

U.S. Pet Pro Classic 2026 Contest Rules and Regulations

Table of Contents

Responsibility to Read the Rules and Check-in	4
Contestants' Responsibility To Read The Rules	4
Contestant Check-in	4
Regular and Special Classes	4
Regular Competition Structure	4
Two-Tiered Competition	4
Divisions	5
Division 1: U.S. Pet Styling Championship Classes	5
Division 2: Yellow Rose of Texas Championship Classes	5
Regular Classes	5
Regular Class 1: Poodles (Purebred, All Sizes & Natural Colors)	5
Regular Class 2: Sporting Breeds (Spaniels and Setters)	6
Regular Class 3: Wire-coated Breeds (Handstripped Only)	6
Regular Class 4: All Other Purebreds (Scissored Only)	6
GroomTeam USA Breeds by Class and Time Allowed	7
Special Competition Structure	7
Special Classes	7
Special Class 1: U.S. Open & Asian Styles Championship	7
Special Class 2: U.S. Creative Styling Championship	8
General Rules and Regulations: Entire Competition	10

Trade Show Floor Access is Included	10
Eligibility of Contestants	10
Eligibility of Dogs & Disqualifications	10
Reasons for Contestant Disqualification/Dismissal	11
Withholding Awards	12
Contest Ring-Specific Rules and Regulations	12
Proper Animal Care	12
Access to the Contest Ring, Setup, and Pre-Judging	12
No Refunds for Absent, Disqualified, or Ineligible Entries	12
Attire	12
Permitted Equipment	13
Permitted Grooming and Styling Methods	13
Personal Devices and Visual Aids	13
Food, Beverages, and Smoking	13
Conversations in the Contest Ring	14
Preparation of Animals	14
Pre-judging	14
Dyeing Versus Color Enhancing	14
Handstripped Entries, All Classes	14
Permitted Animal Accessories	15
Time Limits	15
Judges Critiques	15
Judges Consultant	15
Disqualification	15
Conference Management Reserved Rights	16
Grievances	16
Contestant Liability	16

Personal and Animal Liabilities	16
Dyes and Colors	17
Bathing and Drying Facilities	17
Bathing and Preparation Facilities	17
Bathing/Preparation Facility Schedule	17
Bathing and Preparation Facility Hours of Operation	17
Pet Occupancy and Holding Facility	18
Sportsmanship	18
Questions, Clarifications, Interpretations	19
Suggestion/Grievance Form	20

Responsibility to Read the Rules and Check-in

Contestants' Responsibility To Read The Rules

It is each contestant's responsibility to access, read, and comply with the official U.S. Pet Pro Classic Contest Rules and Regulations. With the exception of rules that pertain specifically to regular GroomTeam sanctioned classes (i.e. divisional and individual class rules), special class contestants must abide by applicable rules and regulations contained herein. Do not rely on anyone else's interpretation, as failure to abide by the rules could result in dismissal or disqualification from competition. Questions regarding rules should be directed to conference management prior to arrival on site or to the Ring Steward at the conference.

Contestant Check-in

Check-in at Designated Times is Mandatory for All Contestants in All Contests. Check-in Times are typically 30 MINUTES PRIOR TO PRE-JUDGING. Please **see the Contest Schedule at www.uspetproclassic.com for all required check-in times.** All styling contestants must check-in ringside with the Ring Steward. **No contestant will be allowed to compete without checking-in prior to their class(es) of competition.** All instructions given by U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management, the Ring Steward, Contest Coordinators, or their designated representatives **MUST** be strictly adhered to. **Failure to comply will result in disqualification from competition with no refunds given.**

Regular and Special Classes

The U.S. Pet Pro Classic competition is a 3 day series that comprises Regular and Special Classes. The Regular Classes are a series of 4 U.S. Pet Pro Classic competition classes. There are two Divisions within the Regular Classes, Open Division and Yellow Rose of Texas Division. First place winners in each Division are eligible to compete in the U.S. Pet Pro Classic Best Pet Stylist in Show competition for their respective Division. Special Classes have specialized rules that may deviate or add to Division 1 rules. Competitors entered in Special Class competitions are NOT eligible for either the Best Pet Stylist In Show or Yellow Rose competitions.

Regular Competition Structure

Two-Tiered Competition

The U.S. Pet Pro Classic is a two-tiered competition. There are **2 Divisions** (Open and Yellow Rose of Texas), with **4 Classes** in each division. The divisions are designed to allow pet stylists to compete with professionals who have similar competitive experience.

Divisions

Division 1: U.S. Pet Styling Championship Classes

Division 1 classes are 'Open' to all contestants who wish to enter.

GroomTeam Members, Owners, Handlers, or Breeders who have "finished a Champion(s)" in their specific breed(s), instructors, pet styling contest judges, and certifiers must compete in the Open competition.

1st Place class winners from this division compete for the honor of becoming this year's Best Pet Stylist in Show, Open Division, and Best All Around Pet Stylist in Show.

Division 2: Yellow Rose of Texas Championship Classes

Division 2 classes are for Entry- and Intermediate-level contestants only.

