

#  NFCG **V**irtual CHAMPIONSHIP RULES

## COMPETITION LEVELS

Competition is open to all wood sculptors of any artistic level. There are four levels of competition: Open, Intermediate, Novice, and Youth. The wood sculpture must be of a fish or representation thereof and may contain other animals or marine life as habitat if desired.

**Open:** This level represents amateur and professional artists whose carvings demonstrate excellence in all aspects of the competition criteria. Entrants will compete for certificates and NFCG Titles in all categories.

**Intermediate:** This level includes artists who have refined their carving skills beyond the Novice Level. Intermediate carvers compete for certificates, and NFCG Best of Show Intermediate awards.

Carvers who have won **one** Best of Show Intermediate Division or **two** Best of Intermediate Division awards (at any local or national show) must move up to the Open Level. Carvers who display advanced skills beyond this level are encouraged to move up to the Open Level.

**Novice:** This level is reserved for entry-level artists. Novice carvers compete for certificates, and NFCG Best of Show Novice awards.

Carvers who have won **one** Best of Show Novice Division award or **two** Best of Novice Division (at any local or national show) must move up to the Intermediate Level. Carvers who display advanced skills beyond this level are encouraged to move up to the Intermediate Level.

*Novice and Youth levels are the only levels that may also include mentor/teacher instructed entries and entries made from purchased patterns available commercially.*

**\*Youth**: This level is reserved for entry-level carvers who are age 17 or under at the time of carving completion. Youth carvers compete for certificates and Best of Show Youth awards. There is no fee for Youth entries. Youth eligible carvers may compete in Novice, Intermediate, or Open Levels instead of Youth if they choose.

**DIVISIONS | CATEGORIES**

**Decorative Life Size Division Categories:**

· Salmon/Trout/Char – rainbow, brook, brown, cutthroat, golden, grayling, and all salmon species.

· Freshwater game fish – bass, pike, muskies, walleye, crappie, perch, bluegill, sunfish and pan fish.

· Other fresh water fish – Includes all other freshwater fish not classified elsewhere, including such

 species as gar, sturgeon, carp, koi, paddlefish, and shad.

· Tropical reef fish – wrasses, butterfly’s, angel’s, damselfish, squirrelfish, groupers, eels, and other

 primarily reef-dwelling species.

· Offshore game fish –bluefish, dolphin, mahi mahi, mackerel’s, tunas, dories, jacks, and bill fish.

· Costal game fish - striped bass, bonefish, tarpon, permit, redfish, sea trout, snook, and bonita.

· Miscellaneous saltwater fish - Includes all sharks, rays, flounder, halibut, seahorse, and leafy dragon.

 *Categories can have classes established for all life size decorative fish if there are three or more fish in that*

 *species.*

### Decorative Miniature Division Categories

Fresh Water Fish

Salt Water Fish

### Wall Mount Division Categories

Fresh Water Fish

Salt Water Fish

**Natural Finish Division Categories:**

Interpretive Fish Carving

Realistic Natural Finish

**Free Style Division Categories:**

Smoothie

Transitional Sculpture

**Antiques Division**

 Antiquated in design and presentation.

 Ancient or old-fashioned.

**Fish Decoy Division**

Decorative style only, at this time.

### Aquatic Mammal Division

Whales, dolphins, seals, otters, etc.

 **RULES & REGULATIONS**

**General Rules and Information**

1. **Eligibility:** Any carving entered at a previous National Virtual Fish Carving Championship is no longer eligible for any future NFCG competitions.
2. **Levels:** A carver can only enter one level of carving competition at each show. A carver cannot enter two levels (i.e. as both the Open and Intermediate Levels, with different carvings).
3. **Multiple Entries:** Multiple entries are allowed in the various divisions and categories of the carver’s current competition level.
4. **Level Advancement:** At the National Virtual Fish Carving Championships, a carver can elect at any time to move up in classification. However, once a carver has voluntarily advanced to the Intermediate or Open Levels of competition, that carver cannot re-enter as a Novice or Intermediate carver at future NFCG competitions.
5. **Individual Work:** Entries must be original in design and concept and must be the work of the individual whose name the carving is entered in at the NFCG competition. If after judging it is determined that this policy has been violated, the award will be rescinded.
6. **Nameplates:** The name of the artist should ***not*** be visible. The name must be taped over or otherwise obscured to prevent judges from seeing the name.
7. **Entry and Registration Fees:** The National Virtual Fish Carving Championships will be held each year in the month of June. Entrants will be responsible for paying the appropriate entry and registrations fees as established by the National Virtual Fish Carving Championships.
8. **Critiques:** Critique sheets will be electronically sent to participants upon request. Carvers are encouraged to seek judge’s critiques in the spirit of skill and technique improvement.

