



International Plastic Modelers' Society

2026 National Contest Categories

In general:

Specific scale for each Class is generally listed at the start of each Category. Unless otherwise specified, each Category includes model subjects of all eras, types, subjects, and scales.

Split Categories:

Categories may be split into two or more sub-categories. The use and naming of splits will be based on the number of entries and composition of the category at the contest and determined by the National Contest Committee. Named splits are listed below. All other splits will be defined at the contest. The estimated number of splits per Class are listed with the title of the class.

Awards Packages:

The total award packages (1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards) will not exceed the sum of the categories, the estimated split counts listed herein, plus the additional splits enumerated.

This comprises 208 listed categories and 18 additional splits, to be determined by the Chief Judge and Head Class Judges. For 2026, a maximum of 226 award packages may be presented. This count is exclusive of any additional overall and theme awards.

0. Juniors (18 categories and 1 anticipated split)

Pre-Teen includes entrants through 12 years old.

Teen includes entrants 13 through 17 years old.

There are no Out-of-Box categories in the Juniors Class.

Aircraft

10 Pre-teen
11 Teen

Military Vehicles

20 Pre-teen
21 Teen

Figures

30 Pre-teen
31 Teen

Ships

40 Pre-teen
41 Teen

Automotive

50 Pre-teen
51 Teen

Real Space and Science Fiction

60 Pre-teen
61 Teen

Gunpla

70 Pre-teen
71 Teen

Dioramas

80 Pre-Teen
81 Teen

Miscellaneous

90 Pre-teen
91 Teen

I. Aircraft (53 categories and named splits, plus 3 anticipated additional splits)

1/144 refers to scales 1/99 and smaller.

1/72 refers to scales 1/98 to 1/60.

1/48 refers to scales 1/59 to 1/40.

1/32 refers to scales 1/39 and larger.

Categories 101 - 140 are for military aircraft only.

Categories 170-189 include any type of aircraft, military or otherwise.

Biplanes (and others that are predominantly fabric, struts, and rigging)

101	Small, 1/72 Scale and smaller
102	Large, 1/48
103	Large, 1/32

Small Prop, Single Engine Aircraft, including Small Gliders

1/72 scale = not exceeding 8.5" length or wingspan

1/48 scale = not exceeding 13.9" length or wingspan

104	1/72 US/Allied Inline, Planned Split 1
105	1/72 US/Allied Inline, Planned Split 2
106	1/72 US/Allied Radial
107	1/72 Axis Inline
108	1/72 Axis Radial
110	1/72 Out-of-Box, Instructions Required
111	1/48 US/Allied Inline
112	1/48 US/Allied Radial
113	1/48 Axis Inline
114	1/48 Axis Radial
116	1/48 Out-of-Box, Instructions Required

Medium Prop, Two-Engine Aircraft, including Medium Sized Gliders

1/72 scale = not exceeding 11" length or wingspan

1/48 scale = not exceeding 17" length or wingspan

117	1/72
118	1/48

Large Prop, Multi-Engine Aircraft, including Large Gliders

1/72 scale = exceeding 11" length or wingspan

1/48 scale = exceeding 17" length or wingspan

119	1/72
120	1/48

Medium or Large Prop, Multi Engine Aircraft, Out-of Box, Instructions required

1/72 scale = exceeding 11" length or wingspan

1/48 scale = exceeding 17" length or wingspan

121	1/72
122	1/48

Small Jet

1/72 scale = not exceeding 8.5" length or wingspan

1/48 scale = not exceeding 13.9" length or wingspan

123	1/72
124	1/72, Out-of-Box, Instructions Required
125	1/48
126	1/48, Out-of-Box, Instructions Required

Large Jet

1/72 scale = exceeding 8.5" length or wingspan
1/48 scale = exceeding 13.9" length or wingspan

127	1/72
128	1/72, Out-of-Box, Instructions Required
129	1/48
130	1/48, Out-of-Box, Instructions Required

1/32 Aircraft

131	1/32 Prop-Driven
132	1/32 Jet-Powered
133	1/32 Prop-Driven or Jet Powered, Out-of-Box, Instructions Required

1/144 Aircraft (1/99 scale or smaller)

134	Small (not exceeding 4.25" in length or wingspan)
135	Large (exceeding 4.25" in length or wingspan)
136	Out-of-Box, Instructions Required

Rotary Wing

137	1/144 and 1/72
138	1/48 and 1/32
139	Out-of-Box, Instructions Required

Civil, Sport, Racing, Gliders, and Air Taxis

140	1/144 and 1/72
141	1/48 and 1/32
142	Out-of-Box, Instructions Required

Airliners, Airliner Types, and Airships

150	1/144
151	1/72, 1/48, and 1/32
152	Out-of-Box, Instructions Required

Other Aircraft Types

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
160 All entries

Elevated Displays (non-diorama displays --"Aircraft on a Pole") (See Specific Class Rule I-F)
170 1/144 and 1/72 Scale
171 1/48 and 1/32 and larger Scales

