

Texas Gourd Society
2026 Lone Star Gourd Festival
Competition Guidelines, Rules and Application
Oct. 23, 24, 25, 2026

WHO MAY ENTER – Anyone may enter.

ENTRY FEES (per entry)

TGS Members – Early: entry form postmarked by **Oct 10, 2026** - **\$5**

Late: entry form received at the door or postmarked after deadline – **\$10**

Non-members – Early: entry form postmarked by **Oct 10, 2026** – **\$12.00**

Late: entry form received at the door or postmarked after deadline – **\$17.00**

Youth Division (Under 17 Years) – Early: entry form postmarked by **Oct 10, 2026** – **No Fee.**

Late: entry form received at the door or postmarked after deadline – **\$1.**

Please note: It is a TGS policy that there are no refunds on canceled entries. Early entry is encouraged to speed up drop off. You may change categories at the time of drop off if your entry has changed and does not meet the original category criteria.

AWARDS

BEST OF SHOW: Best Overall

TEXAS AWARD 2nd place to Best of Show

NOTE: Both BEST OF SHOW AND TEXAS AWARD will be chosen before any other ribbons are awarded and removed for any other awards other than People’s Choice.

PEOPLES’ CHOICE: Voted on by the public. Winner announced on last day of show.

BEST OF DIVISION: Awarded in Divisions 1, 2, 3, and 4

CATEGORY AWARDS: First, second and third place awards may be given for each category. Note that if there are fewer than three entries in a category, a first-place award may not be given if the judges feel the entries present do not meet the quality necessary for a first place award.

VIP AWARD: Award chosen by a VIP from Kerrville, Tx.

The **OPEN THEME** this year is **WILDFLOWERS**.

DELIVERY/PICKUP OF ENTRIES

Competition entries will be received at the Hill Country Youth Event Center

Entry drop off – Thursday Oct 22, 2026 12:30-4:00 PM

Entry pickup – Sunday Oct. 25, 2025 2:00 pm, from the competition area.

Any unclaimed entries will become the property of the Texas Gourd Society.

The **Delivery/Pick Up Form** is required for entries not being personally delivered or picked up. It may be sent with the entry application or accompany the delivery. No deliveries will be accepted without this form.

No mailed gourd entries will be accepted.

GOURD DETAILS

- Entries previously entered in any AGS sanctioned Texas Gourd Society competition will not be permitted.
- Gourds must predominate (more than 50%)
- The inside of a cut gourd must be cleaned of membranes and sanded. Any method or materials may be used to finish the inside of the gourd. Rims not trimmed must be sanded smoothly.
- When the stem is left on the gourd as part of the entry, it must be finished in relation to the entry.
- Work not meeting category criteria will not be judged, or may be moved to a proper category.
- Craft/artwork for each entry must be the work of one person who is the entrant.
- It is permitted to include a stand or hanger provided by the entrant to support crafted gourds. The stand or hanger will not be considered in the judging of the gourd unless it is permanently attached.
- If the gourd or sculptural piece of multiple gourds is completely covered (with clay, beads, paint, etc.) and cannot be seen, the artist must provide photos of the work before it was covered so the gourds can be identified by the judges.

JUDGING OF CRAFTED/ART GOURDS

Judging will be in accordance with the standards of the American Gourd Society Judging Handbook. The Rank Scoring method will be used for each category. The Judges will consider Originality: Overall design/theme, craftsmanship, accessories, artistic quality and Workmanship: Neatness and quality, color/finish, balance/scale, overall appearance.

Note: If the quality of the gourd used is poor, judges will reduce their rank-order decision for that gourd as they deem appropriate.

CRAFTED/ART GOURD DIVISIONS

Definitions for categories are listed at the very end. Read Carefully. **GOURDS MUST PREDOMINATE**

NOTE: You may only enter in one Division: Div 1, Div 2, Div 3, Masters. It is your responsibility to decide which Division you need to enter based upon the Division descriptions. You may have only one entry per category, but **you may enter as many categories as you wish within your Division.** Deciding where to place your entries works on the honor system. Please be honest with your entries. Anyone may enter a Division that they feel is *higher* than their abilities. If you wish to try for a level *higher*, go for it, but entrants should strive to make the competition fair by not entering at a level *below* their abilities. Again, please read the descriptions carefully. **People entering as Div 1, Div 2, or Div 3 may enter the Open Craft/Decorative Division.**

YOUTH DIVISION

Crafted/Art Gourds. We welcome submissions from young people! Awards will be presented in each age group and Youth Open Category. Any technique and material allowed. Each entrant allowed to enter their age category plus the Youth Open Category. Show attendance is not required.