 **SPECIFIC DIVISION RULES**

#### Decorative Life Size Division

Entries will be judged on technique/craftsmanship, artistry, and interpretation of the essence of the species, artistry, overall presentation, and originality. A carving should emphasize form, content, and movement rather than a realistic duplication of the fish. It should be presented in a style that provokes thought.

1. The entry is based on the whole fish and will consist of one or more complete fish of any species - with emphasis on creating an innovative and artistic composition.
2. Entries are to be made of wood. Other materials may be used for habitat and structural purposes, however, they must be hand -formed (with the exception of eyes). Pre-painted eyes of glass, plastic, or other materials may be purchased or formed and are eligible in this division at all levels.
3. Other materials such as bondo, epoxies, veil material and other adhesives products may be used in the insertion of fins, constructing eyes, scale texturing, and the construction of the habitat.
4. No casting or molded products of any type may be used.
5. Large fish may compete in Decorative Life Size Division as a reduced version, provided the carved fish are at least 18 inches in length. There is no maximum size. For example, a 12-foot, 600-pound marlin or a 6-foot, 80-pound salmon would be carved so that the minimum size is 18 inches and reflects the mature anatomy of the life-size fish.

#### Decorative Miniature Division

Entries will be judged on technique/craftsmanship, artistry, and interpretation of the essence of the species, artistry, overall presentation, and originality. A carving should emphasize form, content, and movement rather than a realistic duplication of the fish. It should be presented in a style that provokes thought.

1. The entry will consist of one or more fish of any species with emphasis on creating an innovative and artistic composition.
2. Entries are to be made of wood. Other materials may be used for habitat and structural purposes however, they must be hand -formed, (with the exception of eyes). Pre-painted eyes of glass, plastic, or other materials may be purchased and are eligible in this division at all levels.
3. Other materials such as Bondo, epoxies, veil material and other adhesives products may be used in the insertion of fins and the construction of habitat.
4. No casting or molded products of any type may be used.
5. Entries for Miniature Division must be one-half size or less and must be 8 inches or less in every dimension for the fish. Both criteria must be met.

#### Wall Mount Division

Entries will be judged on technique/craftsmanship, artistry, and interpretation of the essence of the species, artistry, overall presentation, and originality. A carving should emphasize form, content, and movement rather than a realistic duplication of the fish. It should be presented in a style that provokes thought.

1. For the category of Wall Mount, any artist with an entry not suitable for tabletop display is required to provide the appropriate attachments that will safely aid in the hanging of the sculpture. If in doubt contact the hosting show for requirements.
2. Entries are to be made of wood. Other materials may be used for habitat and structural purposes however, they must be hand -formed, (with the exception of eyes). Pre-painted eyes of glass, plastic, or other materials may be purchased and are eligible in this division at all levels.
3. Other materials such as bondo, epoxies, veil material and other adhesives products may be used in the insertion of fins and the construction of habitat.
4. No casting or molded products of any type may be used.

###  Natural Finish Division

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#### Interpretive Fish Carving Category

Entries will be judged on technique/craftsmanship, artistry, and interpretation of the essence of the species, artistry, overall presentation, and originality. A carving should emphasize form, content, and movement rather than a realistic duplication of the fish. It should be presented in a style that provokes thought.

1. Carving may be entrant’s choice from any fish.
2. Entry is to be entirely of wood with the exception of the base. The base may be of other material and will be considered as part of the sculpture. No artificial eyes can be used in this division. If a natural finish carving has glass eyes it can be entered in the Freestyle Division.
3. If a supporting pedestal under the base is needed it will not be considered as part of the sculpture.
4. Interpretive Wood Sculpture entries have no size restrictions.
5. Stains and other finishes may be used as long as they do not completely cover or block the grain of the wood.

#### Realistic Natural Finish Category

Entries will be judged on craftsmanship, artistry, interpretation of the essence of the species, overall presentation, and originality. A carving should emphasize form, content, and movement yet be more like a realistic duplication of the fish than the Interpretive Fish Carving Category. It need not include scale renderings or fin rays. It should be presented in a style that provokes thought and wonder.

1. Subject may be entrant’s choice from any fish.
2. Entry is to be entirely of wood with the exception of the base. The base may be of other material and will be considered as part of the sculpture. No artificial eyes can be used in this division. If a natural finish carving has glass eyes it can be entered in the Freestyle Division.
3. If a supporting pedestal under the base is needed, it must be provided by the artist and it will not be considered as part of the sculpture.
4. Realistic Natural Finish entries have no size restrictions.
5. Stains and other finishes may be used as long as they do not completely cover or block the grain of the wood.

##### Free Style Division

Entries will be judged on technique, craftsmanship, essence of the species, artistry, and overall presentation. It is our hope that this Freestyle Division will release the creative efforts of fish carvers that may have felt restricted by other rules and class requirements for competition.