Vacuum-formed
180 All entries

Conversions
185 All entries

Scratch-Built
189 All entries

Vintage Aircraft kit, originally molded before December 31, 1980, verification and instructions required

190	1/144 Scale and smaller
191	1/72 Scale
192	1/48 Scale
193	1/32 Scale and larger

II. Military Vehicles (32 categories and named splits, plus 6 anticipated additional splits)

Large Scale refers to 1/34 and larger

1/35 refers to scale 1/35

1/48 refers to scales 1/59 to 1/36.

1/72 refers to scales 1/100 to 1/60.

For entries with figures but not intended to be dioramas, see Specific Class Rule II-B

1/35 Military Vehicles (including tanks, assault guns, and self-propelled guns)

- 200 Closed-top AFVs, through Korea, Axis Light and Medium
- 201 Closed-top AFVs, through Korea, Axis Heavy, Panthers and Tigers
- 202 Closed top AFVs, through Korea, Allied, U.S.
- 203 Closed-top AFVs, through Korea, Other than U.S.

- 204 Closed-top AFVs, post-Korea, NATO
- 205 Closed-top AFVs, post-Korea, Warsaw-Pact and Russian
- 206 Closed-top AFVs, post-Korea, U.S.

- 207 Open-top AFVs or AFVs with Interiors, Axis
- 208 Open-top AFVs or AFVs with Interiors, Allied
- 209 Open-top AFVs or AFVs with Interiors, Other

- 210 Armored Cars, Post WW II (refers to after 1945)
- 211 Armored Cars, WWII and Earlier (refers to 1945 and earlier)

- 212 Armored Halftracks

- 213 Closed-Top Self-Propelled Artillery, All Types and Markings
- 214 Soft Skinned Military Vehicles, All Types and Markings

1/48 Military Vehicles

- 215 Tracked, 1/48 Scale U.S.
- 216 Tracked, 1/48 Scale Other than U.S.
- 217 Wheeled

1/72 Military Vehicles

- 218 Tracked, through Korea, Allied
- 219 Fully Tracked, through Korea, Axis
- 220 Fully Tracked, post Korea
- 221 Armored Cars and Armored Halftracks
- 222 Soft-skinned Military Vehicles

Artillery Pieces (including missiles and railroad guns, but excluding limbers and prime movers)

- 223 Artillery Pieces Through W.W.II (refers to 1945 and earlier), All Scales
- 224 Artillery Pieces Post W.W. II (refers to after 1945), All Scales

Conversions and Scratch-Built

(A model that MUST have its silhouette/type SUBSTANTIVELY CHANGED by the MODELER, using SCRATCH-BUILDING SUPPLIES, i.e., sheet plastic, sheet brass, tin, wood, etc.) *Refer to Specific Class Rule II-A*

- 225 All entries

Kit-Bash Conversions

(A model that MUST have its silhouette SUBSTANTIVELY CHANGED by the MODELER, using ANY PRE-EXISTING KIT PARTS from another model or manufactured conversion parts/pieces designed for such change by the manufacturer, whether or not it is intended for the model it is employed upon.)

- 230 All entries

Multi- or Towed Vehicles (non-diorama display)

(No more than three vehicles attached to each other; see **Specific Class Rule II-D** and definition. Examples: any towed Artillery prime-mover/limber and artillery piece; any Tank Transporter/Trailer, with or without a loaded vehicle; any other combination of two vehicles that are attached to each other.)

240 All entries

Large Scale (1/34 or larger)

250 Large Scale Military Vehicles, All Entries

Out of Box, Military Vehicle Kit, instructions required

260 1/35 Scale, all types
261 1/48 Scale, all types
262 1/72 Scale, all types

III. Figures (18 categories and named splits, plus 1 anticipated additional split)

1/32 and 1/35 figures will compete as 54mm.

Historical, Dismounted and Mounted

300 53mm and smaller

Historical, Dismounted

305 54mm to 70mm

Historical, Dismounted

310 71mm and larger

Historical, Mounted or With Mount

315 54mm and larger

Major Conversions and Scratch-Built

320 All entries

Fantasy and Science Fiction

325 53mm and Smaller, Human
326 53mm and Smaller, Non-Human
327 54mm to 120mm, Human
328 54mm to 120mm, Non-Human
329 121mm and larger, Fantasy & Science Fiction

Busts

330 Historical, Pre-1900, USA
331 Historical, Pre-1900, International
332 Historical, 1900 to Present, USA
333 Historical, 1900 to Present, International
334 Fantasy and Science Fiction, Human
335 Fantasy and Science Fiction, Non-Human

War Games

340 War Game Figure (single)
341 War Game Set (5 or more)

IV. Ships (17 categories and named splits, plus 2 anticipated additional splits)

1/700 refers to scales 1/451 and smaller.

