



NEW ZEALAND NAIL COMPETITION – 2026

POSTER NATURAL – RULES AND GUIDELINES

Express your creativity in our "Halloween" 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 natural and not extended and be in one colour or a French style. You may choose to collab with a team of photographers, makeup artists, and/or hair stylists if you wish.

Entry Requirements

- This is an online submitted category.
- Theme is Halloween
- Both the nails and image should be styled in the given theme.
- Entries must be emailed to nznailcomp@gmail.com. Due date of submission – Sunday 18th October –for online judging. Placings announced October 31st 2026
- The image must be A4 and taken in portrait –not landscape. The image should be suitable for the cover of a magazine.
- 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 natural shape.
- Nails must not be longer than 2cm 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.
- 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. Please attach a copy when submitting your entry.
- Anonymous presentation: No names, logos, or identifying marks on, or in the entry.
- Optional (roughly 150-word) description + step-by-step if needed.
- When you enter this category, you are allowing New Zealand Nail Competition to use the image for any and all marketing/promotional purposes.
- All general and online rules/guidelines apply.



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POSTER NATURAL – JUDGING CRITERIA & SCORING

JUDGING CRITERIA & SCORING

Judging Criteria – Competitors will be assessed on 7 criteria, scored 0 and up to 5 for each, Total possible points: 33 with 0.5 point allocations allowed

SCORING, PLACING & DECISIONS

- All category divisions require a minimum of four competitors to award 1, 2 & 3 place.
 - If fewer than four competitors enter a category, competitors may move to the next eligible division or receive an entry credit or refund.
 - In cases where this is not possible a Highly commended medal will be awarded to symbolise first place and the competitor will not move onto the next higher division.
- If a category has three or less competitors, only first place – highly commended will be awarded.
- Marking for our Poster Categories is 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

- 2-point deductions may apply for minor rule breaches (e.g. display size violations).
- 5-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
 - AI presented images
- 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 – 7 JUDGING CRITERIA

• SHAPE & LENGTH CONSISTENCY

Focuses on the uniformity of shape and length across all visible nails. Aim for a perfect match in length and shape. demonstrating technical control, this is the foundation of technical execution.

• PRODUCT CONTROL

Demonstrates clean product application, precise placement, even coverage, smooth finishes, and clean margins. Look for minimal imperfections or stray product. For example, has your gel been applied evenly without streaks, transparent patches, bubbles, pitting or dull/shiny spots.

• NAIL PRESENTATION

Assesses how effectively the nails are featured and presented within the editorial image. Nails should be clearly presented, in focus, and stand out as the primary subject, not an afterthought.

• COMPOSITION & COHESION

Evaluates how effectively all visual elements work together to create a balanced, coherent, and visually engaging editorial composition. The relationship between the nails, lighting, angle, and any other elements should feel deliberate.

• EDITORIAL IMPACT

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? This measures the immediate visual impact and 'it-factor' of the complete image. Aim for memory, strong editorial strength, and a clear, compelling aesthetic.

• THEME COMMUNICATION

Focuses on how clearly and effectively the competition's specific theme is communicated through the nail art and overall image. The theme should be obvious and integral. Now looking past first impressions, does the design draw you into new elements. The longer you look, the more details you discover.

• CREATIVE INTERPRETATION

It's good to think outside the box and express yourself creatively. 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.

Values high originality and imaginative interpretation. Look for unique ways to express the theme, beyond predictable designs, showing true creative artistry.

• COMPETITION COMPLIANCE

While not a separate criteria, this is the final holistic review. Your image must meet all critical compliance requirements (e.g., portrait format, number of visible nails, no nail art, theme, and no forbidden digital edits). Non-compliance leads to disqualification. or point deductions.



POSTER – NATURAL SCORE SHEET

NEW ZEALAND
NAIL COMPETITION

New Zealand Nail Competition 2026 – Halloween Theme

JUDGE 1	Criterion	Points	Points Guide – May include 0.5 points
Assesses technical execution.	• SHAPE & LENGTH Assesses the consistency of shape and length across all visible nails	/3	0 – Not Demonstrated / Not Assessable 1 - Developing. Visible inconsistencies present 2 - Competent. Generally consistent with minor variation 3 - Exceptional. High level of consistency
	• PRODUCT CONTROL Assesses clean application, even coverage, straight margins, smoothness, finish.	/5	0 – Not Demonstrated / Not Assessable 1 - Limited. Major improvement required. 2 - Developing. Some strengths evident but inconsistent 3 - Competent. Meets the expected standard/room to improve 4 - Strong. High level of execution only minor refinements possible 5 - Exceptional. Outstanding execution. No visible weaknesses

