



---

# JUDGING GUIDE

---

AMERICAN NATURAL BODYBUILDING FEDERATION

Version 3.1 - May 2019

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Assembling a Judging Panel .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Number of Judges.....	2
Judging Appointments.....	2
<b>Expectations of Judges.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Scoring and General Judging Considerations.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Scoring .....	4
Score Sheets and Tabulation .....	5
Crossovers .....	6
Violation of Posing Guidelines .....	7
<b>ANBF Division Guidelines .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Bikini.....	7
Figure.....	9
Women's Physique .....	11
Men's Physique.....	13
Classic Physique .....	15
Bodybuilding .....	16
<b>Maintaining Objectivity While Judging.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>How To Provide Feedback.....</b>	<b>20</b>

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

The American Natural Bodybuilding Federation's (ANBF's) Mission is to provide the ultimate natural bodybuilding experience for the competitor. The strategy to accomplish this includes providing consistent judging to clear standards that is untarnished by biases and personal relationships. The purpose of this guide is to provide a single source to educate current and future ANBF judges on ANBF standards, judging procedures, and expectations. Additionally, this guide will be posted publicly to provide transparency to the competitors on these topics. This guide describes ANBF policies, standards, and procedures as of the date on the front page and will be updated whenever the ANBF Board of Directors approves a change to these items.

---

## ASSEMBLING A JUDGING PANEL

---

---

### NUMBER OF JUDGES

---

Judging panels for all ANBF competitions are to be of an odd number consisting of at least five individuals. Effort will be made to assemble panels consisting of a diverse group of individuals with a nearly even split between males and females whenever possible. If possible within the show's budget, some judges should be brought in from outside the region where the show is being held. An odd number of judges is required so two-way ties can be broken (see later section on scoring). In the event that a panel has an even number of judges, the head judge's score will not be included in the tabulation of scores unless a panel member abstains from judging a class in which they have a client competing.

---

### JUDGING APPOINTMENTS

---

Judging appointments can be made based on past judging experience with the ANBF or other bodybuilding organizations and/or having satisfactorily passed test judging. All judges should review this guide and the contest guidelines at [anbfnatural.com](http://anbfnatural.com) to ensure their familiarity with the ANBF format and guidelines.

---

## EXPECTATIONS OF JUDGES

---

- Judges must provide the promoter one week's notice to cancel their participation on a judging panel. This is required to give the promoter sufficient time to find a replacement and cancel any travel arrangements. Exception may be made in the case of an unexpected illness (in fact, every effort should be made NOT to judge when sick).
- Judges should arrive before the competitors' meeting and remain present for at least 15 minutes after the completion of a contest to respond to immediate feedback requests. Judges must be present at the judge's table for all phases of judging, including overalls, which are judged during the awards ceremony.
- Judges should be dressed in business casual attire. Jeans will be allowed, but should not have holes or ragged edges. Attire should set a professional tone, with men wearing collared shirts and women in modest attire without plunging necklines or micro-mini skirts. Smart athletic

shoes/sneakers, loafers, leather boat shoes, sandals and dress heels or flats are acceptable. Avoid wearing flip-flops. Hats and gym attire will not be permitted.

- Judges should strive to remain objective, especially when competitors they are familiar with are entered in an event. The ANBF aims to provide good, clear, objective judging and wishes to maintain an equitable reputation among competitors, spectators, fellow judges, and other natural bodybuilding organizations. Judges should review the later section in this document regarding tendencies that can impact objectivity and compromise judging.
- To facilitate objectivity, no coaches will be allowed to judge a class in which they have clients registered. Judges should inform the promoter at least two weeks ahead of time of any such conflict, so the promoter can be sure that there are not any classes with multiple judges sitting out such that less than four judges are scoring a given class. On the day of the competition, judges should inform both the head judge and the tabulator prior to the start of the competition of which classes they will be sitting out due to having a client in the class and the judge should remove themselves from the judging table when that class is on stage.
- Judges should strive to judge according to the ANBF criteria be prepared to provide definitive reasons for a competitor's placement. Taking notes during judging facilitates the process of providing feedback. Promoters will provide the judges notepads for this purpose. When the decisions are close, judges should make an extra effort to note the reasons for their placements in anticipation of questions regarding the decision.
- While ANBF division guidelines available at [www.anbfnatural.com](http://www.anbfnatural.com) do include standards for suits and jewelry, disqualification due to inappropriate suit will be handled by the promoter and should not be addressed by judges. However, judges may provide feedback to the competitor on the style of suit and should in fact do so if the suit distracts from the competitor's presentation.
- Attempt should be made to respond to emailed requests for feedback within one week of receiving the request. This is extremely important in the case when a competitor disagrees with their placement and can go a long way towards diffusing tension and preventing a competitor from developing a low opinion of promoters, judges and the ANBF. Additionally, constructive feedback that can help a competitor to improve for subsequent shows can be extremely important input for their preparation.
- Do not communicate with contestants or audience during judging or awards ceremony. If a competitor or audience member engages the judges or otherwise distracts the panel, the head judge and/or the promoter will intervene to address the issue. The exception to this is when it is necessary to ask people sitting in the front row of seating behind the judges to move. In most ANBF shows, the promoter will tape off the first row to prevent the audience from sitting too close to the judges. If a judge sees someone sitting in the blocked off row, then the judge may politely ask this individual to move to a different seat.
- Do not discuss scoring with other judges during judging procedures. It is okay to discuss observations on specific competitors after their division is complete and scoring sheets are turned in. In fact, discussions such as these often help judges to hone their skills and gain the benefit of their colleagues' perspectives. However, specific placements should not be discussed and there must not be any attempt to develop a consensus on placement among a judging panel.
- Judges should stay off of their cell phones during judging. Photos taken to serve as a reminder when later providing feedback are acceptable; however, judges should not be texting, reading

emails, participating in social media, or otherwise engaged on their cell phones during the judging procedures. This denies the competitor the full attention of the judges, and could wrongly give the impression that a judge is inappropriately communicating with a competitor, coach or audience member during judging.

