

VANDERBURGH COUNTY FAIR TALENT CONTEST

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Vocal & Instrumental: Friday, July 24, 2026 7:00p.m. Auditorium
Dance, Tumbling & Novelty: Saturday, July 25, 2026 1:00p.m. Auditorium

Pre-registration is required. Entry forms, including payment links, are available at www.vanderburghcountyfair.com under Events > Contests. **Entry deadline: Friday, July 10, 2026.** Entry fee: \$10 per person, per act, with a maximum of \$100 for groups of 10 or more. Please review all rules and regulations; failure to comply may result in disqualification.

This is not a 4-H event; 4-H participation is not required. Contestants must be Indiana residents. To be eligible for placements, acts must be from Vanderburgh Co. or have a majority of members from Vanderburgh Co. Acts from neighboring counties whose fair does not host a talent contest may enter and perform for judges' feedback and possible sanction to compete at the Indiana State Fair Talent Contest, pending state approval. Contact Chairpersons for details.

DIVISIONS

Contestants may compete in one solo and/or one group act.

Junior – Ages 12 and under. Solo & Group. Solo participants who turn 13 in 2026 must compete in the Senior Division. For group acts, participants who are 13 may compete in Junior if the majority of the group is 12 or under. No one over 14 is allowed in the Junior Division.

Senior – Ages 13–21. Solo & Group.

Exhibition – For those ineligible due to age, residency, or other reasons, or for those who wish to perform without being judged. Exhibition acts are not eligible for placements or prizes.

CATEGORIES

Categories will be divided by solo male, solo female, or group (2+ performers, male or female).

A) VOCAL – Vocal performance with instrumental accompaniment (must remain purely supportive). Background vocals on CD should be minimal. No props allowed.

B) INSTRUMENTAL – Instrumental performance without vocal utterance. Accompaniment is allowed but must be purely supportive. No same-type instruments for accompaniment.

C) DANCE – Dance performance (ballet, pointe, tap, jazz, lyrical, modern, hip-hop, step). Dance-related acrobatic/tumbling skills allowed (2 per solo, 4 per group). Props must be part of the costume (e.g., hat, cane, umbrella).

D) CLOGGING – Clogging performance (freestyle, artistic, traditional, hoedown, precision). Tumbling is not allowed. Props must be part of the costume.

E) TUMBLING/GYMNASTICS – Floor routines with more than two acrobatic/tumbling skills. Must provide own mats & runners. Props/scenery allowed. No spotters.

F) NOVELTY – For acts that don't fit other categories, such as skits, lip sync, comedy, magic, mime, juggling, hula hoop, reenactment, jump rope, or theatrical performance. Props allowed.

*If fewer than three acts are entered in a category, they may be combined with another category.

RULES

1. Timing & Setup: Contestants have 2 minutes to set up props, instruments, mats, etc. Performance time begins when music starts (if used) or at the first movement or vocal utterance. **Solo acts: 2 minutes / Group acts: 2.5 minutes / Bands: 5 minutes.** Acts exceeding the time limit incur 10-point deduction.

2. Prohibited Items & Acts: No cheerleading, baton twirling, or acts using batons, machetes, or sharp instruments. Fire, dry ice, fog, straw, or confetti are not allowed on stage.

3. Props, Costumes, & Equipment: Props are hand-carried items and are not part of the costume (e.g., hats, canes, umbrellas, or similar wearable items are part of the costume). All props and equipment must be removed promptly from the stage following the performance. Microphones and a piano will be provided.

4. Accompaniment: If used, contestants must provide their own accompanist (live or recorded).

5. Sound & Music: A sound system and operator will be provided. Instrumentalists may bring their own amplifier. Music must be on either a CD (one high-quality song per CD, labeled) or a mobile device. A 1/8-inch (3.5mm) plug will be available for connection. Contestants must provide their own device operator. Devices may need to be removed from cases. Contestants are responsible for compatibility and playback; errors may result in a deduction. All acts must use the provided lighting.

6. Liability: Contestants are responsible for their costumes, props, belongings, and equipment. The fair is not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

7. Judging & Concerns: All participants will receive recognition; official placements and State Fair selections follow judging. The decisions are final. Written complaints may be submitted to Vanderburgh County Fair Assoc., P.O. Box 58, Inglefield, IN 47618, by July 27, 2026. Unsportsmanlike conduct, including verbal complaints, may result in disqualification and ineligibility the following year.

8. State Fair Representation: Vanderburgh County may send one act per category in Junior and Senior Divisions to the Indiana State Fair Talent Contest. A second act may advance if scores qualify. Performers winning both solo and group may advance in both. Contestants must disclose prior qualification in another county. Winners declining participation must notify a Chairperson by noon Sunday, July 26, 2026. The next eligible act may be contacted.

9. Fair Grounds Entry: Contestants and families are responsible for Fair Grounds entry fees.

***Chairpersons will interpret rules and address unforeseen situations; decisions are final.**