

# How to Judge an Amtgard Arts and Sciences competition

and

## Definition of Categories

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with quotes from

Grand Duchess Tawnee Darkfalcon

**As a Judge you are asked to follow a criteria that has worked before.**

**Garbing:** Hopefully you will have a model who is not the maker showing the most important aspect of the garment, can it be worn comfortably or at all. Next you want to check for seams, are they finished in a period way. I.E. give extra points for: are they pressed open and stitched down, are they flat felled (blue jean seam, very difficult), are they french seamed (sewn twice, very difficult, lots of work), you may see a serged seam (t-shirt seam) this is not difficult and take no time to do no extra points are earned here. It is a permanent seam that is strong and good but no effort was involved as in the other methods.

If it is a first effort garment and the person has never received garbers for their work you may see frayed edges. This is the only time that points do not need to be taken away from the person if the overall look is excellent.

However, a perfect score is still for all the work done at its best including no frayed edges. Everything else on the garment is icing on the cake. Construction is number one. So, you are looking for:

- 1) Construction
- 2) Durability
- 3) Looks

**Needlepoint/Beadwork:** This is a category that is difficult to judge because usually the pattern is store bought. The work is always beautiful and hard to do no matter where the pattern was obtained. A perfect score can be reserved for those who went through the trouble of designing the pattern in their heads that is larger than 18x24 on 11 or smaller aida cloth (special cross-stitch cloth that has 121 x's per inch, linen, or everyday fabric). The speed at which someone does this is 10 x's per minute. This type of piece will take 4 to 6 months to do. Small favor size pieces that are original works are also difficult but be sure to compare the work of these against the others.

There you wanted a guide you got it. You decide who deserves what score, just keep the above reference in mind. So here you are looking for:

- 1) Originality
- 2) Difficulty
- 3) Time
- 4) Looks

**Art:** This category encompasses several types.

**2-D art:** Here is all the flat art. This can be the most beautiful of all the categories or the ugliest. Every judge has had to figure out their own way of judging this category. But for those who have not, my best advice is to

discuss the piece with your fellow judges especially if one of them has their Masterhood in this category. You are looking for:

- 1) Originality
- 2) Difficult
- 3) Looks

**3-D art:** This category is for sculptures, jewelry, some weapons, shields, etc. Again you want to look for originality more than anything else. You can discuss what you see with your fellow judges, compare notes. The time put in to each aspect is also important. Each item should have documentation on how they were made.

You are looking for:

- 1) Originality
- 2) Difficulty
- 3) General Appearance

**Cooking/Brewing:** This is another category that can enlighten you or make you sick. The taste of something is the most important than the looks. Unless it is in the Brewing category. Only the brewer really knows so documentation is very important. Your score will have to depend on their documentation. You are looking for:

- 1) Taste
- 2) Originality
- 3) Presentation

**Devices/Favors:** See Garbing above. Documentation for the Device is the best way to judge this category.

**Bardic:** This category is always judged on a personal preference. It has always been a complaint of many that the judging is not done well. Sir Pebyr wrote a great article on performance. If you have read this then refer to it for this category or better yet go grab him and ask. To most if the piece entertained it has done its job. But then there is the newest member that had to work up the nerve for weeks to perform and did not do well with the piece but stood his ground and finished it without a mistake. You may wish to judge him on effort. You are looking for:

- 1) Performance
- 2) Originality
- 3) Effort

**Sciences:** The process of the constructed items is important. When it comes to weapons your first concern will be is it safe. If the weapon is unsafe you have the option of finding the person who made it and asking them if they would rather enter it in 3-D art. If the answer is no then the item in question should not receive a score for it failed to pass the safety test, it is not a legal weapon. You are looking for:

- 1) Construction
- 2) Originality
- 3) Time taken
- 4) Effort
- 5) Durability
- 6) Presentation

### **Definitions of Categories**

The following are definitions and my synopsis of definitions from an article on *Winning Crown Qualifications*. The article was written by Grand Duchess Tawnee Darkfalcon, her definitions are in italics:

**2-D art:** *(drawings, paintings, banners, scrolls, etchings on other works) A piece which is really 3-D, such as a pillow or banner, can be entered in this category if all you want judged is the actual picture. This category has seen the destruction of people's work. Don't just bring out an unframed pencil sketch, unpainted and free to be caught up by a tree or flippant wind. Pencil drawings are hard to see. Color pencils, matte boards, ink pens are cheap.*

**3-D art:** (jewelry, sculpture, coronets, ceramics, toys, games, etc.) Basically if its three dimensional, and you want it judged for its artistic qualities rather than the complexity of construction, it can be entered here.

**Photography:** (black and white, sepia, or color) This category is neither period or appropriate but it has its place. We need to document the growth of our great organization thus the new category. Photographs must be tasteful, no nudes. You must have developed the film yourself and printed the photos to get full credit for this category. If you are not the technician you will only receive partial credit, 30%. If you do not indicate on your entry form that you are the technician as well as the photographer it will be assumed that you will receive 30% of the credit on your score.

