

A photograph of an aerialist in a purple leotard performing a hoop routine, suspended by a rope. The background is a mix of purple and gold textures.

CIRCO Festival

APRIL 30 - May 3, 2026
Calgary, AB

CIRCO FEST 2026

Competitive Aerial Arts,
Acrobatics, and Dance Festival



OUR MISSION

Circo Festival's goal is to bring the circus performance community together and provide performance experience and constructive critiques for the growth of the next generation of circus performers.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION



All registrations will be made through Dancebug, you can find the link on our Website.

Circo Festival will be accepting registration from May 15th, 2025 - January 31, 2026.

- On January 31, 2026, the following is due:
 - All information regarding entries, which includes the performers' names, ages, pieces' titles, levels, the number of people in groups, and the categories they will attend.
 - Full Payment
 - Large Prop information
 - For Aerial Alternate Apparatus category and Manipulations, specify which apparatuses will be used.
 - For Aerial Entries: Specify whether the entry requires more than one rigging point and what rig points you'll need, if the routine has a live lift and if it requires a technician.
- This festival is non-refundable, with the following exceptions:
 - A 50% refund will be provided with a doctors note for injury or illness.
 - In the case of a pandemic or natural disaster causing the event to be cancelled, a credit will be given to rescheduled/future events.
 - Refunds will be made available for graduating seniors who cannot return the next year for Circo Festival in the event of a cancellation due to a pandemic or natural disaster.

DEPOSITS

Deposits are required to make reservations for Circo Festival. Reservations will be accepted from May 15, 2025 to October 31, 2025. This gives your studio the opportunity to reserve your place at our competition without knowing the full details of your registration.

5% Early Bird Rates will apply to the final payment for reservations made between May 15, 2025 to October 31, 2025. Once the deposit has been sent, we will send a discount code to use on your registration. It is the responsibility of the studio/individual to apply the coupon in order to receive the early bird discount when completing their registration.

Based on the estimated amount of entries from the studio, this money will be used towards your registration.

Deposit required:

- 1-3 entries: \$50 deposit
- 4-10 entries: \$100 deposit
- 11-20 entries \$500 deposit
- 21-50 entries: \$1000 deposit
- 51+ entries: \$1500 deposit

To reserve placement at Circo Festival, deposits for all entries are due by October 31, 2025, afterwards participants will need to register.

Your full payment and registration amount must be submitted by January 31, 2026. If registration is not fulfilled after this date, the deposit will be considered forfeited. There is a \$20 late fee per entry to complete registration after this date.

Studios and organizations qualify for a bulk discount for registration once they provide proof of organization ownership. Independent entries also qualify if they have 5+ registrations.



DATES AND LOCATION

Dates:

April 30 - May 3, 2026

Address:

The Grand

608 1 St SW, Calgary, AB

GENERAL RULES

- By entering the competition participants are giving their permission for any video or photographs to be used by Circo Festival Canada. These photos can be used for promotion for future year's competitions without the dancers receiving compensation or royalties.
- Performers that are sick are requested not to come to the competition and should remain home to prevent the spread of germs.
- Studios/organizations must carry their own insurance for their students. Independent entries are covered under Circo Fest Insurance.
- All performers must sign a waiver within thirty days of the event.
- All music for routines must be free of adult themes and profanity as this is a family friendly event. Music for all routines must be uploaded no later than 1 month before the event.
- There will be a spectator fee for audience members. This fee will be approximately \$17 per day with the option to purchase a weekend pass at a discounted rate. Performers and studio staff will not require a spectator ticket, they will receive a backstage pass that will allow them into the audience to support their friends and teammates for free.
- Performers, instructors, and individuals helping set up props are allowed backstage. No parents are allowed. Instructors must be wearing a backstage pass in the backstage area at all times.
- No performers or teachers are permitted in the wings unless their own entry is on the stage.
- Performers who are wanting to watch and support their friends routines should do so from the audience. The only exception to this is if they have a routine of their own scheduled within 15 minutes after their friend is on stage. Performers who are found sitting in the backstage area that do not have a routine within 15 minutes will be asked to leave as the backstage area is very small.
- Videography and photography are not permitted in the audience. Failure to follow this rule will result in the removal of the audience member, without reimbursement, as well as a point deduction from the performers score.
- Cowbells and air horns are not permitted in the audience.
- Studios are responsible for the age and placements to be accurate. Students/parents will have to provide document proof if the level or age is questioned.
- Adjudicators may make adjustments to entry level placements for any reason they see fit (i.e. if a performer was entered in Novice but is performing high level skills with strength and confidence more suited to the Intermediate level.) These changes are up to the discretion of the adjudicators and must be approved by the Circo Fest manager. If an adjustment has been made, a member of the Circo Fest staff will inform studio staff and placements for performers who were moved will be given at the adjudication of the updated level placement.



