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**RULES FOR THE
MARCHING CONTEST**



The Marching Contests will take place in the Parkstad Limburg Stadium Kerkrade on:

- Saturday 11 and Sunday July 12, 2026
- Saturday 18 and Sunday July 19, 2026

See article 2 for days and dates of contests.

Article 1: Participation and Divisions

1.1. Participation is possible in five (5) divisions:

- Championship Division (the highest division)
- World Division
- 1st Division
- 2nd Division
- Junior Division

A. The Championship Division is for bands that wish to and are capable of challenging the title ‘WMC World Champion Marching’. The Championship Division is for the most experienced bands who, in their home country compete on the highest level in Marching. Only bands that compete in the Championship Division can win the title ‘WMC World Champion Marching’.

B. The World Division is for bands that:

- Compete at the highest level in their home country but have not reached the required level of the WMC Championship Division.
- Compete in the very top of the second highest level in their home country.

C. The 1st Division is for bands that compete in the second highest or at the very top of the third highest level in their home country.

D. The 2nd Division is for bands that compete at a good basic level in their home country.

E. The Junior Division is for bands whose members (including drum major / band leader) have not reached the age of 18 by December 31, 2026. Documentary evidence in the form of a photo ID may be checked before the bands compete. Violation of this rule could end in possible disqualification and any winning titles removed.

1.2. WMC gives bands the opportunity to participate in the Marching Contest of WMC in exhibition (without being adjudicated and given scores). Their aspiration should be to show-case their cultural background to the audience by being part of this worldwide event. Bands that are interested in an exhibition performance should contact WMC directly.

1.3. Each participant may choose to compete in the division in which they think they fit best.

1.4. All participating bands must submit their portfolio with previous results and – if possible – recent video material (2023 or later) on application.

- 1.5. The maximum of participants for each of the divisions are:
 - 1.5.1. Championship Division: 13 bands
 - 1.5.2. World Division: 12 bands
 - 1.5.3. First Division: 8 bands
 - 1.5.4. Second Division: 6 bands
 - 1.5.5. Junior Division: 7 bands

If there are more applications than slots in a division, WMC will decide, based on the portfolio, which bands will be assigned a slot. If possible within the timeschedule WMC can open up more slots. There is no appeal possible against this decision.

- 1.6. WMC Kerkrade can advise or rule, based on the portfolio as to whether a band may participate in their chosen division, or that the band should participate in a lower or higher division. This can be advised (in which case the band may decide themselves) or as a ruling, in which case the band will not be given the choice. The band then must participate in the ruled division.
- 1.7. In case of a ruling, no appeal is possible.

Article 2: Days and Dates of Contests

- 2.1. The Marching Contests will take place on the following dates:
 - A. Championship Division – Saturday 18 and Sunday July 19, 2026
 - B. World Division – Saturday 18 and Sunday July 19, 2026
 - C. 1st Division – Saturday 11 and Sunday July 12, 2026
 - D. 2nd Division – Saturday 11 and Sunday July 12, 2026
 - E. Junior Division – Saturday July 11, 2026
- 2.2. Dates and timeslots will be at the discretion of WMC Kerkrade.
- 2.3. The WMC reserves the rights to cancel contest days based on the number of registrations.
- 2.4. Bands that also compete in the Show Contest or Marching Parade Contest will perform in both contests in the same weekend but not necessarily on the same day.
- 2.5. Bands, competing in the Championship Division Show (Prelims/Finals), will have their marching performance within the same weekend but not on the same day.

Article 3: Repertoire

Bands may perform compositions of their own choice, suitable and representative of the division in which the band is competing. Titles and scores of all music used in contests need to be submitted to WMC Kerkrade no later than May 1, 2026. Any further changes or alterations in the scores must be brought to the attention of WMC Kerkrade no later than three (3) working days prior to the performance.

Scores can be submitted as follows:

1. As a pdf in the application module (my WMC account).
2. As a hardcopy to the post box of WMC, including the band's name and registration number. A shipping label with the bands name and registration number can be downloaded from the application module (my WMC account).

Article 4: Copyrights

WMC requires all participating bands to comply with copyright laws regarding performance and/or use of arrangements of copyrighted music, visual images and other materials, as well as the use of copyrighted audio, spoken text and display of copyrighted words and images. If copyright violation is found to exist, disqualification may occur.

- 4.1. All the participating bands and ensembles are required to secure permission to arrange all music involved. WMC stresses that participants do not ignore the Permission to arrange requirement to participate in a WMC contest or event. In the My WMC Portal bands are required to submit their program. Please remember, the submission above is only a declaration of your repertoire so that your groups' copyright compliance may be tracked. Submitting your information on the form is NOT a request for Permission to arrange.

If bands do not secure licensing prior to their performance, they may incur considerable penalties and be liable for any infringement of copyrighted materials.