**Bardic:** (instrumental, dance, oratory) *Both instrument and piece should be period if possible. If the instrument isn't period, the piece should certainly be so. If you are playing your own work, tell the judges.* For Oratory most entries consist of poetry recitations and theatrical soliloquy. *If you are reciting your own work, tell the judges. If possible, you should memorize your entry, and perform it with vigor.* If you are singing remember that carrying a tune has become very important of late. Have a musician play along with you for confidence, you'll be surprised how wonderful you really sound. Ask the great Bards in your area for a copy of their articles about singing or just pick their brains 'til there's nothing left.

**Garbing:** (court, fighting garb that is not armor such as monster garb and class garb, color including hats, masks, gauntlets, cloaks, boots, pouches, etc., needle work) *The very finest of Amtgard garb has passed through this category. Feel free to have someone else model your garb, but choose your model wisely. Flash and sparkle are popular in moderation, but even court garb should be reasonably functional. If there's something special about your entry, tell the judges about it. Accessories where you can, and don't forget the details. Color and fighting garb are the most basic art to Amtgard. This is a competition to use durable materials and practical designs in an imaginative fashion. Lame's and other fine fabrics are more durable than your might guess, don't be shy about trying new ideas. Simple variations on standard designs can be real winners* Grand Duchess Tawnee stresses that a judge will count off for a model that is wearing jeans and sneakers, under the garb. Needlework is a category that is near and dear to me. If you designed and stitched the item yourself then you receive full credit. If your entry was preprinted on the cloth or plotted by someone else then you get 50% of the credit. If you have ever had to draw out your own pattern you understand.

**Food:** (cooking, vintners, desserts, beverages, herbal remedies) *Always bring serving and eating utensils and dishes.* This includes bread if it is a jam or butter, crackers if it is cheese, sipping cups for your wines and liquors, etc. *If your food is spicy, the judges appreciate a cup of water. Appearance is important. Be practical in your choice of entries, often cooking entries must sit around for a couple of hours.* I will have a schedule put together in June 1994 so that you can time your cooking. I might be able to provide an area for cooking close to the judging area for freshness sake. Last year we had a great deal of homemade liquors that went over big and strong.

**Writing:** (prose, poetry, informative) These are to be submitted as typed, double-spaced pages with at least 5 copies enclosed in a page protector. DO NOT submit originals as there may be comments written on your entries. Word quantities are suggestions. Go over them at your own risk. All items will be judged on Amtgard period. Things that win: *short, interesting, humor, or humorous renderings of actual events* for prose; *helpful useful articles,* or processes used to create your entry for informative; *humorous, serious, but try to choose a subject other than affairs of the heart* in poetry.

**Active Construction:** (period machines such as clocks, spinning wheels, looms, crossbows, muskets, wagons, etc.) *Active construction entries are constructs with moving parts.* Musical instruments such as a mandolin could also be entered because of the adjustable tuning pegs.

**Passive Construction:** (staves, feast gear, real steel) *This category shares a solid border with 3-D art. If you want your work judged on the quality and difficulty of construction, rather than simple beauty, enter it here.*

**Heraldry:** (devices, rose) Devices are your personal or company or household symbol on a tabard, banner, or scroll. Being that we are a fantasy society and have not established in many corpora's proper heraldry I ask

that you present your devices in creative descriptions that can be documented. Just make a copy that I can keep of your documentation and add it to your entry form with due credit to the source. This way we can begin the wheels of progress. *The Rose consists of banners, coronets, belts, favors, publications, games, etc. Entries in the Rose should somehow improve the club, whether in appearance, informative value, etc.*

**Sages:** (corpora/reeves test, debates) The Corpora/Reeves test sample will be sent out in May. The Corpora test will be over basic information that is uniform to all the groups. The Reeves test will be over the 6th edition rules. The debates are the fun part of this category. You will be paired up with a random opponent and given a topic to debate. If there are sides to take you will be told who is pro and who is con at that time. All topics will cover the period before 1650, here are your topics: When were the Knighthood's of Amtgard separated into the different categories and why. Is the Earth flat or round. The new world was discovered in what year and by whom, the Vikings, Italians, Indians, who, when. Who was the most powerful military force of the old world, the Romans or the Mongols. Is the Earth the center of the Universe. Amtgard weapon construction-are they practical, safe. What is the best defense Sword and Shield Vs Spear. You will have 10 minutes to debate. Good Luck!

**Armor/Shield/Weapon Construction:** (*Amtgard legal weapons and shields, leather, chain mail, plate mail, scale mail, quilted, studded*) *Entries in this category should be Amtgard legal. Breakthroughs in technology notwithstanding, the pretty stuff often wins. It should be both attractive and functional, and meet all safety requirements. The use of period materials find favor with the judges. Judges like a good soft weapon, too. We've seen hundreds of swords, dress yours up to enter it.*

**Engineering Construction:** (Siege weapons, furniture, camping equipment) Siege Weapons are becoming more and more popular. This is an excellent opportunity to show off your craftsmanship and research abilities. *This is a good category because it makes the Kingdom sparkle at Intergroup events.* This usually consists of period items that dress up the campsite. Due to the difficulty of getting around the site to judge your item I am willing to allow photos and maps to your campsite of your entry so long as the item is at the event and we can find it.

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