

Physical Preparation Checklist

A Few Days before the Contest

Choose appropriate attire for the contest.

- Are your clothes coordinated?
- Are your clothes comfortable?
- Are your clothes clean and freshly pressed?
 - Your clothes should be comfortable and neat in appearance. Don't be too flashy, but don't be too conservative – as in all things balance is important.
- Are your shoes appropriate for your clothes?
- Are your shoes polished?
 - Contests that are held on a stage will bring your shoes to the judges' eye level. Inappropriate (uncoordinated, old, unpolished) shoes can really stand out and are an eyesore that can leave a bad initial impression.
- Are you planning on wearing jewelry?
 - Jewelry is fine, but it shouldn't be shiny or glittery, because that will distract the audience and judges. If you are wearing jewelry make sure that it is subdued.
- Is your hair neat and appropriate?
 - Do your bangs hide or shade your eyes? If so, do something about it. If you are male, get a hair cut or use mousse or hairspray. If you are female, you can use curlers, pins, mousse, hairspray, whatever. **Your eyes are the most important part of your expressions! Make sure they can be seen!**
- **Don't do anything stupid that could cause you to catch a cold!**

The Day of the Contest

- How is your posture?
 - Be comfortable, but stand straight and be poised. Don't move around too much. **Don't put your weight on the podium.** Your body should be at attention, but hands and feet at ease.
- How are your gestures?
 - Your hands should move, but not too much and not too quickly. When you start your speech, hold your hands lightly in front in order to avoid nervous gestures. When you are into your speech and comfortable, you can start to use them for gestures.
- How is your eye contact?

- Look at the eyes of the people. (If you find this difficult/uncomfortable to do, look at their foreheads.) Move your eyes slowly and smoothly in cycles around the entire audience – paying special attention to the corners of the hall.
- How is your voice?
 - Make sure your voice matches the content and tone of your speech. Modulate your voice. Use it to add emphasis.
- **Don't forget to SMILE!**