- Judges should not disclose any scores to anyone other than the tabulator prior to official announcements being made.
- Judges should not discuss placements on social media or publicly engage competitors or coaches who question or complain about placements following the show. Feedback on a specific competitor should only be given directly to that competitor privately and only when requested.
- At all times, judges should conduct themselves in a professional manner, and not do anything that could adversely reflect upon the competition, promoter, other judges, the ANBF, or natural bodybuilding as a whole.

---

## SCORING AND GENERAL JUDGING CONSIDERATIONS

---

---

### SCORING

---

Judging for placements within each class will take place during group comparisons. Each judge will assign placements for competitors based the criteria below.

Judges will evaluate competitors on the following criteria:

- **Symmetry (40% of overall score)** - Symmetry is a measurement of the evenness of development of the competitor's physique and how well the parts of the physique flow together. It includes the balance and proportion of the competitor from side to side, top to bottom and front to back. Symmetry is a measurement of evenness of development between all muscle groups and proportion when viewed from all sides. No body part or muscle group should stand out from the rest.
- **Muscularity & Conditioning (40% of overall score)** - Muscularity refers to muscle size and development relative to the competitor's frame, including shape and size. The level of muscularity is determined by the extent of development in relation to the size of the competitor's skeletal structure. Also to be considered is the shape and contour of the developed muscle and muscle groups. Conditioning refers to the level of differentiation between adjacent muscles delineating sections or fibers within the same muscle group and the degree of firmness (hardness) of muscle tone. Leanness is important but an overly dieted appearance is neither advantageous nor desirable.
- **Posing & Presentation (20% of overall score)** – Posing/Presentation score is a measurement of how well the competitor presents themselves and displays their physique on stage as well as adherence to ANBF posing guidelines. Competitors should present themselves with poise, good posture and confidence and should utilize posing that enhances their physique i.e. no overly pointed elbows, arms too far from midline of body, or inability to display symmetry (lats flared except in bikini). Competitors should be able to quickly and smoothly transition between poses. Judges should be careful not to confuse this score with the routine score, which will be scored separately. While competitors have flexibility in suit choice in many categories, poor choice of suit (e.g. a suit that obscures assets or emphasizes weaknesses) can result in a lower score in this category.

Routines and stage walks are judged separately as part of the competitor's presentation. Each routine/stage walk will be scored using the following system:

- -1 = no effort, bad choice of poses to display physique
- 0 = good overall display of physique utilizing proper choices of poses to show strengths, nice effort
- +1 = excellent display of physique, good choice of poses, entertaining routine
- +2 exceptional display of physique with exceptional choice of poses to highlight strengths, extremely entertaining routine

Individual presentations should be done tastefully and be conducive to a family atmosphere. Props and/or costumes are allowed, but should be tasteful and should not obscure the physique. The best routines and stage walks should strike a good balance between being entertaining and displaying the physique. While dancing and acrobatic moves are not explicitly required or prohibited, these things should be incorporated in a way that helps to highlight the physique rather than distract from it. Costumes and props, when allowed, should not obscure the physique. The ANBF recommends that costumes should be worn for no more than a quarter of the routine.

For pro qualifying classes where there are less than 5 competitors, judges will also score the competitors' "pro potential" through a simple yes/no vote. When considering this, Judges should not base their score on an assessment of whether the competitor could currently complete in a pro class. Rather, the judge should assess whether they believe the competitor has achieved a level of symmetry, muscularity, conditioning and posing/presentation expertise that appropriately positions them to be able to achieve a competitive pro-level physique within two years.

---

## SCORE SHEETS AND TABULATION

---

---

### SCORE SHEETS

---

Score sheets are organized by competitor number and name followed by columns labeled "Sym," "Musc/Cond" and "Posing." These columns are to be completed during the group comparisons, with each judge recording rank/placements in each of these areas. The head judge will lead the competitors through multiple rounds of quarter turns and/or mandatory poses. It is recommended that judges focus on assigning placements in just one criterion at a time, but it is up to the judge to determine in which order he or she will do that. The head judge will NOT make announcements such as "this is the symmetry round." However, it is advisable for judges to focus on symmetry during the quarter turn portion of the bodybuilding (men's and women's), classic physique, and women's physique divisions, and leave the Muscularity, Conditioning, and Posing/Presentation scoring to be judged during the mandatory sculpted pose portion.

A column for "Routine" score will also be included on the score sheet, and judges should record scores for individual routines and stage walks in this column. Judges should maintain awareness of crossovers and carry forward routine scores to subsequent classes when a competitor crosses over (the competitor will only execute the routine/stage walk once).