The Yellow Rose of Texas Division is limited to contestants who have never won more than:

- Six first placements, and a
- Best Pet Stylist In Show, or equivalent, or Best All Around Pet Stylist In Show, or equivalent, from any division at any GroomTeam sanctioned competition.

1st Place class winners in this division compete for the honor of becoming this year's Best Pet Stylist in Show, Yellow Rose of Texas Division.

Note: Should any class in either of the above stated divisions have less than two entries, U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management will determine whether the contestant may compete within the Division or must move to another Division, if eligible. Contestants may elect to withdraw. Contestants may not compete in multiple divisions, unless the division change is mandated by U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management.

Regular Classes

Unless stated otherwise, contestants' styles must represent breed standards and should be trimmed per acceptable AKC breed profiles (i.e. the finished trim should present the illusion of correct breed expression, proportions, substance, balance, symmetry, and angulation, as well as be free of mats, pet styling flaws, or injuries).

Measurement of dogs: Taken from the floor to the highest point of the withers.

Regular Class 1: Poodles (Purebred, All Sizes & Natural Colors)

Allotted Time:

- 11" and under: 1 hour and 30 minutes
- Over 11", up to and including 17": 1 hour and 45 minutes
- Over 17", up to and including 23": 2 hours
- Over 23", 2 hours and 15 minutes

Acceptable Breeds: All sizes, natural colors of purebred Poodles. (Purebred, Toys, Miniatures, and Standards) Coats must be a natural color. If artificial colors (e.g. dyes, chalks, etc.) are used, they may enhance the natural color, but not change the natural color.

Poodle Styling: All pet and show poodle styles are acceptable provided they respect the breed profile as set forth by the AKC standard and adhere as follows:

Feet must be shaved, and may be shaved prior to competition start time. NO extra time will be permitted if not completed prior to class start.

For sanitary purposes, stomach and anal areas may be trimmed prior to class start.

Face must be shaved during the competition time frame.

Small mustache or goatees are permitted but may NOT be executed prior to class start.

Scissored face styles such as Bichon or other scissored type faces are prohibited.

Show topknots may be pre-banded, including hair extensions prior to the start of the class, spray up products are prohibited prior to the start of the class.

Regular Class 2: Sporting Breeds (Spaniels and Setters)

Allotted Time: 2 hours

Acceptable Breeds: Spaniels and Setters (see specific breed list). Coats must be a natural color. If artificial colors (e.g. dyes, chalks, etc.) are used, they may enhance the natural color, but not change the natural color. Coats must be a natural color. If artificial colors (e.g. dyes, chalks, etc.) are used, they may enhance the natural color, but not change the natural color.

Styling: Must be groomed and styled to AKC breed profile as presented in the conformation show ring. For sanitary purposes, stomach and anal areas may be trimmed prior to class start. Sporting coats must be carded and/or handstripped. Clippers are only permissible as permitted in the AKC conformation show ring.

Regular Class 3: Wire-coated Breeds (Handstripped Only)

Allotted Time: See specific breed list

Acceptable Breeds: See specific breed list. Coats must be a natural color. If artificial colors (e.g. dyes, chalks, etc.) are used, they may enhance the natural color, but not change the natural color.

Styling: Must be groomed to AKC breed profile as presented in the conformation ring. For sanitary purposes, stomach and anal areas may be trimmed prior to class start. Wire-Coats must be hand-stripped. Clippers are only permissible as permitted in the conformation show ring.

Regular Class 4: All Other Purebreds (Scissored Only)

Allotted Time: See specific breed list.

Acceptable Breeds: See specific breed list. Coats must be a natural color. If artificial colors (e.g. dyes, chalks, etc.) are used, they may enhance the natural color, but not change the natural color.

Styling: Must be groomed to AKC breed profile as presented in the conformation ring. For sanitary purposes, stomach and anal areas may be trimmed prior to class start

GroomTeam USA Breeds by Class and Time Allowed

Please see the GroomTeam USA official website [HERE](#) for current breeds by class and time allowed.

Under the main navigation bar option entitled "Competitors" select "Breeds by Class and Time Allowed".

Special Competition Structure

The U.S. Pet Pro Classic is host to special classes that are NOT eligible for GroomTeam Points. Special classes have only one division per class and are open to all contestants. The following special classes will be hosted at this year's U.S. Pet Pro Classic.

Special Classes

Special Class 1: U.S. Open & Asian Styles Championship

Allotted Time: 1.5 Hours: under 17" at the withers; 2 Hours, 17" & over at the withers. Poodles cannot have shaved feet and/or faces. Shaved faces with mustaches and/or goatees are also excluded. No additional time is allowed for handstripped entries.

Acceptable Breeds: Any mixed breed or purebred is eligible for this class. However, trims for purebreds must be uncharacteristic of their breed profiles. The finished trim should create the appearance of a dissimilar purebred, a mixed breed or an asian trim.

Examples:

Acceptable: Poodle groomed to appear as a Bedlington Terrier or in Asian style.

Unacceptable: Lakeland Terrier styled as a Lakeland Terrier or similar appearing breed.

