



How to Be a Great Volunteer Judge

Judging speech and debate can be fun and easy to do! This guide will help volunteers become great judges. Learn how to make your time impactful and positive for speech and debate students!



PREPARATION

Step 1: Find judging opportunities.

The easiest place to start finding volunteer opportunities is through the National Speech & Debate Association's (NSDA) tabulation system and tournament calendar, currently found online at www.speechanddebate.org/tournament-calendar. You can also email info@speechanddebate.org if you have any questions about the process.

Step 2: Watch our training videos.

Create an NSDA user account at www.speechanddebate.org/join. You'll be able to access various training materials, including our judge training that provides an overview of each type of event, sample ballots, and short videos. Visit www.speechanddebate.org/judge-training for details.

Once you've signed up for a volunteer opportunity, please be sure to find out if any additional training is required. It's possible you may need to complete a background check. If a tournament has a required training session, please do your best to attend. Often, those trainings are helpful in answering questions about particular rules at a given location. For example, in some areas, students cannot enter the room until you, the judge, are there. In some events, preparation time, forfeit times, or other rules may vary in small but still significant ways. You'll be their favorite volunteer by attending the training and following their procedures.

THANK YOU

If you are volunteering, you undoubtedly believe in the power of speech and debate. By volunteering to judge, you have given several students the opportunity to compete. For many tournaments, judges are the limiting factor. On behalf of those students and that tournament, thank you for providing the opportunity for speech and debate!

FREE JUDGE
TRAINING!



The NSDA and the NFHS have partnered to offer a free, online, self-paced introductory course for judges. It covers:

- ▶ Best practices for judging speech and debate
- ▶ Clips of exemplar performances
- ▶ Suggestions for how to provide effective and appropriate feedback
- ▶ An overview of what judges should expect when attending a tournament

To access this course, visit www.NFHSLearn.com/courses and click "Adjudicating Speech and Debate."