

Masquerade Participants' Guide

If you're considering showing a costume in the Detcon1 Masquerade, welcome! We're glad to have you! Please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with the information below. When you're ready, you can email a completed [Masquerade entry form](#) to masquerade@detcon1.org, or turn it in when you get to DetCon1.

Entry Classes

The costume competition is broken down into several skill classes:

Youth: Children age thirteen and under are judged in a class on their own.

Novice: The novice class is for beginning costumers. To be eligible, you can have no more than three previous masquerade awards from the novice or beginning division.

Journeyman: The Journeyman class is for intermediate costumers. To be eligible, you cannot have more than three awards from masquerades entered at the journeyman or intermediate level.

Master: The Master class is for advanced costumers.

A note on eligibility: You do not need previous awards to enter as a Journeyman or Master. We strongly encourage you to enter in the class that best reflects your skill level. If you have several costumes under your belt but you've never entered any of them, consider entering as a Journeyman. If you make costumes professionally or have a lot of experience with costuming, please enter as a Master.

“Motown 3000” Theme Category

The DetCon Masquerade has an optional theme--showcasing design ideas for what Detroit will look like in the year 3000. Imagine the future of Detroit and show us what people will wear there. Get creative! Consider Detroit's culture, its history, and the things that give it a unique place in the past, present, and future of North America.

You do not have to submit a costume related to this theme. However, if you choose to do so, you will be considered for awards and recognitions reserved for theme participants.

Judging

The Judges will award several awards in each category, including Best in Class. They'll also award a Best In Show. For these awards, entrants are judged primarily on their presentations. Creative or impressive skits will have a big impact on your score.

You may also choose to submit your entry for workmanship judging. A workmanship judge will look at your costume in a well-lit area, with attention to detail. You may be awarded recognition

for demonstrating excellence in a particular construction technique, like tailoring, pattern drafting, or matching patterns over seams.

Before The Convention

We won't have live microphones for contestants during the Masquerade. If you have any music or other audio to accompany your presentation, please record it in advance and bring it with you. Keep in mind that we'll be using a professional sound system, so you'll want to bring the highest-quality recording you can get.

Before The Show

When you arrive at the convention, you'll need to register with Masquerade staff. The masquerade registration will be located near Ops, outside the Ontario Exhibit Hall on the 3rd Floor. The Masquerade Registration staff will ask you about your plans for your presentation. This is the time to hand over any pre-recorded audio, and to discuss any requests you have in terms of lighting, stage setting, special effects, or how you'd like the Master of Ceremonies to present you. Remember that while surprising the audience is great, surprising the Masquerade crew is not okay--you need to clear everything you plan to do on stage with them in advance.

If you have any special requests, you may be asked to attend the Masquerade tech rehearsal. You may also be asked to attend if Masquerade staff need to evaluate your presentation for safety. Registration staff will tell you when and where you need to report for rehearsal.

In The Green Room

You can think of the Masquerade Green Room as the 'backstage' area for the Masquerade. It will be located near the Masquerade itself. Specific information about the Green Room will be provided when you check in at the Masquerade Registration table. You will need to sign in at the Green Room prior to the show starting. If you're presenting as a group, every member of the group must sign in.

You'll be told your presentation order and assigned to a specific area to prepare. Masquerade volunteers will be on hand to assist you. They're there to make sure that entrants participating for awards get to see the workmanship judge, that all entrants appear on stage at the proper time, and that you have everything you need to put on your best show. Please comply with their instructions.

There will be light snacks and some emergency repair supplies (safety pins, glue) on hand. Please don't abuse these privileges--they are there for everyone. You should eat dinner before you arrive at the Masquerade, and your costume should be complete and ready to show when you arrive.

Your Presentation

At the beginning of the Masquerade, the Master of Ceremonies (MC) will introduce the judges and explain the division system.

Presentations will go by skill class, with the youth class presenting first. The childrens' division awards will be handed out at this time. Afterwards, the children will be escorted back to the green room, where they and their caretakers will be released to go to fan photography, to find a seat in the masquerade audience, or to leave the masquerade entirely.

When it's time for your division to present, a Masquerade volunteer will line you up in presentation order and lead you into the ballroom to present. There will be stagehands to help you onto and off of the stage. Any assistance you need from them in terms of props or stage-setting should be discussed in advance at the Masquerade Rehearsal. Stagehands are there to help ensure the safety of the event, but please don't put them to the test. At no point should you be moving too fast to stop yourself before you fall off the stage.

After your presentation, you'll be escorted back to the Green Room. You are welcome to stay in the green room, or to go find a seat in the audience. If you like, you can remove your costume (or part of it) after your presentation. Please remain in the general vicinity and be prepared to be called back on stage for awards.