Feedback:

JUDGE 2	Criterion	Points	Points Guide
Assesses the editorial presentation and visual execution.	• NAIL PRESENTATION - Assesses how effectively the nails are featured within the image. are they the main focus	/5	0 – Not Demonstrated / Not Assessable 1 - Limited. Nails are not effectively featured 2 - Developing. Nails are highlighted/presentation could stand out more 3 - Competent. Nails are clearly presented and in focus 4 - Strong. Very effective presentation that enhances the image. 5 - Exceptional. Nails are showcased exceptionally well. Standout
	• COMPOSITION & COHESION Assesses how effectively all visual elements work together to create a balanced and cohesive editorial	/5	0 – Not Demonstrated / Not Assessable 1 - Limited. Unbalanced or disjointed. 2 - Developing. Some balance, improvements needed 3 - Competent. Balanced and cohesive, minor refinements possible 4 - Strong. Well balanced, cohesive and visually engaging. 5 - Exceptional. Flawless with strong visual flow
	• EDITORIAL IMPACT Assesses immediate impact, memorability, editorial strength.	/5	0 – Not Demonstrated / Not Assessable 1 - Limited. Major improvement required. 2 - Developing. Some strengths evident but inconsistent 3 - Competent. Meets the expected standard/room to improve 4 - Strong. High level of execution only minor refinements possible 5 - Exceptional. Outstanding execution. No visible weaknesses

Feedback:

JUDGE 3	Criterion	Points	Points Guide
Assesses the concept, theme & overall creative impact	• THEME COMMUNICATION Assesses how clearly the competition theme is communicated.	/5	0 – Not Demonstrated / Not Assessable 1 - Limited. Theme is unclear or weak 2 - Developing. Theme is somewhat evident but not strong 3 - Competent. Theme is clear and meets expectation 4 - Strong. Theme is well communicated and effective 5 - Exceptional. Theme is powerfully expressed throughout the image
	• CREATIVE INTERPRETATION Assesses how imaginatively and distinctively the theme has been interpreted	/5	0 – Not Demonstrated / Not Assessable 1 - Limited. Minimal creativity or originality 2 - Developing. Some creative elements but predictable. 3 - Competent. Thoughtful interpretation with room to elevate 4 - Strong. Creative and distinctive interpretation 5 - Exceptional. Highly original and imaginative interpretation

Feedback:

COMPLIANCE CHECK		X
Correct Portrait format	-2	
Min 5 nails showing	-5	
Natural Category Not Met	DQ	
Prohibited Digital Editing/Alteration	DQ	

NOTES

SCORE SUMMARY	
Judge 1	
Judge 2	
Judge 3	
Compliance Deduction	
FINAL SCORE	



NEW ZEALAND NAIL COMPETITION –2026

ONLINE COMP – RULES AND GUIDELINES.

ONLINE COMP 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.
- It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure artwork is submitted on time.
 - **Cutoff date for Poster:** Sunday October 18th 2026 via email. nznailcomp@gmail.com. Entries will be uploaded for online Judging, placings announced Saturday October 31st
 - **Poster –Peoples choice:** All poster entries are open to public voting on Friday 30th October. winner announced October 31st. PC 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.
- Do not name or label your work. All entries must be unidentifiable

COMPETITOR CONDUCT

- Entries cannot be shared online before October 30th (when we will open people's choice)
- Work must be completed solely by the competitor.
- Competitors are responsible for return shipping, packaging, 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 behavior, may result in disqualification, or refusal of future entry. or event cancellation.
- Observing these rules ensures fairness and protects the integrity of the competition.

PACKAGING & SHIPPING:

- The 2026 Poster New Zealand Nail Competition is an online only event.
- Competitors must send entries to: nznailcomp@gmail.com by October 18th 2026
- Subject: Poster (category) (division) Halloween
- When required competitors are responsible for any insurance.
- The NZ Nail Competition will ship medals to all place getters by November 30th 2026
- The NZ Nail Competition takes no responsibility for lost or damaged packages.



NEW ZEALAND NAIL COMPETITION – 2026

RULES, GUIDELINES & ENTRY CONDITIONS

ELIGIBILITY & ENTRY

- The New Zealand Nail Competition welcomes qualified, certified, and currently in 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 four competitors required to award all placings).
- After the registration cut-off date (Sept 30th), Transfers, name changes, or category changes will be accepted but incur an admin fee of \$20NZD

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 Director.
- The New Zealand Nail Competition reserves the right to amend these rules at any time.