An additional column for “Pro Potential” will be included on the score sheet. In the event there is a pro qualifying class with less than 5 competitors, judges will mark their yes/no vote on the pro potential for each competitor in the class in this column. It is not necessary to fill in this column for non-pro qualifying classes or for pro-qualifying classes with more than 5 competitors.

---

## TABULATION

---

For each judging criteria area, the tabulator will drop the highest and lowest rank for each competitor as a safeguard against bias, whether intentional or on a subconscious level. The remaining judges’ placements are summed for each criterion. The resulting criteria scores are then combined, applying equal weights (25% each) to arrive at an overall placement score. The routine/stage walk scores are averaged across the judges and deducted from the sum of the placement score to determine a final score. The competitor with the lowest final score receives first place in the class, while the second lowest sum receives second place, etc.

In the case of a tie, the tabulator will work with the head judge to break the tie. In most cases, the tabulator will use the head judge’s score as the tiebreaker. As a back-up method, the head judge may also choose to review ALL scores (to include the high and low scores) and mark each instance when one competitor was placed higher than the other competitor. The competitor who was placed higher by the most judges will be the winner. This second method is useful in the unusual situation when there is an even number of judges and the head judge was not scoring during the competition. The tabulator will inform the Head Judge of each class where a tiebreaker is required and review the tabulation with the Head Judge before submitting final placements to the promoter. Tabulation and results of tie-breaking decisions will not be shared with competitors, coaches, or spectators during the competition or during feedback requests at the venue. Tabulation may only be released by written request to the ANBF President following the competition.

For pro qualifying classes where there are less than 5 competitors, the tabulator will tally the number of “yes” votes for each competitor in the class. If the winning competitor also receives a “yes” vote from a majority of the judging panel (e.g. three of five, four of seven, or five of nine judges), then the winner will also be awarded an ANBF pro card.

---

## CROSSOVERS

---

With crossover entries, it’s common for a number of competitors to be in the same class more than once. When judging competitors who have crossed into multiple classes within a division, it is important for judges to assess the competitors’ appearances during that specific class and not base any portion of their scoring on previous classes. However, the judge should also maintain awareness of instances when they reverse placement order between competitors from class to class and be able to explain the reasoning for it to anyone who asks about their scoring. Judges should make every effort to keep track when they change ranking order between competitors and retain the reasons in their notes.

Another common occurrence is crossover between divisions. Ideally, a single competitor would not fit the ideal for both divisions, and hence should not win both divisions. However, it is possible that no competitors in these divisions fully exemplify the ANBF standard and a single competitor may be the closest to the standard in more than one division. This outcome can look bad to competitors and

spectators, so it is important that it only occur when justified. Whenever judging competitors that crossover between divisions it is important for judges to apply the criteria for the specific division that is being judged. Judges should note the reasons for the competitor's placement in the context of those criteria and be able to explain the reasoning for their placement in that context.

---

## VIOLATION OF POSING GUIDELINES

---

ANBF posing guidelines include specific guidance designed to keep the event tasteful and facilitate direct comparison of physiques by the judges. The ANBF understands that some violations of the ANBF posing guidelines are due to inexperience or differences between organizations. The head judge may, at their discretion, correct the competitors. The head judge should give two to three warnings to the amateur competitors, but only one warning to professionals. If the competitor (or competitors) fails to adjust when corrected, then judges are instructed to address this in their scoring. Throughout this guide, we have tried to provide guidance as to which criteria should be impacted by posing violations. Typically, the impact is to the "Posing/Presentation" score which accounts for one-fourth of the competitor's placement. So, while a posing violation should cause a lower placement, it will not necessarily lead to a loss. However, if the posing violation also presents the competitor's physique in a way that makes it difficult to judge, for example, muscularity, then the posing violation will have a greater impact.

NOTE: Competitors who are overly suggestive, bent over in their rear stance or not following other ANBF posing guidelines may, at the discretion of the head judge, be corrected. If the competitor fails to adjust when corrected, then judges are instructed to address this in their scoring (see previous section on scoring). This applies to group comparisons as well as individual stage walks.

The ANBF posing guidelines are included within the summary of each division's guidelines outlined below. Photographs illustrating acceptable posing are also included on the ANBF website at [www.anbfnatural.com](http://www.anbfnatural.com) and all ANBF judges should review those photographs as part of their preparation for judging.

---

## ANBF DIVISION GUIDELINES

---

From the judges' perspective, the divisions offered by the ANBF differ mainly by the required mandatory poses the levels of muscularity and conditioning expected. This section summarizes those items for each Division. It provides photographic examples of competitors whose physiques exemplify aspects of the ANBF's ideals for each division. These photographs are intended for illustrative purpose only. Inclusion of a specific competitor's photograph in this guide should not be construed as endorsement of a specific competitor, nor implication of bias that will lead to that individual placing first in ANBF contests. Additionally, inclusion in this guide should not be taken as a specific competitor's endorsement of the ANBF.

---

### BIKINI

---

---

#### MUSCULARITY AND CONDITIONING

---

Bikini competitors should display:

- A slight level of muscularity;
- Full/round shoulder caps;
- Visible quad development;
- Visible hamstring development;
- Full, round, firm glutes;
- Should **NOT** display an abundance of muscle size
- Overall healthy and fit muscle tone;
- Visible abdominal definition;
- Visible quad definition;
- Visible hamstring definition;
- Full, round, firm glutes with visible tie-in to hamstrings
- Should **NOT** display deep cuts, striations, or overly dieted look;
- Should **NOT** display deeply drawn-in faces or stringy-looking muscularity (an emaciated look).

