



PURPOSE

To evaluate each competitor's preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the field of nail care.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to active NYS SkillsUSA members enrolled in programs with cosmetology/nail care as the occupational objective.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS

NYS SkillsUSA Contest Specific

- White dress shirt.
- Black dress slacks.
- Black socks or black or skin-tone seamless hose
- Black leather work or dress shoes.

Note: Contestants must wear their contest clothing to the contest orientation meeting. Also bring #2 pencil, resume, and safety assurance form.

RESUME REQUIREMENT

Competitors must create a one-page resume to submit at orientation.

DEVICES

Cell phones or other electronic devices not approved by the NYS Chairperson will be collected by the contest chair during the competition. Chairpersons will announce their acceptance by listing it on their standard or at the orientation meeting. In case of emergencies advisors should allow the competitors to take their phones to the contest areas.

If the competitor uses their device in a manner which compromises the integrity of the competition, the competitor's score may be penalized.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. Supplied by the competitor
 - a. Safety glasses for competitor and model
 - b. White terry towels (no holes or stains allowed)
 - c. Disposable towels for the table
 - d. Water dispenser (optional)
 - e. All items necessary to complete five sculptured acrylic nails.
Note: Dappen dishes must have covers; monomer, polymer and primer must be from the same manufacturer; two or more of the four basic acrylic colors (pink, white, clear, or natural) must be used to complete two-tone/French manicure sculpted nails
 - f. All items necessary to complete five nails with a tip and light-cured enhancement overlay. It can be a hard gel or a hybrid gel/acrylic product.
Note: Gel polish, temporary or no-light gels may not be used
 - g. Dark red crème lacquer/polish
 - h. All items allowed to complete the flat nail art application: medium choices: acrylic paints, polishes/lacquers, colored powders (acrylic and dip), gel polish, rhinestones sizes 20ss and under, glitters and dusts, and adhesives, i.e., gel topcoats/glue
Note: No pre-prepared items can be used; items are limited to those intended for use on nails. Topcoat may be used as a sealer
 - i. A written description of the nail art theme. Themes are to be typewritten, should include pictures and be contained within a plastic sleeve.
Note: Due at competition check-in. Competitor cannot have a picture or any other visual aide to reference to complete the nail art portion of contest
 - j. Portable kit organizer (to transport all items necessary for the competition)
 - k. Manicure table
 - l. lamp (optional)
 - m. electrical extension cord

***Note:* Electric files/drills are not allowed**

SCOPE OF THE COMPETITION

The competition is defined by industry standards as set by the current industry technical standards. The competition is divided into two parts: a written exam and a series of testing situations designed to assess knowledge in nail care industry standards.

KNOWLEDGE PERFORMANCE

All competitors are required to take the NYS SkillsUSA professional development test orientation.

The competition will include a written knowledge exam assessing all aspects of nail care including safety and sanitation, natural nail and foot care, and artificial nails, and a written description of nail art theme.

SKILL PERFORMANCE

The competition will include a series of testing situations including oral presentations and technical applications. The areas that will be evaluated are customer service, safety and sanitation, natural nail care, artificial nails, and nail lacquer and art application. Observations during each segment and evaluation of the finished product will be considered in the scoring.

