# WSF SALSA RULEBOOK

*2027 Revision*

*Governing WSF Salsa Competitions, Competitors, Officials, and Organizers*



# Table of Contents

1. Foreword and Authority
2. Definitions
3. Competition Framework
4. Eligibility and Competitive Classifications
5. Athlete Rules and Responsibilities
6. Rules for Organizers
7. Officials, Ethics, and Conflicts of Interest
8. Adjudication Standards
9. Scrutineering, Results, and Records
10. Competition Procedure
11. Syllabus Governance and Invigilation
12. Salsa Event Technical Rules
13. Music, Costume, Props, and Presentation
14. Safety, Medical, and Restarts
15. Violations, Penalties, Protests, and Appeals
Appendix A. Skating System of Judging
Appendix B. Official WSF Step Lists
Appendix C. Recommended Round Structure
Appendix D. 2027 Revision Notes

# 1. Foreword and Authority

## 1.1 Scope and Purpose

The World Salsa Federation establishes this Rulebook to govern WSF Salsa competitions, competitors, officials, organizers, and sanctioned competitive events. These rules are intended to protect fair competition, consistent adjudication, athlete safety, transparent results, and the technical identity of Salsa as a competitive dance discipline.

## 1.2 Rules Hierarchy

**a)** This Rulebook is the controlling competition document for WSF Salsa sanctioned events.

**b)** The official WSF Salsa Technical Syllabus, approved syllabus lists, official proficiency standards, and published event circulars supplement this Rulebook.

**c)** Event-specific departures are valid only when published in advance and approved in writing by the WSF Salsa Rules Committee, WSF Salsa National Director, or other body designated by WSF.

**d)** If two provisions conflict, the more specific provision controls unless WSF issues a written interpretation stating otherwise.

## 1.3 Interpretation and Uncovered Matters

Matters not expressly covered by this Rulebook shall be resolved by the Chairman of Judges for immediate competition purposes and referred afterward to WSF for interpretation when the matter may affect future events, athlete eligibility, sanctions, or published results.

## 1.4 Immediate Rulings and Post-Event Review

A ruling required for the competition to continue is final for purposes of completing the event, but does not prevent a timely protest, correction request, disciplinary review, or appeal where this Rulebook or WSF policy permits one.

## 1.5 Non-Discrimination and Access

WSF sanctioned activities shall be administered without arbitrary discrimination. Closed, invitational, membership, residency, age, proficiency, sex/gender, or role-based events are permitted only when the limitation is lawful, published in advance, and consistent with the competitive purpose of the category.

## 1.6 Document Control

Each adopted Rulebook shall state its effective date, version, approval authority, and superseded edition. WSF may publish official interpretations or technical bulletins during the year; each such bulletin shall identify whether it is advisory, immediately binding, or effective only for future events.

# 2. Definitions

## 2.1 Adjudicator or Judge

An official appointed to evaluate and mark competitors according to the applicable competition rules and adjudication standards.

## 2.2 Athlete

A WSF member or eligible registrant entered to compete in a WSF Salsa event.

## 2.3 Chairman of Judges

The official responsible for managing the adjudicating panel, resolving immediate competition questions, confirming rules compliance, and certifying results with the Scrutineer.

## 2.4 Championship

A sanctioned competitive event held for a title or championship designation in a geographic, organizational, national, or international scope.

## 2.5 Competition

An organized gathering of athletes, officials, organizers, and spectators for competitive events.

## 2.6 Event

All rounds of a specific competitive category, classified by dance style, proficiency or material level, age division, role or pairing structure, and format.

## 2.7 Couple

Two athletes competing together as Leader and Follower. Same-sex, mixed-gender, and other role arrangements are permitted when the event rules allow the required Leader/Follower functions to be performed clearly and safely.

### 2.8 Single or Solo Event

An event in which each athlete is judged individually, whether athletes dance simultaneously, in groups, or one at a time.

### 2.9 Team

A group of three or more athletes competing as one entry.

### 2.10 Amateur Athlete

An athlete who does not earn regular compensation as a dance professional and who competes in amateur categories. Receipt of competition prizes, scholarships, sponsorships, travel reimbursement, or awards does not by itself establish professional status.

### 2.11 Professional

An individual who regularly earns compensation from dance teaching, coaching, adjudicating, performing, choreographing, or other dance services, or who has declared professional status under WSF rules.

### 2.12 Pro/Am Entry

An entry consisting of one amateur athlete and one professional partner. Unless an event circular provides otherwise, only the amateur athlete is competitively judged for placement and awards.

### 2.13 Syllabus Event

An event restricted to published figures, actions, timing, and material from the applicable syllabus level or approved syllabus list.

### 2.14 Open Event

An event not restricted to syllabus figures, subject to timing, safety, lift/drop, category, and Salsa-character requirements.