Styling: Overall execution of the trim and its suitability to the dog's conformation, character and personality. For sanitary purposes, stomach and anal areas may be trimmed prior to class start. Execution of the trim is based on the quality of styling techniques and methods to include overall balance, symmetry, angulation and smoothness of the trim. Suitability of the trim is based on adaption of the trim to fit the dog's conformation, expression, character and personality. If a purebred dog is trimmed in the image of a different breed (e.g. trimming a Poodle to look like a Bedlington Terrier), then the intended breed image and standard may be taken into consideration by the Judge.

Asian Fusion trims must be a balance of inventive asian fusion pet styles combined with non-conventional and fun American pet styles.

Allotted Time: 1.5 Hours: under 17" at the withers; 2 Hours, 17" & over at the withers. No additional time is allowed for handstripped entries

Color/Accessories: Color, sparkle, bows and other similar embellishments are acceptable. However, they may NOT be so excessive as to create the illusion of a "Creative" trim or to conceal the pattern. **If color is applied to the dog's coat, it must be temporary (e.g.: chalks, non-permanent dyes or sprays, blow pens, etc.)**

— NOT a permanent color. With the exception of specific coloring mediums (i.e. blow pens, markers, crayons, etc.), all other coloring (temporary dyes, sprays, airbrushing, chalks, etc.) **MUST** be completed prior to entering the ring to avoid damaging hotel/convention center property and equipment!

Props are NOT allowed. Judging is based on the overall execution and suitability of the trim to include the quality of the styling techniques and methods and the overall balance and smoothness of the trim. Suitability of the trim is based on adaptation of the trim to fit the dog's expression, character and personality. If a purebred dog, the trim should be uncharacteristic of its breed profile.

Special Class 2: U.S. Creative Styling Championship

The U.S. Pet Pro Classic is proud to bring you an extraordinary U.S. Creative Styling Championship competition. Contestants are encouraged to let their imaginations go WILD! Create "Your Favorite Theme" ...now add dogs costumed and trimmed in creative designs that represent recreations of your theme. Throw in props, music, video, scenery and an MC and you've got this year's over-the-top, fun and most imaginative U.S. Creative Pet Styling Championship competition ever! The U.S. Creative Design Class is an OPEN competition. One entry will be accepted per person.

Allotted Time: 1 hour for in-ring setup (staging and props) and finishing touches. Finishing touches are defined as last minute touch-up styling (smoothing out the trim); addition of enhancements such as costumes, accessories and decorations; and color touch-up. Permanent colors must be applied prior to arrival at the show. Touch-up color products used on-site cannot be permanent and/or damaging to conference property, facilities or styling tables.

Acceptable Breeds: One or more purebred or mixed breed dogs may be used as part of each entry. However only one dog will be judged as the contestant's entry. Any other dog(s) used to support the contestant's entry will be viewed and judged as part of the props and overall theme.

In-Ring Styling & Coloring: Other time allowed for in-ring finishing of designs, entries used for the U. S. Creative Pet Styling competition **must be colored, patterns pre-set, styled, and costumed prior to presentation** of their designs. Other than [on-site touch-up color] **NO DOGS ARE ALLOWED TO BE COLORED ON-SITE (CONVENTION CENTER PROPERTY, BATHING VANS, DRYING AND PREPARATORY ROOMS, OR HOTEL PROPERTY)**. For sanitary purposes, stomach and anal areas may be trimmed prior to class start. All supporting props and decorations must be set-up and ready to be displayed by the designated start of judging.

Contestants are encouraged to let their imaginations "go wild". Themes may be recreated from the contestant's favorite character, song, cartoon, movie, etc. and performed following class end. However, all themes must be in good taste, at the discretion of U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management or their designated representatives, and presented with decorum.

Color/Accessories: Color, sparkle, bows and other similar embellishments are acceptable. If color is applied to the pet(s)' coat, it may be temporary or permanent, but **ALL PRODUCTS MUST BE SAFE COMFORTABLE FOR USE ON ANIMALS**. Judging is based on the overall execution and suitability of the trim to include the quality of the styling techniques and methods and the overall balance and smoothness of the trim. Suitability of the trim is based on adaptation of the trim to fit the dog's expression, character, personality, and the theme of the presentation. If a purebred dog, the trim should be uncharacteristic of its breed profile.

Additional rules, regulations, policies, and procedures:

1. Each contestant is assigned a designated 6' x 6' presentation area. All props, decorations, scenery, supporting dogs, and assistants must be confined to this area. Backdrop props must be pre-assembled and able to be easily set-up and removed at the end of the event.
2. Props, decorations, scenery, costumes, make-up and creative designs must be a re-creation and presentation of the theme selected by the contestant. The design of the dog in the leading role must be the "Focal Point" of the presentation and all supporting dogs and cast members (assistants), props, and audiovisual must enhance the main theme. Cast members (assistants) must not exceed 2 individuals and must also represent the theme.
3. **Audiovisual requests** or materials to support your presentation **MUST** be received by **no later than 90 calendar days before the first day of the conference**, and are subject to approval by U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management.
4. In addition to the required to check-in with the contest ring-steward, **U.S. Creative Styling Championship contestants must also be present for any special 'Rehearsals' that may be required.** Check with the Ring Steward for the location of the U.S. Creative Styling Championship Orientation and Rehearsals (also check the contest schedule for any required rehearsals).
5. **Winners will be determined by (1)** the originality & creativity of the design & theme; **(2)** the quality of the styling techniques; and **(3)** the quality & harmony of the final presentation (props & decorations).
6. A **'People's Choice'** Award will be presented to the most popular presentation and design as determined by audience applause.
7. **Once the judging is completed**, contestants and their creative designs will be spot-lighted and on display for approximately one half (1/2) hour following the award presentations. We request that contestants take this into consideration and avoid props or decorations that might become uncomfortable for the animals or will not allow the animal to be exercised.
8. **Each entry must be an original design and contestants must name their designs.** Contestants may utilize props, costumes, decorations, and finishing products to enhance their designs. However, they must not obstruct or interfere with the presentation or the Judges' view of the creative trim. Creative Styling Artists must supply and provide a sign entitling their design. No product, decoration, accessory, or prop is permitted that would be uncomfortable for the animal or presents a danger to the animal's health, safety, or well-being.
9. **NOTICE! THE U. S. CREATIVE PET STYLING CHAMPIONSHIP IS AN EXTREME, OVER THE TOP CREATIVE STYLING COMPETITION.** Don't be afraid to go crazy with hair designs, hair extensions, weaves, color, costumes, make-up or props worn or used by the dog or presenter. **However, remember ALL PROPS, COSTUMES, COSMETICS, AND COLOR MUST BE SAFE AND COMFORTABLE FOR ANIMALS.** Costumes for both presenter(s) and pets must be in good taste and not offensive.

General Rules and Regulations: Entire Competition

Trade Show Floor Access is Included

1. All registered contestants receive trade show floor access for all 3 days (Saturday, Sunday, Monday). Trade show floor access includes admittance to the trade show, platform demonstrations, contest viewing, and eligibility for door prize drawings with a door prize form validated by the Ring Steward. Seminars, Add-on Workshops, and Bundles are **NOT** included with Trade show floor only access. Contestants entering three (3) or more grooming classes are additionally allowed 1 assistant, who will receive the same trade show floor access as described above.

Eligibility of Contestants

1. Competition is open to all interested parties.
2. With the exception of contestants with speaker assignments at the conference, no one employed by Conference Management or involved in the production of the conference may enter.
3. Contest judges are excluded from Regular and Special Class competition.
4. Speakers with assignments at the conference may not enter under any judge if their presence or the presence of their dogs might give the impression of an unfair competitive advantage. In addition, speakers with assignments at the conference who choose to compete must refrain from socializing with judges; i.e. dining, drinking, rooming, etc. and must comply with all other conference rules.
5. Employees, students, relatives, or others who have engaged in a vested business relationship **within the past 4 months with any judge may not enter under that judge. Please check the judging assignments prior to entering the competition.**
6. Contestants should be cognizant of the perception other contestants and spectators have of interpersonal relationships between judges and Contestants. Contestants must refrain from socializing with Judges; i.e., dining, drinking, rooming, etc.
7. Contestants may not enter under any judge when their presence or the presence of their dogs might give the impression of an unfair competitive advantage. Judges must **NOT** provide dogs for contestants in any class they are judging. There will always be “**grey areas.**” always ask yourself whether the situation, however innocent, projects an outward impression of impropriety. **A good rule of thumb is:** If you have concerns about whether something is inappropriate, you probably should avoid the situation.
8. Contestants with judging conflicts at the Best Pet Stylist In Show Level may compete in classes where no conflict exist but will be disqualified from the Best Pet Stylist In Show competition.

Eligibility of Dogs & Disqualifications

1. Texas law dictates current rabies vaccinations for all dogs. We also recommend for the health of the pet that all dogs have current Bordetella and all other recommended vaccinations.
2. Dogs must be entered in the appropriate class for their breed to be eligible for competition.
3. Dogs must be within the specified height range for classes with height requirements.
4. Six weeks or more growth of hair is desirable; however, the U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management recognizes that some dogs grow coat more quickly or slowly than others. Therefore, adequate coat will be defined as follows: **Coat must be of sufficient length** to allow the Contestant to create a distinct difference in its overall appearance (i.e. appearance of its head, body, legs, feet, tail, expression, profile, and overall coat length).
5. The dog's coat must appear healthy, shiny, pleasant-smelling, clean, and free of ectoparasites and mats by the completion of the trim. **Definition of a mat:** Hair that is tangled to the extent that a comb cannot be easily pulled through without exerting excess force. In other words, a comb will pull easily through a tangle but not a mat.
6. The dog's coat must be healthy and free of infectious diseases or parasites.
7. The dog must be manageable, without any sign of aggression or viciousness. It must allow handling by the judge.
8. Contestants may not compete with dogs provided, bred, or owned by their judge.
9. Contestants who are disqualified prior to the beginning of competition will be asked to leave the ring.

Reasons for Contestant Disqualification/Dismissal

1. Non-payment of contest fees and/or late registration.
2. Coaching from within or outside the contest ring, including use of audiovisual aids.
3. Uncooperative or disruptive behavior in the contest ring.
4. Cruel or inhumane treatment of a dog whether by handling or neglect.
5. Late arrival to the ring.
6. Razor burning and/or injuring a dog.
7. Rough handling techniques.
8. Fraudulent class entry.
9. Disrespect, abuse, or damage of hotel, convention center, or Conference Management property.
10. Any infraction of the conference's contest rules.
11. Conflict of interest between the Contestant and their judge(s).
12. Noticeably unhealthy, sick, or seriously injured animals.
13. Unsportsmanlike behavior.