References

Milady Standard Nail Technology Textbook, Fifth Edition: www.milady.com

Salon Fundamentals: Nail Technology: www.pivot-point.com

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

1. All competitors must bring a model for the competition.
2. Competitors are not permitted to touch their models before the competition begins or between segments.
3. Conversation between competitor and model is *limited*. *Communication with observers, judges and other competitors is prohibited during the competition.*
4. Disqualification or penalty points taken can occur for the following:
 - a. Any rule not followed, with *no* exceptions
 - b. Leaving competition area before completion of the nail care competition (applies to both competitor and model) without proper escort
 - c. Unauthorized use of a product that is not allowed or that does not appear in the above listing
 - d. Any product that appears to have been altered
5. Competitors should come prepared to do the following:
 - a. A three- to five-minute mock interview in front of the contest chair and judges. The competitors will introduce themselves and address the judges. The mock interview should include the following points: (1) Explanation of nail art theme; (2) College and/or career plans/goals following the completion of their program; (3) Identifying and explaining a personal goal.
 - b. All five fingers of the model's right hand are to be sculpted with acrylic using forms, no tips, in a two-tone/French-manicure (pink and white) technique. Two or more colors of acrylic may be used.
 - c. All five fingers of the model's left hand are to have nail tips applied and overlaid with a light-cured gel or a light-cured hybrid acrylic/gel. Any type of tip may be used.
 - d. A multiple-choice exam on all aspects of nail care.
 - e. Two coats of dark red crème lacquer/polish are to be applied to the model's right hand.
 - f. Flat nail art is to be applied to all five fingers of the model's left hand. A specific theme is to be carried through on all five fingers and in a written description. Competitors must have written and submitted a description of the theme they intend to create at the competition check-in. Themes should be typewritten; they may be decorated and must be contained in the plastic sleeve. Judging will be on the overall balance of the use of different mediums and the creative use of the mediums to support the theme, as well as your attention to detail. Once all judging is complete, props may be used to enhance art during the parade of models.

STANDARDS AND COMPETENCIES

NAIL 1.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills needed to perform safety and sanitation in a nail care situation.

- 1.1. Show safety in handling products
 - 1.1.1. Set up table to consist of items needed for the specific competition application in progress (e.g., if sculptured nail is in progress, the tip and wrap and nail art materials should not be visible during this time)
 - 1.1.2. Identify all products and solutions properly with the manufacturer's original packaging and labeling (e.g., cannot be defaced)
 - 1.1.3. Ensure that bottles and containers are securely closed after use
 - 1.1.4. Demonstrate when and how safety glasses and gloves are used
- 1.2. Perform sanitary practices
 - 1.2.1. Ensure that all implements, and files are brought to the competition cleaned, disinfected or new and are labeled as such
 - 1.2.2. Ensure that any implement or file that becomes contaminated during the competition is disposed of or cleaned and disinfected
- 1.3. Perform safe usage of implements and tools
 - 1.3.1. Verify there are no cuts on surrounding skin
 - 1.3.2. Verify there are no cuticle abrasions
- 1.4. Apply knowledge of sanitation and disinfection, how they are accomplished and how they differ
 - 1.4.1. Define sanitation and disinfection
 - 1.4.2. List and explain proper procedure for sanitation and disinfection
 - 1.4.3. Contrast sanitation and disinfection
 - 1.4.4. Describe importance of proper sanitation
 - 1.4.5. Describe importance of proper disinfection
- 1.5. Show cleanliness and organization of the working environment
 - 1.5.1. Ensure that workspace is clean and organized throughout competition
 - 1.5.2. Verify that only needed items are out on the table
 - 1.5.3. Ensure that required tools and products are accounted for and professionally organized

NAIL 2.0 — Implement skills that are needed for quality customer service in a nail care situation

- 1.1. Evaluate client needs and demonstrate listening skills
 - 1.1.1. Analyze nails
 - 1.1.2. Question client about current state of natural nails
 - 1.1.3. Question client on desired results
 - 1.1.4. Understand client's current situation versus desired situation
- 1.2. Demonstrate effective communication while talking with the client
 - 1.2.1. Develop and recommend services and products that relate to client needs
 - 1.2.2. Use a pleasant tone of voice, smile, and exude positive body language
 - 1.2.3. Be persuasive

- 1.3. Model professional behavior and a positive attitude throughout the competition
 - 1.3.1. Listen to directions
 - 1.3.2. Follow all rules
 - 1.3.3. Be punctual

NAIL 3.0 — Apply the knowledge and the skills needed to perform natural nail care in a nail care situation

- 3.1. Describe natural nail care services including a basic manicure and add-on services and results that can be obtained through these services
 - 3.1.1. Propose a service or combination of services for specific client needs
 - 3.1.2. Describe a basic manicure and additional services
 - 3.1.3. Describe the results that can be obtained through these services
- 3.2. Describe home care products and the results of their use
 - 3.2.1. Prescribe needed home care products and their purposes
 - 3.2.2. Describe the results that can be obtained by using these products