### 2.15 Lift

An action in which one partner supports or assists the other so that both of the assisted partner's feet are off the floor and the assisting partner bears meaningful weight. Assisted jumps may be treated as lifts when weight support, elevation, or travel creates lift-like risk or visual effect.

### 2.16 Drop

A supported lowering, lean, fall, dip, or descent in which a partner's center of mass is taken below normal standing level while maintaining support or control. A drop does not become a lift merely because one foot briefly leaves the floor unless both feet leave the floor with weight support.

### 2.17 Aerial

A lift, toss, assisted jump, or acrobatic movement in which the elevated athlete's body leaves ordinary floor support in a manner requiring catch, support, or landing control.

### 2.18 Recognizable Salsa Content

Movement, timing, partnering, shines, body action, musical interpretation, and choreographic vocabulary that a qualified WSF Salsa adjudicator can identify as Salsa-based. For percentage requirements, content is measured by adjudicated routine time unless the rule states otherwise.

### 2.19 Electronic Scoring System

A WSF-approved or organizer-approved system that authenticates officials, records marks, preserves audit trails, calculates results, and permits verification by the Scrutineer and Chairman of Judges.

### 2.20 Official Record

The certified marks, calculations, penalties, protests, rulings, and result documents retained for a sanctioned event, whether maintained on paper, electronically, or both.

# 3. Competition Framework

### 3.1 Mandatory Technical Rules

These technical rules are mandatory for WSF sanctioned Salsa events. Other organizers are encouraged to adopt them to promote uniformity.

### 3.2 Competition Formats

**a)** Salsa Championship Singles School Figure Competitions.

**b)** Salsa Undisputed Championship Couple Competitions.

**c)** Salsa Cabaret Championship Couple Competitions.

**d)** Salsa Shine Championship Single Competitions.

**e)** Salsa Team Championship Competitions.

**f)** Salsa Pro/Am Championship Competitions.

**g)** Any additional format approved and published by WSF.

### 3.3 Judging System

The Skating System shall be used for placement-based events unless the event circular expressly identifies another WSF-approved system. The judging system determines how marks are tabulated; it does not replace the adjudication standards in Section 8.

### 3.4 Rounds and Advancement

The Chairman of Judges shall determine heats, recalls, and advancement numbers in consultation with the Organizer and Scrutineer. Competitors in the same round shall receive substantially equal competitive opportunity unless the format requires individual routines or staggered appearances.

### 3.5 Minimum and Maximum Entries

An organizer may combine or cancel categories with insufficient entries when the possibility is published in advance. A single uncontested entry may be awarded a placement only if it completes the required performance and is not disqualified.

### 3.6 Finals

A final should normally consist of six entries. The Chairman may authorize a different number for operational, fairness, tie, floor-safety, or event-design reasons. If a tie in recalls creates more qualified finalists than intended, the Chairman shall decide whether to expand the final, conduct an additional round, or apply a published recall-tie procedure.

### 3.7 Number of Adjudicators

**a)** Adjudicating panels shall contain an odd number of qualified judges.

**b)** Regional or larger titled championships, protected competitions, and international competitions should use five to seven judges.

**c)** Local titled championships, regional non-titled competitions, formation/team competitions, and special events should use three to five judges unless WSF approves otherwise.

**d)** No event may proceed with fewer than three judges unless WSF expressly authorizes an emergency exception.

### 3.8 Timing Standard

WSF recognizes On1 and On2 timing as standard for restricted and Undisputed Salsa competitions. Competitors may be judged on the consistency, clarity, and musical correctness of the timing they present. Cabaret, Shine, and Team events may use broader timing choices subject to Salsa-content, safety, and category rules.

### 3.9 Role Language

Rules shall use Leader and Follower unless a rule specifically requires a sex-based, gender-based, age-based, or event-specific distinction. Legacy references to man, lady, male, or female should be interpreted as Leader/Follower or athlete as the context requires.

## 4. Eligibility and Competitive Classifications

### 4.1 Membership and Registration

All athletes entering WSF sanctioned events must be current WSF members or must complete membership registration through the organizer before competing. If an event includes first-time membership through entry fees, the entry materials shall state that clearly.

### 4.2 Proficiency or Material Levels

Bronze Syllabus, Silver Syllabus, Gold Syllabus, and Open identify the permitted material for an event unless WSF separately publishes athlete advancement or proficiency-status rules.

### 4.3 No Downward Classification Penalty Without Published Advancement Rules

An athlete shall not be disciplined for entering Bronze, Silver, or Gold solely because the athlete is experienced, advanced, or successful in other events, provided the athlete complies with the published material restrictions. WSF may adopt future advancement rules, but such rules must define classification status, promotion, demotion or reclassification, mixed-level couples, and effective dates.

### 4.4 Cumulative Syllabus Levels

**a)** Bronze Syllabus events permit Bronze material only.

**b)** Silver Syllabus events permit Bronze and Silver material unless the event circular expressly states Silver-only material.