AERIALS/ACROBATICS/WHEEL RULES

- For all performers under 16: Instructors have to be present in the wing during an Aerial performance or Acrobatics performance with tosses or a minimum of three-person lifts. The instructor needs to be prepared to step in should anything go wrong, and their presence is required to help the performer.
- For Aerial Pieces: We are providing two 4' x 6' x 2" folding mats and 4' x 4' x 8" crash mat underneath the apparatus, we will have a 12 inch thick mat available upon request. It is mandatory to have two folding mats (4' x 6' x 2") underneath your apparatus during the competition, and mandatory for any competitor under the age of 16 to have 4' x 4' x 8" crash mat, there will be no exceptions to this rule. Performers are welcome to bring their own mat to use that is approved ahead of time by Circo Fest, if they do not want to use the one provided.
- For Aerial Pieces: Each piece will get 1.5 mins to set up their apparatus and 1.5 mins to take down their apparatus. This may make your piece appear at five minutes on the schedule. (This also includes setting your apparatus height).
- Live lifts will only be present in elite-level categories.
- Entries in the Novice Wheel Category may have an instructor present on the stage during the performance in case they need to step in or spot. Entries in the Intermediate or Elite Wheel Categories may have instructors present in the wings.

PROP REGULATIONS

- Props must not cause structural damage or scratching of the flooring.
- Prop time limits to set up and take down
 - All Dance & Non Aerial
 - 30 second set up for normal props and 30 second take down.
 - Productions
 - 3 minutes

PERFORMERS CODE OF CONDUCT

- No soliciting other students from other studios or talent scouting at the event.
- We encourage all performers to cheer on their fellow performers when they are on the stage. Everyone should be respectful of other studios, race, gender, level, size and skills.
- Warm-up space is to be shared by all studios. Studios are required to take turns using the space.
- Dressing rooms may be shared by multiple studios. There will be no reserving of spaces in the dressing room, and we ask that you clean up after yourself.
- Any vandalism or theft will result in immediate disqualification and you will be asked to leave the competition.
- No coaching of other students unless you have been directly asked.
- No coaching from the wings is permitted. Students must be fully prepared to perform. Instructors in the wings for Aerial or risk-taking acrobatic pieces must be present in case of emergency but not there to help from the wings.
- Respectful attitudes are required throughout the festival. Any disrespect or bullying towards staff, instructors, or other performers will not be tolerated and will result in immediate disqualification.
- Circo Festival fosters a positive environment and wants all performers to have a good experience. No gossiping or negative comments are permitted from students, parents or instructors.

ENTRY INFORMATION

AGE GROUPS

Tiny: 3-5

Mini: 6-8

Junior: 9-12

Teen: 13-18

Adult: 18+

Calculated for groups using the average age
(all ages added then divided by the number of performers)

Age calculated as of March 1, 2026

LEVELS

Novice

- 1-2 years of training in the category and/or 0-5 hours of training/rehearsals per week in any style.
- 1st year competing in any style.
- Amateur - no professional (paid) performance experience.

Intermediate

- 3-4 years of training in the category and/or 5-10 hours of training/rehearsals per week in any style.
- 2-3 years competing in any style.
- Amateur- no professional (paid) performance experience.

