

USA Memory Championship Rules

General Information

All Mental Athletes (MAs) must complete the application package and return it to the USA Memory Committee by the stated deadline in order to compete. Due to logistical requirements, **no exceptions** will be made for either incomplete or late applications. "Walk-in" competitors on the day of the event will not be allowed to compete or sit in with the MAs.

The USA Memory Championship is a **closed national event**. In order to compete (or sit in), you **must** meet the following citizenship and residency requirements:

1. United States of America citizen as supported by official government issued documents such as a state notarized birth certificate or USA issued passport
or
2. **Legal permanent resident** of the United States of America as supported by a Permanent Residency Card (also known as a "Green Card") issued by USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services)

The USA Memory Championship welcomes all MAs 12 years of age or older who meet these residency requirements. Please note that for those who are under the age of 18, a legal guardian or parent must sign the application. The registration fee of \$25 will only be waived for students under the age of 18 or enrolled in a post-secondary undergraduate program.

Memorization

MAs must be seated and ready to begin 5 minutes prior to the start of each event.

Each MA should be fully conversant with the rules prior to the competition. All questions should be sent in writing to the Executive Director of Judges at least 5 days prior to the event.

MAs are presented with the competition papers placed face down on the table in front of them.

The Executive Director of Judges (EDJ) will start the event by saying, "**You may begin**" and start the official timer.

An announcement of time remaining will be made as follows:

20 Minute Events	5 minutes left 1 minute left
15 Minute Events	5 minutes left 1 minute left
5 Minute Events	1 minute left

Cell phones, palm pilots, pagers, timers and any other "noisy" form of portable electronic devices **must be** switched off during all events.

MAs may leave their table to use the bathroom at any time during the **memorization period only** but must leave/return to the room quietly without disturbing others.

Each MA must maintain silence during each event.

When the time allotted for memorization is over the EDJ will announce "**Time is up, please turn your papers over**". At that point all MAs must stop memorizing and turn **all** papers face down on the table in front of them. The desk will then be cleared of all items and blank answer sheets will be provided.

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Recall

The EDJ will then start the recall period by saying, "**You may begin**" and start the official timer.

A MA may hand in their answer sheet at any time during the recall period. Only then can the MA leave their table. Once this is done, the individual MA's recall period for that event is over. We please ask that MAs only leave their table prior to the recall period ending in the case of **extreme** circumstances to minimize disruption to the remaining MAs.

MAs must ensure that their name is clearly marked on every answer sheet submitted. Points from an answer sheet will only be attributed to a MA if their name is clearly marked on the sheet in question.

It is the responsibility of each MA to ensure that their answer papers are clear and that potential misunderstandings are clarified by writing notes to explain the meaning of an answer or by pointing it out when the paper is collected.

No changes to the answer paper will be allowed once it has been handed to the judge. The EDJ's decision is final.

General Rules

Any concrete or tangible memory aid used must be developed within the time allowed for each competition. A MA will be allowed to bring and use **only the following items**: paper and pens, a ruler, timing device and / or silencing ear phones. All used papers must be collected prior to starting the recall session for each competition.

A MA wishing to clarify some point or make a request once the competition has started should raise a hand to attract attention. If the point raised is likely to be of significance to other MAs an appropriate method of communicating will be used so as to cause the least possible disruption to the MAs.

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USA Memory Championship 2009 Event Changes

The structure of the competition for 2009 has not changed from last year. The morning of the event will feature a qualifying round of four events that will culminate with the **top 7** scoring MAs advancing to the Championship round in the afternoon. The order of events will be as follows:

Qualifying

1. Names and Faces
2. Speed Numbers
3. Speed Cards
4. Poetry

After the first three events in the pre-qualifying round, the **top 3** scoring MAs will automatically advance to the Championship Round without having to compete in the fourth and final event. The remaining MAs will compete in the final event and the **top 4** overall scores will advance to the Championship round. Event ordering is tentative and subject to change. *Please refer to the individual section for each event for a more detailed description and scoring information.*

Championship Round

1. Spoken Words
2. Tea Party / 3 Strikes and You're Out
3. Double Deck O'Cards

Each of the three events in the Championship round will be conducted in a round-robin style tournament and will eliminate 2 MAs per event. *Please refer to the individual section for each event for a more detailed description and scoring information.*