**c)** Gold Syllabus events permit Bronze, Silver, and Gold material unless the event circular expressly states otherwise.

**d)** Open events are not restricted by syllabus figure list but remain subject to technical, safety, category, and timing rules.

### 4.5 Age Classification

Age classifications are determined by the age the athlete attains during the calendar year of the competition. Pee Wee: 4-5; Juvenile: 6-7; Pre-Teen I: 8-9; Pre-Teen II: 10-11; Junior I: 12-13; Junior II: 14-15; Youth I: 16-18; Youth II: 19-20; Adult A: 21-30; Adult B: 31-45; Adult C: 46-59; Adult D: 60-70; Adult E: 71-79; Adult F: 80 and above.

### 4.6 Couple Age Classification

**a)** For Pee Wee through Youth II, a couple may compete in the age division of the older partner unless a specific youth-development rule permits otherwise.

**b)** One partner may be no more than two age classifications younger in Pre-Teen, Junior, and Youth categories unless WSF approves an exception.

**c)** Adult couples compete in the age division of the younger partner unless the event circular states that adult categories are determined by the older partner, combined age, or other published method.

**d)** Organizers may combine adjacent age divisions when published in advance or required by entries, provided no athlete is forced into a materially unsafe or inappropriate category.

### 4.7 Proof of Age

WSF or the Organizer may require proof of age. Acceptable proof includes a birth certificate, passport, government-issued identification, immigration or residency document, or other reliable documentation approved by WSF. Records for minors shall be handled with appropriate privacy protections.

### 4.8 Professional, Amateur, and Pro/Am Status

Prize money, scholarships, sponsorships, or reimbursement do not by themselves change an athlete from Amateur to Professional. Professional status is determined by WSF policy, professional declaration, regular compensated dance activity, or entry into a professional category. Pro/Am rules are in Section 12.6.

## 5. Athlete Rules and Responsibilities

### 5.1 Knowledge of Rules

Athletes, partners, coaches, parents or guardians of minor athletes, and team representatives are responsible for knowing and following the WSF rules, event circular, schedule, syllabus restrictions, and posted instructions.

### 5.2 Check-In and Readiness

Athletes must check in as directed and be ready to compete at least thirty minutes before the scheduled or announced time of each event. Failure to appear when called may result in withdrawal from that round unless the Chairman permits an exception.

### 5.3 Conduct

Athletes shall behave civilly and sportsmanlike on competition premises. Athletes shall not harass, threaten, intimidate, or challenge judges regarding marks before, during, or after an event. Good-faith questions must be directed through the Organizer, Chairman, or protest procedure.

### 5.4 Eligibility Responsibility

Athletes are responsible for entering only events for which they are eligible and for dancing only permitted material in restricted events. A registration error by an organizer does not excuse an athlete from clearly published eligibility restrictions, but may be considered when determining penalties.

### 5.5 Dress and Appearance

Athletes must comply with published dress, costume, footwear, number, prop, and safety requirements. The Chairman may require alteration or removal of an item that creates a hazard, obscures required numbers, damages the floor, or violates published standards.

### 5.6 Competition Prizes, Scholarships, and Sponsorships

Athletes may accept lawful competition prizes, scholarships, sponsorships, travel support, and gifts unless prohibited by WSF policy or event circular. Sponsorship agreements that may affect eligibility or WSF status should be submitted to WSF for review before signing.

### 5.7 Rights of Athletes

Athletes are entitled to fair administration, published rules, non-arbitrary treatment, reasonable access to official results, and the hearing or review procedures established by WSF policy.

### 5.8 Records and Property

No person may remove, alter, deface, destroy, conceal, or interfere with official scorecards, electronic scoring records, master sheets, result reports, or protest records. Violations may result in discipline.

# 6. Rules for Organizers

### 6.1 Sanction Requirement

A competition, championship, exhibition with competitive ranking, clinic contest, benefit event, or other activity using WSF sanction or WSF competitive status must be approved by WSF using the current sanction process.

### 6.2 Organizer Responsibilities

**a)** Conduct the event according to this Rulebook and approved event circular.

**b)** Use qualified officials and ensure officials understand the event format.

**c)** Publish categories, dances, age divisions, proficiency or material levels, rules departures, syllabus lists, dress requirements, music requirements, and entry deadlines.

**d)** Provide a safe floor, appropriate medical and emergency plan, insurance compliance, and reasonable athlete welfare measures.

**e)** Provide adequate schedule, check-in, warm-up, rehearsal, music, sound, and scrutineering systems.

**f)** Retain official records and submit required reports, fees, membership materials, and financial statements to WSF by the applicable deadline.

### 6.3 Publication Requirements

Entry forms and event materials shall include WSF sanction language, release/waiver language required by WSF, acknowledgement of WSF administrative procedures for complaints/hearings/appeals, and a clear statement of any special rules or approved departures.