1/350 refers to scales 1/450 to 1/101.

1/72 refers to scales 1/100 and larger.

Aircraft Carriers

400	1/700
401	1/350

Battleships, Battlecruisers, and Cruisers

421	1/700
422	1/350

Other Surface Ships, smaller than cruiser-sized

Destroyers, Escorts, Corvettes, Commercial, etc. (except 'boats')

431	1/700
432	1/350

Sailing

Sail-powered ships and boats

441	Sailing Ships, plastic based kits
442	Sailing Ships, wood based kits

Early Steam and Sail

Transition vessels: American Civil War, Spanish-American War, pre-dreadnoughts, etc.

445	All entries
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Submarines

451	1/700
452	1/350 Scale, Submarines, pre-1946
453	1/350 Scale, Submarines, 1946 and after
454	1/72 scale and larger

Boats, Speedboats, Motor Torpedo Boats, Motor Patrol Boats

460	All entries
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Naval Technology (Standalone naval equipment, such as gun turrets, gun and missile mounts, boat davit sets, aircraft catapults, etc.)

470	All entries
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Conversions and Scratch-Built

(A conversion entry MUST have its silhouette SUBSTANTIVELY CHANGED by the modeler, using either scratch-building materials or parts from another model or manufactured conversion, whether or not it is intended for the model it is employed upon).

480	All entries
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OOB Ship kits, Instructions Required

490	All entries
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V. Automotive (23 categories and named splits, plus 1 additional anticipated split)*1/32 refers to scales 1/32 and smaller.**1/24 refers to scales 1/31 to 1/20.**1/16 refers to scales 1/19 and larger.***Factory Production**

500	1/32
501	1/24, 1959 and older body
502	1/24, 1960 and newer body, U.S. Manufacturer
503	1/24, 1960 and newer body, Foreign Manufacturer

Hot Rods, Street Rods, and Street Machines

510	Hot Rods and Street Rods - 1948 and older
511	Street Machine - 1949 and newer

Customs

512	All entries
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Competition Vehicles

520	1/32
521	1/24, Drag Racing, Modified Street and Purpose Built
522	1/24, Open Wheel
523	1/24, Closed Wheel

Large Scale (except motorcycles)

530	1/16
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Conversions and Scratch-Built

540	All entries
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Documented Replicas

545	All entries
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Commercial Vehicles (including cargo as part of overall entry)

550	Light Commercial
551	Heavy Commercial, On-Highway Use
552	Heavy Construction and Farm Equipment, Off-Highway

Motorcycles (civilian/racing only)

560	All entries
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Curbside

570	All entries
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Automotive Technology and Culture

580	All entries
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Out of Box, Instructions required

590	Factory Production - Instructions required
591	Hot Rods, Street Rods, Street Machines, Customs and Competition, Instructions required

Vintage Automotive Kit, originally molded before December 31, 1980, verification & instructions required

595	Vintage Automotive, all entries
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VI. Space and Science Fiction Vehicles (11 categories and named splits, plus 1 additional anticipated splits)

Real Spacecraft, Missiles, and Vehicles (kits and scratch-built)

600 Real Spacecraft, Missiles, and Vehicles
601 Hypothetical Design but intended to be used as real spacecraft by NASA, etc.

Science Fiction and Fantasy Subjects (See Specific Class Rule VI-A)

610 Star Trek, Space 1999, and other TV or Movie Series, from kits
611 Star Wars, from kits based on three original episodes 4, 5, and 6
612 Star Wars, from kits based on all other episodes, series, etc.
613 All Other Vehicles or Vessels, Space Faring, from books, sources other than TV or movies
614 Other Vehicles or Vessels, Non-Space-faring: Terran, Water, Atmospheric Aircraft, etc.
615 Conversions and Scratch-built

Out-of-Box, instructions required with each entry

620 All entries

Vintage Space or Science Fiction Kit, originally molded before December 31, 1980, verification & instructions required

631 Vintage Real Space or Hypothetical Design, all entries
632 Vintage Science Fiction, all entries

VII. Miscellaneous (13 categories plus 1 additional anticipated split)

Prehistoric Animals (Dinosaurs, marine reptiles, flying reptiles, mammals, etc.)