---

## POSING

---

- **GROUP COMPARISONS** - Each class will be brought to front center stage and guided through quarter turns to display physiques from the front, left, back, and right. Mandatory poses will be performed as follows:
  - **Front Stance** - Both feet should remain in alignment on the designated line on the stage (i.e. no staggered stance). Hip can be slightly twisted to the side, but competitors should be careful not to be overly twisted so that the judges are unable to see their number. One hand may be on the hip if desired.
  - **Rear Stance** - Both feet should remain in alignment on the designated line on the stage (i.e. no staggered stance). Legs should not be crossed and competitors must not bend over or turn to look over their shoulder when performing the rear pose. One hand may be on the hip if desired
  - **Side Stance** - The side poses are flexible and competitors should use the stances they feel display their physiques in the most favorable manner. Feet may be together or one may be slightly in front of the other; knees (or a knee) may be straight or bent; hands may be at the side or one or both may be on the hip. Competitors may twist at the waist to turn their upper torso toward the judges. Stances should be fairly relaxed and competitors should not appear to be flexing.
- **INDIVIDUAL STAGE WALK** - Bodybuilding-type poses, and fitness moves (like push-ups) should be avoided. An overly bent over back pose is considered by the ANBF to be in bad taste, and judges are instructed to assign the competitor a lower score for their stage walk if this pose is executed during the walk.



## EXAMPLES OF THE PREFERRED ANBF BIKINI LOOK



FIGURE

## MUSCULARITY AND CONDITIONING

In general, the **figure competitor** should demonstrate visible muscle development, separation and conditioning without striations. Figure competitors should display:

- A degree of muscularity greater than bikini but less than women's physique is sought; however, excessive mass is not desired.
- Well-defined muscles that flow evenly.
- Round, full delts that flow into the biceps and triceps.
- A taper in the lats flowing into the oblique with fluid lines into the sweep of the upper thigh.
- Visible quad development.
- Visible hamstring development.
- Full, round, firm glutes
- Visible abdominal separation
- Visible separation between delts, biceps and triceps
- Visible quad/hamstring separation
- Round, firm glutes with visible tie-in to hamstrings

- These words can be helpful to assess what should not be descriptive to the ideal physiques in this division: Ripped, shredded, peeled, striated, dry, diced, hard, vascular, grainy, massive, thick, dense, etc.

Note: Figure competitors should not display deeply drawn-in faces or stringy-looking musculature (an emaciated look).

#### EXAMPLES OF THE PREFERRED ANBF FIGURE LOOK



be allowed so long as these are not the majority of poses in the routine..

#### POSING

- **GROUP COMPARISONS** - Each will be guided through quarter turns to display physiques from the front, left, back, and right. Mandatory poses will be performed as follows:
  - **Front/Rear Stance** - The front and rear stances are to be with head and eyes facing the same direction as the body, heels and toes together, knees can be soft, but should not be overly bent. Arms should be no more than 2 inches from the competitor's hip (front and side) and should be relaxed from the elbow down through the fingers. Lats should be spread wide as to accentuate the v-taper. Shoulders and chest should be high, but not hunched toward the ears.
  - **Side Stance** – In the side stances (left and right), the head and eyes are facing the same direction as the body (to the side), heels are together or front foot may be

shifted slightly forward of the rear foot (no visible space between the feet). Both legs should be straight and competitors should not bend one knee (front or back). Competitors may twist slightly at the waist, while keeping in mind that the twist cannot be overly done. Twist only slightly enough that the rear shoulder (furthest away from the judges) can be displayed. The front arm (closest to the judges) must not be moved any further than the midline of the hip.

- *INDIVIDUAL STAGE WALK* - Fitness moves (like push-ups) should be avoided. Bodybuilding poses should be avoided, although a few open-hand sculpted poses will

---

## WOMEN'S PHYSIQUE

---

---

### MUSCULARITY AND CONDITIONING

---

In general, the women's physique competitor should demonstrate visible muscle separation and some cuts without striations. Women's Physique competitors should display:

- Overall aesthetics and look that is found in a figure competitor, however significant level of muscularity which is greater than that of the figure competitor is desired
- Overall conditioning intermediate to that of a figure competitor and that of a bodybuilder, with some visible striations.
- Well-defined muscles that flow evenly.
- Round, full delts that flow into the biceps and triceps.
- A taper in the lats flowing into the oblique with fluid lines into the sweep of the upper thigh.
- Significant quad development.
- Significant hamstring development.
- Full, round, firm glutes.
- Visible abdominal separation
- Visible separation between delts, biceps and triceps
- Visible quad/hamstring separation
- Round, firm glutes with visible tie-in to hamstrings
- These words can be helpful to assess what should not be descriptive to the ideal physiques in this division: Ripped, shredded, peeled, dry, diced, hard, massive, etc.
- Note: Women's Physique competitors should not display deeply drawn-in faces or stringy-looking muscularity (an emaciated look).