### 6.4 Special Rules and Departures

No special rule may contradict core WSF safety, eligibility, judging, or integrity requirements unless WSF expressly approves the departure in writing. Approved departures must be published before entries close whenever practical.

### 6.5 Officials List

Organizers shall submit or publish the proposed adjudicators and key officials according to WSF deadlines. WSF may require changes to the panel for qualification, balance, conflict, or integrity reasons.

### 6.6 Medical and Safety Plan

Organizers shall have a documented plan for medical incidents, floor hazards, music or power failure, evacuation, minor-athlete welfare, and emergency communication. At minimum, a responsible official shall know who may stop dancing and how medical help will be summoned.

### 6.7 Results Publication

Results shall not be published as official until reviewed by the Scrutineer and certified by the Chairman of Judges. Published results should identify category, round, final placements, penalties affecting placements, and whether marks are available for inspection.

### 6.8 Record Retention

Unless WSF policy requires a longer period, organizers shall retain official marks, scrutineering reports, electronic audit logs, penalties, protest records, and corrected-result notices for at least one year after the competition.

# 7. Officials, Ethics, and Conflicts of Interest

### 7.1 Officials Covered

This section applies to judges, Chairmen of Judges, Scrutineers, Invigilators, MCs when performing official functions, music directors, deck captains, registrars, and any person with authority over eligibility, marks, results, or competition conduct.

### 7.2 Official Conduct

Officials shall act with fairness, impartiality, competence, independence, and respect. Officials shall not use their position to favor or disadvantage an athlete, studio, coach, team, organizer, or commercial interest.

### 7.3 Judge Independence

Judges shall mark independently and shall not discuss athlete performance, intended marks, comparative rankings, or adjudicative impressions with other judges, spectators, coaches, athletes, or interested persons until the relevant category is completed and results are certified.

### 7.4 Conflicts of Interest

An official has a conflict when a reasonable person could question the official's impartiality because of a family, romantic, coaching, business, employment, financial, studio, team, or other significant relationship with an athlete, coach, entry, or organizer.

### 7.5 Disclosure and Recusal

**a)** Officials must disclose known conflicts to the Chairman or Organizer as soon as practicable.

**b)** The Chairman shall determine whether reassignment, recusal, panel adjustment, disclosure, or documented exception is required.

**c)** A judge should not adjudicate a current private student, regular coaching client, spouse/partner, close relative, employee/employer, or entry from a studio in which the judge has a significant ownership interest unless no reasonable alternative exists and the exception is documented.

**d)** Failure to disclose a material conflict may result in discipline and may support a post-event review if the conflict could have affected results.

### 7.6 Communication With Competitors

Officials shall avoid substantive competition-related communication with athletes, coaches, or interested persons during an event. Necessary logistical communication must be neutral and should occur through event staff where practical.

### 7.7 Chairman of Judges

The Chairman manages the judging panel, assigns or confirms judging duties, instructs judges on the event and evaluation standards, resolves immediate rule questions, receives invigilation reports, confirms penalties, and certifies results with the Scrutineer.

### 7.8 Scrutineer

The Scrutineer tabulates marks, identifies incomplete or irregular cards, prepares results, maintains calculation records, and presents results to the Chairman for verification and certification. The Scrutineer shall not alter a judge's mark except through a documented correction procedure.

### 7.9 Invigilator

The Invigilator monitors restricted syllabus and technical-material compliance, records suspected violations, warns as authorized, and reports violations to the Chairman. The Invigilator should be qualified as a WSF Salsa judge or approved technical official.

# 8. Adjudication Standards

**CORE CLARIFICATION:** The Skating System ranks marks after they are given. This section tells judges what they are evaluating before they mark.

### 8.1 Timing and Rhythm

Clear and consistent relationship to the music, including break timing, rhythmical accuracy, recovery from errors, and suitability to the category.

### 8.2 Technique

Foot placement, body action, balance, alignment, control, rotation, use of weight, efficiency, and clarity of action.

### 8.3 Partnering and Lead/Follow

Connection, communication, responsiveness, spatial awareness, role clarity, safe mechanics, and cooperative musical movement.

### 8.4 Salsa Character

Recognizable Salsa identity in timing, body action, partnering, shines, musical phrasing, flavor, and movement vocabulary.

### 8.5 Musicality

Interpretation of phrasing, accents, breaks, dynamics, structure, and energy without sacrificing timing or technical control.

### 8.6 Movement Quality

Coordination, fluidity, sharpness where appropriate, control of speed, direction, levels, and transitions.

### 8.7 Difficulty and Risk Management

Appropriate complexity, successful execution, safety, and whether difficulty enhances rather than obscures Salsa quality.

### 8.8 Presentation

Performance quality, projection, costuming integration, floorcraft, professionalism, and suitability to the event type.