700 All entries

Humor in Modeling

710 All entries

Vehicle Caricatures

715 Caricatures (*Egg-Planes, Weird-ohs, Roth Monsters, etc.*)

What If....(other than science-fiction)

720 Kit-Based (spurious markings on standard kit)
721 Kit-Bashed / Scratch-built

Triathlon (models from three different classes – see Specific Class Rule VII-D)

730 All entries

Collections (5 or more closely related items – see Specific Class Rule VII-E)

740 All entries

IPMS Chapter / Group Entry see Specific Class Rule VII-F

750 All entries

Miscellaneous (any subject not otherwise covered, except dioramas)

760 All entries

Paper Models

765 Paper models, all types and entries

Out-of-Box, Instructions required with each entry

770 What If... (other than science-fiction)
771 Triathlon (models from three different classes)
772 Miscellaneous (any subject not otherwise covered, except dioramas)

VIII. Dioramas (15 categories and named splits plus 1 additional anticipated split)

- 810 Aircraft Vignette, 1/144 and 1/72
- 811 Aircraft Vignette, 1/48 and 1/32
- 812 Aircraft Diorama
- 821 Military Vehicles 1/49 and smaller
- 822 Military Vehicles 1/48 and Larger, Vignette, Tanks
- 823 Military Vehicles, 1/48 and Larger, Vignette, Other than Tanks
- 824 Military Vehicles 1/48 and Larger, Diorama
- 830 Figure Vignette, 54mm and smaller
- 831 Figure Vignette, 55mm and larger
- 832 Figure Diorama
- 840 Ships, Vignette
- 841 Ships, Diorama
- 850 Automotive, all entries
- 860 Space and Science Fiction Vehicles, All entries
- 870 Miscellaneous, all entries

IX. Gunpla and Mecha (8 categories plus 1 additional anticipated split)

- 901 Gunpla, Scale 1/144 Unpainted Entries
- 902 Gunpla, Scale 1/144 Painted/Customized Entries
- 903 Gunpla, Scale 1/100, Unpainted Entries
- 904 Gunpla, Scale 1/100, Painted/Customized Entries
- 905 Gunpla, Larger than 1/100 Scale, All Entries
- 906 Maschinen Krieger, Mecha Only (Non-Mecha will be entered in appropriate Sci-Fi Category)
- 907 Mecha Non-Gundam, less than 8 inches tall, All Entries
- 908 Mecha Non-Gundam, 8 inches or taller, All Entries

Additional IPMS/USA Contest Awards

Best of Class Awards will be given in each of the eight Classes and are listed below. The awards are selected from the first-place winners in the categories within each Class.

Tom Kolk Best Junior Model Award	Best Automotive Award
Ken Robert Best Aircraft Award	Best Space or Science Fiction Vehicle Award
Art Gerber Best Military Vehicle Award	Best Miscellaneous Award
Best Figure Award	Best Diorama Award
Best Ship Award	Best Gunpla Award

The **Best Use of an IPMS/USA Convention Special Decal** will be selected by IPMS/USA Past Presidents from among any of the entries in the contest which use a Convention Special Decal. Entrants must sign-up specifically for this special award.

The **Jim Sage Most Popular Model Award** will be given as selected by majority vote (by ballot) of the attendees of the convention (registrants and general public attendees).

The **George Lee Judges Grand Award** will be given as selected from the Best of Class award recipients, as selected by the National Contest Committee (Class Head Judges and Chief Judge).

Theme Awards will be selected from among any of the entries in the contest which meet the parameters of the designated theme, and as noted by the entrant on their model entry form. See *General Rule 3-E*: Entrants must sign up specifically for these special awards. Up to 5 Theme Awards may be requested by the host chapter, are approved by IPMS/USA, and are posted on the convention website along with the Rules and Categories.

Theme awards for 2026 are as follows:

- 1 Happy Birthday America! – The American Revolution
- 2 Gundam RX-78 – Back to the Beginning
- 3 Truck Town USA – Celebrate International Harvester.
- 4 60th Anniversary of Star Trek
- 5 110th Anniversary of the Battle of Jutland (The largest naval battle of World War I)

Manufacturer or Special Interest Group (SIG) Awards can be sponsored/selected by various manufacturers, organizations, and special interest groups. These awards must conform to *Rule 3-F*. Entrants must sign up specifically for these special awards or designate participation on their entry forms if required digitally. Any such awards expected to be announced by IPMS at the Convention or in its *Journal* magazine must be accompanied by sponsorship of at least one regular category awards package. The screening/selection for these awards is not accomplished by IPMS/USA judging teams; they are selected by the sponsors/sponsors' selected teams. They will be chosen while the contest room is open to public viewing, and the awards may be placed/presented prior to the awards banquet at the convenience of the sponsor.

Honorariums. The honorariums or named best-of awards have been approved by the NCC and E-Board through 2026, per *Rule 3-H*.