



**SkillsUSA Maryland**  
**2026 State Championships**  
*Nail Care Competition Update (3/9/26)*  
**Saturday, April 18, 2026**  
**Carroll County Career and Technology Center**

Please Note: ALL contestants must provide their own UV lamp/light source and extension cord for the gel application portion of the contest. Acrylic systems must be odorless to comply with state standards. No exceptions.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

<b>8:00 – 8:30</b>	<p><b>Contestant &amp; Model Check In</b>  Check in with contest chair and judges and submit your <b>Resume</b>, <b>Written Description</b> of your nail art theme and a printed <b>Color Photo</b> of the nail art to be created during the contest. Photo may include props. Models <b>DO NOT</b> need to submit a resume!</p>
<b>8:30 – 9:00</b>	<p><b>Contest Briefing – (house rules, clock, expectations, etc.)</b>  Set Up &amp; Kit Check  Set Up for Acrylic Application</p>
<b>9:00 – 10:00</b>	<p><b>Acrylic Application (Odorless Acrylic Products Only – Acrylic products with odor cannot be used!)</b>  The model’s right hand will be used to sculpt nails with forms, <b>no tips</b>, using a two-tone, french-manicure technique. Acrylic powder color expectations are white or natural for the free edge, pink or clear for the nail bed.  Based on salon-quality nails, the following will be evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Acrylic Application: product control, clarity, no bubbles, smile line, c-curve, arch, thinness, and continuity.</li> <li>● Finished Appearance: clarity, smoothness, shape &amp; length, consistent finger to finger, and proportionate to hand, high-gloss shine (no nail oil), and no cuticle involvement</li> </ul>
<b>10:00 – 10:10</b>	<p><b>Judging of Acrylic Sculpted pink and whites. Clean-up of Acrylic application.</b></p>

10:10 – 10:20	<b>Setup for Gel &amp; Tip Application.</b>
10:20 – 11:20	<p><b>Gel &amp; Tip Application</b>  The model's left hand will have nail tips applied, blended, and overlaid with a Gel system. All items necessary to complete five nails with a tip and light-cured gel overlay.  Based on salon-quality nails, the following will be evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tip Application: fit, alignment, and blending. Tip and glue do not have to come from the same manufacturer. Any tip may be used.</li> <li>• Gel Application: product control, even coverage, the apex in the stress area, and thinness.</li> <li>• Finished Appearance: clarity, smoothness, shape &amp; length consistent finger to finger and proportionate to hand, high-gloss shine, and no cuticle involvement.</li> </ul>
11:20 – 11:30	<b>Judging of Gel &amp; Tip application. Clean-up of Gel &amp; Tip application.</b>
11:30 – 12:00	<b>LUNCH</b>
12:00 – 12:10	<b>Set Up for Polish &amp; Nail Art Application.</b>
12:10 – 1:10	<p><b>Polish &amp; Nail Art Application</b>  Two coats of Dark Red Crème <b>Lacquer</b> Polish are to be applied to the model's right hand. The following will be evaluated: Neatness, Coverage, Evenness, No cuticle involvement  Items allowed for the flat nail art application include: Acrylic paints, polishes/lacquers, colored powders (acrylic and dip), gel polish, rhinestones sizes 20ss and under, glitters and dusts, and adhesives, i.e., gel topcoats/glue  Note: No pre-prepared items can be used; items are limited to those intended for use on nails.  Nail art is to be applied to all 5 fingers of the model's left hand. A specific theme should carry through on all 5 fingers and in a written description. Diagrams of the art you intend to create can be used, however, diagrams are limited to the finished product and may not be step by step instructions. Photos are allowed. All nail art must be created using gel polishes/gel paints, lacquers and/or acrylic paint Only!  <b>Top Coat may be used as a sealer, ONLY ON NAIL ART!!!</b> No props allowed.  The following will be evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity; theme, follow through of theme, artist expression, and color coordination.</li> <li>• Level of Difficulty; complexity of design.</li> <li>• Precision; neatness and clarity of lines.</li> <li>• Theme Continuity</li> </ul>
1:10 – 1:20	<b>Judging of Polish &amp; Nail Art Application Clean-up.</b>

<p><b>1:20 – 2:00</b></p>	<p><b>Oral Presentations</b></p> <p>Contestants will give a 3-5 minute presentation on the benefits of Natural Nail Care. You will direct your presentation to the judges as if they were a client who came to you for a consultation. Props may be used.</p> <p>Contestants should use props as cheat sheets or to sell the client on a natural nail service.</p> <p>The presentation should cover the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recommended natural nail care services.</li> <li>● Results the client should expect.</li> <li>● The home care products the client would need to purchase and use to obtain these results.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2:00 – 2:30</b></p>	<p><b>Contest Debriefing</b></p> <p><b>Contestants, Models, Teachers, and Advisors are welcome and encouraged to attend.</b></p>

**COMPETITION DRESS AND GUIDELINES:**

Note: The Competitors must wear their official competition clothing. Official SkillsUSA white cosmetology smock or apron (optional) can be worn with a white T-shirt or dress shirt, black dress slacks, and black work or dress shoes (non-skid and completely enclosed, no open-toe or openheel).

Note: Model clothing includes a black T-shirt, black dress shirt or polo shirt, black dress slacks, and black work or dress shoes (non-skid and completely enclosed, no open-toe or openheel).

1. All competitors must bring a model for the competition.
2. Competitors are not permitted to touch their models before the competition begins or between segments.
3. Conversation between competitor and model is limited. Communication with observers, judges, and other competitors is prohibited during the competition.
4. Disqualification or the assessment of penalty points may occur for the following:
  - a. Any rule not followed, with no exceptions
  - b. Leaving competition area before completion of the nail care competition (applies to both competitor and model) without proper escort
  - c. Unauthorized use of a product that is not allowed
  - d. Any product that appears to have been altered
5. Competitors should come prepared to do the following:
  - a. A three- to five-minute mock nail care consultation on the benefits of natural nail care. The competitor will address the judges as if they are a new client of theirs in the salon. Props may be used. The consultation should include the following points:
    - 1). Recommended natural nail care services
    - 2). Results the client should expect
    - 3). The home care products the client would need to purchase and use to obtain these results.
  - b. All five (5) fingers of the model's right hand are to be sculpted with acrylic using forms, no tips, in a two-tone/French-manicure (pink and white) technique. Two or more colors of acrylic may be used. Nail Care, 2024-26 • 5
  - c. All five (5) fingers of the model's left hand are to have nail tips applied and overlaid with a light-cured gel or a light-cured hybrid acrylic/gel. Any type of tip may be used.
  - d. Two coats of dark red crème lacquer/polish are to be applied to the model's right hand.
  - e. Flat nail art is to be applied to all five (5) fingers of the model's left hand.

- 1). A specific theme is to be carried through on all five fingers.
- 2). Each competitor must submit a copy of their nail art theme's written description in a sheet protector along with a photo of the nail art
- 3). Diagrams of the art to be created can be used; however, these are limited to the finished product and may not be step-by-step instructions.
- 4). Judging will be on the overall balance of the use of different mediums and the creative use of the mediums to support the theme, as well as the attention to detail.
- 5). Once judging is complete, props may be used to enhance art for the parade of models.