Y-1 10 years and under

Y-2 11 to 17 years

Y-3 Youth Open. For 2026 the category is Wildflowers. This is a mixed media category.

GROWERS DIVISION

Must be grown by the person entering competition. Gourds must be clean.

G-1 Best Looking Gourd, Fresh or Dried – Judged on Cultural perfection, Trueness of Type, Cleanliness, and Size/shape/color/variety.

G-2 Hand Manipulated/Jim Story – Gourds that have been knotted, spiraled, etc... Judged on Cultural perfection, Cleanliness, Manipulation, and Difficulty. The winner will be eligible for the AGS Jim Story award.

There is more information on the Jim Story Award on the American Gourd Society website.

DIVISION 1 <Novice>

Division 1 is for those artists who are new to the art form have been in gourd art no longer than three years and are not accomplished in the use of basic techniques. Entrants must not have won a major award in a gourd show or juried art show. If you have won a major award in a juried gourd art show or won Best of Novice Division previously, you must move up to Division 2. The use of copyright free patterns may be used. Gourds from a seminar or class MAY be entered in this division.

Categories:

- 1. Pyrography**
- 2. Mixed Media**
- 3. Coiling/Weaving/Fiber**
- 4. Carved**
- 5. Painted/Dyed**

DIVISION 2 <Intermediate>

Division 2 is for those artists who understand and use basic techniques. Only copyright-free patterns are acceptable but original works are highly encouraged. Entrants must not have won a major award in a gourd show or juried art show. If you have won a major award in a juried gourd art show or won Best of Division 2/Intermediate Division previously, you must move up to Division 3. You may have sold gourds or have taught a gourd class for a fee. Gourds from a seminar, class or pattern MAY NOT be entered in this level.

Categories:

- 6. Pyrography**
- 7. Mixed Media**
- 8. Coiling/Weaving/Fiber**
- 9. Carved**
- 10. Southwest/Western**
- 11. Whatever**

DIVISION 3 <Advanced>

Division 3 is for artists who have progressed to a more complicated level of work and have a good grasp of multiple techniques and finishing skills. They are creating more original work and are ready to compete with a wider range of competitors. They may have taught class but are not showing in major galleries and have not won top awards in art/gourd competitions. If you have won Best of Division 3/Advanced Division previously, you must move up to Division 4. The work is of original design, not from a seminar or class (unless they taught the class).

Categories:

- 12. Pyrography**
- 13. Mixed Media**
- 14. Coiling/Weaving/Fiber**
- 15. Carved**
- 16. Southwest/Western**
- 17. Whatever**

DIVISION 4 <Masters>

Division 4 - Artist's work shows excellent use of all techniques and finishing skills. The work is of original design, not from a seminar or class (unless they taught the class). Their work may be shown in galleries, previously won top awards in art/gourd competitions, or have reached the level of fine art. **NOTE:** Artists entering this Division are **NOT** allowed to enter in the Open Fine Craft/Decorative Division, but **ARE** allowed to enter in the Open-Themed Yearly Category.

Categories:

- 18. Pyrography**
- 19. Mixed Media**
- 20. Coiling/Weaving/Fiber**
- 21. Carved**
- 22. Southwest/Western**
- 23. Whatever**
- 24. Mask/Wall hanging**
- 25. Sculpture/Figure**

OPEN DIVISION FINE CRAFT/DECORATIVE CATEGORY

This division is open for anyone in Divisions 1, 2 and 3. Entries are eligible for Best of Show and other major awards. GOURDS MUST PREDOMINATE.

Categories:

- 26. Mask or Wall hanging**
- 27. Functional/Wearable**
- 28. Musical**
- 29. Sculpture/Figure**

OPEN-THEMED CATEGORY (changes yearly) Open to artists from ALL DIVISIONS.

