

NEBRASKA STATE FAIR

THE FAIREST SHOWDOWN: BATTLE OF THE BANDS



Calling all musicians! The Nebraska State Fair's The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands is ready to rock in 2024. We are now taking applications for this year's inaugural competition. There is no cost to enter this contest. Please read the official contest rules before signing up.

Grand Prize	\$2,500	Chance to open at a State Fair Mainstage Concert
Runner-Up	\$1,500	Chance to open at a State Fair Mainstage Concert
Third Place	\$750	

Important Dates

February 1 – March 1	Open Submission Period
March 6 – March 13	Public Voting Period
March 18	Top 10 Announced
March 20 – March 27	Panel Judging
April 2	Semi-Finalists Selected (5)
Tentative: July 26	Semi-Finalists Perform at Hear GI
August 7	Finalists Selected (3)
August 25	Finalists perform on the Pump & Pantry Party Pit Stage. One band will be crowned the winner of the first-ever The Fairest Showdown!
August 27 or 28	Champion and Runner-Up perform as Opening Act for Mainstage Show (Pending Confirmation)

General Information

- Band Eligibility – Amateur Bands Only (See No. 13 in Official Rules). All bands must have at least three members, and the members must remain the same throughout the entire competition. All band members must be at least 16 years of age or older. The staff of the Nebraska State Fair, its Board of Directors, volunteers, or individuals serving in a sponsor relationship capacity with the Nebraska State Fair are strictly prohibited from entering the competition.
- Bands must perform one original song and one cover song. (See Official Rules for more information)

Selection Process

- The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands will consist of three rounds: preliminary (public voting and judge panel), semi-final and finals.
- The open submission period will be held beginning February 1 thru March 1. Preliminary competition will take place March 6 – March 13 with public voting and March 20 – March 27 with a judge panel. On April 2, five semi-finalist bands will be selected through the Nebraska State Fair - The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the public viewing and voting process, along with

authorized representatives of Nebraska State Fair's "The Fairest Showdown", as described in the Official Contest Rules.

- All bands chosen as a semi-finalist of the Nebraska State Fair - The Fairest Showdown: Battle of Bands will compete on the Hear Grand Island Stage on July 26, 2024 in a live performance competition determining the three finalists.
- All semi-finalists will receive one complimentary gate admission ticket per band member for the 2024 Nebraska State Fair.
- Semi-finalists not chosen for the finals will remain alternates and take the place of finalists who are disqualified or cannot play at The Fairest Showdown.

Finalists

The three finalists chosen for the Fairest Showdown Championship – which will take place Sunday, August 25, 2024, at the Pump & Pantry Party Pit, will compete in the live performance competition. In addition, the winner and the first runner-up may become the "Opening Act" for one of our Headliners.

- Finalists will receive (1) The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands general admission ticket per band member valid for August 25, 2024, and (10) complimentary tickets for family, friends, or fans.

Live Finals Competition Round – August 25, 2024

- At the Fairest Showdown event, each band will have a total of 15 minutes each to setup and teardown their equipment and 30 minutes to play, including at least one original composition, in no order. Therefore, there will be a quick turnaround before the next band performs. The performance lineup will be in alphabetical order as described in the Official Contest Rules.
- The winner of the Fairest Showdown will be chosen through a points system determined by a judges' panel, as described in the Official Contest Rules, after the conclusion of the final band's performance. The judges' panel will be asked to vote based on a combination of each band's performance, musical ability, crowd engagement, and originality.
- One winner will be chosen as the overall Fairest Showdown Champion, receiving a \$2,500 grand prize. Second place will receive \$1,500 and third place \$750.
- The winner and runner-up will have the chance to open for one of our headliners - Winner allowed 1st choice.

See official rules for all information about entering the Nebraska State Fair – The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands!

Official Contest Rules: The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands

Contest Rules

No Purchase Necessary to Enter or Win. Limit one entry per band. Any subsequent Entries from a single band will be void.