### 8.9 Priority of Criteria

Timing, Salsa character, technical control, and safety are foundational. Difficulty, tricks, presentation, and choreography should enhance the performance but should not compensate for persistent timing errors, unsafe movement, or loss of Salsa identity.

### 8.10 Syllabus Event Evaluation

In syllabus events, judges should evaluate the quality of permitted material rather than rewarding the appearance of higher-level complexity. Clean Bronze danced with timing, technique, and connection may be ranked above busier material that exceeds or distorts the syllabus.

### 8.11 Cabaret, Shine, and Team Evaluation

In Cabaret, Shine, and Team events, judges may give increased weight to choreography, individual expression, synchronization, tricks, formation design, and theatrical presentation, while still evaluating timing, Salsa content, technique, musicality, and safety.

### 8.12 No Outside Reputation

Judges shall mark only the performance before them in the current dance, round, or routine. Titles, reputation, school, prior rounds, social relationships, coaching history, or expectations are not admissible judging factors.

## 9. Scrutineering, Results, and Records

### 9.1 Scorecards and Marks

Each judge shall submit a complete scorecard or authenticated electronic mark for each assigned heat or routine. In finals, no judge may tie competitors for any place unless the event format expressly permits ties.

### 9.2 Incomplete or Irregular Marks

If a scorecard or electronic submission is incomplete, impossible, duplicated, illegible, or inconsistent with the Chairman's instructions, the Scrutineer shall return it to the judge for correction before certification whenever possible. All corrections must be documented.

### 9.3 Electronic Scoring

Electronic scoring may satisfy requirements for scorecards, signatures, transmission, retention, and publication if it authenticates the official, locks or timestamps submissions, preserves an audit trail, supports correction review, and allows the Scrutineer and Chairman to verify the result.

### 9.4 Certification of Results

Results become official when the Scrutineer has completed calculation and verification, the Chairman has reviewed any irregularities or penalties, and the result is certified for publication. Announced but uncertified results are provisional.

### 9.5 Correction of Errors

**a)** A scrutineering, transcription, software, arithmetic, or publication error may be corrected after announcement.

**b)** A judge's adjudicative opinion shall not be changed after submission except to correct a documented clerical or submission error confirmed by the judge and accepted by the Chairman.

**c)** If an official result is amended, the Organizer shall publish a corrected result notice identifying the category, correction, date, and reason.

**d)** Corrections shall preserve the original record and the audit trail.

### 9.6 Inspection of Marks

Final marks and master sheets may be made available for inspection after certification, subject to WSF privacy, safety, minor-athlete, and administrative policies. Inspection does not authorize removal, alteration, or publication of non-public personal information.

## 10. Competition Procedure

### 10.1 Schedule and Calls

The Organizer shall publish a schedule and may update it during the event. Athletes are responsible for monitoring official announcements, heat sheets, deck calls, and schedule changes.

### 10.2 Late Arrival or Missed Heat

An athlete or entry not present when called may be scratched from that round. The Chairman may permit late participation only if doing so does not materially prejudice other competitors or disrupt the event.

### 10.3 Withdrawals

A withdrawal after a round begins shall be recorded. If the withdrawal affects recalls, final size, or results, the Chairman and Scrutineer shall determine the fairest administratively practical resolution under this Rulebook.

### 10.4 Heat Size and Floorcraft

The Chairman may split heats, reduce floor density, alter round structure, or order additional comparisons when floor size, entry count, age division, safety, or visibility requires it.

### 10.5 Equal Opportunity

Within a round, entries should receive substantially equivalent music length, floor time, and judging opportunity. Differences required by solo routines, staged routines, or published format rules are permissible.

### 10.6 Music Failure or External Interruption

If music, sound, lighting, floor condition, outside interference, collision caused by another entry, medical incident, or other external factor materially affects an entry's performance, the Chairman may order a restart, re-dance, partial re-dance, continuation, or no re-dance after considering fairness, safety, and whether judges have sufficient basis to mark.

### 10.7 Competitor-Caused Interruption

If an interruption is caused primarily by the athlete or entry, including missed call, costume issue, unsafe action, forgotten choreography, music submitted incorrectly, or voluntary stop, the Chairman may deny a re-dance, impose a penalty, or permit a restart only for compelling fairness or safety reasons.

### 10.8 Re-Dance Procedure

When a re-dance is ordered, the Chairman shall state whether the original performance is disregarded or whether only the affected portion is considered. Judges shall be instructed clearly before marking.

## 11. Syllabus Governance and Invigilation

### 11.1 Recognized Syllabi

WSF recognizes the official WSF Salsa Syllabus and any syllabus approved by WSF for a specific event, level, or season. An approved syllabus list should identify title, issuing body, version/date, levels, approval date, and any WSF modifications.