Withholding Awards

Awards will be withheld in the event that the finished trim does not give the illusion of the AKC breed profile, for contests in which the dogs are judged against their breed profile. In the case of mixed breeds or purebreds in obviously non-breed specific trims, suitability of the trim to the dog's personality, conformation, and the execution of the trim are the determining factors. Entries deemed ineligible will not be considered for placement within their class. **Entries must have a 'finished' appearance.**

If the quality of work presented has attained acceptable professional standards (i.e., the trim is finished, meets the breed profile, where applicable, and there is no basis for dismissal or disqualification), award placements will not be withheld.

Provided sufficient eligible contestants are entered, 1st, 2nd and 3rd placements will be awarded in that order to the respective contestants. Should there only be two eligible contestants in a class, then 3rd place would clearly not be awarded. Should pet styling techniques or breed profile not meet acceptable industry standards, judges may choose not to award any placements or may choose the appropriate placements based on the quality of the work.

Contest Ring-Specific Rules and Regulations

Proper Animal Care

1. All dogs are to be crated and properly fed, watered, and exercised while not being groomed and styled. Please bring sufficient crates to house your dogs. All dogs must be on leash when not crated. Each contestant should bring plastic sheeting to be placed under and around the dog crates, plus newspaper and small plastic bags for disposal of dog waste, etc.
2. Dogs must not be left unattended on tables. Ask the Ring Steward for assistance if you must walk away from your table! Violators will be warned once; second violations will result in dismissal from the class!

Access to the Contest Ring, Setup, and Pre-Judging

1. Contestants will have access to the ring **30 minutes prior to class start** and must be set-up and have their dogs ready for the judge's inspection at the time stated for pre-judging. Each class will begin as soon as the last entry is pre-judged. Contestants who are not set up in the ring and ready to begin at the designated time for pre-judging will not be allowed to compete. Plan to be in the ring at least 15 minutes prior to pre-judging.

No Refunds for Absent, Disqualified, or Ineligible Entries

1. Entry fees will not be refunded in the event that a dog is absent, disqualified, ineligible or excused by the judge.

Attire

2. **Contestants are encouraged to dress professionally.** Excessively tight or revealing attire is strongly discouraged. Styling smocks are required to be worn during the competition. Shoes (preferably with non-skid soles) must be worn. "Flip flops" and other open-toed shoes are considered to be unsafe ring attire and will **NOT** be allowed.

3. **The dress code for the Best In Show Judging and Awards is “dressy”!** Grooming attire or **jeans/t-shirts will not be allowed.** This dress code also applies to any Contestants’ Assistants who will be exhibiting the Contestant’s “Best In Show” entry. Should any Contestant or their designated Assistant be dressed inappropriately, the U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management reserves the right to select and assign an appropriately dressed individual to exhibit the Contestant’s entry for the Best In Show Judging and Awards. We ask all Contestants to come prepared with the appropriate attire to dress for the Best In Show ceremony.
4. **Contestants may tastefully display their sponsor logos** and/or names on their uniforms/smocks during competition subject to approval by U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management. All other business entity logos/names, contestant titles or GroomTeam affiliations are strictly prohibited and may **NOT** be displayed in any fashion (uniforms, jewelry, medallions, etc.). **For details and approval requests, please contact U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management at (801) 577-0109 or email: info@uspetproclassic.com.**

Permitted Equipment

1. Hair dryers will not be allowed in the ring. Use of any other equipment that requires excessive amperage or creates excessive noise, such as vacuum systems, etc., is also prohibited. Low amperage lighting will be allowed provided it does not create a power problem or visual distraction to other contestants.
2. Large equipment cases and crates which require excessive floor space will not be allowed in the contest ring.
3. Personally-owned equipment must be removed from the ring following the completion of each class. Personal styling tables may remain if the table is identified with the contestant’s name and contact information and the table is required for use in the next class.

Permitted Grooming and Styling Methods

1. Except where restricted as stated in these rules, all types of grooming and styling methods and techniques are permitted inclusive of clipping, scissoring, thinning, handstripping, plucking and carding. Use of snap-on combs is also permitted.

Personal Devices and Visual Aids

1. Radios, head sets, earbuds, and/or cell phones may not be used in the contest ring.
2. Visual aids, such as photos, books, dvd’s, etc., may not be used in the ring.

Food, Beverages, and Smoking

1. Food is not allowed in the contest ring.
2. Beverages may only be brought into the contest ring in “spill-proof” containers.
3. Smoking will not be allowed in the contest ring or in any area of the facility where there are conference activities.

Conversations in the Contest Ring

1. Conversations in the contest ring must be kept to a minimum; it is distracting to other contestants and could be perceived as “coaching”.

