

Entering in an Arts and Sciences Competition

Arts and Sciences is an important part of the SCA. The Arts and Sciences competition is a time for those who have learned the skills to further our recreation to display their works, to get helpful feedback and to inspire others. The role of the judge in a competition is to give helpful, honest feedback to encourage the artisan to take the next step along their road to re-creation. As an entrant, the best way to ensure a satisfying experience is to give the judge the tools they will need to give adequate feedback (and we don't mean pens).

As you can see when you read through this information, **documentation is very important**. It is the guide with which a judge will use to determine how well you succeeded in your entry. If you do not have the information for the judges, they will be forced to rely on their own knowledge of your endeavor. While we try to have informed judges, sometimes new judges (who may be unfamiliar with your area of expertise) may have to be relied on for judging. We do want new judges to learn, but it is certainly preferable to have informative documentation for them to use when judging your project. Take a look at the criteria below and check to see if your documentation covers those points. If your documentation is lacking information that the judge will need to correctly judge the other criteria, or if they simply want more detailed information, they are being encouraged to seek you out. Please make yourself available to them.

Documentation: (10 points)

Give score based on the following:

- Description of entry including some of the following: country of origin, period of origin, characteristics of style for that period
- Lists materials and skills used to complete the project
- Lists methods and tools used to complete the project
- Research and reference: cites at least one source and one visual or descriptive reference, or two of either.
- If there is not enough information available to finish with the other judging criteria, you are **encouraged** to seek out the entrant and ask them whatever is needed to further judge this item.

Creativity and Authenticity: (10 points)

Efforts to achieve a completely authentic item (except those items that are unsafe) will score best. Judge on appropriateness, cultural consistency, and period effect. This is balanced with creativity in materials and methods. When authenticity is not available, was a creative substitute used to give a period effect?

- Form/function— is it a period item and does it work in a period way (apparent knowledge or application of period practice)
- Methods of creation— appropriate to period or are consistent and give a period effect
- Materials used- period or reasonable substitutions that give a period effect
- Design, style— is the design or style period or give a period effect

Complexity and Difficulty: (10 points)

Rank the ambition of the entry, not the workmanship, based on the following. Keeping in mind that not all period items are complex.

- Scope of endeavor-attention to detail, overall presentation, etc.
- Difficulty/variety design elements used
- Difficulty/variety of techniques attempted, including research and material preparation
- Difficulty/variety media, materials, tools used
- Extent of original work or ideas

Workmanship: (10 points)

Rank the quality of execution and success of the entry. Judge based on the following:

- Effective use of tools, methods—appropriate application of design
- Techniques, handling of materials, etc., how well the heraldic design translates into the media used and the finished product
- Design: period aesthetics, motifs, design (note: period sense of balance and proportion is not necessarily the same as modern) etc
- Form/Function: does it do what it should do and look as it should look?
- Period styling or personalization or special embellishment

Judge's Observation (5 points)

Evaluate the work as a whole, rating the aesthetic effect and appeal beyond the mere technical proficiency. Consider how you react to the entry (intuitive response) and other items not previously addressed. This is the 'wow' factor; following are some examples to consider, but the category is not limited to these.

- Completely authentic from the ground up -OR-
- Unique or outstanding display or attempt at period presentation -OR-
- Logical creative endeavor within a period methodology (creativity/individuality) -OR-
- You want this piece for your birthday