### 11.2 Publication of Syllabus

For every restricted syllabus event, the Organizer must publish either the applicable step list or the exact syllabus title, version, and level. Competitors shall not be penalized for failing to follow unpublished restrictions.

### 11.3 Permitted Material

Competitors in restricted syllabus events must limit figures, actions, entries, exits, styling, syncopations, and combinations to material reasonably included in the applicable syllabus level, including ordinary connecting actions and accepted variations published or recognized by WSF.

### 11.4 Invigilation Warnings and Penalties

**a)** Prior to a final, a syllabus violation should ordinarily result in a verbal warning recorded by the Invigilator or Chairman.

**b)** In a final, a material syllabus violation may result in a placement penalty, up to and including last place in that dance or routine.

**c)** Repeated, deliberate, unsafe, or advantage-seeking violations may result in disqualification.

**d)** The Chairman determines the penalty after receiving the Invigilator's report. The report should identify the entry, round, material at issue, and whether a prior warning was given.

### 11.5 Good-Faith Ambiguity

Where published syllabus language is genuinely ambiguous and the material is not unsafe, the Chairman may issue a warning or clarification rather than a placement penalty. WSF should record recurring ambiguities for future syllabus bulletins.

### 11.6 Syllabus and Proficiency Standards as Companion Documents

The Rulebook may identify permitted material by level; the Technical Syllabus should define figures, timing, holds, footwork, and accepted variations; Proficiency Standards should describe the quality expected at Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Open levels; Adjudication Standards should guide comparative ranking.

# 12. Salsa Event Technical Rules

## 12.1 General Salsa Standard

Except where a specific category allows broader interpretation, WSF Salsa competition expects recognizable Salsa timing, action, partnering, rhythm, and character. The use of styling from related Latin, Afro-Caribbean, street, theatrical, or social dance sources is permitted when it supports rather than replaces Salsa identity.

## 12.2 Singles School Figure Competitions

**a)** Singles School Figure events are individual syllabus events. Athletes may be required to dance the Leader or Follower part, or another published role format, as specified by the Organizer.

**b)** Categories are Bronze, Silver, and Gold unless WSF approves additional levels.

**c)** Music is provided by the Organizer or WSF unless the event circular states otherwise.

**d)** In preliminary and semi-final rounds, athletes may dance all together or in groups for approximately 1 minute to 1 minute 30 seconds.

**e)** In finals, athletes shall dance in a format published by the Organizer, which may include all-athlete comparison, smaller group comparison, individual comparison, or three-comparison format. The exact format must be announced before the final begins.

**f)** Only figures from the applicable syllabus level and approved syllabus list are permitted.

**g)** Costumes are permitted and encouraged subject to safety and dress rules.

## 12.3 Undisputed Championship Couple Competitions

**a)** Undisputed is a couple event judged on Salsa performance without syllabus restriction unless the event circular states otherwise.

**b)** Costumes are permitted and encouraged.

**c)** Lifts are not permitted. Drops are permitted only in Junior, Youth, and Adult categories and must be safely controlled.

**d)** On1 and On2 timing are standard. Competitors should maintain the timing choice presented unless a musical or choreographic change is clearly intentional and well controlled.

## 12.4 Cabaret Championship Couple Competitions

**a)** Cabaret is a couple routine event emphasizing choreography, theatricality, tricks, and presentation while retaining Salsa identity.

**b)** Lifts and drops are permitted only in Youth and Adult categories.

**c)** At least 75% of adjudicated routine time, excluding non-danced entrance and exit, must consist of recognizable Salsa content.

**d)** Maximum total routine time, including entrance and exit, is 3 minutes unless the event circular states a shorter limit.

**e)** Competitors must submit music in a format and by a deadline published by the Organizer. Digital files are preferred; CDs may be accepted if published.

**f)** Costumes and theatrical presentation are permitted and encouraged subject to safety rules.

## 12.5 Shine Championship Single Competitions

**a)** Shine is a solo event and shall not be divided by sex/gender unless a specific event circular creates lawful and published divisions.

**b)** Costumes are permitted and encouraged.

**c)** Preliminary rounds may include all-athlete comparison, groups of three or other manageable groupings, and final comparison. Approximate music lengths should be published.

**d)** Finalists may dance individually to their own submitted music for a minimum of 2 minutes and maximum of 2 minutes 30 seconds unless the event circular states otherwise.

**e)** Shine performances may use broader beat/style choices, but must remain substantially Salsa-based.

## 12.6 Team Championship Competitions

**a)** Teams must consist of at least three athletes and no more than sixteen athletes unless WSF approves otherwise.

**b)** Teams may include any gender combination.

**c)** Lifts and drops are permitted only in Youth and Adult categories.

**d)** At least 75% of adjudicated routine time, excluding non-danced entrance and exit, must consist of recognizable Salsa content.

