be uploaded at the time of registration.

It is important to note that **if the Festival office has to contact you because of incomplete information** (i.e. missing movements, pieces at the wrong grade level, etc.) will result in an additional **$25 charge**. Failure to pay the charge will result in disqualification and refunds will not be given.

All criteria listed in the OMFA General Rules (omfa.ca/festival/rules-and-regulations) must be strictly adhered to.

******All of the requirements for video submissions are detailed in the red Virtual Submission Requirements button.******

# Community String Orchestras

**PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS**

**Registration and payment must be made by your local festival's deadline.**

**Competitors must perform two (2) contrasting selections**

**Community String Orchestra - Ages 14 and Under: Twenty (20) minutes**
**Community String Orchestra - Ages 16 and Under: Twenty (20) minutes**
**Community String Orchestra - Ages 18 and Under: Twenty-five (25) minutes**
**Community String Orchestra - Ages 19 and Over: Twenty-five (25) minutes**

**There is no minimum performance time limit.**

**Accurate performance times must be included on the entry form. Do not guess timings.**

**Not providing your YouTube video link and the PDF of your music by your Festival's deadline will result in disqualification.**

**"To Be Decided" in any field will not be accepted and will also result in disqualification.**

**If your piece does not have any movements, please state "none".**

| Class | Live | Virtual |
|---|---|---|
| 28501 - Community String Orchestras - Ages 14 and Under | n/a | $160.00 |

***Competitors must perform two (2) contrasting selections.*** *At least one of the pieces must have been performed at the Local Festival and received a minimum mark of 85. Multi-movements of one piece are counted as one selection.*

***Time Limit:*** *Twenty (20) minutes*

# Community String Orchestras (continued)

| Class | Live | Virtual |
|---|---|---|
| 28502 - Community String Orchestras - Ages 16 and Under | n/a | $160.00 |
| ***Competitors must perform two (2) contrasting selections.*** *At least one of the pieces must have been performed at the Local Festival and received a minimum mark of 85. Multi-movements of one piece are counted as one selection.*<br><br>***Time Limit:*** *Twenty (20) minutes* | | |
| 28503 - Community String Orchestras - Ages 18 and Under | n/a | $160.00 |
| ***Competitors must perform two (2) contrasting selections.*** *At least one of the pieces must have been performed at the Local Festival and received a minimum mark of 85. Multi-movements of one piece are counted as one selection.*<br><br>***Time Limit:*** *Twenty-five (25) minutes* | | |
| 28504 - Community String Orchestras - Ages 19 and Over | n/a | $160.00 |
| ***Competitors must perform two (2) contrasting selections.*** *At least one of the pieces must have been performed at the Local Festival and received a minimum mark of 85. Multi-movements of one piece are counted as one selection.*<br><br>***Time Limit:*** *Twenty-five (25) minutes* | | |