30. For 2026 - WILDFLOWERS

This entry can be created using any gourd art technique and may be made from one or multiple gourds. This can be serious or humorous—enjoy this category! Gourds must predominate. This category is eligible for Best of Show and Best of Show Runner-up, but not for a Best of Division award,

since it is an Open Category and is open to artists from **ALL** Divisions. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place ribbons will be awarded.

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS FOR ALL DIVISIONS

This is an alphabetical listing of all Crafted/Art Gourd Categories for all Divisions. Not all of the categories are included in each Division, each year with the exception of the Youth Division who may enter in any of the categories below for their age group. Check the Entry Application for the Division you plan to enter for the categories that are offered in that Division for this year.

If an entry doesn't seem to belong in the category where the entrant placed it, it is up to the discretion of the Competition Committee to place it in the correct category. If the entrant already has an entry in that category, it will be up to the entrant to decide which entry will be kept in the competition.

Copyrighted designs, such as Disney characters or copies of other artist's work, may not be used on entries and will not be accepted, unless written permission is granted by the artist or copyright owner. Copyright-free designs may be used.

NOTE: The subject of the categories must predominate. Gourds must predominate.

BIRDHOUSE, BIRD FEEDER, FUNCTIONAL or DECORATIVE – May be functional or nonfunctional. If birdhouse is functional, it must have proper hole and drain for type of bird.

CARVED – HAND-CARVED, POWER CARVED, CUT, CHISELED, CHIPPED, AND/OR GOUGED, INCLUDING CUT OUTS – Use of lasers to cut or carve is NOT allowed. Other media/embellishments are allowed that enhance the gourd, but carving **must** predominate.

COILING/WEAVING/FIBER – Any material may be used, natural or man-made. Any technique may be used, such as weaving, Tenerife, sewing or coiling, etc. Gourd may be finished with any medium or as mixed media. Fiber may be attached to the rim or body of gourd. Focal point must be on Coiling/Weaving/Fiber. Gourd **MUST** be more than 50% of entry.

FUNCTIONAL/WEARABLE – Wearable such as purses, hats, jewelry, etc... Sets of jewelry must be displayed on a stand, board, box or case. Method of display will not be judged. Functional gourds such as lamps, candle holders, serving dishes, etc... If lamp shade and base are permanently attached, the entire piece is judged.

GOURD MASKS AND WALL HANGINGS – Must be ready to hang on the wall or have a display stand. Mounting on board, canvas, or in a frame is allowed. Means of display will not be judged if it not permanently attached. If a mask, eyes may or may not be cut out.

MIXED MEDIA – Must include two or more media, such as carving, painting, pyrography, etc... Any type finish is allowed and embellishments are allowed.

MUSICAL – Any instrument. Gourd must predominate. Instrument must be functional.

PAINTED/DYES – used of Acrylics, colored pencils, or dyes

PYROGRAPHY – Translucent finish allowed on burned areas. Other media, finishes, and embellishments that enhance the gourd are allowed on areas that are not burned. Pyrography must show and must predominate.

SOUTHWEST/WESTERN– Southwest - Designs are often geometric and inspired by Native Americans of the Southwest. Western - Anything depicting the Southwest such as landscape, cowboys, or leather tooling.

SCULPTURAL/FIGURE – One or more gourds may be used. May be a figure or sculpted piece. Any kind of figure, including Spirit Dolls.

UNUSUAL OR INNOVATIVE USE OF MATERIAL – The use of any material in an unusual or innovative way. A great category to use your imagination to be creative and to push your boundaries.

WHATEVER – For gourds that do not fit in a category. Also, the judges may place any gourd that does not meet the requirements for a category in which the entrant placed.

SELLING YOUR GOURDS

The Texas Gourd Society is not responsible for selling your entries. If you wish to sell your entries, please have your contact information and/or booth number (no prices) on neatly printed cards and place them next to your entry. Please remember that Sales Tax must be collected, and is the responsibility of the seller. For help with Texas Sales Tax Information, go to www.window.state.tx.us or call 1 (800) 252-5555. Any item sold must remain in the competition area until close of the show. Delivery arrangements to the buyer must be arranged between the seller and the buyer.

Entries entered in competition are available for photography or sketching by any person or organization. However, they may not be used by anyone for any income or profit producing activity. Fair use (newsletters, chapter websites) is allowed. This is in accordance with the American Gourd Society Judging Handbook.