Eligibility: The contest is open only to amateur musical groups and bands with a minimum of three (3) members per band. ALL band members must be legal residents of the United States or District of Columbia. ALL band members must be at least 16 years of age.

To Enter

- No cost to enter. Bands can enter by submitting the necessary entry materials on the Nebraska State Fair - The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands submission website.
- Bands must submit a recording made by your band.
- Bands must submit one original musical composition and lyrics written and owned by a band member or members. The recording must be owned by a member or members of the band, and for which the band or at least one member has the right to License for commercial use. Bands also must submit one cover song. These songs will be played at the competition if the band is selected.
- Each band will have their entry submission posted to the Nebraska State Fair - The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands voting page for public viewing and voting March 6 – March 13.
- Each visitor will be allowed to submit one vote during the open submission round. At the close of this round, on March 13, 2024, the five bands receiving the most votes from site visitors during the voting period, will advance to the semifinal round. In the event of a tie, authorized representatives of the Nebraska State Fair will choose from amongst the bands receiving the most votes to determine the seven semi-finalists.
- Submissions must be formatted as a YouTube or Vimeo link. Submission entry will open on February 1, 2024, and close on March 1, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. (CST). The music submitted in the original category of the competition cannot have been previously published or licensed and each entrant shall indemnify the Nebraska State Fair from any claims related to or arising out of the ownership, publication, or use of entrant's composition. Modification of an existing work is only allowed in the cover song section of the contest. Nebraska State Fair is not responsible for lost, late, damaged, illegible, or incomplete entries.
- All entries shall become the property of the Nebraska State Fair and will not be acknowledged or returned. By submitting an entry, the writer and owner of the composition, as well as the creator of the audio, video, or other formatted submissions, grant the Nebraska State Fair a non-exclusive, global, and perpetual license to use the composition, submission, and any other materials provided in connection with the contest entry in promotional or media associated with the contest, including the ability to edit, amend, or alter any portion of any submission. Nebraska State Fair reserves the sole right to disqualify any entrant for non-compliance with any section of these rules.

Preliminary Rounds – Judging Process

The preliminary round of competition will consist of two parts (public voting and a judge panel). Public voting will narrow all entries down to the Top 10. From there, a judge panel will narrow the pool down to the Top 5. The judge panel will award points as follows:

- The Nebraska State Fair will select a panel of at least (2) judges.

- All judging will be based upon the submitted Original Song, Cover Song and Lyrics.
- Originality of Music and Lyrics (15 points), Cover Song (30 points), Original Song (30 points), Professionalism in Demo (25 points).

Semi-Finalist – Selection Process

By April 2, 2024, five bands will be selected through the Nebraska State Fair - The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands. These will be selected by a judges panel. The selection process and application of the above criteria will be at the Nebraska State Fair's sole discretion.

Semi-Finalist Live Round – Judging Process

All bands chosen as a semi-finalist Nebraska State Fair - The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands will compete on the Hear Grand Island Stage on July 26, 2024 in a live performance competition determining the three finalists.

The three finalist band winners of The Fairest Showdown will be chosen through a point system determined by the judges' panel, as described below, after the final band's performance. The judges' panel will vote based on a combination of each band's performance, musical ability, crowd engagement, and originality. Final points awarded as follows:

- The Nebraska State Fair will select a panel of at least (2) judges.
- Originality of Music and Lyrics (15 points), Instrumental Performance (30 points), Vocal Performance (30 points), Stage Presence (25 points).

The semifinal and final rounds are family-friendly competitions. Absolutely NO foul language or questionable lyrics during contestants' performances or otherwise while participating in the contest. If you are unsure if your song choice is appropriate, please email Karli Schulz at kschulz@statefair.org.

Finalist – Eligibility

The three Finalists chosen will be offered the opportunity to perform in The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands event to be held Saturday, August 25, 2024. Each band member selected to perform will be required to execute a Finalist Performance Agreement. All forms must be returned before the band will be permitted to perform at The Fairest Showdown. Nebraska State Fair reserves the right to verify any entrant's eligibility. Non-compliance with any of the foregoing, or any other section of these rules, may disqualify the entire band.