---

### POSING

---

- *GROUP COMPARISONS* – Each group will first be guided through quarter turns to display physiques from the front, left, back, and right and then taken through rounds of mandatory sculpted poses. Quarter turn transitions should be fluid with no stiff, jerky, military-style or overly suggestive movements.
  - **Front/Rear Stance** - The front and rear stances are to be with head and eyes facing the same direction as the body, heels and toes together, knees can be soft, but should not be overly bent. Arms should be no more than 2 inches from the competitor's hip (front

and side) and should be relaxed from the elbow down through the fingers. Lats should be spread wide as to accentuate the v-taper. Shoulders and chest should be high, but not hunched toward the ears.

- **Side Stance** – In the side stances (left and right), the head and eyes are facing the same direction as the body (to the side), heels are together or front foot may be shifted slightly forward of the rear foot (no visible space between the feet). Both legs should be straight and competitors should not bend one knee (front or back). Competitors may twist slightly at the waist, while keeping in mind that the twist cannot be overly done. Twist only slightly enough that that the rear shoulder (furthest away from the judges) can be displayed. The front arm (closest to the judges) must not be moved any further than the midline of the hip.
- **Mandatory Sculpted Poses** – Following the quarter turns, competitors will be asked to display each of the following open handed sculpted poses. Side poses will be performed on both the right and left side. At the discretion of the head judge, competitors may be asked to only display their favorite side for chest and triceps poses.
  - **Front Double Biceps** – Open hands displaying flexed biceps with one leg posted to the side and flexed to accentuate the quad.
  - **Side Triceps with Leg Extension** – Hips facing the right or left of the stage, with the competitor's upper body slightly twisted to face the judges. The leg closest to the judges should be extended and flexed to display the quad with the rear leg bent. Hips should be pushed back and chest should be high. Competitors may hold the arm facing the judges by reaching behind the back to display the triceps or they may place the rear hand on the hip and twist forward with the arm closest to the judges flexed with the palm down to display the triceps.
  - **Side Chest with Arms Extended** – Hips facing the right or left of the stage with the leg closest to the judges extended and flexed to display the quad and the rear leg bent. Hips are pushed back. Arms are extended out in front of the competitor's body with one hand placed over the other and the rear shoulder tilted upward to open the chest and display the chest to the judges.
  - **Rear Double Biceps** - Open hands displaying flexed biceps with one leg posted to the rear and out to the side and flexed to display the hamstring.
  - **Abs and Thigh** – Hands reached behind the competitor's head and abs flexed (air blown out) with one leg extended forward and flexed to display the quad.
- **INDIVIDUAL ROUTINES** – Routines should be used to show the competitors individuality using posing, dance moves, etc. Routines should be done tastefully and be conducive to a family atmosphere. Props and/or costumes will be allowed, but should be tasteful and should not obscure the physique.

## EXAMPLES OF THE PREFERRED ANBF WOMEN'S PHYSIQUE LOOK



## MEN'S PHYSIQUE

### MUSCULARITY AND CONDITIONING

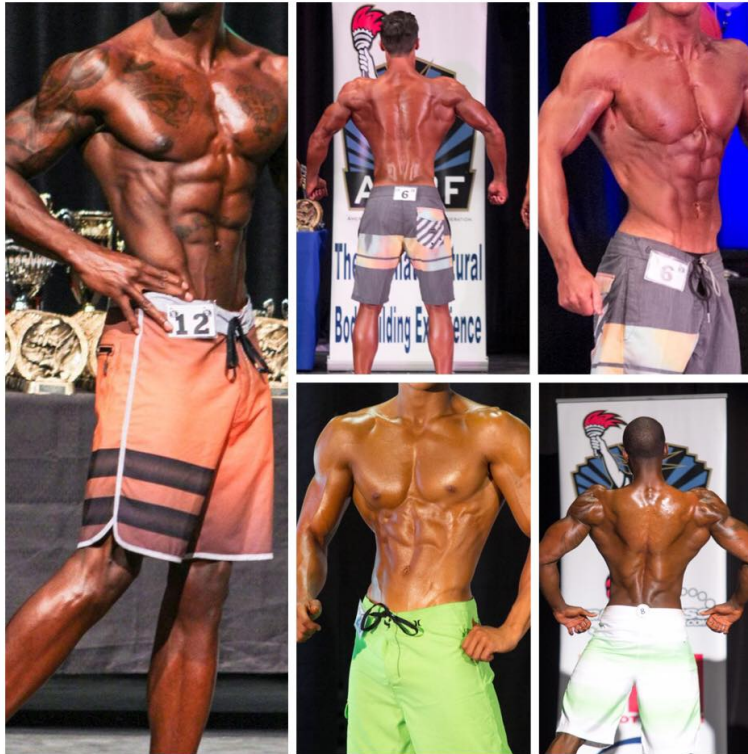
Leanness is important but an overly dieted appearance is neither advantageous nor desirable. Men's Physique competitors should display:

- A significant level of muscularity; however excessive muscularity that would qualify as bodybuilding will be scored down accordingly.
- Well-defined muscles that flow evenly throughout the physique.
- Rounded delts that flow into the biceps and triceps.
- A taper in the lats flowing into the oblique with lines that flow evenly to the upper thigh. Visible ab separation.
- Visible separation between delts, biceps and triceps
- These words can be helpful to assess what should not be descriptive to the physiques being judged in this division: Ripped, shredded, peeled, striated, dry, diced, hard, vascular, grainy, massive, thick, dense, etc.