Preparation of Animals

1. **Preparatory Work:** All dogs should be freshly shampooed and dried, with ears cleaned, and toenails clipped prior to the competition.
2. For sanitary reasons, the pads of feet, genital and tummy areas can be pre-trimmed, according to the breed’s standard.
3. **Poodles may have their feet (entire foot and pad), tummy and genital areas** trimmed prior to prejudging. Show topknots may be pre-banded, including hair-extensions prior to the start of the class. However, spray up products are prohibited prior to the start of the class.
4. With the exception of the preparatory work listed herein, all other trimming, rubber-banding, finishing sprays and styling of the dog’s coat must be performed in the ring within the specified class time.

Pre-judging

1. The judges will visually examine the dogs prior to the start of the various classes to determine eligibility of the entry. Contestants will have the opportunity to call anything to the judge’s attention that might reflect poorly on the quality of their finished entry. Each contestant **MUST** provide a comb for use by the Judge, should the Judge elect to comb through the dog’s coat.
2. Contestants are responsible for supplying their dogs and grooming equipment, inclusive of crates, clippers, shears, brushes, combs, nooses, shampoos, etc. Each contestant must supply their own dryer and grooming table/arm. Contestants must also supply their own towels and are **prohibited from using hotel guest towels and/or linens**. Equipment must be quiet enough so as not to cause a distraction for other Contestants or their dogs.

Dyeing Versus Color Enhancing

1. **Dyeing of dogs** is not permitted in regular class competition. However, **color enhancing** is acceptable. For example, a black coat that is dull may be brightened or the black color highlighted and darkened, but it cannot be dyed to appear any other color than black. Chalk and chalk-like products are allowed provided they do not change the color of the dog and the table and surrounding areas are protected from damage and/or discoloration.

Handstripped Entries, All Classes

1. Handstripped coats may be staged or kept in “rotation” per orthodox breed trimming techniques as prescribed by respective breed clubs for preparation of the breed for conformation shows. However, sufficient coat must be removed during the competition and within the allotted time to make a distinct difference in the dog’s overall appearance (i.e. appearance of head, body, legs, feet, tail, expression, profile, and overall length of coat).
2. Contestants may use clippers if prescribed by the respective breed club as a common method or technique used

to prepare the breed for 'show' (for example, shaving cheeks on the Scottish Terrier and Miniature Schnauzer); however, all clipper work and handstripping must be performed in the contest ring within the time allotted.

3. If, in the opinion of the judge, the Ring Steward, or Conference Management, a required carded and/or handstripped entry is determined to be a combination trim (i.e. clippers and scissors have been used inappropriately), the contestant will be disqualified and ineligible for any and all class placements.
4. Chalk and/or other finishing agents may be used, provided they are applied prior to class start or within the time allotted, and that upon inspection by the judge, the coat may be combed through using orthodox breed techniques. For example, judges would not comb through chalked, teased, or product-enhanced heads of Terriers, such as the Westie.

Permitted Animal Accessories

1. With the exception of the U. S. Open Styles Championship, the U. S. Creative Styling Championship, dogs must be presented for judging without bows, bandanas and/or nail polish.

Time Limits

1. **When time is up, it's up!** With the exception of finishing sprays, no other work can be done to the entry other than re-combing of the coat. For example, placement of bands in show topknots must be done within the allotted class time. With the exception of chalked furnishings, judges will not comb through the head/neck of entries in show trims requiring application of rubber bands, hair spray or other coat-enhancement products. **For example:** Chalked, teased and sprayed head pieces on Westies or banded and sprayed show topknots on Poodles **would NOT** be combed through by the judges, however chalked furnishing on Terrier legs **would be** combed through.
2. Since additional time has already been allotted for large dogs and for handstripping, preference will not be shown by the judge to contestants with large dogs or who have demonstrated more labor-intensive techniques such as handstripping.

Judges Critiques

1. Critiques by judges will be allowed in the ring if they do not interfere with set-up of the next class. Contestants may also seek critiques from their respective judge outside the ring. Critiques from other judges are inappropriate and not permitted.

Judges Consultant

1. A Judge's Consultant will be available to act in an advisory capacity, should any Judge feel the need to seek information from another pet styling expert.

Disqualification

1. Disqualification for infraction of any rules, regulations, policies, or procedures stated in this document may result in forfeiture of titles, prize money, and trophies/plaques, and registration fees. Contestants may further be banned from future competition. Notification of severe disqualifications will be sent to other industry conference managers and GroomTeam USA, Inc.

2. Contestants fraudulently entering classes for which they are not eligible will be disqualified.

Conference Management Reserved Rights

1. U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management reserves the right to interpret, add, alter or nullify any rule, class structure, deadline or statement. Said interpretation(s), addition(s), alteration(s) or nullification(s) shall be without prejudice and in the best interest of the conference and/or the contestants at large.
2. Contestants are reminded that they have agreed to accept the decisions of the U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management as final and binding. Good sportsmanship is expected inside and outside the ring.