**e)** Team timing, roster, substitution, rehearsal, entrance/exit, music, and dress rules in this Rulebook apply unless the event circular publishes approved alternatives.

**f)** No athlete may compete with more than one team in the same team event at the same competition unless WSF approves a specific exception.

### 12.7 Pro/Am Championship Competitions

**a)** A Pro/Am entry consists of one amateur athlete and one professional partner.

**b)** Unless otherwise published, only the amateur athlete is judged for placement, prizes, titles, and proficiency recognition. The professional partner's performance may be considered only insofar as it affects partnering, safety, lead/follow clarity, or the amateur athlete's demonstrated performance.

**c)** The professional may dance with multiple amateur athletes, provided the schedule permits and no unfair coaching, delay, or conflict results.

**d)** The amateur athlete's age and proficiency/material level determine the category unless the event circular states otherwise.

**e)** Syllabus restrictions, lift/drop rules, costume rules, timing rules, and safety rules apply according to the category entered.

**f)** A professional partner may not receive amateur placements or amateur awards in Pro/Am categories unless specifically published as a teacher award.

# 13. Music, Costume, Props, and Presentation

### 13.1 Music Submission

When entries provide music, organizers shall publish accepted formats, deadline, file naming method, backup requirements, and whether CDs are accepted. Digital audio files such as MP3 or WAV should be accepted when practical.

### 13.2 Music Suitability

Music must be suitable for the category, comply with published time limits, and be free of content that the Organizer or WSF determines is unlawful, unsafe for the event setting, or inconsistent with athlete welfare rules.

### 13.3 Costumes

Costumes are permitted and encouraged where stated. Costumes must not create a safety hazard, expose athletes contrary to published dress standards, damage the floor, interfere with numbers or judging, or include detachable elements likely to fall during performance.

### 13.4 Props

Props are prohibited unless expressly allowed by the event circular. Any allowed prop must be safe, manageable, non-damaging to the floor, and removed promptly after the routine.

### 13.5 Numbers and Identification

Competitor numbers or other identification must be worn or displayed as directed. A judge must be able to identify each entry clearly during the round.

# 14. Safety, Medical, and Restarts

### 14.1 Authority to Stop Dancing

The Chairman, Organizer, medical lead, deck captain, or other designated safety official may stop a heat or routine when immediate safety, medical, floor, sound, lighting, or welfare concerns require it. The Chairman shall determine competition consequences after the situation is stabilized.

### 14.2 Unsafe Movement

A lift, drop, aerial, trick, collision, floorcraft choice, prop, or costume element may be deemed unsafe even if the category generally permits that type of action. Unsafe execution may result in warning, penalty, disqualification, or stoppage.

### 14.3 Medical Incident

An athlete who appears injured, ill, disoriented, bleeding, or unable to continue safely may be stopped from competing until cleared by the appropriate event or medical authority. Athlete welfare takes priority over schedule and placement.

### 14.4 Minors

Events involving minors shall be administered with reasonable welfare protections, including appropriate check-in, backstage, dressing-area, photo/video, and adult-supervision practices consistent with WSF policy and local law.

### 14.5 Restart and Re-Dance Safety

No restart or re-dance shall be ordered if it would create unreasonable safety risk. A medically affected athlete may not be pressured to continue for result purposes.

# 15. Violations, Penalties, Protests, and Appeals

### 15.1 Types of Violations

Violations may include eligibility violations, syllabus/material violations, timing/category violations, lift/drop restrictions, costume or prop violations, misconduct, interference, late arrival, music submission failure, official-record interference, unsafe conduct, or breach of WSF policy.

### 15.2 Available Penalties

Depending on severity and timing, the Chairman or WSF may impose no action, clarification, warning, placement penalty, last-place penalty for a dance or routine, loss of recall, disqualification, removal from venue, suspension, loss of title or prize, corrected result, or referral for discipline.

### 15.3 Penalty Principles

Penalties should be proportionate, consistent, documented, and connected to competitive advantage, safety risk, intent, repetition, and notice. Ordinary judging opinion is not a penalty and is not protestable merely because a competitor disagrees with the placement.

### 15.4 Protests

**a)** A protest may challenge eligibility, rule application, syllabus/material violation, calculation, official error, unsafe conduct, or other administrable matter.

**b)** A protest may not challenge a judge's subjective ranking or comparative opinion absent fraud, bias, conflict, corruption, or rules violation.

**c)** Protests must be filed by the athlete, coach, team representative, or other person granted standing by the event circular.

**d)** Unless the event circular states otherwise, protests concerning matters known during the event must be filed as soon as practicable and before the affected result is certified when possible.

**e)** The Chairman may resolve protests necessary to continue the competition. Post-event protests shall follow WSF administrative procedures.

### 15.5 Appeals and Administrative Procedures

WSF complaint, hearing, and appeal procedures apply where available. The requirement to use WSF administrative procedures before litigation or arbitration does not eliminate the need for immediate competition rulings, but it preserves orderly review after the event.

