

APPLICATION

2025 STUDENT JAZZ COMPETITION

College and High School Instrumental Divisions and Jazz Vocal Division



Application deadline: Friday, February 28, 2025
Competition finals: 7 p.m. Saturday, March 22, 2025

Jazz Pensacola, a 501(c)(3) organization, is now accepting applications for the 2025 Student Jazz Competition.

Our Vision and Mission: Jazz Pensacola aspires to be the premier Jazz club on the Central Gulf Coast dedicated to promoting all forms of jazz – America’s Music. We endeavor to provide a social forum for jazz performance, education and enjoyment for listeners and musicians. As part of that mission, Jazz Pensacola seeks to encourage and assist emerging jazz musicians during their student years. The jazz community, including musicians and educators, feels that by welcoming students and giving them an opportunity to showcase and develop their talents, we are helping to create the jazz musicians of the future – and thereby fostering the future of jazz.

Three Divisions: The competition will be divided into three groups, with three finalists selected for each division. Awards for final placement will be as follows:

- **College Instrumental Division:**
First Place: \$500
Second Place: \$300
Third Place: \$150
- **High School Instrumental Division:**
First Place: \$400
Second Place: \$200
Third Place: \$100
- **Jazz Vocal Division (High School and College):**
First Place: \$500
Second Place: \$300
Third Place: \$150

Monetary awards are intended to be used for furthering the student’s jazz education, such as tuition assistance in a jazz education program, private instruction with a jazz educator, jazz camps, or other music education programs. Award checks will be given to finalists at the conclusion of the live finals event.

Application Requirements: Applying instrumentalists and vocalists must reside and attend school (including homeschooling) in the greater Pensacola area (including Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties in Florida and Baldwin county in Alabama).

Applications must be **postmarked no later than Friday, February 28, 2025**. Notification of finalists will be posted on the Jazz Pensacola website, jazzpensacola.com.

Multi-instrumentalists may apply separately for different instruments, but may only compete as one individual during the live finals.

Applications must include:

1. **CD/mp3/mp4 recordings of two songs.** Applicants must choose and record their performance of one 12-bar jazz blues and one jazz standard performed in a swing, latin or contemporary style. Instrumentalists and vocalists may use up to a maximum of three accompanists, or a backing track. Find optional **play-along mp3 files** and PDF lead sheets for suitable selections on the Student Jazz Competition/Student Information page of jazzpensacola.com. The preliminary contest recordings should demonstrate an ability to improvise on the melody/harmony.
 - **Instrumentalists** should include no more than four choruses of the selected tune. The first chorus should be playing of the melody in a jazz-like style, the second and third choruses should demonstrate improvisation, returning to the top of the tune for the fourth chorus.
 - **Vocalists** should include at least two full choruses of the selected tune, with improvisation on the second chorus. Although “scat” singing is not required, the recording should show the ability to vary the elements of the song in a creative and spontaneous fashion.
 - **Percussionists** should be accompanied by piano or guitar, and bass, and must demonstrate use of both sticks and brushes, which should be clearly distinguishable on the recording. No more than four full choruses of the tune should be included, with one chorus a drum solo.
 - **Preliminary recordings** must be submitted as a CD/mp3/mp4 (not a video) file and labeled with your name, instrument, order and title of songs, and date(s) on which you recorded the songs.
2. **A completed 2025 Student Jazz Competition Application form** (below).

Selection Process: The preliminary recordings and the live competition performances will be evaluated and critiqued by an impartial judge who is an experienced jazz musician and/or educator.

JUDGING CRITERIA INCLUDE:

- **Sound:** tone quality, appropriate to style
- **Technique:** speed, evenness and clarity of execution
- **Time:** consistent accuracy and feeling of the pulse
- **Tonal materials:** selected chords, scales, emphasized melody notes
- **Spirit/drive:** emotional feeling, vitality, conviction
- **Lyricism:** melodiousness

The purpose of the preliminary recording is to showcase the performance of the applicant, rather than the recording itself. Judging will focus on the performance, **not** the quality of accompanists, studio techniques and effects, etc. A simple home recording is ideal; we are not looking for a studio production.

The applicants who receive the highest ratings will be selected as the three finalists in each division.

FINALISTS: The finalists will perform live in the Competition Finals, scheduled for Saturday, March 22, at 7 p.m. in the Mainstage Theater on the campus of the University of West Florida. A professional rhythm section will be provided.

Finalists will select and play one jazz blues and one non-blues jazz standard. Finalists will provide charts for the rhythm section. **Finalists must perform their selections by memory – finalists cannot use music on stage.** The live performances will be observed and evaluated by judges, who will then select the first, second, and third place award winners with the awards presentation to follow. In addition, critiques will be made available to the performers. Admission to this live event is free, and family, friends, teachers and bandmates are encouraged to attend and provide support.

Jazz Pensacola
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Pensacola FL 32502-5633
(850) 433-8382
Email: jazzpensacola@gmail.com
jazzpensacola.com



2025 STUDENT JAZZ COMPETITION APPLICATION

Complete and send this application, along with required preliminary recordings either as hard copy plus CD to Jazz Pensacola, 3 West Garden St., Suite 418, Pensacola, FL 32502-5633, or as PDF and mp3/mp4 audio file attachments via email to jazzpensacola@gmail.com.

Deadline: Must be postmarked by Friday, February 28, 2025. Call (850) 433-8382 with questions or email: jazzpensacola@gmail.com.

Name (print) _____ Instrument _____

School _____ Grade _____ Age _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

Notification of results will be sent to each applicant and posted on jazzpensacola.com. In addition, by signing below, you agree to abide by the rules, and present yourself in a mature and professional manner throughout the competition.

Student's signature _____

Signature of band director, private instructor,
or other verifying school official _____

Parent's signature if under 18 years of age _____

CHECKLIST FOR APPLYING

- Audio recordings, submitted on CD or mp3/mp4 files – can be sent as email attachments.
- Completed, signed and dated 2025 Student Jazz Competition Application – also can send via email.