Grievances

1. Open communication between Conference Management and Contestants is crucial to the growth of our industry and encourages professional comradery. We appreciate your comments and recommendations, however, grievance, complaints or other issues involving the competition **MUST** be submitted in writing. For this purpose, a Suggestion/Grievance form is provided in this publication or may be requested while on-site from the U.S. Pet Pro Classic Contest Manager, Coordinator or Ring Steward.
2. Should a contestant have a grievance related to the competition or another contestant, the following procedure must be followed:
 - A. **Verbally notify** the Ring Steward or Contest Coordinator at the time of occurrence, and
 - B. Following the end of the class, complete and **submit** to the Ring Steward or Contest Manager a formal grievance **in writing** using the appropriate U.S. Pet Pro Classic Grievance Form. The grievance form **MUST** be accompanied by all verifying documentation.
 - C. **Grievance(s) will not be accepted after the close of the conference** (i.e. after all judging and awards presentations have been completed) in which the incident occurred. Sportsmanship issues must be submitted prior to the close of the conference and while all involved parties are on si

Contestant Liability

Personal and Animal Liabilities

Each contestant will be held financially liable for any damages caused by themselves, their assistant(s), or their dog(s) to any conference-related property or individuals. Contestants are required to properly care for their pets and responsibly feed, water, exercise and clean up after their pets. **U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management reserves the right** to remove dogs that are disruptive, destructive, or neglected while on convention center, hotel, or other conference-related grounds. Dogs must be kept under control and supervised at all times. **Hotel staff at all affiliate hotels will be monitoring for possible violations of each hotel's pet policies by U.S. Pet Pro Classic guests.** Should Conference Management be notified by the convention center or a conference-affiliated hotel that a contestant has allowed a dog(s) to become a public nuisance, is neglected, soiled convention center, hotel, or other conference-related property with out clean-up, or has been charged for damage to a hotel guest room, the contestant will be disqualified. **Reported violators will forfeit all registration fees, contest entry fees, awards, and may be asked to leave the respective hotel property.** GroomTeam USA, Inc. will be notified, where appropriate, of any and all violations.

Dyes and Colors

Dyes and Colors: With exceptions as stated in these rules, all colors applied to any animal's coat must be temporary (example: chalks, non-permanent dyes or sprays, blow pens, etc.) — NOT a permanent color. All coloring mediums (i.e. blow pens, markers, crayons, etc.), all other coloring (temporary dyes, sprays, airbrushing, chalks, etc.) **MUST BE NON-TOXIC AND SAFE AND COMFORTABLE FOR ANIMALS. ANY DYES OR COLORS APPLIED IN THE CONTEST RING MUST BE WATER SOLUBLE AND CAPABLE OF EASY CLEANUP WITHOUT STAINING, LEAVING RESIDUE, OR OTHERWISE DAMAGING THE CONVENTION CENTER PROPERTY (FLOORS, CHAIRS, STAGE, OR OTHER PROPERTY).**

ANY CONTESTANT DISCOVERED TO HAVE APPLIED A DYE OR COLOR NOT LISTED ON OUR APPROVED LIST AND THAT RESULTS IN DAMAGE TO THE CONVENTION CENTER PROPERTY WILL BE DISQUALIFIED, FORFEIT ALL AWARDS, PRIZES, TROPHIES, PLAQUES, AND REGISTRATION FEE. THEY MAY BE ADDITIONALLY BARRED FROM FUTURE COMPETITION. ALL CONTESTANTS ARE REQUIRED TO CLEAN UP AFTER THEMSELVES. ANY DYES OR COLORS LEFT ON THE CONFERENCE FLOOR, VANS, OR STYLING TABLES MUST BE REMOVED.

Bathing and Drying Facilities

Contestants who use bathing and drying facilities (including mobile vans), as designated and dictated by Conference Management and/or host facility, will be held financially responsible for any and all damage(s) and may, at the discretion of Conference Management, be disqualified from competition.

Bathing and Preparation Facilities

Bathing/Preparation Facility Schedule

The U.S. Pet Pro Classic sets up a mobile grooming bathing facilities (mobile grooming vans) for use by U.S. Pet Pro Classic contestants. The vans are equipped with a tub, water and a styling table. A prep and drying room will be available at the convention center for contestants to dry and prepare their contest dogs. However, **contestants must supply their own tables, dryers, towels, products, and styling equipment when utilizing the facilities.**

Each contestant **must** clean up after themselves. Negligence could result in fines for damages, eviction from the conference, disqualification, and barring from future events. Bathing and preparation facilities are available on a first come, first served basis. **Upon your arrival at the conference, check with the Ring Steward for the location of the bathing/prep facilities.**

Due to hotel restrictions, bathing, dyeing, or drying of dogs is prohibited within hotel guest rooms. NO HOTEL TOWELS/LINENS MAY BE USED FOR DRYING DOGS! Contestants must bring their own towels. CONTESTANTS ARE REQUIRED TO CLEAN UP AFTER USING THE FACILITIES.

Bathing and Preparation Facility Hours of Operation

Bathing Vans 1 and 2 (Located by contest ring on the trade show floor)

Friday, June 6th:	7 pm - 6 pm
Saturday/Sunday, June 7th-8th:	7 am - 6 pm
Monday, June 9th:	7 am - 11 am

Bathing Van 3 (Located in the parking lot behind the Texican Court Hotel)

Friday, June 6th:	5 pm - 11 pm
Saturday/Sunday, June 7th-8th:	5 am - 11 pm
Monday, June 9th:	5 am - 11 am

Drying Room (see Trade Show Floor Plan at www.uspetproclassic.com) or inquire at Ring Steward's Desk)

Friday, June 6th:	7 pm - 6 pm
Saturday/Sunday, June 7th-8th:	7 am - 6 pm
Monday, June 9th:	7 am - 11am

CHECK WITH THE RING STEWARD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS!

