



Cosplay Contest Guidelines

Hello everyone! Mandalaura-Ann and Daesnight here with Cosplay Contest rules, regulations, criteria and categories for BAY-CON 2026. It is just around the corner and we know all you cosplayers out there are ready for the opportunity to showcase your work! Last year I was once again blown away by the creative ability as well as the crowd support. We appreciate everyone's participation these last four years and always look forward to seeing what you come up with!

Here's to another great year of BAY-CON!!!

In our continued effort to improve and expand the contest as well as allow time for our volunteers to enjoy the convention, a couple of changes to categories and registration have been made. Pre-judging will still occur at time of sign up, but rather than having it all be at separate times like last year, everything is going to flow as one big event.

Contest Registration/ Prejudging:

There will be a 2 hour sign up time block which will include pre-judging for all contestants wishing to participate *If you are in line when sign up closes, you will be able to sign up still. The contest will be held 30 minutes after the prejudging is finished. We are planning showtime for the end of the convention with another 30 minute break to allow for deliberation for awards. Times to be posted as soon as we solidify them. The contest will be held Saturday May 2nd, 2026!

Contest Sign-up Location: In Besse Center (will provide more exact location leading up to event)

Divisions:

YOUTH (1st place trophy)

- 0-13 years old
- New to Cosplay creation
- New to being on stage

BEGINNER (1st place trophy)

- Have made 3 or less cosplays
- New to cosplay competition
- Minor Craftsmanship Skills

ADVANCED (1st place trophy)

- Has made at least 4 cosplays
- Competed at one other convention
- Background in sewing, 3d Printing, or other crafting methods

GROUP (Certificate)

- Two or More people collaborating in both build and stage presence

BEST IN (Certificate for each category)

- Hero
- Villain
- Anime
- Video Game
- Mash-Up
- Original Characters

Purchased Cosplay - No Modifications made (Stage walk only)

Judging Criteria/Rubric:

Category	Outstanding (8-10 Points)	Great (5-7 points)	Good (2-4 points)	Needs Work (0-1 point)	Scores
Build Quality/ Mediums Used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use of many materials & techniques. -Polished -75%-100% self made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use of a handful of materials & techniques -Well Put Together -50%-75% self made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use of one or two different materials and techniques -Unrefined -25%-50% self made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Little to no technique or craft materials used -Unfinished -0%-25% self made 	
Originality/ Personal Touches	Cosplay is unique and eye catching	Cosplay is original and imaginative	Cosplay has original elements but is overall unaltered	Cosplay has no originality or added elements.	
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Represents character accurately -Confident on Stage -3 poses, ~3 seconds each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Represents the character -Positive stage presence -3 poses, ~2-3 seconds each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Moderately represents the character -Tense stage presence -3 poses, ~1-2 seconds each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Loosely represents the character -No stage presence -3 poses ~0-1 second each 	
TOTAL					
NOTES:					

RULES:

Weapons and Props Guidelines

- Nothing that is real/functional is allowed. If you have a prop weapon it MUST be checked in at the front desk by security.
- You must conform to local, state and federal laws.
- Arrows must not have tips and must be secured into a quiver.
- No Metal Props, no exceptions. You WILL be asked to return it to your vehicle.
- Any props over 5' need to be able to be broken down when traveling through con.
- Once again, ALL cosplay props and weapons must be inspected by security upon arrival to BAY-CON.
- Contact Dave Laur at dave.laur@baycollege.edu with any questions.

Cosplay Guidelines

- Let your creativity flow!!
- We want to see characters from all entertainment mediums!
- This is an all-ages event, so please keep that in mind when choosing and creating your cosplay to wear.
- At least ONE item of your cosplay must be modified or made by you, the cosplayer, to be entered into the judging portion of the cosplay contest. A march will be held for all contestants, in which those that do not meet the maker guideline will have a chance to walk the stage to show off their still SUPER AWESOME Cosplay.
- Cosplay is Not Consent, please ask before taking personal photos. Cosplay is also for everyone and we want everyone to feel welcome and proud of their work.
 - Photos will be taken during the contest and convention by an event photographer for future use in PR work.

Come on down to BAY-CON 2026 and release your inner child, show off your creative ability, and join us in bringing local cosplayers together in a welcoming and safe environment! Even if you don't wish to participate in the contest feel free to dress up! Be ready to have people ask to take their picture with and/or of you (if you're comfortable with it).

This is all about fun, but safety is top priority. Please follow the guidelines regarding props and embellishments with your cosplay and once again keep in mind that this is an all-ages event.

We can't wait to see what everyone has come up with! See you May 1st & 2nd, 2026!