Composition copyrights are typically managed by music publishers. To identify the music publisher(s) for a particular song, you could first consult a CD that contains the song. If the CD identifies the performing rights society (ASCAP, BMI or SESAC), you can go to the website for the appropriate society and search the database to find the music publisher(s). Searching for the song title in the databases should give you at least the name of the music publisher and will usually give you both the name and contact information.

Search Engines

- ASCAP Search Engine
- BMI Search Engine
- SESAC Search Engine
- Partial listing of public domain songs

- 4.2. Spoken Word / Literary Copyrights – Spoken word – Including movie quotes, and literary quotations, may contain copyrighted content. You should exercise care to ensure that you have permission to use any copyrighted words in your show.
- 4.3. Visual Arts - Visual pieces of art, including photographs, are most likely copyrighted. You should exercise care to ensure that you have permission to use any copyrighted visual image in your show.

By sending in your registration form you declare that you have acquired all of all the necessary rights.

Article 5: Contest Area and Performance Area

- 5.1. For the purpose of interpretation, the 'Contest Area' is defined by the area within the stadium that does not include entry ramps, hallways or seating area.
- 5.2. The performance will take place on a street circuit which will be marked on the field. The circuit has a street width of 9.14 meters (10 yards). This is regarded as the 'Performance Area' (in separate document). All lines are classed as boundaries of the Performance Area.
- 5.3. During the performance, the band and/or band members need to stay within the lines of the street circuit.
- 5.4. **Penalties:** There will be no penalties for any boundary violation. The visual adjudicators will take any boundary violation into account in their rewarding of the performance.

Article 6: The Performance

- 6.1. The bands, in all divisions, are free to choose their own route within the set street circuit.
- 6.2. Participating bands in all divisions must perform a minimum of at least one (1) manoeuvre left or right and one (1) counter march.
- 6.3. Bands are free to choose which style of performance they use for manoeuvres left, right and counter marches.
- 6.4. The chosen route and style of manoeuvres will affect the overall assessment. When and where these manoeuvres are performed in relation to the played repertoire, as well as the style in which they are performed will be rewarded accordingly.
- 6.5. The choice of route and manoeuvres, as well as the style in which they are performed, must be representative to the standard of the division in which the band is competing.
- 6.6. During the performance with adjudication, the band needs to move in a continuously forward direction (without stopping or marking time, except at the end of the performance (6.8.3)).
- 6.7. At the end of the performance, the band must come to a halt in front of the Grandstand whilst continuing to play. After 8 seconds and before 20 seconds, the full band has to step off and march forward to the 'end line' (which is the same as the START-marker). Once the first rank passes the 'end line', adjudication and timekeeping will end.
- 6.8. The performance:
 - 6.8.1. March on (without adjudication): upon a signal from the organization, the band marches without playing to the START-marker and comes to a full stop.
 - 6.8.2. The performance (with adjudication): as soon as the band is ready to start the per-

formance, the drum major/band leader must clearly indicate to the announcer that they are ready to begin their performance. The announcer will then give permission to start. From that moment, once the band starts to play or to move, the timekeeping and adjudication will begin.

6.8.3. The end of the performance (with adjudication): once a band comes to a halt (no mark time) in front of the Grandstand, the band has to continue playing. After 8 seconds and before 20 seconds, the full band has to step off and march forward to the 'end line' (which is the same as the START-marker). Once the first rank passes the 'end line', adjudication and timekeeping will end.

6.8.4. March off (without adjudication): The band will continue to march forward and march off via a route indicated by the organization.

6.9. There will be 0.1 penalty given per incident whenever the band is not moving in a continuously forward direction.

6.10. In the event of a violation of the end procedure (6.7 and 6.8.3) or not performing a left or right turn or a countermarch (6.2.), the Independent Chairman of Adjudication will add a penalty of 2,00 points per incident to the overall score. The penalty will be advised by the judge Visual Ensemble.

Article 7: Time Limits

7.1. There are two (2) time limits:

- Overall time (entry, preparation, performance and exit) – maximum 12 minutes
- Performance Time (the time limits in which the band is adjudicated):
 - Junior Division – minimum 4 minutes, maximum 8 minutes.
 - Championship Division, World Division, 1st Division and 2nd Division – minimum 5 minutes, maximum 8 minutes.

7.2. The performance time starts after the announcement: *'Band Name, you may take the field for competition.'*

7.3. The performance time (with adjudication) stops after the first rank of the band passes the end line (START-marker).

7.4. The schedule for warming up, report, performance and locations will be published and called the timetable.

7.5. All bands are to report at the designated gates as will be communicated in the most recent timetable.

7.6. Bands will perform according to the most recent timetable.

7.7. If a band misses its scheduled performance time, the artistic management of WMC can grant them a new time slot, **but only if this is possible.**

7.8. The Independent Chairman of Adjudication can delay a performance but cannot force the band to perform earlier than the most recent timetable.

