

# Table Topics Contest Rules

These rules apply to all Table Topics Contests, which are conducted in English only. These rules may not be supplanted or modified, and no exceptions may be made.

## PURPOSE

To provide an opportunity to learn by observing the more proficient speakers who have benefited from their Toastmasters training.

To encourage development of impromptu and/or extemporaneous speaking skills and to recognize the best as encouragement to all.

## SELECTION SEQUENCE

Each Club in good standing may select a contestant to compete in the Area contest. An alternate should also be selected. The Area speech contest winner then proceeds to the Division contest (if applicable). The Division winner then proceeds to the District contest. Should an Area or Division contest winner be unable to participate in the next contest level, the highest placed available contestant will advance to that level.

## ELIGIBILITY

**All Toastmasters who are members in good standing, in a Club in good standing, are eligible to compete.** New, dual, or reinstated members must have dues current with Toastmasters International.

The following are ineligible to compete in any contest: incumbent International Officers and Directors; District Officers (Governor, any Lieutenant Governor, Division Governor, Area Governor, Secretary, Treasurer, or Public Relations Officer) whose terms expire June 30; International Officer and Director candidates; Immediate Past District Governors; District Officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1.

Toastmasters who are members in more than one Club and who meet all other eligibility requirements may compete in each Club Table Topics Contest in which membership in good standing is held. However, should they win more than one Table Topics

Contest, they can represent only one of the Clubs at the Area level. No contestant can compete in more than one Area Table Topics Contest, even if the two Areas are in different Divisions or different Districts.

A contestant must be a member in good standing of the Club, Area, Division, or District being represented when competing in a speech contest at the next level.

Each speaker must complete the Speaker's Certificate of Eligibility (form 1183) and submit it to the Chief Judge prior to the contest.

### **TOPICS**

**All contestants shall receive the same topic, which shall be of a general nature, and shall peak for two minutes.**

**The topic shall not require a detailed knowledge but should lead to an opinion or conclusion.**

### **GENERAL PROCEDURE**

A contest Chairman, contest Sergeant at Arms, Chief Judge, at least five Judges, two Counters, and two Timers are appointed. These appointments will be as far as is practical at Club levels, but required for Area through to District and Regional levels of this contest.

**Before the contest, contestants and the contest Sergeant at Arms are briefed on the rules by the contest Chairman. Judges, Counters, and Timers are briefed on their duties by the Chief Judge. Contestants will then draw for their speaking position with the contest Chairman.**

If a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, may be included in place of the primary contestant. When the contest Toastmaster is introduced, if not present, the primary contestant is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant. Where the primary contestant arrives and makes his present known to the contest Chairman and has all required paperwork in good order prior to the introduction, and missed the briefing, disqualification shall not occur and the primary contestant may speak in the drawn order, but waives the opportunity of a briefing.

**All contestants will speak from the same platform or area**

designated by the contest Chairman with prior knowledge of all the Judges and all the contestants. The contestants may speak from any position within the designated area and are not limited to standing at the lectern/podium.

- A lectern/podium will be available. However, the use of the lectern/podium is optional.
- If amplification is necessary, a lectern/podium fixed-mounted microphone and a portable microphone should be made available, if possible it is suggested that the fixed-mounted microphone be nondirectional. **The selection and use of a microphone is optional for each contestant.**
- **All equipment will be available for contestants to practice prior to the contest. Contestants are responsible for arranging for their preferred setup of the lectern/podium microphone and other equipment in a quiet manner before being introduced by the Toastmaster.**

**When the contest begins, all contestants except the first, shall leave the room. The topic is then read to the first contestant, who shall then speak on that topic for two minutes.**

Introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant's name twice.

There will be one minute of silence between contestants, during which the Judges will mark their ballots.

**Announcement of the contest winners is final.**

### TIMING

**Speeches shall be two minutes long. Contestants who speak less than one minute or more than two minutes 30 seconds will be disqualified.**

Time will begin with the contestant's first definite verbal or non-verbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered by the contestant, but would include any other communication such as sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.

- A **green light** will be turned on a one minute and remain on

for 30 seconds.

- An **amber light** will be turned on at one minute and 30 seconds and remain on for 30 seconds.
- A **red light** will be turned on at two minutes and remain on until the speech is concluded.

**No audible device, such as a buzzer, or other signal from the timer shall be used for the overtime period.**

<b>Green</b>	<b>1:00 minute</b>
<b>Amber</b>	<b>1:30 minutes</b>
<b>Red</b>	<b>2:00 minutes</b>

Any sightless contestant may request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing, which may be an audible device. **The contestant must provide any special device required for such signal.**

**In the event of technical failure of the signal, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.**

Prior to announcing results, the Chairman should announce if time disqualification(s) occurred, but **not** name the contestant(s) involved.

### **PROTESTS**

**Protests will be limited to Judges and contestants.** Any protest will be lodged with the Chief Judge and/or contest Chairman prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s). The contest Chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding eligibility prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.

The contest Chairman can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.

**All decisions of the Judges are final.**

### **WINNERS**

In contests with five or more participants, a third place winner (if wanted), second place winner, and first place winner will be announced.

In contests with four participants, a second place winner and first place winner will be announced.

[July 2001]

## TABLE TOPICS JUDGING GUIDELINES

Table Topics [Judge's Form](#)

### Judging Guideline Items & Points

TABLE TOPICS CONTEST -- JUDGE'S GUIDE					
	Suggested Point Values				
Judging Items	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Remarks
<b>Speech Development</b>	30	29-33	22-17	16-0	Opening, body, close, organization, smoothness
<b>Effectiveness</b>	25	24-18	17-11	10-0	Logic, directness, enthusiasm, achievement of purpose, audience response
<b>Physical</b>	15	14-11	10-6	5-0	Appearance, body language
<b>Voice</b>	15	14-11	10-6	5-0	Flexibility, volume
<b>Language</b>	15	14-11	10-6	5-0	Appropriate to speech, purpose and audience. Good grammar,

					pronunciation and word selection
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>(100 points possible)</b>				

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