



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 |
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- | | |
|-----|--|
| 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 |
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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 |
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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 |
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Rotary Wing

- | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 137 | 1/144 and 1/72 |
| 138 | 1/48 and 1/32 |
| 139 | Out-of-Box, Instructions Required |
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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 |
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Airliners, Airliner Types, and Airships

- | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 150 | 1/144 |
| 151 | 1/72, 1/48, and 1/32 |
| 152 | Out-of-Box, Instructions Required |
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Other Aircraft Types**Unmanned Aerial Vehicles**

- | | |
|-----|-------------|
| 160 | All entries |
|-----|-------------|

Elevated Displays (non-diorama displays --"Aircraft on a Pole") (*See Specific Class Rule I-F*)

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|-----|---------------------------------|
| 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 |
|-----|-------------|
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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. |

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- | | |
|-----|--|
| 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. |

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- | | |
|-----|--|
| 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 |

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

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- | | |
|-----|--------------------|
| 212 | Armored Halftracks |
|-----|--------------------|

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- | | |
|-----|---|
| 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 (refuses 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**

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|-----|-------------|
| 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

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

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

470 All entries

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

OOB Ship kits, Instructions Required

490 All entries

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 Vignetter, 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

Ken Robert Best Aircraft Award

Art Gerber Best Military Vehicle Award

Best Figure Award

Best Ship Award

Best Automotive Award

Best Space or Science Fiction Vehicle Award

Best Miscellaneous Award

Best Diorama 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*.