Elite

- 5+ years of training in the category and/or 10+ hours of training/rehearsals per week in any style.
- 4+ years competing in any style.
- Any contestants with professional (paid) performing experience required to enter in this category.



ENTRY INFORMATION



DANCE / ALL NON-AERIAL GROUP SIZE & TIME LIMITS

There is no minimum time limit, the maximum time for each division is as follows:

GROUP SIZE	NUMBER OF DANCERS	TIME LIMIT
Solo	1	2.5 mins
Duet	2	2.5 mins
Trio	3	3 mins
Small Group	4-9	3 mins
Large Group	10-14	4 mins
Line	15+	5 mins
Production	15+	10 mins

\$10.00 fee per 30 seconds of additional choreography

AERIAL GROUP SIZES & TIME LIMITS

There is no minimum time limit, the maximum time for each division is as follows:

GROUP SIZE & DIVISION	NUMBER OF DANCERS	TIME LIMIT
Solo - Novice Division	1	2.5 mins
Duet - Novice Division	2	2.5 mins
Trio - Novice Division	3	3 mins
Small Group - Novice Division	4-9	3 mins
Large Group - Novice Division	10-14	4 mins
Line - Novice Division	15+	5 mins
Solo - Intermediate Division	1	3 mins
Duet - Intermediate Division	2	3 mins
Trio - Intermediate Division	3	3.5 mins
Small Group - Intermediate Division	4-9	3.5 mins
Large Group - Intermediate Division	10-14	4.5 mins
Line - Intermediate Division	15+	5.5 mins
Solo - Elite Division	1	4 mins
Duet - Elite Division	2	4 mins
Trio - Elite Division	3	4.5 mins
Small Group - Elite Division	4-9	4.5 mins
Large Group - Elite Division	10-14	5.5 mins
Line - Elite Division	15+	6.5 mins

\$10.00 fee per 30 seconds of additional choreography

ENTRY INFORMATION



CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

Note: Maximum of three Acrobatic tricks in dance categories (with the exception of Open). Pieces with more than three will be moved to the Acro Dance category and adjudicated as such.

Acrobatic Gymnastics: Routine that uses Gymnastic discipline to perform Acrobatic Duo and Trio routines set to music with adjudication focusing on dynamic elements, balance elements and tumbling passes.

Acrobatic Dance: Routine that combines dance technique with Acrobatics elements. Adjudicated as per technique outlined in common Acrobatic dance syllabi.

AcroYoga: Routine that combines Yoga and Acrobatics. This includes many types of partner and group Acrobatics in which at least someone is lifted and may present less dance elements.

Aerial Alternate Apparatus: Routine uses an Aerial apparatus that is not considered a part of Lyra, Silks, Straps, Hammock or Trapeze.

Aerial Hammock: Routine that uses an Aerial apparatus that consists of fabric suspended from a rig point that has single piece, folded to make a loop.

Aerial Lyra: Routine that uses an Aerial apparatus that consists of a circular hoop-shape suspended from a rig point. A performer can use a lollipop or Wegg Sphere.

Aerial Silks: Routine that uses an Aerial apparatus that consists of fabric suspended from a rig point that has two fabric pieces.

Aerial Straps: Routine that uses Aerial apparatus that consists of single or two straps suspended from a rig point. The performer wraps straps around the hands and wrists. This style features strength and flexibility while manipulating the apparatus.

Ballet: Routine uses Ballet technique. Classical Ballet and Character Ballet.

Character: Routine uses music from movies or musicals to portray certain characters, without lip SINC or singing.

Contemporary: Routine uses Contemporary, Contemporary Ballet or Modern technique. May be set to instrumental and does not require a clear connection or story with lyrics (not to be confused with Lyrical).

Contortion: Routine where performers showcase their skills of extreme physical flexibility and strength.

Cultural: For all cultural/national dances and routines such as Native American hoop dancing, Irish dancing, partner Swing, Highland dancing, Ukrainian dancing, Bollywood, Cuban, West Africa, etc.