## EXAMPLES OF THE PREFERRED ANBF MEN'S PHYSIQUE LOOK

---



## POSING

---

- **GROUP COMPARISONS** - Each class will be guided through quarter turns to display physiques from the front, left, back, and right. Mandatory poses will be executed as follows:
  - **Front/Rear Stance** -The front and rear stances are to be performed with one hand on the hip with the opposite leg extend outward.
  - **Side Stance** - The side poses are flexible. Competitors should use the stances they feel display their physiques in the most favorable manner. Feet may be together or one may be slightly in front of the other, hands may be at the side or one or both may be on the hip. Competitors may twist at the waist to turn their upper torso toward the judges.
- **INDIVIDUAL STAGE WALK** - Fitness moves (like push-ups) should be avoided. Bodybuilding poses should be avoided, although a few classic sculpted poses will be allowed so long as these are not the majority of poses in the routine.

## CLASSIC PHYSIQUE

---

### MUSCULARITY AND CONDITIONING

---

Leanness is important but an overly dieted appearance is neither advantageous nor desirable. Classic Physique competitors should display:

- A slightly more muscular look than men's physique but less than bodybuilding especially in the lower body;
- A physique that has good structure but is not overwhelming in any areas and flows from muscle group to muscle group;
- Shoulders and lats that create an X-frame look and create a balance with the waist and lower body. Biceps and triceps should be comparable in size in relation to the rest of the physique.
- A V-taper created by the lats visible from front and back to create an X-frame that flows into the abs and oblique area from the front and the lower back from the rear.
- Visible abdominal separation;
- Visible separation between delts, biceps and triceps;
- Visible quad/hamstring separation;
- Full, round detailed muscles;
- These words can be helpful to assess what should **NOT** descriptive to the physiques being judged in this division: Ripped, shredded, peeled, striated, dry, diced, hard, vascular, grainy, massive, thick, dense, etc.
- Should **NOT** display stringy-looking muscularity (an emaciated look).

### EXAMPLES OF THE PREFERRED ANBF CLASSIC PHYSIQUE LOOK

---

*COMING SOON*

---

### POSING

---

- **GROUP COMPARISONS** - Each class will be guided through quarter turns and sculpted poses to display physiques from the front, left, back, and right. Mandatory poses will be executed as follows:
  - **Front/Rear Relaxed Stance** - Head and eyes should face the same direction as the body with heels and toes together. Knees can be soft, but should not be overly bent. Arms should be no more than 2 inches from the competitor's hip (front or side). Lats should be spread wide as to accentuate the v-taper. Shoulders and chest should be held high, but not hunched toward the ears.
  - **Side Relaxed Stance** – Head and eyes should face the same direction as the body; heels may be together or the front foot may be shifted slightly forward of the rear foot (no visible space between the feet). Both legs should be straight or competitor can have a slightly soft knee. Competitors may twist slightly, but keeping in mind that the twist should not be overly done. Twist only enough so that the rear shoulder (facing away from the judges) can be displayed. The front arm (facing the judges) must not be moved any further than the middle of the hip.

- **Front Double Biceps** – this should be performed in a way that accentuates the competitor’s physique best. The vacuum pose was popular in the era that inspired this division, but it is not expected. When considering competitors executing differing versions of this pose, judges are instructed to give no more weight to one style of pose vs others, but rather to consider whether that choice of pose appropriately accentuates the competitors best features.
- **Side Chest** – Foot closest to the judges should have a spiked calf about the midline of a planted rear foot. The back leg should press against the front leg to present the hamstring. Back arm should be pressing against the chest to present fullness with hand placement near the wrist on the lead arm. A slight turn of the back shoulder may be used to create a fuller appearance, but should not be over dramatized.
- **Rear Double Biceps** – calf should be spiked to show definition. Hamstrings should be tightened to show definition. Lats should be opened wide without any pinching. Glutes will remain covered with the required posing trunks (i.e. no adjustment of the suit to reveal the glute will be allowed).
- **Abs and Thigh** - this should be performed in a way that accentuates the competitor’s physique best. The vacuum pose may be used but it is not expected. One quad should be spiked, abs should be flexed (vacuum optional) and arms behind the head. When considering competitors executing differing versions of this pose, judges are instructed to give no more weight to one style of pose vs others, but rather to consider whether that choice of pose appropriately accentuates the competitors best features
- **Classic Pose of Choice** – Victory pose, archer, single bicep with other arm raised, twisting double bicep, one arm flexed and one behind head. Competitors should use the stances they feel display their physiques in the most favorable manner.
- **INDIVIDUAL STAGE WALK** - Routines should be used to show the competitors individuality using posing, dance moves, etc. Routines should be done tastefully and be conducive to a family atmosphere. A few classic sculpted poses should be included.

---

## BODYBUILDING

---

### MUSCULARITY AND CONDITIONING

---

Bodybuilding competitors should display:

- Greatest level of muscularity is as compared to all other categories.
- Well-defined muscles that flow evenly.
- Full, round delts that flows into the biceps and triceps.
- A taper in the lats that flow into the oblique with fluid lines into the sweep of the upper thigh.
- Visible muscle separation and deep cuts with striations.
- Visible ab cuts.
- Visible cuts between delts, biceps and triceps.
- Visible quad/hamstring separation.
- Round, firm glutes with visible tie-in to hamstrings.
- Muscles should be full and round.