U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management reserves the right to alter the Bathing/Drying schedule & location dependent upon conference and contestant needs. Alteration to the bathing/drying schedule/location will be made with respect to all concerned parties.

Pet Occupancy and Holding Facility

The U.S. Pet Pro Classic and its affiliate hotel management(s) reserve the right to enter hotel guest rooms and the convention center pet holding area to remove dogs/cats that are being destructive, neglected, or causing any type of disturbance. Dogs must be kept under control and supervised at all times. **One crate per dog/cat is required. Protective floor covering (plastic sheets) under all crates is required!**

The contestant drying room at the convention center (see Floor Plan) may be used as a holding facility for dogs, and will be available for use from 2 pm - 7 pm on Friday, and 10:00am - 6:00pm on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. Dogs placed in the 'holding facility' are the contestant's responsibility and should be properly exercised, fed, watered and safely crated. Negligence could result in eviction from the show and barring from future events.

Sportsmanship

True Sportsmen:

1. Conduct themselves with integrity, courtesy and commitment to the sport and the competitive spirit.
2. Abide by the rules, guidelines, policies and procedures set forth by the individuals and organizations that govern our sport.
3. Are always considerate of the well-being of the pets entrusted to their care.
4. Are respectful and considerate of fellow contestants, colleagues, judges, ring stewards, contest coordinators, conference managers, and their representatives.
5. Are respectful of conference-related facilities and grounds.
6. Conduct themselves with a high level of civility, decorum, poise and humility, regardless of the outcome of an event or contest.

7. Do not disparage, defame or slander any contestant(s), judges(s), ring stewards, contest coordinators, conference manager(s), or their representatives.

Poor sportsmanship may be defined as, but not limited to:

1. Disparaging or derogatory language or conduct toward any contestant(s), judges(s), ring stewards, contest coordinators, conference manager(s), or their representativesCruelty, abuse or neglect of animals.
2. Leaving the contest ring without permission or refusal to follow instructions or protocol set forth by Conference Management, their Representatives, or any other industry official or individual.
3. Belligerent, rude or discourteous conduct toward any contestant(s), judges(s), ring stewards, contest coordinators, conference manager(s), or their representatives, or any other industry official or individual.
4. Intent to sabotage any contestant(s), judges(s), ring stewards, contest coordinators, conference manager(s), or their representatives, or other individual(s) by gossip, rumor, hearsay, disparagement, defamation or slander.
5. Premeditated or malicious damage to any equipment of a contestant or to conference-related property.
6. Attempting to influence judges or their decisions.
7. Public rejection, disposal or destruction of awards.

Failure to abide:

by the aforementioned principles of sportsmanship could result in denial of entry at future USA shows, forfeiture of any titles, monies, awards, and eligibility for any points attained from the competition. GroomTeam USA, Inc. will be informed of all infractions and rulings issued.

Formal Grievances:

must be submitted in writing to the Ring Steward or U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management, and must stipulate concerned parties and issues for consideration in accordance with conference rules and guidelines. Grievance(s) will not be accepted after the close of the class, with the exception of sportsmanship issues, which must be submitted prior to the close of the conference and while all involved parties are on site.

Questions, Clarifications, Interpretations

We want to help! Should you have any questions, need clarification, or interpretation concerning anything involving the rules contained herein or about the competition, we encourage you to contact us at:

U.S. Pet Pro Classic
info@uspetchproclassic.com
(801) 577-0109 voice/text

Suggestion/Grievance Form

Contestant's Name _____
Business Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone (Area Code) _____ Home _____ Bus. _____
Cell # _____ Email _____

Suggestion(s): _____

Grievance(s): _____

Class _____ Judge _____

Placement: ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd

Documentation/Verification

All signed complainant or witness statements and/or other documentation should be attached and submitted with this form. Verifications/statements other than those attached should be explained here:

Contestants are reminded that they have agreed to accept the decisions of U.S. Pet Pro Classic Conference Management as final and binding. Good sportsmanship is expected inside and outside the ring. Publicly criticizing a judge or the conference reflects poorly on a contestant; however, written communication with Conference Management is the professional method of resolving issues and is, therefore, encouraged. Open communication between Conference Management and Contestants is crucial to the growth of our industry.

Should a contestant have a grievance related to the competition, the contestant must:

- a. **Verbally** notify the Contest Manager or Coordinator at the time of occurrence, and
- b. **Immediately** submit a formal grievance, which must be submitted in writing, with verifying documentation, to the Contest Manager or Coordinator.

No competition grievance will be accepted after the close of the class (i.e. after completion of judging and awards presentations). Sportsmanship grievances must be submitted prior to the close of the show and while all concerned parties are present.

By my signature I am hereby stating that the information and submitted documentation is true and accurate.

Contestant's Signature _____ Date _____