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Pre-Qualifying Scoring

100 Championship Points per event will be awarded to the MA with the **highest score** in each event. All raw scores will be calculated into Championship Points utilizing a Bell Curve and the value will carry 2 decimal points. For example:

Names and Faces:

		Raw Score	Champ Points
1	Tom	105	100.00
2	Dick	74	70.48
3	Jane	100	95.24
4	Harry	63.5	60.48

- * Scoring for the Speed Card event will be slightly different than the other events. The amount of cards memorized and the time completed for each trial will be computed into a value. The highest value from both trials will win the event and score 100 points. All remaining scores will be calculated utilizing a Bell Curve.
 - o Example: Tom memorizes 52 cards in 120 seconds, Dick memorizes 52 cards in 180 seconds, Jane memorizes 52 cards in 90 seconds and Harry memorizes 26 cards. These results will be calculated into a raw score utilizing the formula $(52*(x/52)+((300-y)*.16666666)$ where x represents the number of cards memorized and y is the time. The calculation factor of .16666666 is a time bonus for memorization in under 300 seconds only.
 - Please note if $x < 52$ then $y = 300$. Only MAs who correctly recall 52 cards will be eligible for the time bonus.

MA	Results	Raw Score	Champ Points
Tom	52 cards 120 sec	82	94.25
Dick	52 cards 180 sec	72	82.76
Jane	52 cards 90 sec	87	100
Harry	26 cards 300 sec	26	29.89

The Championship points given for each of the 4 disciplines are added together giving the final result for a MA.

Note: No bonus points will be awarded for setting World or National Records. Additionally, to set a USA Memory Championship Record, the MA **must** be competing in a **USA National Event**.

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Qualifying Events

Names and Faces	
Memorization	15 minutes
Recall	20 minutes
Question Paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 99 color photographs of different people (head and shoulder shots) with a first and last name written underneath each picture. Pictures are provided 9 to a page in 3 rows of 3 photographs on 8 ½ x 11 paper.
Answer Paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> MAs will be given the 99 color photographs again (9 to a page in 3 rows of 3) but without the names and in a different order to that on the question sheet. MAs must clearly write down the correct name (first and/or second name) under each photograph.
Scoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A point is awarded for every correctly spelled first name. A point is awarded for every correctly spelled last name. Points are still awarded if only one of the two names per photograph can be recalled. <p>No points will be awarded for phonetic spellings.</p>

Speed Numbers	
Memorization	5 minutes (There are two attempts at this event with a new sheet of numbers each time.)
Recall	10 minutes (for each trial)
Question Paper	Computer generated numbers are presented in rows of 20 digits with 25 rows per page.
Answer Paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> MAs must write their recalled numbers in rows of 20 digits on the answer sheets provided. MAs must start with the first digit in the first row. MAs must continue the recall in consecutive rows. Skipping rows is not allowed.
Scoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20 points are awarded for every complete row that is correctly recalled in order. <p><u>FOR THE LAST ROW ONLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ If the last row is incomplete (e.g. only the first 19 numbers have been written down) but all of the digits are correct, then the points awarded will equal the number of digits recalled (19 in this example). ❖ The best score from the two attempts is awarded. <p>No mistakes allowed per line. ½ credit will not be given for 1 mistake in a row.</p>

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Qualifying Events (cont.)

Speed Cards	
Memorization	5 minutes (There are two attempts at this event with a new deck each time)
Recall	5 minutes (for each attempt)
Question Paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A freshly shuffled pack (deck) of 52 playing cards. 2. MAs who expect to memorize the complete pack (deck) of cards in less than 5 minutes must inform the judge so that a timekeeper with a stopwatch can be assigned. 3. MAs who expect to complete their memorization in less than 5 minutes must agree with their judge an appropriate signal that indicates they have finished memorizing. 4. MAs completing their memorization in less than 5 minutes must wait the entire memorization period before recall begins.
Answer Paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A second pack of cards, in proper order, is given to the MA. 2. This second pack must be placed in the same sequence as the memorized one. 3. Once the recall time has elapsed, the MA will place the recall stack on the table, indicating where to commence scoring. 4. If there is a discrepancy, scoring stops at that point and all cards correctly memorized to that point will be counted.
Scoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The MA who memorizes all 52 cards in the quickest time and correctly recalls the pack, wins the event. 2. The best score from the two attempts is awarded.