- The following are examples of common terms used in the bodybuilding industry. These words can be helpful to assess what should be descriptive to the physiques being judged in this division: Ripped, shredded, peeled, striated, dry, diced, hard, vascular, grainy, massive, thick, dense, etc.
- Should not display stringy-looking muscularity (an emaciated look).

---

## POSING

---

- **GROUP COMPARISONS** – After the individual presentations for each competitor is complete, the class is brought to front center stage and is guided through quarter turns to display physiques from the front, left, back, and right and then will be guided through rounds of sculpted poses. All transitions should be fluid with no stiff, jerky, military-style or overly suggestive movements. Competitors are not allowed to alter the fit of their suit by hiking up the back or pulling up on the sides during front/rear lat spreads.
  - **Front/Rear Stance** - The front and rear stances are to be with head and eyes facing the same direction as the body, heels and toes together, knees can be soft, but should not be overly bent. Arms should be no more than 2 inches from the competitor's hip. Lats should be spread wide as to accentuate the v-taper. Shoulders and chest should be high, but not hunched toward the ears.
  - **Side Stance** – In the side stances (left and right), the head and eyes are facing the same direction as the body (to the side), heels are together or front foot may be shifted slightly forward of the rear foot (no visible space between the feet). Legs can be straight or slightly bent to accentuate quads and hamstrings. Competitors may twist slightly at the waist, while keeping in mind that the twist cannot be overly done. Twist only slightly enough that that the rear shoulder (furthest away from the judges) can be displayed. The front arm (closest to the judges) must not be moved any further than the midline of the hip.
- **Mandatory Sculpted Poses** – Following the quarter turns, competitors will be asked to display each of the following close-handed sculpted poses in no particular order. Side poses will be performed on both the right and left side. At the discretion of the head judge, competitors may be asked to only display their favorite side for side poses after an initial round displaying both sides.
  - Front Double Biceps
  - Front Lat Spread
  - Side Chest – both sides
  - Side Triceps – both sides
  - Rear Double Biceps
  - Rear Lat Spread
  - Crab Most Muscular (men only)
  - Hands on hip Most Muscular
  - Abdominals with one thigh

- In classes where competitors are very close in comparison, additional poses may be used to help differentiate physiques; these include:
  - Side serratus – both sides
  - Right/Left Thigh (flex and rotate)
  - Right/Left Hamstring
  - Calves (up on toes)
- Judges should focus on evaluating symmetry/proportion primarily during the relaxed quarter turns and muscularity during the mandatory pose round.  
Definition/Conditioning should be evaluated throughout the group comparison. Posing and presentation are not explicitly considered during group considerations, but judges should make note of posing that either helps or hurts the competitor in displaying their muscularity or symmetry as an item for feedback.

*INDIVIDUAL ROUTINES* – this portion will immediately follow the group comparisons. Routines should be no more than 60 seconds in length and should be used to show the competitor's individuality using posing, dance moves, etc. Competitors are permitted to utilize other poses (in lieu of or in addition to mandatory poses during their individual routines

## EXAMPLES OF THE PREFERRED ANBF BODYBUILDING LOOK



## MAINTAINING OBJECTIVITY WHILE JUDGING

---

It is the intent of every ANBF judge to perform their duties as fairly and as objectively as possible. However, everyone has subconscious biases that can inhibit their objectivity. Judges should make every effort to maintain awareness of their individual biases and to avoid applying them when judging. Common situations that can inappropriately influence placements include:

*PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS* - Judges should avoid scoring competitors favorably or unfavorably due to any type of personal relationships they may have with the competitors or impressions of that competitor gained from social media. In these situations, judges must strive to evaluate and place those individuals objectively using ANBF criteria.

*PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS* - Judges should avoid scoring competitors based on their reputation and/or previous placements. Judges should treat each competition as if it is a first appearance and evaluate and place the Competitor based on their appearance on that particular day. Additionally, when competitors are registered in multiple classes and/or divisions, it is important for judges to treat each class as a separate appearance and not allow the appearance in an earlier class to influence their placement in the current class.

*PERSONAL PREFERENCES* - The ANBF values the fact that each judge brings their own individual tastes and opinions to the table, and does not believe that all judges should place competitors exactly the same way. However, judges should be careful that their own preferences do not interfere with judging all competitors fairly according to the ANBF guidelines. Judges should assign placements based on the scoring criteria established by the ANBF. This can be a challenge when the judge is also a competitor. Most competitors have favorite body parts and “weak” areas that they focus on improving. Because of this, judges who are also competitors can sometimes inadvertently place a higher priority on certain traits and as such, conscious attempts should be made to avoid this.

*AUDIENCE REACTIONS* – Sometimes a competitor receives an extremely positive response from the audience. However, the amount of audience response a competitor receives during judging is often the result of other factors unrelated to how their physique looks. Judges should ignore cheers and comments from the audience participation (which is encouraged) and score only according to the ANBF criteria.

## HOW TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK

---

After the show, competitors may contact judges for feedback. Some competitors are happy with placements and are looking for constructive criticism while others may be unhappy and inquire about the reasons for their placements. Regardless of why a competitor contacts a judge, it is important to provide honest, accurate and valuable feedback.