7.9. The most recent timetable will be posted 24 hours before the reporting time of the previous timetable.

7.10. **Penalties:** In case of a violation of time limits (7.1) which are under or over the indicated limits, the Independent Chairman of Adjudication will add a penalty of 0,05 points per second to the overall score.

7.11. **Penalties:** Any timetable violation of the time schedule (7.5, 7.6 and 7.7) will carry a minimum of a two-point (2.00) penalty to a maximum of disqualification. This will be at the discretion of the Independent Chairman of Adjudication.

Article 8: Scoring and Awards

8.1. The performance will be rewarded by an International team of five (5) adjudicators and a separate adjudicator for the drum major award. The team will be supervised by an Independent Chairman of Adjudication. The following captions will be adjudicated:

- Music Ensemble 100 points, one adjudicator
- Visual Ensemble 100 points, one adjudicator
- Music Performance 100 points, two adjudicators
- Visual Performance 100 points, one adjudicator
- Drum major 100 points, one adjudicator

8.2. The captions Music Performance and Visual Performance will be adjudicated on field level. All other captions will be adjudicated from the top of the audience viewing area in the Grandstand.

8.3. Each caption consists of two sub-captions. The top sub-caption represents the WHAT (vocabulary) and the bottom sub-caption represents the HOW (excellence).

8.4. Each band will receive a final score calculated as follows:

	Adjudicator	Box/Field	Caption	Subcaption		Total sub captin	Average caption
				Vocabulary	Excellence		
Music	Adjudicator 1	Box	Music Ensemble	100,00	100,00	200,00	400,00 : 2 = 200,00
	Adjudicator 2	Field	Music Performance 1	100,00	100,00	400,00 : 2 =	
	Adjudicator 3	Field	Music Performance 2	100,00	100,00	200,00	
Visual	Adjudicator 4	Box	Visual Ensemble	100,00	100,00	200,00	400,00 : 2 = 200,00
	Adjudicator 5	Field	Visual Performance	100,00	100,00	200,00	
Drum major seperate score	Adjudicator 6	Box	Excellence	100,00	100,00	200,00	= 200 : 2 = 100,00
Sub total sore adjudicator 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5							400,00 points
Devided by 4							100,00 points
-/- time penalties							000,00 pons
Overall score (maximum)							100,00 points

8.5. Each band will receive a score that determines the ranking in their division.

8.6. All adjudicators will give recorded comments of the performance for their caption.

8.7. Next to the ranking in the divisions, each band receives an award based on the total 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

8.8. The following special awards will also be given in each division:

- Best Brass/Wind/Fanfare Band
- Best Percussion Ensemble/Drum Band (including so called mallet bands)
- Best Natural Horn Band
- Best Flute Band

8.9. The Public Vote Award: at the conclusion of every competition day a Public Vote Award will be presented to the band that receives the most votes from the audience. The votes will be collected digitally through the WMC-app. This prize is awarded regardless of division and contest (Marching, Marching Parade and Show) and will be handed out during the daily award ceremony.

8.10. The Drum Major Award: at the conclusion of every competition day a Drum Major Award will be presented to the best drum major of the day, regardless of division. The highest scoring drum major overall will receive the title of “WMC Drum Major 2026”. This title will be presented at the final day of the contest during the Award and Closing Ceremony.

Article 9: Championship, Titles and Prizes

9.1. The following championship titles will be awarded:

- Winner WMC Junior Division Marching – Highest ranking band in the Junior Division.
- Winner WMC 2nd Division Marching – Highest ranking band in the 2nd Division.
- Winner WMC 1st Division Marching – Highest ranking band in the 1st Division.
- Winner WMC World Division Marching – Highest ranking band in the World Division.
- WMC World Champion Marching – Highest ranking band in the Championship Division.

All Titles and Awards in the Junior Division will be presented at the Award Ceremony on Saturday July 11 2026

All Titles and Awards in the 2nd and 1st Division will be presented during the Award ceremony on Sunday July 12 2026.

All Titles and Awards in the World and Championship Division will be presented during the Award ceremony on Sunday July 19 2026.

9.2. In the Championship Division the following prize money will be awarded:

- WMC World Champion Marching Contest € 1.000,00
- First runner up WMC Marching Contest (ranked number 2) € 750,00
- Second runner up WMC Marching Contest (ranked number 3) € 500,00

Article 10: Authorities Marching Contest

10.1 The WMC Artistic Management is artistically responsible for all contests in the Parkstad Limburg Stadium.

10.2 The Independent Chairman of Adjudication is responsible for the correct application of the adjudication system. The Independent Chairman of Adjudication reports directly to the WMC Artistic Management.

Article 11: Results and Appeal

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

11.2 No appeal is possible against scores and WMC will not engage in any appeal process.

11.3 In case of unforeseen circumstances which these rules do not apply, WMC Kerkrade reserves the right to make decisions that are binding. No appeal is possible.

General information

info@wmc.nl

0031 45 545 50 00

Address

Niersprinkstraat 8
6461 AS Kerkrade, the Netherlands

www.wmc.nl