Awards will be presented after the YA Award Ceremony, by division. If you are called on stage for an award, approach the award presenter, accept your award, then form a line at the back of the stage to wait while other awards are presented.

After The Masquerade

You can retrieve any media or documents you brought on Sunday morning from 10 am to noon. While we'll make an effort to turn any unclaimed items over to Ops, we cannot guarantee the return of your media or documents at any other time--so please make sure you stop by. Information will be available about when and where you can acquire photos from the official Masquerade photographer.

Rules & Policies

Because of the nature of the event, the Masquerade has rules and policies that are distinct from those of the convention at large. These rules are in effect only at the Masquerade itself, the rehearsal, and in the Masquerade green room. Participants are expected to comply with convention rules at all other times, including on their way to and from masquerade events and spaces.

The phrase "better to beg forgiveness than ask permission" does not apply to the Detcon1 Masquerade. Failure to comply with these rules, and with all instructions from masquerade staff,

may lead to disqualification from the masquerade. Serious violations may lead to expulsion from the convention with no refund.

Costumes and Props:

All entries must comply with these rules:

- The Detcon1 Masquerade is a PG-13 event. If you're not sure if your costume, prop, or presentation is appropriate, ask.
- No unsheathed, edged weapons on stage. All edged weapons must be peace bonded. There will be a weapons master to check them if there are any questions.
- No food product-based costumes or messy substances allowed on stage or in the backstage area. This includes wet, dry, or oily substances. These can pose both a safety hazard and could create problems with other peoples' costumes.
- No fire allowed on stage. If you need to use a smoky type substance, clear it with the director in advance. This refers to open flames, fire, flash powder or any type of smoke or fog.
- No projectiles of any sort. If you need to throw something during your presentation, clear it with the director.
- Each contestant may only appear once on stage during the Masquerade. However a contestant may enter more than one costume so long as it appears on another body.
- Purchased or rented costumes may not be shown in competition.
- No costume is not a costume.
- No flash photography while contestants are on stage. A separate area will be provided for general photography. This rule is primarily intended for the audience.
- If you have any questions, ask the director. Surprise the audience, NOT the director or staff.

The Green Room

- Treat other Masquerade participants with respect. Show their costumes and equipment the same care you would show your own.
- Do not take pictures of other participants without their consent.
- Participating children will need to have a responsible adult with them at all times.
- You may bring an assistant with you to help you prepare, but the green room is primarily there for Masquerade participants. Non-participants who are getting underfoot may be asked to leave at any time.
- You must comply with any and all instructions from Masquerade staff.

Photography

- No flash photography while contestants are on stage. A separate area will be provided for general photography. This rule is primarily intended for the audience.
- Please don't pester other participants for photos while in the green room. Doing so may interfere with their preparations, or with the work of masquerade judges and staff.

Presentations

For groups of one or two people, presentations can be thirty seconds to one minute in length. For three or more people, presentations can run up to two minutes. If your presentation runs long, your audio and lighting may be cut. Failure to leave the stage promptly when your time is up may disqualify you from Masquerade awards.

Masquerade staff are there to make sure you present yourself as well as possible to the audience and judges. They are happy to help you surprise the audience--just don't try to surprise *them*. They're also responsible for making sure the Masquerade is safe and fun for everybody. In order to do that, they need to know everything you plan to do on stage--no exceptions.

Detcon1 takes safety very seriously. The Masquerade director and their designees may, at their sole discretion, forbid you from including in your presentation anything that they believe may endanger people or property.

Presentation Rules:

- All costumes and presentations must be appropriate for a PG-13 audience.
- Presentations are time-limited: 1 minute for one or two people, and 2 minutes for three or more.
- No live microphones will be provided for contestants' uses. Please have all songs, talk, etc pre-recorded and ready to go.
- No fire allowed on stage. If you need to use a smoky type substance, clear it with the director in advance. This refers to open flames, fire, flash powder or any type of smoke or fog.
- No projectiles of any sort. If you need to throw something during your presentation, clear it with the director.
- If you have any questions, ask the director. Surprise the audience, NOT the director or staff.

Weapons

The Masquerade weapons rules apply only at masquerade spaces and events (including the masquerade itself, the masquerade green room, and any Detcon1-sponsored rehearsal activities). At all other times and places--*including when you are traveling to and from Masquerade spaces*--the Detcon1 weapons policy found in the program book is in effect.

Any part of your costume that violates the Detcon1 weapons policy will need to be securely stowed in a box or case until you arrive in the green room, and must go back in its case when you leave.

Please show some basic common sense when transporting these items. There will be people in and around the hotel who are not convention participants. The hotel, the convention, and the Detroit police are unlikely to look kindly on you frightening the muggles.