Should one or more finalists be disqualified prior to the Battle of the Bands, the Nebraska State Fair may, within its sole discretion, choose one or more replacements from amongst the semi-finalists to participate in the Battle of the Bands. Both semi-finalists who did not make the finals are eligible as alternates.

Finalists – Battle of the Bands Performance and Judging

At the Battle of the Bands, each band will have a total of 15 minutes to set up their equipment and 30 minutes to play their original compositions. The performance lineup will be chosen alphabetically by the Nebraska State Fair.

The winner of The Fairest Showdown will be chosen through a point system determined by a judges' panel, as described below, after the conclusion of the final band's performance. The judges' panel will be asked to vote based on a combination of each band's performance, musical ability, crowd engagement, and originality. Final points to be awarded as follows:

- A judge's panel will be 100% of the final points. The Nebraska State Fair will select a panel of at least

(2) judges.

- Originality of Music and Lyrics (15 points), Instrumental Performance (30 points), Vocal Performance (30 points), Stage Presence (25 points).

The band receiving the most points will be declared the Grand Prize Winner at the conclusion of the Battle of the Bands event.

Tie Voting Methods and Disqualification

During any of the rounds or judging (including initial entries, semi-finals, and The Fairest Showdown event), Nebraska State Fair and their affiliates: assume no responsibility for inaccurate entry or contest related information.

Any attempt by an entrant or voter to deliberately damage the website or undermine the legitimate operation of this contest is a violation of criminal and/or civil laws and should such an attempt be made; The Nebraska State Fair reserves the right to disqualify relevant entrant or vote(s) submitted and seek damages and other remedies to the fullest extent permitted by Law.

The Fair reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to void entries or votes they believe are suspect or to modify, cancel, terminate, or suspend this contest (or any portion of this contest) should virus, bugs, non-authorized human intervention, or other causes beyond the control of the Fair corrupt or impair the administration, security, fairness, or proper play of the contest and, in any such event, select winner from all eligible online votes received prior to the event requiring such action. The use of any device to automate the voting process is prohibited. In the event of suspected extreme voting irregularities, the Fair has the right, in their sole discretion, to determine the Grand Prize, contest winner.

Further, the Fair reserves the right to disqualify any band from the competition if any member of the band or its entourage makes any public statement, gesture or suggestion intended to bring Fair into public disrepute, contempt, scandal, or ridicule or intending to shock, insult, or offend the Fair or engages in any activity (in Fair's sole discretion) that is contrary to the spirit of the contest. Decisions of the judges/Fair staff are final and binding.

In the event of a tie, preliminary and final round scores will be combined. The judges will determine the ranking if the tie is not broken.

