

GROOM YORK

COMPETITION CATEGORY RULES

FREESTYLE CLASS

CATEGORY RULES & STYLING GUIDELINES

Freestyle allows competitors to showcase their personal grooming style, technical skills, and artistic flair while creating a finished look that does not follow a traditional breed-standard trim.

Permitted Styles & Techniques

- Competitors may choose their own grooming style, provided the finished look does not follow a traditional breed-standard trim.
- Shaved feet and faces are permitted, including on Poodles.
- Modern and contemporary Poodle trims are permitted when the groom includes a noticeable creative or artistic element, such as body swirls, patterns, or other decorative styling.
- Unlimited color application is permitted.
- Minor carving and detailing are permitted as accents to the overall groom.

Restrictions

- Full-body animal transformations and extreme carving are not permitted in Freestyle. These techniques are reserved for the Creative Class.
- Competitors wishing to showcase extensive carving, elaborate sculpting, or full-body animal-inspired transformations should enter the Creative Class.

Judging Focus

Judging will focus on overall execution, technical skill, finish quality, creativity, balance, and the successful presentation of the chosen style.

CATEGORY DISTINCTION: Freestyle permits color, minor carving, and artistic flair. Full-body transformations and extreme carving belong in Creative.

CREATIVE CLASS

CATEGORY RULES & STYLING GUIDELINES

The Creative Class is designed for competitors to showcase imagination, artistic vision, and technical skill through bold, innovative, and highly creative grooming transformations. Competitors are encouraged to think beyond traditional grooming styles and create unique, eye-catching designs.

Permitted Styles & Techniques

- All grooming styles and creative concepts are permitted.
- Full-body animal transformations and imaginative sculpting are allowed.
- Extensive carving, intricate patterns, and advanced detailing are permitted.
- Unlimited color application is allowed, including multiple colors and creative color placement.
- Shaved feet and faces are permitted, including on Poodles.
- Breed-standard trims may be used when incorporated into a larger creative concept.
- Competitors may combine techniques, textures, shapes, and colors to achieve their artistic vision.

Creative Guidelines

- The finished groom should demonstrate a clear creative concept or artistic theme.
- Designs may be abstract, geometric, animal-inspired, character-inspired, or entirely original.
- Creativity should be evident in the overall presentation, not solely through the use of color.
- Competitors are encouraged to demonstrate technical precision, thoughtful design, and attention to detail.

Judging Focus

Judging will focus on originality, creativity, execution, technical difficulty, carving and sculpting quality, color application, overall finish, and how successfully the final groom represents the competitor's artistic vision.

Important Notes

- All creative techniques must be performed safely and humanely.
- Only pet-safe grooming products and colorants intended for use on animals may be used.
- The dog's comfort and welfare must remain a priority throughout the competition.
- Judges reserve the right to determine whether a groom meets the requirements of the Creative Class.

RISING TALENT CLASS

CATEGORY RULES & ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

The Rising Talent Class is designed for beginner competitors entering the grooming competition world for the first time. This category gives new competitors an opportunity to showcase their grooming skills, build confidence, and gain experience in a supportive competitive environment.

Permitted Styles

- Competitors may present either a freestyle trim or a breed-standard trim.
- All grooming must demonstrate safe handling, proper technique, and attention to detail.
- Creative elements are permitted when performing a freestyle trim, provided the finished groom remains appropriate for the selected style.

Eligibility Requirements

- This class is strictly reserved for individuals who have never competed in a professional grooming competition.
- Competitors who have previously entered or participated in any grooming competition are not eligible to enter the Rising Talent Class.

Disqualification Policy

- Any competitor found to have previously competed in a grooming competition will be disqualified from the Rising Talent Class.
- If prior competition experience is discovered before or after judging, event organizers reserve the right to disqualify the competitor and adjust placements accordingly.

Judging Focus

Judging will focus on overall finish, technical execution, handling of the coat, balance, presentation, and the competitor's ability to demonstrate foundational grooming skills.

By entering the Rising Talent Class, competitors confirm that they meet all eligibility requirements. Groom York organizers reserve the right to verify eligibility and make final determinations regarding qualification.