

WISCONSIN RIVER WOODCARVERS

Judging Guidelines 2026

A carver can enter any class, but from then on work cannot be entered in a lower class. Classes are:

Youth: The Youth class will be split into Youth 1 (age 14 and under) and Youth 2 (age 15- 17). There will be no categories in the Youth classes.

Novice: For carvers that have not won a total of 6 blue ribbons in any competition or a BEST OF SHOW ribbon in any competition.

Intermediate: For the more experienced carver who has developed his/her art beyond the novice level, but is not considered advanced. Any carver who has won a total of 6 blue ribbons in the Novice class in any competition or a BEST OF SHOW ribbon in the Novice class in any competition in the U.S. must move up to the Intermediate class.

Advanced: Any carver that has won a total of 6 blue ribbons in the Intermediate class in any competition or a BEST OF SHOW ribbon in the Intermediate class in any competition, or an OVERALL BEST OF SHOW ribbon, must compete in this class.

2026 COMPETITION CATEGORIES

1	Realistic Human	2	Human Caricatures	3	Animal Caricatures
4	Caricature Group (2 or more)	5	Realistic Animals	6	Realistic Fish
7	Realistic Fish Group (2 or more)	8	Game Birds	9	Song Birds
10	Waterfowl	11	Birds of Prey	12	All other Birds
13	Chip Carving in the Round	14	Chip Carving Flat	15	Relief Carving / Low / Natural Finish
16	Relief Carving / Low / Colored Finish	17	Relief Carving / Deep / Natural Finish	18	Relief Carving / Deep / Colored Finish
19	Pyrography / Natural finish	20	Pyrography / Colored Finish	21	Santa(s)
22	Religious / Angels	23	Mythical (Trolls etc.)	24	Jewelry (Wooden)
25	Walking Sticks / Canes	26	Floral	27	Miniatures (Human) 3" or less
28	Miniatures (Animal) 3" or less	29	Miniatures (Other) 3" or less	30	Miscellaneous (Including but not limited to Golf Balls & Intarsia
31	Bark Carving (Human)	32	Bark Carving (Animals)	33	Bark Carving (Other)
34	Reptiles	35	Unusual Wood (Driftwood, Logs, Beams, & Cypress Knees)	36	Gourds
37	Treenware (Including but not limited to spoons, bowls, & mugs)	38	Ornaments	39	Decoys
40	Stylized	41	Instructor Assisted		

Entry Guidelines

You must rent a table and display at the Show to enter into competition. Tables may be shared, but in order to enter judging, all entrants must pay the full table fee. There are two exceptions: youth entrants pay no table fee, and carving clubs may only pay a single table fee for the club (per table).

In 2026 we will again use (6) Judges to expedite the competition process. Two judges will judge Novice, two will judge Intermediate, and two will judge Advanced.

Table space rental allows a carver to enter up to six carvings into competition with no more than two in any one category. Additional carving may be entered into competition for a fee of \$5.00 per carving. Club tables are limited to six carvings per table with a no more than two carvings in any one category per carver. Youth entrants may enter up to four carvings, in either Youth 1 or Youth 2, depending on age at show time.

All carvings entered for judging must have the date of completion and carver's name permanently marked on the carving, this mark may be on the back side, or bottom. Carvers who sign their carving or carve their name in the carving in such a way that it would be visible to the judges are required to mask or hide this mark for the competition.

All carvings entered for judging must have been completed after September 20, 2023

All carvings must be entered for judging before 8:45 A.M. Saturday. Judging will begin immediately following. There will be a time for acceptance of entries on Friday evening, after the Holiday Inn and Show organizers are done with basic Show setup.

The judging room will be locked at all times except during acceptance of entries. No person not directly involved in judging, recording results, or accepting entries will be allowed in the judging room. There will be a short, announced period after the end of judging when carvers will be allowed inside the judging room to view all entries that were into competition before they are released for return to the show floor.

This is a woodcarving competition. Other materials may be used; see a discussion of this issue under judging guidelines below. A discussion was held at the December 11, ²⁰²⁴ Show Committee meeting about allowing other items than woodcarvings on show tables. The Show Committee discussed this clause and decided to allow: woodworking (e.g. cutting boards, boxes, and wood turnings as long as the items are handcrafted by the craftsman selling the item.)

Judging Guidelines

Judges may override the carver's choice of category. Judges may also move a piece into a different category if there is only one entry in a category. Decisions of the judges are final.

Judges are encouraged to use "Honorable Mention" ribbons if they feel any category deserve it.

This is a woodworking competition, and our general intent is to highlight carved items. Other tools and materials may be used on entries, as in the following examples:

1. Other tools besides carving tools may be used, including but not limited to woodburning tools, rotary tools (drills, Dremel's, etc.), and sanding products. Other materials may be used. These include glass or plastic eyes (Generally used on animals), metal for stiffeners or on parts usually too thin to support the carving (such as bird legs/feet) metal jewelry parts (clasps, etc.), string/twine to simulate rope, gourds, and stands-mounts for items that can't stand on their own.
2. The degree to which the judges choose to enforce these sub-bullets is their decision. As a general rule, these guidelines will be more strictly enforced (or, said differently, detract from the judged place of the item) as items arise in class.

- Instructor-assisted carvings are acceptable. Generally, original carvings are likely to be judged higher than "equivalent" instructor-assisted carvings.
- After the Novice class is judged, the judges who judged the Novice class will determine the "Best of Novice"- After the Intermediate class is judged, the judges who judged the Intermediate class will determine the "Best of Intermediate". After the Advanced class is judged, the judges who judged the Advanced class will determine the "Best of Advanced". Then all (6) judges will determine the "Best of Show",
- For Youth, judges can give out more than one Blue Ribbon in an age classification if deemed appropriate.