Poem	
Memorization	15 minutes
Recall	20 minutes
Question Paper	A previously unpublished poem.
Answer Paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MAs must recall the poem from the beginning by writing it down exactly as it was written (the title and the author also score) on the paper provided. 2. MAs must make it clear where one line ends and another line starts. 3. MAs must make it clear where lines have been left out from their recall of the poem 4. A maximum of 2 consecutive omitted lines is allowed before scoring stops
Scoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each line has a different number of points available but to score all of those points, the entire line has to be perfect. Total points per line are awarded for correctly recalling: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Every correctly spelled word. b. Every incidence of a capital letter. c. Each punctuation mark (to include italics, underlining). 2. If one or more mistakes are made in a line, that line will score 0 points for that line. 4. If more than 2 lines are omitted, scoring stops at the last omitted line. <p><u>FOR THE LAST LINE ONLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A partially completed final line of the answer scores the marks for the portion remembered if the line is correct as far as it goes. <p style="color: red;">To score points, the line must be recalled EXACTLY as written. ½ credit is no longer awarded for one mistake in a line.</p>

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Championship Events

Total Time: 40 min	Spoken Words
Memorization Time:	15 minutes
Presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A list of words organized in columns of 20 with 5 columns to a page. 2. 3 pages of words (300) are provided. 3. MAs must start at the first word of column 1 and remember as many of the words as possible.
Recall	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 7 MAs will be randomly ordered to begin the oral recall of the words. MA may use blank white paper for notes. 2. Recall will begin with the first word in the first column and continue consecutively. 3. Each MA will be allowed up to 15 seconds to answer.
Elimination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first 2 MAs who either identify the incorrect word or fail to recall a word are immediately eliminated.

Total Time: 40 min	3 Strikes and You're Out
Memorization Time:	15 minutes
Presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5 people, onstage live, revealing 24 pieces of information about themselves <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Name: first, middle and last (i.e. Samuel Thomas Kean) b. Date of Birth: Month, date, year (i.e. March 20, 1754) c. Where they live: city, state and zip code (i.e. Old Tappan, New Jersey 07675) d. Phone number: standard 7 digit number (i.e. 123-4567) e. Pet: type, color and name (i.e. black cat named Sally) f. Favorite 3 hobbies (i.e. fishing, golfing, reading) g. Favorite car: year, make / model and color (i.e. 1957 blue Chevy Corvette) h. Favorite 3 foods (i.e. spaghetti, chocolate, steak) 2. Each person will be presented on stage at a podium for 90 seconds to present the information. As the information is being presented, it will appear on a screen behind the person. 3. MAs will be presented with a sheet of paper including the information and are allowed to take notes for review during presentation / memorization. 4. After all 5 presentations are made, MAs will have 7 ½ minutes to review their notes before recall begins.
Recall:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 5 MAs will be placed on stage and randomly selected and ordered to begin the oral recall of information. MA may use blank white paper for notes. 2. The people will be brought back out, in randomized order. 3. The adjudicator will begin with the first piece of information and continue consecutively (as presented) until all information for that particular person is revealed. 4. Each MA will be allowed up to 15 seconds to answer. 5. All pieces of information answered must be correct and complete. (i.e., the first car must have all pieces of information correct)
Elimination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each MA will be allowed 3 incorrect answers before being eliminated. 2. The first 2 MAs with 3 errors each will be eliminated.

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Championship Events cont.

Total Time: 15 min	Double Deck O'Cards
Memorization	5 minutes
Presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 decks of 52 playing cards previously arranged in a random order. (The decks will not be mixed and will have unique colors to distinguish.) Memorization will begin with the first card on top of the face-down designated deck. (Recall will not be permitted to begin from the bottom of the deck to the top.) 2. MAs must start memorizing from the first deck of cards presented.
Recall	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MAs will be randomly ordered prior to the beginning of the oral recall. 2. A 2 minute hiatus will occur between memorization and recall. 3. Each MA will be allowed up to 15 seconds to answer. 4. After each MA identifies the card, the adjudicator will flip the next card in the "master deck" to determine if the MA is correct.
Elimination	The first 2 MAs to make a mistake are eliminated. The remaining MA is crowned USA Memory Champion.