Good feedback starts with good notes. After a long day of judging it can be easy to forget the strengths and weaknesses of each competitor, especially at shows with a larger number of participants. In order to provide detailed feedback, it is important for judges to take detailed notes. Judges are encouraged to develop their own systems for taking notes. It can be difficult to take detailed notes during the group comparisons, but every effort should be made to note reasons for placements when the class has competitors who are very close in comparison. Judges should feel free to ask the Head Judge for more time during group comparison so they can make those notes. Individual routines/stage walks provide the best opportunity to take detailed notes on each individual. Do not throw your notes away or leave them at the venue – hold on to them. Expect to keep your notes for 2-3 weeks after the show because some competitors will wait that long to request feedback.

Overall, it is extremely important for judges to show the competitors they care and give specific and actionable feedback. A personal touch from judges who are often top Pro competitors and role models in the industry means a lot to many competitors. Their feedback can have a huge impact on the competitor's experience and when done in a positive, encouraging way it will lead to many repeat visits to the ANBF and other natural bodybuilding stages.

---

#### TIPS FOR GOOD FEEDBACK\*

---

- Read a competitor's email at least twice before drafting a response. Many competitors will ask specific questions. Make sure to read the email thoroughly to ensure their questions or concerns are addressed.
- Be sure to provide feedback that addresses short-term and off-season improvements.
- Read the Judging Guidelines. Refer back to this handbook to ensure feedback given is in alignment with the ANBF's guidelines. Judges should not provide feedback that is in contradiction to established guidelines. That can make the judge and the organization look bad.
- When providing feedback it is important to provide a balance of strengths and weaknesses.
- In order to set a positive tone, start with a competitor's strong points. Starting with the positive helps remind competitors of what they have accomplished. Some examples are:
  - "What I admire about your physique..."
  - "I'm impressed with the way you ..."
  - "I really enjoyed your..."
  - "I really liked how you..."
  - "What stood out to me the most was ..."
- Provide suggestions for improvement. After addressing a competitor's strong points, be sure to state weaknesses. When drafting this part of feedback, be sensitive to people's feelings. Give honest, helpful, and appropriate suggestions. Remember that good judge's feedback can help a competitor grow while bad feedback can break their spirit or discourage them from returning to the ANBF.
- Use personal statements whenever possible, describing your reactions.

---

\* Adapted from OCB Judges Packet  
Version 3.1

- "I felt..."
- "It seemed to me..."
- "I wonder if..."
- "I sense..."
- Avoid "but" and "however" - "You started out very strong, but/however..." The "but" and "however" negates everything said before. Make two separate sentences or connect them with "and."
- End on a positive note. After pointing out strengths and areas for improvements, it is time to wrap up. A judge doesn't want a competitor to feel discouraged and the ANBF wants the competitors to feel positive about doing future ANBF shows. Therefore, try to end feedback on a positive note. For example:
  - "Good luck at your next show..."
  - "Overall I think [insert something positive]"
  - "I look forward to seeing you compete with the ANBF again..."
- Try to limit your comments to a competitor to their specific strengths and weaknesses. Some competitors will ask you why another competitor was placed ahead of them. Sometimes responses to this question invite further argument from the competitor and/or their coaches regarding the placements. Instead, try to limit your comments to the competitor to provide feedback on their performance on the day and refrain from making comments that invite comparisons to the others on stage.
- Do not speculate on the scoring of other judging panel members or "bad-mouth" other judges. When responding to competitors, remember that the final placement is essentially an average of multiple judges' opinions. Sometimes you will disagree with the final placements due to this averaging. The other judges on the panel may have seen things differently than you did, and that is acceptable to the ANBF. Denigrating the placements of other judges reflects negatively on the entire judging panel and the organization. Also, please do not make statements such as "Well, I had you in first, so I don't know what happened." Statements such as these invite comparisons of your scores to other judges' scores, implies poor judging on the part of your ANBF judging panel colleagues, and reflects poorly on the organization.
- If you must offer feedback on a competitor's tan, put the feedback into context so the competitor understands the impact of the tanning issue. It is not acceptable to just tell the competitor that their tan was not dark enough, splotchy, the wrong color or lacking sheen. Be sure to explain how the tan issue impacted your ability to see their physique. Without the information on how judging is impacted by tan, competitors can feel like they are being judged for something unrelated to their physique. This can lead to feelings of resentment to both the judge and the organization, and cause the competitor to discount all of the judge's feedback.
- Spell and grammar check and use complete sentences. Judges are not being judged by their ability to spell; however, misspelled words and poor grammar may make it difficult for a competitor to understand the feedback. Also, many judges draft their feedback on mobile devices and as a result may lapse into shorthand/social media-appropriate language. This tendency can lead to unclear and potentially confusing feedback and should be avoided.

- Be careful about giving overly specific training or nutrition advice. There is no way to definitively know just by looking at a competitor whether they have been doing specific exercises. It can be very frustrating to a competitor to be told they need to do something they're already doing. Instead of volunteering unsolicited training or nutrition advice, either wait for the competitor to ask you, or ask them first what they have been doing to train before offering suggestions. A corollary to this is to be careful not to "bad-mouth" or denigrate specific trainers' methods. Instead offer an alternative approach stated as an opinion ("I find that..." or "For me, X works" or "I prefer to...").
- Do not use profanity.
- Think before sending. Sometimes judges are in a rush to respond to competitors and may miss something, or write something that can be misinterpreted. After drafting an email, (especially if a competitor needs significant improvements or is aggressive in disagreeing with the decision), it may be beneficial to wait a few hours before responding. Re-reading an email a little later can give a judge an opportunity to reflect on how the feedback may be received by someone else.