NAIL 4.0 — Apply the knowledge and skills needed to perform artificial nails services in a nail care situation

- 5.1. Build an acrylic nail
 - 5.1.1. Ensure product control; clarity/no bubbles, smile line
 - 5.1.2. Verify that the cuticle and nail groove are smooth and thin
 - 5.1.3. Identify that the contour, the highest point of nail, is in the center at the natural stress area
 - 5.1.4. Ensure that the shape and length is consistent on each finger
 - 5.1.5. Identify that the surface finish is smooth, with a high-gloss shine
- 5.2. Demonstrate proper application and blending of a nail tip
 - 5.2.1. Perform tip application (i.e., fit and alignment)
 - 5.2.2. Perform tip blending
 - 5.2.3. Perform product control (e.g., no adhesive seepage)

- 5.2.4. Perform tool control (i.e., no excessive filing on skin or natural nail)
- 5.3. Describe the proper application of a nail wrap and resin
 - 5.3.1. Differentiate types of wrap materials and describe proper application
 - 5.3.2. Describe the proper application of resin
- 5.4. Demonstrate application of a light-cured nail enhancement
 - 5.4.1. Define a light-cured enhancement
 - 5.4.2. Differentiate light-cured enhancement from other material used to create artificial nails
 - 5.4.3. Describe benefits of light-cured enhancement
 - 5.4.4. Demonstrate application of light-cured enhancement (e.g., cover nail completely, no excess gel in cuticle area)
 - 5.4.5. Identify that the contour, the highest point of nail, is in the center at the natural stress area
 - 5.4.6. Ensure that the shape and length is consistent on each finger
 - 5.4.7. Ensure that surface finish is smooth, with a high-gloss shine
- 5.5. Prepare or describe preparation of a natural nail for any type of artificial enhancement
 - 5.5.1. List steps for properly preparing a natural nail for an artificial enhancement
 - 5.5.2. Identify importance of proper preparation
- 5.6. Demonstrate proper finishing techniques for any type of artificial enhancements
 - 5.6.1. List steps to finish an artificial nail
 - 5.6.2. Understand and contrast different file grits
 - 5.6.3. Describe the proper contour for the strongest artificial nail
- 5.7. Describe the varied materials used to create artificial nails
 - 5.7.1. Compare and contrast acrylic nails, wrap systems and light-cured enhancements
- 5.8. Describe the different methods of creating artificial nails
 - 5.8.1. Compare and contrast overlays, tip with overlays, and sculpting methods of creating artificial nails
- 5.9. Describe maintenance required for artificial nails
 - 5.9.1. Describe maintenance for acrylic nails
 - 5.9.2. Describe maintenance for wrap system nails
 - 5.9.3. Describe maintenance for light-cured enhancements nails

NAIL 6.0 — Implement the knowledge and skills needed to perform nail lacquer and art application in a nail care situation

- 6.1. Show proper application of nail lacquer, including any necessary cleanup
 - 6.1.1. Ensure neatness, coverage, evenness, and cuticle involvement
- 6.2. Show proper application of flat nail art
 - 6.2.1. Implement creativity; theme, follow-through of theme, artist expression, and color coordination
 - 6.2.2. Perform at the proper level of difficulty and complexity of design
 - 6.2.3. Ensure precision, neatness, and clarity of lines
- 6.3. Describe the theme you intend to create with nail art in one to two written paragraphs (grammar, creativity and language will be evaluated)



Championships for 2025

Special Instructions to Contestants

Date submitted: 2/27/26

Contest Name Nail Care

Chairperson: Kysha Daniels

List any new special instructions for the contestants that are not listed or might be changed from the New York SkillsUSA Technical Standards for 2025. DO NOT list requirements already printed in the NYS standards.

Only Special Instructions received by March 1, 2026 will be posted on the website!!!

Deleted Materials & Supplies

Time Breakdown:

Acrylic Pink & White Application (models right hand) 60 minutes

Tips with gel cured overlay (models left hand) 60 minutes

Red Lacquer Polish Application (models right hand) 30 minutes

Nail art application (models left hand) 60 minutes