

**20**  
9 JUL - 2 AUG  
**26**

**RULES FOR THE CONCERT CONTESTS 1st,  
2nd and 3rd DIVISIONS FOR  
WIND BANDS / FANFARE BANDS  
BRASS BANDS / PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES**



## General

Every four years, the World Music Contest is the stage on which Wind Bands, Fanfare Bands, Brass Bands and Percussion Ensembles can compete with the world's best. This is wind & percussion music of the highest quality, performed by participants from all over the world. In fact, the WMC has the most international field of participants in the world.

Wind Bands, Fanfare Bands and Brass Bands in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Divisions will perform an Own Choice Program within the set time. The total program therefore consists of a Test Piece and an Own Choice Program. The difference between the divisions is determined by the level of difficulty of the Test Piece based on the International Band Grading Chart.

In the Percussion Ensemble Contest there is no Test Piece and the conductor has the artistic freedom to develop – within the given time – the best possible program.

## Contest schedule 2026

### Wind Band

1st Division | max. 22 bands, Friday July 24 & Saturday July 25, Location: Roda Hall.

2nd Division | max. 25 bands, Friday July 31, Saturday August 1 & Sunday August 2,  
Location: Kerkrade Theater.

3rd Division | max. 30 bands, Friday July 24, Saturday July 25 & Sunday July 26,  
Location: Kerkrade Theater.

### Fanfare Band

1st Division | max. 22 bands, Saturday July 18 & Sunday July 19, Location: Roda Hall.

2nd Division | max. 6 bands, Friday July 17, Location: Roda Hall.

3rd Division | max. 7 bands, Friday July 17, Location: Roda Hall.

### Brass Band

1st Division | max. 10 bands, Saturday July 11, Location: Kerkrade Theater.

2nd Division | max. 10 bands, Sunday July 12, Location: Kerkrade Theater.

3rd Division | max. 10 bands, Friday July 10, Location: Kerkrade Theater.

### Percussion Ensemble

1st Division | max. 8 ensembles, Sunday July 19, Location: Kerkrade Theater.

2nd Division | max. 9 ensembles, Friday July 17, Location: Kerkrade Theater.

The contest venues are the Roda Hall and Kerkrade Theater in the City of Kerkrade, The Netherlands.

## Article 1: Sections

Participation in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Division of WMC 2026 is open to bands/ensembles in the sections:

- Wind Band
- Fanfare Band
- Brass Band
- Percussion Ensemble (only 1st and 2nd Division)

Application is possible for those bands/ensembles that qualify for the division of their choice based on their general playing standard. Participating bands/ensembles must submit a Curriculum Vitae online, via the My WMC portal, demonstrating that the quality and history of the band is such that they are eligible for participation in the Concert Contests (of their chosen division).

Application for WMC 2026 opens on April 1, 2025 and closes on November 1, 2025. The assessment of the Curriculum Vitae by the Artistic Manager of WMC will take place as soon as possible after completion of application.

## Article 2: Contest schedule and possible changes, prize ceremony and draw

WMC reserves the right to cancel contest days based on the number of registrations.

Each cluster of divisions will end with a prize ceremony in which all the results are announced simultaneously. Besides the conductor a band/ensemble shall appoint a representative to attend the ceremony on stage.

In January 2026 there will be a drawing of lots for all participants in the Concert Contests to determine who is playing at what time. This drawing is supervised by a notary and will be broadcast through live stream. Results are binding.

## Article 3: Duration of the program

### **Wind Bands, Fanfare Bands and Brass Bands 1st, 2nd and 3rd Division:**

- 3.1 The maximum duration of the Own Choice Program depends on the length of the Test Piece.
- 3.2 The total program consists of a Test Piece and an Own Choice Program within the set time.
- 3.3 Participants are entirely free to determine the order in which they wish to perform their music.

- 3.4 In addition to the Test Piece, a maximum of 3 works may be programmed. Of these, 1 work may be a composition for soloist and band, provided that another work is programmed in addition.
- 3.5 1st Division: The participating bands must perform a program with a total performance time of at least 35 minutes and a maximum of 40 minutes, including changes.
- 3.6 2nd Division: The participating bands must perform a program with a total performance time of at least 30 minutes and a maximum of 35 minutes, including changes.
- 3.7 3rd Division: The participating bands must perform a program with a total performance time of at least 25 minutes and a maximum of 30 minutes, including changes.

### **Percussion Ensembles:**

- 3.8 In the Percussion Ensemble Contest there is no Test Piece, and the conductor has the artistic free-dom to develop – within the given time – the best possible program.
- 3.9 1st Division: The participating ensembles must perform a program with a total performance time of at least 35 minutes and a maximum of 40 minutes, including changes.
- 3.10 2nd Division: The participating ensembles must perform a program with a total performance time of at least 30 minutes and a maximum of 35 minutes, including changes.

