

Reminder- cleanu up is part of the competition.
All tables and chairs need to be stacked and
everything must be removed from the competition
area.



Barbering: 2026 SkillsUSA Virginia State Leadership Conference and Skill Championships

Date: *March 09, 2026 - March 11, 2026*

Location: *Virginia Beach Convention Center, Virginia Beach, Virginia*

March 9:*Contest Orientation 4 p.m.*

March 10: *Contest 8 a.m.*

Theme: *Space*

2026 Competition Theme: The competition theme for the 2026 Creative Freestyle Design is **Space**. Competitors are encouraged to base their designs on space-related elements such as rockets, spaceships, planets, solar systems, galaxies, astronauts, satellites, comets, stars, asteroids, UFOs, aliens, the moon, the sun, or space stations. These examples are suggested but not limited—creative interpretation of the **Space** theme is encouraged.

Rule Clarification: “No Guards” To clarify the intent behind the rule stating “no guards:

Detachable blade clippers and adjustable blade clippers *are* allowed. This aligns with the traditional tools and practices within the history of barbering. The key distinction is that detachable blades are *not* being used as a substitute for guards. They function similarly to adjustable clippers—offering a range from closed to open—rather than mimicking guard lengths like #4 or #5.

Adjustable clippers may still use their lever to transition between lengths, just as a detachable clipper user may switch blades. This is consistent with standard barbering techniques.



Ultimately, regardless of the tool, competitors will still need to demonstrate skill using clipper-over-comb methods to sculpt and shape. These expectations are rooted in the official Barbering guidelines, which we continue to follow.

Orientation Meeting:

There will be a mandatory meeting for the advisors and contestants on Monday, March 9, in the seating section by the contest site. This will be the time for questions to be answered by the contest chairs. **All Resumes will be submitted at this time.**

Purpose

To evaluate each competitor's preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the field of barbering.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to active SkillsUSA members enrolled in programs with barbering and/or cosmetology as an occupational objective. Each state may send one high school and one college/postsecondary entry.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS

Class F: Competition Specific — Barbering, Cosmetology, Esthetics, Nail Care

- Official SkillsUSA white dress shirt or official white polo
- Black dress slacks
- Black work or dress shoes (non-skid and completely enclosed, no open-toe or open-heel)

Note: Wearing socks or hose is not required. If worn, socks must be black dress socks and hose

must be either black or skin-tone and seamless/non-pattern.

Note: The Official SkillsUSA white cosmetology smock or apron can be worn

with a white dress shirt. **** White polo or white button-down is acceptable for SLC**

Note: Competitors must wear their official competition clothing to the competition orientation.



EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. Supplied by the technical committee:

a. All pictures or literature of styles, haircuts and creative instruction details related to the

competition's tasks. Note: Pictures will not be provided until competition time.

b. Competition creative design theme.

2. Supplied by the competitor (checked during kit check):

Manikins: **Burmax-** Ryan (Bearded) and Jake

a. Cutting shears

b. Thinning shears

c. Razor and spare blade

d. Clipper (detachable metal blades are to be used unless otherwise noted)

e. Trimmer

f. Blow dryer

g. Comb(s)

h. Brush(es)

i. Spray bottle filled with water

j. Professional temporary hair color of choice: examples include pencils, chalks, spray, and paint. Any type of temporary color not requiring water to rinse is acceptable.

k. Towels (minimum of 6)

l. Neck strips

m. Clippies or hair clips

n. Labeled hospital-grade disinfectant wipes

o. Hand sanitizer

p. Tripod and manikin stands

q. One roll of tape

r. One roll of paper towels

s. First aid kit

t. Two (2) color copies of their hand-drawn creative design. Drawings must include both the color application and beard design details. The design drawing size must be no larger than 8" x 10". One copy should be placed in the portfolio, and the other will be used during the competition.

u. Two (2) copies of a written description of the inspiration and method used to develop their creative design. The description must be typed and be at least a half-page in length.

One copy should be placed in the portfolio, and the other will be used during the competition.



- v. Employment portfolio, see details under standards and competencies.
- w. Blue or black ink pen (required at both the orientation and during the competition)
- x. All competitors must create a one-page, single-sided resume: Due at orientation.

PROHIBITED DEVICES

Cellphones, electronic watches, and/or other electronic devices not approved by the cluster chair.

Penalties for Prohibited Devices

If a competitor's electronic device makes noise or if the competitor is seen using it at any time during the competition, an official report will be documented for review by the Cluster chair. If confirmed that the competitor used the device in a manner that compromised the integrity of the competition, the competitor's scores may be removed.

SCOPE OF THE COMPETITION

The competition is divided into four separate skill performance tests and a verbal communications evaluation, defined by industry standards as identified by the SkillsUSA National Technical Committee.

KNOWLEDGE PERFORMANCE

There is no general knowledge test required in this competition. Competitors are required to take the SkillsUSA Professional Development Test.

SKILL PERFORMANCE

The four separate skill performance tasks include haircutting, hair styling, hair color, and beard design and coloring. Competitors will be evaluated on their professional portfolio, two haircuts/styles, and a creative design. Competitors will replicate the steps a barber would perform after an effective client consultation. The competitor will be expected to duplicate a client's desired length and shape within a hair design photo. Creativity is evaluated in the creative cut and beard design. Haircutting skills are evaluated in the re-creation, working from a picture of two haircuts. Oral communication skills are assessed during the interview and creative design components. Competitors can use their employment portfolio during the job application and interview components.



COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Theme: **Space**

1. All competitors must keep their working area clean and organized throughout the competition.
2. All competitors must follow sanitation and safety procedures throughout the competition. Competitors must clean their station completely at the end of the competition as part of the sanitation assessment.
3. A professional attitude and communication are expected throughout the competition.
4. Once time is called, competitors must stop working. Touching the hair of the manikin after time is called will result in a ten (10) point penalty.
5. A copy of the hand-drawn creative design and the typed written description must be taped to the corner of the table before starting creative design skill performance. Note: competitors without prompting will give a presentation on their creative design to the judge.
6. Additional items that may be used to complete haircuts and/or creative design. These items will **not** be part of the kit check and must be packed separately from the kit.
 - a. Extra blades for clippers
 - b. Attachments for blow dryer
 - c. Styling products of choice
 - d. Headlamp
7. Items that are not allowed during the competition for any cut/style: stencils, ornaments, hairpieces, leveling devices, guards, additional free-standing lighting, neck dusters, acrylic paint, or additional extension cords.
8. No alterations to clippers or trimmers are allowed. Failure to abide by this guideline could be a cause for disqualification from the competition. This is a safety and sanitation issue.
9. The portfolio is a hard-copy collection (notebook or other type of binding, not required to be in an official SkillsUSA notebook) of a competitor's abilities and accomplishments, including insights into skills they may have, methods used, the impact of work, along with any relevant outcomes and/or lessons learned. The portfolio's purpose is to provide another way for the interviewers to learn about the competitor (potential employee). The portfolio should be created as a final product to be used in applying for employment. The following describes the content required for the employment portfolio:
 - a. Table of contents
 - b. Copy of competition hand-drawn creative design



c. Copy of the competition written description of the inspiration and method

used to develop their creative design

d. Career and professional development goals and a biography

e. Work philosophy statement and personal mission statement

f. List of areas of expertise

g. Works in progress (activities and projects)

h. Work samples from academic, employment and internship settings, before/after photos of cut/style work performed

i. Copy of competition one-page single-sided resume

j. References, transcripts, letters of recommendation

k. Certificates, diplomas, licenses, awards, letters of appreciation received

l. Records of community service/volunteer work

m. Professional memberships and service activities

n. Photographs of competitors in a professional setting

o. Certificates of attendance from seminars or workshops

p. Documentation of leadership experience

10. Competitors should not wear any jewelry that could interfere with services.

11. Be aware of your hygiene, as wearing strong perfumes or colognes could affect Others with allergies.

12. Instructors and/or observers who attempt to talk/signal to judges or competitors once the competition has started could cause their competitor to be disqualified from the competition.

STANDARDS AND COMPETENCIES

BAR 1.0 — Interview and Communication Skills: Follow oral and written instructions, respond to oral questions, and demonstrate skill and career readiness by participating in a mock interview for up to 15 minutes.

1.1. Complete employment application

1.2. Use a pleasant voice and eye contact

1.3. Properly introduce yourself

1.4. Respond to oral questions in a professional manner

1.5. Demonstrate critical thinking skills

1.6. Call the interviewer by name

1.7. Edit resume for spelling, grammar, and effective design

BAR 2.0 — Employment Portfolio: Create a professional portfolio that effectively describes occupational skills attained and meets the structural guidelines established by the competition technical committee.



2.1. Write a title page that includes the competitor's name, school, grade, and training program.

2.2. List each section and corresponding page numbers in a table of contents.

2.3. Include components/artifacts that present the competitor's work to a potential employer and display the skills that qualify the competitor for a position.

BAR 3.0 — Duplicate two (2) haircuts and styles selected by the technical committee within a 45-minute time limit.

3.1. Duplicate the haircut using shears, thinning shears, texturizing shears, razor, trimmers, and/or clippers.

3.2. Demonstrate blending, sectioning, lining, and finishing.

3.3. Duplicate the length, design line, and textured look of the selected cut.

3.4. Duplicate the finished design using a blow dryer or thermal tools such as curling iron, flat iron, etc., as needed.

3.5. Use appropriate styling products to duplicate the selected haircut.

3.6. Duplicate the balance of form, control of texture, and the control of the hair direction.

3.7. Follow all safety and sanitation procedures and always maintain a clean area.

BAR 4.0 — Develop a Creative Freestyle Design: Create a cut and beard design with hair color application for both. Must be completed within a 1-hour, 30-minute time limit. **Theme: Space**

4.1. Develop a creative freestyle design cut and beard design, including hair and beard color, using the theme. The haircut and beard should flow together for an all-over look. Note: Color should enhance the look but does not determine.

4.2. Use appropriate styling products to duplicate the hair design created by the competitor

4.3. Demonstrate balance, proportion, and form in the finished creative cut and beard design.

4.4. Show control of texture and control of hair direction in the finished design.

4.5. Incorporate current trends in both haircut, hair color, and beard design.

4.6. Follow all safety and sanitation procedures and always maintain a clean area.