### 15.6 Documentation

Warnings, penalties, recusals, irregular marks, protests, corrections, restarts, and disqualifications should be documented in the official record with enough detail to permit later review.

# Appendix A. Skating System of Judging

### A.1 Preliminary Rounds

In preliminary and recall rounds, each judge votes for the number of entries requested by the Chairman. Entries receiving the required number of recalls advance according to the Skating System and the Chairman's instructions.

### A.2 Final Rounds

In final rounds, each judge places all entries in order of merit. The judge marks first place as 1, second as 2, third as 3, and so on. Judges may not tie entries unless the event format expressly permits ties.

### A.3 Majority Principle

The winner of a dance is the entry placed first by an absolute majority of judges. Second place is allocated to the entry with an absolute majority of second-or-higher marks, and remaining places are allocated by the same principle.

### A.4 Equal Majorities

If more than one entry has a majority for the same place under review, the larger majority prevails. If the majorities are equal, the lower total of the marks forming that majority prevails.

### A.5 No Majority

If no entry has the required majority for the place under review, the calculation expands to include the next lower place and continues until a majority is found.

### A.6 Multiple Dances or Components

When an event includes multiple dances or components scored by final placements, placements are combined according to the Skating System rules adopted by WSF. If a tie remains after all applicable rules, the Organizer may order a re-dance or divide prizes as permitted by the event circular and WSF policy.

### A.7 Electronic Calculation

Electronic Skating System calculation is permitted if the Scrutineer can verify input marks, calculation method, tie resolution, and final output.

# Appendix B. Official WSF Step Lists

**DRAFTING NOTE:** The step lists below preserve the current 2026 WSF structure while updating role language. Final adoption should verify spelling, sequence, and technical definitions against the official WSF syllabus videos and any written technical syllabus.

### Bronze Syllabus

Basic Movements: Forward and Back; Guapeo

Cucaracha

Under Arm Turns: Turn from Basic; Turn from Open Break; Leader Turn from Basic; Alternating Turns - Follower First; Alternating Turns - Leader First with Change of Hands Behind Back

Cumbia Step (5th Position Breaks)

Di Le Que No (Cross Body Lead)

Enchufa

Coca Cola (Reverse Turn from CBL)

Double Enchufa (Stop and Go)

Alternating Enchufa Turns

Exhibela

Natural Top

Adios

### Silver Syllabus

Alternative Basic: Cuban Hook; Leader Head Loop; Follower Head Loop

Vacilala

Vacilense

Siete (7)
Numero Dos (Shadow Cumbias)
Dedo
Sombrero
Setenta (70)
Basic Wrap Around
Setenta Complicado
Reverse Top
Advanced Setenta

### Gold Syllabus

The Tunnel
Reverse Top and Swivels
Advanced Wrap Around
La Capa
Vuelta Por Detras
Alternating Side Runs and Breaks
Double Coca Cola with Sombreros
Rolling In Arm Combination
Around the World

### Bronze Salsa Shines

Cuban Breaks
Hops: Forward; Back
Suzie Q and Chase
The Taps
Back Walks and Rocks
Hop Taps
Cumbia Syncopations
Cross Cucarachas with Toe Heels
Kick Flicks
Heel Toe and Swivels

### Silver Salsa Shines

Cross Kick
Salsa Jazz
Perestroika
Cross Toes
Advanced Taps
Cross Jumps
Colombian Shine
Sabor
Swivels and Ripples
Muevelo

# Appendix C. Recommended Round Structure

| Entries | Recommended Structure | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Uncontested final or exhibition/proficiency evaluation | Placement only if performance is completed and eligible. |
| 2-6 | Final | May use all-on-floor or individual format by category. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 7-12 | Semi-final to final | Recall target normally six. |
| 13-24 | Quarter-final to semi-final to final | Split heats as needed for floor safety. |
| 25+ | Preliminary rounds as needed | Chairman may create additional recall rounds. |

# Appendix D. 2027 Revision Notes

Resolved Amateur/Professional prize-money contradiction by stating that prizes, scholarships, and reimbursements do not alone create Professional status.

Clarified that Bronze/Silver/Gold are material levels unless WSF separately adopts advancement/classification rules.

Added adjudication standards so judges and competitors know what is being evaluated before the Skating System is applied.

Added conflicts-of-interest disclosure and recusal rules for officials.

Limited the effect of immediate Chairman rulings while preserving post-event protest and administrative review.

Defined lift, drop, aerial, and recognizable Salsa content.

Replaced vague “anything goes” language with category-specific permissions.

Added Pro/Am technical rules.

Added electronic scoring, certification, correction, and records procedures.

Added restart, re-dance, safety stoppage, and medical incident rules.

Modernized terminology, music submission language, age rules, and role language.