### **Time limits:**

- 3.11 Violations of the set time limits will result in penalties in the form of point deduction(s) from the grand total: see Article 4.
- 3.12 Time limits will be checked by WMC through twofold time registration:
- Total performance time: time registration of the total performance time including all stage interactions (for example changes, own announcement or presentations). This time registration starts at the first note of the program (that sounds), or at the first stage interaction being part of the performance and stops after the last note of the program (that sounds) c.q. the last stage interaction being part of the performance.
  - Applause time: time registration of the total applause time. Applause time will be deducted from the total performance time leading to the Final total performance time.

## Article 4: Penalty points

Penalty points for exceeding time limits for Divisions 1, 2 and 3 Contests will be assigned based on the Final total performance time (total performance time minus applause time) in relation to the maximum set time for the present Division and section as follows (see Article 3):

• Exceedance by one (1) minute	-	0,00	points
• Exceedance by two (2) minutes	-	0,50	points
• Exceedance by three (3) minutes	-	1,00	points
• Exceedance by four (4) minutes	-	1,50	points
• Exceedance by five (5) minutes	-	2,00	points
• Exceedance by six (6) minutes	-	2,50	points
• Exceedance by seven (7) minutes	-	3,00	points
• Exceedance by eight (8) minutes	-	3,50	points
• Exceedance by nine (9) minute	-	4,00	points
• Exceedance by ten (10) minutes	-	4,50	points

## Article 5: Stage – build-up, clearing the stage

### Percussion

All bands (Wind, Fanfare, Brass and Percussion) must use the standard percussion set provided by WMC Kerkrade as listed in the application module, with a few exceptions (My WMC portal). Bands that substitute percussion instruments may be disqualified from the contest.

### Wind Bands and Fanfare Bands 1st, 2nd and 3rd Division

**1st Division:** The maximum stage time, 60 minutes (including build-up and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 10 minutes is available before your performance for build-up. (A warming-up room is available prior to your performance close to the main stage).
2. A maximum of 40 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 10 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance.

**2nd Division:** The maximum stage time, 50 minutes (including build-up and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 10 minutes is available before your performance for build-up. (A warming-up room is available prior to your performance close to the main stage).
2. A maximum of 35 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 5 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance

**3rd Division:** The maximum stage time, 45 minutes (including build-up and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 10 minutes is available before your performance for build-up. (A warming-up room is available prior to your performance close to the main stage).
2. A maximum of 30 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 5 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance.



## **Brass Bands 1st, 2nd and 3rd Division**

**1st Division:** The maximum stage time, 55 minutes (including entering and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 10 minutes is available before your performance to take place on the stage. (A warming-up room is available prior to your performance close to the main stage).
2. A maximum of 40 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 5 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance.

**2nd Division:** The maximum stage time, 50 minutes (including entering and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 10 minutes is available before your performance to take place on the stage. (A warming-up room is available prior to your performance close to the main stage).
2. A maximum of 35 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 5 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance.

**3rd Division:** The maximum stage time, 45 minutes (including entering and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 10 minutes is available before your performance to take place on the stage. (A warming-up room is available prior to your performance close to the main stage).
2. A maximum of 30 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 5 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance.

## **Percussion Ensembles 1st and 2nd Division**

**1st Division:** The maximum stage time, 80 minutes (including build-up and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 20 minutes is available before your performance for build-up.
2. A maximum of 40 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 20 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance.

**2nd Division:** The maximum stage time, 75 minutes (including build-up and clearing of the stage) is divided as follows:

1. A maximum of 20 minutes is available before your performance for build-up & sound check and/or technical check.
2. A maximum of 35 minutes is available for the performance (with adjudication).
3. A maximum of 20 minutes is available to clear the stage after your performance.

## Article 6: Scores

Scores of the **Own Choice Program** must be submitted as follows:

1. As a PDF in the application module (My WMC portal) by February 1, 2026
2. Three (3 pcs.) original hardcopy scores must be submitted (for use by the adjudicators) by May 1, 2026. Send the scores to the post box of WMC, including the bands/ensembles name and registration number. A shipping label with the name and registration number can be downloaded from the application module (My WMC portal).

## Article 7: Copyrights

WMC Kerkrade requires all participating bands/ensembles to comply with copyright laws regarding performance and/or use of arrangements of copyrighted music. If copyright violation is found to exist, disqualification may occur. We also refer to our General Terms and Conditions on our website for more details and information.

## Article 8: Program and use of the contest venues

- 8.1. Each program to be performed must comply with the provisions of Article 3 Duration of the program.
- 8.2. For Wind Bands, Brass Bands and Fanfare Bands each program contains a Test Piece set by WMC.
- 8.3. For Percussion Ensembles there is no Test Piece.
- 8.4. Compositions for Wind Bands, Fanfare Bands and Percussion Ensembles that require an extended instrumentation are allowed, provided that they fit the available contest stage (see Technical Rider).
- 8.5. The use of the other spaces of the contest venue is also allowed but must be approved by WMC to guarantee such use does not interfere with general security regulations.