1. Entries are to be made at least partially of wood but may be supplemented by non-wood materials beyond the decorative division restriction of metal for structural support or glass eyes. Any materials are permitted and should be specified in the entry registration. All parts of the sculpture must be hand-formed and original. Castings and molds of existing fish or habitat items (such as insects or seashells) are not permitted.
2. Entries in this category may include paint or other materials that cover or replace wood for structural or other creative uses. Items may be bronzed, transition from driftwood into decorative, or include some metal which is hand-formed into the piece.
3. Opaquely painted fish without scales or fin rays, commonly known as “smoothies,” and any other fish carving which cannot meet other division requirements, may compete in this division. Again, it is our hope that the Freestyle Division will release the creativity of fish carvers that may have felt restricted by earlier rules and class requirements for competition.
4. If a base is used, it may be made of any material and construction, however, it will be included for judging on technique, craftsmanship, artistry, and overall presentation.
5. Any artist with an entry not suitable for tabletop display is required to let show staff know two weeks ahead of the show for logistics and set-up options.

#### Smoothie Category

1. This category is for life size fish or entries that fit the reduced scale criteria, which contain no carved or burned scale or fin ray details.
2. Details of the head may be highly detailed if desired.
3. Painting of the highest quality is encouraged.

#### Transitional Sculpture Category

1.This category is for fish that are either free-form, three-dimensional art (from caricature, to chip carving, to northwest Indian, etc.), or functional art (fish head paper weights, lamps, bookends, etc.).

2.Entries are to be made at least partially of wood but may be supplemented by non-wood material beyond the decorative division restriction of metal for structural support or glass eyes. Any materials are permitted and should be specified in the entry registration. All parts of the sculpture must be hand formed and original, castings and molds of existing fish or “habitat” such as insects or seashells, are not permitted.

**Antiques Division**

Antiquated in design and presentation. Ancient or old-fashioned.

**Fish Decoy Division**

Decorative only at this time.

**Mammals Division**

Whales, dolphins, seals, otters, etc.

###  \*Youth Carving Level

This competition is to encourage youth to become engaged in the art form of fish carving, and to provide a venue to present their carvings to the public and give them competition experience. Entries may be done under the supervision of an adult, but the youth must do the carving and painting.

Entries will be judged on craftsmanship, accuracy, and composition and design that depicts the essence of the species.

##### Youth Division(s)

A separate Youth Division will be established if there are enough entries to fill one or more of the categories with 3 or more entries. Classes will be established in a manner similar to other levels, provided there are enough carvings to do so. For example, if there

are three or more entries from competitors over 15 years old, and three or more are 14 years old or younger, the youth division will be split into two age categories divided into 15-17 age (Youth Division Class 1), and 14 and under (Youth Division Class 2).

The division categories will be: Decorative Life Size, Interpretive, and Miniatures.

Youth Award Exception: Youth Level Best of Division certificates may only be awarded if 3 or more fish are entered.

1. Entrants must be 17 or younger at the time of the show opening.
2. Prior entries into National Fish Carving Championship youth competition are not permitted.
3. Entries must be made of wood. Glass or plastic eyes are permitted as are other materials for habitat and structural purposes. Hand-formed habitats are encouraged but not required for youth entries.

#### How National Fish Carving Championship Titles are Determined

There will be NFCG Titles in all Divisions at the Open Level except for the Freestyle Division.

Open Level Divisions are elite divisions for those carvers whose work demonstrates the highest level of artistry and technique. Judging standards are the most demanding with the very best carvings earning a NFCG Title.

All NFCG Title winners in each Division, in Open Class, will compete for Best in Nation, Second in Nation and Third in Nation titles. The NFCG judges will make the final decisions. Once a Best in Nation piece is selected, the second placed carving in that Division (if there is one), will move up to compete for Second Best in Nation with the other Division first-places winners. Third in Nation will be selected using the same procedure.

*National titles will be awarded at the discretion of the judges. If no carving is worthy, a National Title will not be given.*

##### Determining Best of Category and Division Awards

Carvings are grouped by Level, then by Division, then by Category, and then by Class if warranted. A class may be created provided three or more of the same species are entered in the category and at least three or more fish remain. If so determined by the judges the carvings of the same species will be grouped into one class and the remaining entries will be grouped into a second class. Each class will be judged and first, second, and third place certificates will be awarded. Once the class certificates are awarded, the three best fish in the category will receive first, second, and third place certificates. The first-place fish will be recognized as Best of Category.

##### Best of Division

Best of Division winners are selected from the Best of Category winners, a minimum of three entries must be entered to be eligible for the award. All NFCG Title winners in Open Class in each Division will compete for Best in Nation, Second in Nation and Third in Nation titles. The NFCG judges will make the final decisions.

*Upon availability cash or other sponsored awards beyond certificates may be awarded.*