



NEW ZEALAND NAIL COMPETITION – 2026

POSTER NATURAL – RULES AND GUIDELINES

Express your creativity in our "Teddy Bear's Picnic" Poster Natural category. Your task is to design an image suitable for a magazine cover, incorporating a minimum of 5 nails. Ensure that the overall image captures the essence of the Theme. Nails should be short to medium in length within a natural style. You may choose to collab with a team of photographers, makeup artists, and hair stylists if you wish, but remember – when it comes to the nails, it's all you!

Entry Requirements

- This is an online submitted category.
- Theme is Teddy Bear's Picnic
- The nails and image should be styled in the given theme.
- Entries must be emailed to nznailcomp@gmail.com. Due date of submission – Sunday the 26th of April 2026 –for online judging.
- The image must be A4: 8.5 x 11 and taken in portrait –NOT landscape. The image should be suitable for the cover of a magazine. (international standard)
- Smart phone images are acceptable.
- Image file must not exceed 25MB.
- All visible nails MUST strictly consist of one colour. NO ART. French is allowed.
- A minimum of 5 nails must be highly visible. This can be any 5 nails.
- Manicured Natural nails only, no extensions or press on nails.
- Nails can be any salon shape
- Nails must be no longer than 3cm from the cuticle.
- The image itself may be photoshopped but strictly no editing or changing should be done to the nails. This is an important rule to follow with the upraising of AI nail art and will be monitored and will be followed up if deemed necessary.
- You may use photographers, makeup artists and hair stylists.
- If the Model is under 16 years of age the parent/guardian must give signed permission.
- When you enter this category, you are allowing New Zealand Nail Competition to use the image for any and all marketing/promotional purposes.
- Anonymous presentation: No names, logos, or identifying marks on or in the entry.
- Optional (roughly 150-word) description + step-by-step if needed.
- All general and submitted art rules/guidelines apply.



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SUBMITTED ART – RULES AND GUIDELINES.

SUBMITTED ART RULES & GUIDELINES

- Copyright is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted characters, logos, or recognisable intellectual property (e.g. Disney, Warner Bros, movie or TV characters, brand logos). Any copyright or trademark breach will result in immediate disqualification.
- All submitted artwork must be original, exclusive, and created specifically for the New Zealand Nail Competition. Entries must not have been entered into any other competition worldwide.
- All submitted artwork must be fully completed prior to submission.
- Competitors must submit their own work only. The Head Judge reserves the right to request a verbal explanation or ask a competitor to recreate a portion of the work to verify authenticity.
- Nail tips may be commercially purchased or custom made. Handmade tips must reflect commercial proportions and a natural C-curve.
- Mystery images will be emailed by April 6th 2026
- It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure artwork is submitted on time.
 - **Postal submission cutoff:** We recommend you send by Sunday 26 April 2026
 - **Arrival cutoff date for Sub Art:** Thursday 30th April – Artwork will be taken to Hamilton for scoring. Winners will be announced May 3rd via our social media channel. Entries will be on display at the Nail Central Nail Expo.
 - **Arrival cutoff date for Poster:** Sunday 26th April via email. nznailcomp@gmail.com. where work will be uploaded for online Judging, winners announced May 3rd
 - **Poster –Peoples choice:** All poster entries are open to public voting on Sunday the 3rd May winner announced May 4th. This includes all divisions and all 3 poster categories.
- Artwork descriptions may be included. These must be short, legible, contain no brand names, and are not judged.
- Artwork must be displayed within the size requirements for the category. Exceeding size limits will result in a 5-point deduction and may result in non-display.
 - Do not name or label your work. Or any attached description.

COMPETITOR CONDUCT

- Entries cannot be shared online before the awards ceremony.
- Work must be completed solely by the competitor.
- Competitors are responsible for return shipping, packing, and any insurance.
- Competitors and models must act professionally and respectfully toward judges, staff, sponsors, and other competitors at all times.
- Conduct that brings the New Zealand Nail Competition into disrepute, including online behaviour, may result in penalties, disqualification, or refusal of future entry.
- Observing these rules ensures fairness and protects the integrity of the competition.

PACKAGING & SHIPPING:

- The 2026 New Zealand Nail Competition is a submitted art only event.
- Competitors must send entries to: NZ Nail Competition at 301 Riverslea Road North, Parkvale, Hastings, 4120, New Zealand.
- Entries must be emailed to the nznailcomp@gmail.com by Sunday 26th of April 2026
- When required competitors are responsible for any insurance.
- When required competitors are responsible for supplying a pre-paid self-addressed postage bag for the safe return of their artwork.
- The NZ Nail Competition takes no responsibility for loss or damage before or after the entry/entries are in our care.



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POSTER NATURAL – JUDGING CRITERIA & SCORING

JUDGING CRITERIA & SCORING

Judging Criteria – Competitors will be assessed on 8 criteria, scored 0–10 for each, Total possible points: 80

SCORE DESCRIPTION

- 0 – Not achieved
- 1 – Beginner, requires considerable improvement.
- 2 – Novice, skill in development
- 3 – Advanced Novice, fair demonstration of skill
- 4 to 5 – Competent, showing good skill level
- 6 to 7 – Accomplished, great level of skill and control
- 8 – Proficient, exceptionally good, approaching excellence
- 9 – Expert, nearly flawless, demonstrating superb skill
- 10 – Mastery, flawless in all aspects, epitome of mastery.