Dance Line: Routine for 15+ dancers, consists of NON-Acrobatic styles.

ENTRY INFORMATION



CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

Hip Hop: Routine has Street style, and incorporates Hip Hop music and culture.

Jazz: Routine uses Jazz technique, stylization and steps, usually danced to high-energy music.

Lip SYNC: Routine uses dance styles, more commonly musical theatre or imitation, NON-Acrobatic, and performed with lip SYNC rather than singing.

Lyrical: Routine uses a combination of Jazz and Ballet techniques. The fusion of movement is performed to showcase emotions and highlight lyrics. The Lyrical category is reserved for pieces with a clear story or emotional connection with the lyrics of the song. (This is not to be confused with contemporary and modern techniques).

Musical Theatre: Routine uses dance styles, NON-Acrobatic, and performed with singing and acting. Music volume will be lowered so we can hear singers project.

Manipulations: Routine includes juggling, diablo, and manipulating others such as smaller apparatuses, mime, and illusions.

Open: Solos or duets that do not fit in a set category. Example: dancers may have too many Acrobatic skills for a dance category or not enough for an Acrobatic category.

Tap: Routine is performed in Tap shoes, no pre-recorded Tap sounds are allowed. Music volume will be lowered so adjudicators can hear tap sounds clearly

Trapeze: Routine that uses a short horizontal bar hung by ropes or metal straps from a rig point. Acts may be static, spinning (rig from a single point) or swinging. No flying Trapeze can be accommodated in this venue.

Wheel: Routine uses an Acrobatic apparatus that consists of a Cry Wheel or German Wheel.



RIGGING INFO



Circo Festival Canada Rigging is carried out by Michael King, who is ISAIT Certified Theatre Rigging

Circo Festival will have three adjustable rig points upstage, and a live rig point downstage center set at 25ft. Only 20ft is visible to the audience. The live rig will have a manual 3-1 pulley system set up.

If you require a live lift in your pieces, please communicate via email the following by January 31, 2026:

- Whether you require a tech or have your own
- Which routines require a live lift
- The weight of the performer(s) & apparatus
- Must provide information of alternate apparatus upon registration for approval

There is a \$25 fee if you require a tech to operate your lifts.

All live lifts will receive an extra 5 minute rehearsal time in the space before the competition commences.

Our staff will set up and take down your apparatus on the stage for you. Performers or instructors can use this time to speak to the rigging technician to get the height of the apparatus adjusted.

- 1.5 mins to set up, 1.5 mins to take down
- Performers must bring their own aerial apparatus, and items (carabiners, slings, etc), required to attached to the swivel on the rig points.

There is a studio for performers to warm up and practice in. We will have a portable rig with a pulley system set up in the warm up room. Use this space to rig and rehearse at your own risk, there will NOT be a rigging technician available to assist. Please only use it if you are familiar with this rigging system and if someone else is in the room with you. Portable rigging rating is 7000 lbs.



CIRCO FEST INDEPENDENT PRICING



*Please email info@circofest.com for studio pricing!

TYPE	GROUP SIZE	EARLY BIRD PRICE	REGULAR PRICE
Independent	Solo	\$133.00	\$140.00
Independent	Duet	\$85.50	\$90.00
Independent	Trio	\$76.00	\$80.00
Independent	Small Group/ Large Group	\$66.50	\$70.00
Independent	Line/ Production	\$66.50	\$70.00
Independent Aerial	Solo	\$161.50	\$170.00
Independent Aerial	Duet	\$114.00	\$120.00
Independent Aerial	Trio	\$104.50	\$110.00
Independent Aerial	Small Group	\$95.00	\$100.00
Independent Aerial	Live Lift Solo/ Duet (Only centre stage rig point is for live lifts)	\$232.75- Does not require a tech to operate your lifts. \$256.50 -Requires a tech to operate your lifts.	\$245.00 Does not require tech to operate your lifts. \$270 -Requires a tech to operate your lifts.
Independent/ Independent Aerial	Extra Time	N/A	\$10.00 per additional 30 seconds of choreography