Other Rules

1. CONTESTANTS MUST BE ON TIME FOR CHECK-IN. Any contestant late for check-in/the initial briefing will be docked 3 points from their score total.
2. Each band shall use only the percussion and sound equipment provided by the Nebraska State Fair.
3. Any band that has previously placed 1st in The Fairest Showdown: Battle of the Bands is ineligible to compete.
4. Contestants MAY NOT utilize live props. This will include dancers or animals. Non-human props such as costumes and other accessories are permitted.
5. Any prop used by a contestant must be carried on stage by the contestant and must be completed in one trip onto the stage area. The contestant must remove all props used immediately following his/her own performance.
6. Any contestant guilty of distracting any of the other contestants performing shall be disqualified.
7. Any contestant guilty of insulting or starting any confrontation with any of the audience or other contestants shall be disqualified.
8. No one other than contest officials may approach the judges at any time during the contest. It is strictly forbidden for contestants and audience members to speak to contest judges at any time before, during, or after the contest.
9. Any contestant found damaging provided equipment shall be disqualified and fined.
10. Due to the nature of the Nebraska State Fair, the provided sound system, stage size, sponsor-branded backdrop, and lighting may not be altered. No third-party branding may be visible unless provided or approved by the Nebraska State Fair.
11. Any contestant that faces a malfunction of the equipment has the option of starting over. Examples: feedback, skipping of disk, and loss of microphone. (This DOES NOT include the contestant bumping into the equipment, causing a skip, or turning off the microphone while singing.
12. By participating, entrants agree to be bound by these rules. Nebraska State Fair reserves the sole right to substitute entrants at any stage of the contest due to the inability of a contestant to perform, at any stage for non-compliance with these rules, voluntary dismissal, or other event rendering a contestant's participation impractical or impossible.
13. Neither the Nebraska State Fair nor anyone acting on its behalf will enter into any communications with any entrant regarding this contest other than for finalist or winner notifications and marketing needs.
14. By entering, each band member warrants and represents that the band and its members are not currently under a recording contract. And that the band's entry for the original composition for this portion of the contest is entirely original and does not defame or otherwise violate the rights of any third party, and does not violate any federal, state, or local laws or ordinances.
15. Upon entering the contest, band members further warrant and represent that the band has secured the requisite consent from any third party referenced in the band's recorded entry and agrees that Nebraska State Fair and their designees shall have, without limitation, the non-exclusive, perpetual, royalty-free license to record, adapt, modify, and exploit the entry, and the recording and composition embodied therein for trade, advertising, promotion and, or other purposes as The Fair may determine without further consideration to the relevant band or its members.
16. If a band receives prize money, the band must submit or provide any and all tax documents that may be required by law prior to payment being made. For tax reporting purposes, a completed W9 is required by law before payment can be made. Taxes on prizes and any other expenses associated with prizes not explicitly stated herein are the sole responsibility of the individual winners.

17. All prize payments will be made in the form of a check. Payment will be processed within one week, and either will be mailed or picked up at the Fair. Under no circumstances will cash be used, in all or part, as the form of payment, and only one check will be provided per band. If picking up the check in person, check will be released to a designated person in the band with proper identification.
18. Entrants agree that: (1) Nebraska State Fair and its designees shall have the right and permission to use entrant's name, recording, and photograph or likeness, as well as entrant's voice and city of residence for advertising, publicity, trade, and/or other purposes without additional compensation (unless prohibited by law); and
19. Nebraska State Fair and each of its respective parent companies, affiliates, subsidiaries, locations, distributors, suppliers, advertising, and promotion agencies shall have no liability and will be held harmless for any liability, loss, injury, or damage to entrants or any other person or entity, including personal injury, death, or damage to personal or real property, due in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, by reason of the acceptance, possession, use or misuse of prize (including without limitation, the activities associated with performing in this contest) or any travel related thereto or participation in this contest.
20. Participation in this event does not imply or grant any entrant permission to use any intellectual property owned or used by the Nebraska State Fair, including, but not limited to, trademarks, slogans, patents, or copyrights. The Fair may cancel or suspend any event associated with this contest at the Fair's discretion due to emergency, legal or regulatory requirements, act of God, or other event outside of its control.

Scoring

Band Scoring Criteria (Preliminary Round)

- 15 Points: Originality of Music and Lyrics
- 30 Points: Cover Song
- 30 Points: Original Song
- 25 Points: Professionalism in Demo

Band Scoring Criteria (Semi-Final and Final Rounds)

- 15 Points: Material selection and arrangement (difficulty, originality)
- 30 Points: Instrumental performance (rhythm, intonation, dynamics)
- 30 Points: Vocal performance (lead and harmony)
- 25 Points: Stage presence and entertainment value.

Band Scoring Evaluation

- Judges will assess and score each performance.
- Each judge may award up to 100 points for each band.
- After each band performance, judges will provide completed and signed scorecards to the Fair committee, who will tally the scores.

Judges will score the preliminary and final round performances separately.

- Judges' scores are final. Therefore, scores will not be released.
- In the event of a tie, preliminary and final round scores will be combined. The judges will determine the ranking if the tie is not broken.