SCORING, PLACING & DECISIONS

- All category divisions require a minimum of three competitors to award first place.
 - If fewer than three competitors enter a category, competitors may move to the next eligible division or receive a credit or refund.
 - In cases where this is not possible a Highly commented medal will be awarded to symbolise first place and the competitor will not move onto the next division.
- If a category has only three competitors, only first and second place will be awarded.
- Marking for our Poster Categories are done online, typically with international artists.
- In the event of a tie or scoring dispute, the Head Judge will make the final determination.
- The Head Judge's decision is final.
- Score sheets will be made available to competitors following the event.

POINT DEDUCTIONS, PENALTIES & DISQUALIFICATION

- 5-point deductions may apply for minor rule breaches (e.g. display size violations).
- 10-point deductions may apply for moderate breaches that affect compliance but not judging integrity.
- Immediate disqualification will occur for serious breaches, including:
 - Use of copyrighted material
 - Submitting work not completed by the competitor
 - Intentional division misrepresentation
 - Sharing work prior to prize-giving
 - Attempts to influence judging
- Unprofessional or disrespectful behavior may result in deductions, disqualification, or temporary to permanent bans.
- All penalties are signed off at the discretion of the Head Judge.



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POSTER NATURAL – 8 JUDGING CRITERIA

• EXPERTISE AND TECHICNAL SKILL

The aim here is to demonstrate your technical abilities and how well you can execute those skills. Looking at the overall design, is it the best reflection of your skill level? Is it reflective of the division you're competing in?

-Technical abilities involve taking the practical knowledge of a skill or technique and demonstrating it.

The nails should represent the artist's current skill level at its best.

• COLOUR THEORY

Colour has the ability to evoke feeling and direct focus.

Consider how the colour palette works in harmony to complement the overall design. For example, in creating contrast or to showcase the design in a way that epiphyses any key elements or feelings.

• VISUAL DESIGN

It's all about balance and flow. When considering the design concept, it's important to show a visual rhythm throughout the artwork. Is it in symmetry and does the design flow across all 10 nails as well as independently.

Basically, is the set too busy or too sparse, does each tip have a balanced amount of art.

• PRODUCT CONTROL AND WORKMANSHIP

This is a chance to showcase our ability to maneuver and manage nail products.

For example, has your gel been applied evenly without streaks, transparent patches, bubbles, pitting or dull/shiny spots – depending on the finish. If glitters or other nail art supplies (such as foil) are used consider the finish, is it controlled and sitting where it was intended.

The finishing touches, once the piece is complete are there are any imperfections left behind from creating the nail art design. ie; smudged polish, dust, excess adhesive around embellishments etc.

• CONTINUITY OF THEME

This is where your creativity will show through in the theme. Does the theme flow over the entire image? Everywhere you look is there something new with the theme? Is the theme obvious when you look at the piece? does the nail colour flow with the theme.

• UNIQUENESS

It's good to think outside the box and express yourself creativity. Aim to show a creative interpretation of your concept, whether that be through colour, design, theme or something depicted in a new or different way.

Competitors are encouraged to think beyond trends and express their personal artistic identity.

• OVERALL IMPRESSION

They say don't judge a book by its cover, but first impressions are important. What is the initial feeling you're wanting to evoke. Have you captured that in the design?

Now looking past first impressions, does the design draw you into new elements or techniques used. The more you look, the more details you want to discover.

• PHOTOGRAPHIC IMPRESSION

A few things to consider, is the image clear. Do the nails take center stage. Does the image grab your attention and pull you in to discover more.



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RULES, GUIDELINES & ENTRY CONDITIONS

ELIGIBILITY & ENTRY

- The New Zealand Nail Competition welcomes qualified, certified, and currently training Nail Technicians.
- The New Zealand Nail Competition reserves the right to accept or deny any entry at its discretion.
- Competitors must enter the highest division they qualify for. It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure correct division entry. Incorrect entry may result in disqualification without refund.
- Competitors and models must be 16 years of age or older.
- Competitors who do not understand English must arrange their own translator.

ENTRY FEES, REFUNDS, TRANSFERS & CREDITS

Entry Fees

Entry fees contribute directly to the planning and delivery of the event with significant upfront and non-recoverable costs. For this reason, all entry fees are non-refundable. Credit for future NZNC events may be given on a case-to-case basis.

Transfers & Changes

- Name changes and competitor transfers are permitted.
- Category changes are permitted, provided space allows and placement eligibility is not affected (minimum three competitors required to award first place).
- After the registration cut-off date (1 April 2025), Transfers, name changes, or category changes will be accepted but incur an admin fee of \$20ndz

Credits

- Credits may be issued in limited circumstances at the discretion of the organisers.
- Credits are valid for the next New Zealand Nail Competition only, and have no cash value.

Cancellation or Postponement

- If the event is cancelled, a full refund will be issued.
- If the event is postponed, competitors may transfer their entry to the new date or receive a refund minus third-party processing fees (including Wix and Stripe)

No Refund Circumstances

Refunds or credits will not be issued due to change of mind, illness, injury, travel issues, scheduling conflicts, failure to attend, or failure to read or understand the rules.

MEDIA, LIABILITY & FINAL AUTHORITY

- Photo and video content may be captured for promotional use. Entry constitutes consent unless opted out in writing prior to the event. nznailcomp@gmail.com
- Competitors participate at their own risk. The New Zealand Nail Competition is not responsible for injury, loss, or damage to personal property.
- Any situation not explicitly covered in these rules will be ruled on by the Head Judge and event organisers.
- The New Zealand Nail Competition reserves the right to amend these rules at any time.