## Article 9: Instrumentation and doubling of parts

All compositions must be performed according to the instrumentation of the scores concerned. WMC allows the doubling of parts by instruments that are not in the original score.

## Article 10: Adjudicators

The participating bands/ensembles will be adjudicated by an International Team of Adjudicators, consisting of 3 people with broad expertise on bands/ensembles and musical qualities. The International Team of Adjudicators will be supervised by an Independent Chairman of Adjudication.

## Article 11: Scoring, adjudication parameters, distinctions and awards

11.1. Each band/ensemble will receive a score based on the following:

### Test Piece – Wind Bands, Fanfare Bands and Brass Bands:

Adjudicator	Artistic Outcome	Technical Outcome	Total	Score
Adjudicator 1	100,00	100,00	200 : 2 = 100	300 : 3 = 100
Adjudicator 2	100,00	100,00	200 : 2 = 100	
Adjudicator 3	100,00	100,00	200 : 2 = 100	

1. Artistic outcome of the performance (Test Piece), including musical interpretation.
2. Technical outcome of the performance (Test Piece):
  - aspects as general technique, rhythm, ensemble playing, articulation, tuning, sound balance, dynamics, phrasing;
  - quality of soloists and band sections.

### Own Choice Program – Wind Bands, Fanfare Bands and Brass Bands:

Adjudicator	Artistic Outcome	Technical Outcome	General outcome	Total	Score
Adjudicator 1	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	300 : 3 = 100
Adjudicator 2	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	
Adjudicator 3	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	

1. Artistic outcome of the performance (Own Choice Program), including musical interpretation.
2. Technical outcome of the performance (Own Choice Program):
  - aspects as general technique, rhythm, ensemble playing, articulation, tuning, sound balance, dynamics, phrasing;
  - quality of soloists and band sections.
3. General outcome of the performance (Own Choice Program):
  - general presentation of the performance;
  - repertoire choices in relation to communication with the public and the capabilities of the band.



**Final Score – Wind Bands, Fanfare Bands and Brass Bands:**

Adjudicator	Test Piece	Score: Test Piece	Own Choice Program	Score: Own Choice Program	Final Score
Adjudicator 1	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	<b>200 : 2 = 100</b>
Adjudicator 2	100,00		100,00		
Adjudicator 3	100,00		100,00		

**Percussion Ensembles (no Test Piece):**

Adjudicator	Artistic Outcome	Technical Outcome	General outcome	Total	Final Score
Adjudicator 1	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	<b>300 : 3 = 100</b>
Adjudicator 2	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	
Adjudicator 3	100,00	100,00	100,00	300 : 3 = 100	

1. Artistic outcome of the performance, including musical interpretation.
2. Technical outcome of the performance:
  - aspects as general technique, rhythm, ensemble playing, articulation, tuning, sound balance, dynamics, phrasing;
  - quality of soloists and ensemble sections.
3. General outcome of the performance:
  - general presentation of the performance;
  - repertoire choices in relation to the capabilities of the ensemble.

11.2. Each band/ensemble will receive a score that determines the ranking.

11.3. Next up to the ranking, each band/ensemble receives a distinction based on the final score:

- Score up to 59.99           WMC participant
- Score 60.00 – 69.99       Bronze
- Score 70.00 – 79.99       Silver
- Score 80.00 – 89.99       Gold
- Score 90 and above         Gold with Distinction

11.4. Each participating band/ensemble will receive a final score, a short report of the individual adjudicators comments and a diploma.

11.5. The Team of Adjudicators will appoint in each division the following special awards:

- Award for an outstanding section or soloist
- Award for a musical promise or for (a) musical moment(s) that made great impression – in positive sense – on the Team of Adjudicators.

## Article 12: Titles and Prizes

Regarding Titles and Prizes, we refer to the separate document 'Titles and Prizes WMC 2026' on the WMC website.

## Article 13: Results and appeal

13.1. Once publicly announced, results are definite and binding. After this only WMC Kerkrade has the authority to adjust scores when deemed necessary.

13.2. No appeal is possible against results and WMC will not engage in any appeal process.

13.3. In case of unforeseen circumstances and/or situations these rules do not apply, WMC Kerkrade reserves the right to make decisions that are binding. No appeal is possible.

## Article 14: Responsibilities

14.1. The Artistic Management is artistically responsible for all contests in the Roda Hall and the Kerkrade Theater.

14.2. The Independent Chairman of Adjudication is responsible for the correct application of the adjudication system by all adjudicators and for the execution of the rules and adjudication manual. The Independent Chairman of Adjudication reports to the Artistic Management.

*World Music Contest, (WMC) Kerkrade, The Netherlands, April 2025.*

### General information

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