



TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS CHALLENGES

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YOUR INTERESTS.

DISCOVER
YOUR FUTURE.

CREATE
YOUR CAREER.

2026 DSBN REGIONAL CULINARY ARTS SKILLS CHALLENGE SECONDARY LEVEL SCOPE

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PURPOSE OF THE CONTEST:

Participation in the Culinary Arts Skills Challenge provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate, through practical and theoretical application, their skills and task knowledge in the industry relevant to culinary skills and employment.

Students will be evaluated on their professional culinary skills by having them cook hot and cold dishes in accordance with established professional Hospitality and Tourism practices and specifications. Students will present and promote to the public, taking a view into the realistic trade of Cooks/Chefs while demonstrating new culinary trends.

EVENT DETAILS:

Date: Wednesday March 4, 2026

Time: 8:00 am

Location: Niagara College, Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus – Rm HT105

ENTRY: Please connect with a teacher advisor at your school to complete your registration for this competition to be eligible to participate.

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO BE TESTED:

The competition will be a practical cooking and food presentation contest. Presentation of dishes is according to the attached time schedule. An official time clock will be designated. Contestants are responsible for maintaining a clean workstation throughout the contest. Contestants will present plates to the judges and for public display.

Competitor Specific Information Competitors will prepare:

- A set of two (3) course menus consisting of an appetizer, Main Course and a Dessert. Recipes for the test project are supplied by the Technical Committee. These recipes are intended as a guide for the competitors, but menu items from the test project must be respected. Each competitor must submit two (2) copies of their menu and menu elements in either French or English no later than 30 minutes after starting the competition.
- Menus must be handwritten or typed (on the template provided), providing appropriate terminology and descriptors of the cooking methods and the ingredients used.
- Do not include your name or the school board name on the menu.
- All items that are presented on the plates must be listed in the menu elements template provided. Any items that do not appear on the menu (or menu elements) but appear on the plate will not be judged. Marks will be deducted for any omissions from the plate.
- Please see the “Menu Template Document” that is posted to the Skills Ontario website for more information and the templates Competitors must present two (2) plates for each course (main course and dessert)
- Two (2) plates to be presented to the judges

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS:

Safety is a priority at the DSBN Ontario Competition. At the discretion of the judges and technical chairs, any competitor can be removed from the competition site for not having the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and/or not acting in a safe manner. All articles required to be worn are the sole responsibility of the contestant.

The mandatory clothing requirements are the following:

- Non-slip, closed toe, water-resistant shoes (no running shoes, sandals, crocs etc.) Chef trousers (Black, Checked, Striped)
- Double Breasted Chef Jacket, Apron, Side Towel and Chef Hat
- Competitors are not permitted to wear jewelry such as rings, bracelets, necklaces, and piercings. Only exceptions to the “no jewelry” policy will be wedding bands and medical alert bracelets; however, it is recommended to remove these items.
- Any items deemed unsafe and unsanitary must be removed *Competitors will not be permitted to compete until they have the needed safety equipment. The technical committee will have final authority on all matters of safety.
- Competitors must show competence in the use of tools and/or equipment outlined in this scope and can be removed at the discretion of the judges and technical chairs if s/he does not display tool and/or equipment competency.
- Safety and sanitation questions, concerns or disputes will use “Train's - Advanced FST Program” as the reference for sanitation and safety practices.

EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, TOOLS, AND SUPPLIES:

Equipment Supplied by the Contest Coordinator:

- All food (common table)
- Presentation plates for the contest
- 1 x 4 burner gas stove with an oven
- 1 stainless steel table with shelf
- Shared fridge space
- Shared freezer space
- 1 Sink with hot and cold water
- 1 Electric outlet per workstation with GFI (Competitors may choose to bring an extension cord and/or power bar)
- Basic pots and pans, including sauté pans, stewing pans, sheet pans, bowls, china caps.
- Basic equipment such as a small mixer and food processor. Saranwrap, aluminum foil, wax paper, and plastic containers to store food.
- Kitchen towels and dish towels. Side towels or oven mitts.
- Display area for finished plates
- Shared garbage, recycling, and compost bins with bags will be designated.
- All garbage, recycling, and compost must be inspected by the head kitchen judge before being removed from the station.
- All Presentation Plates: 2 each of following 10 in soup bowls, 12-inch white plates: Main Course, 10 inch round white plate: Dessert

Equipment Supplied by the Competitor:

- Competitors may bring any tool and/or equipment deemed necessary to complete their module(s).
- All of the tools and/or equipment must fit on the workstation i.e. table and shelf and fridge.
- Note: Nothing may be stored on the floor or on top of the fridge at the contest site.
- Sanitizing equipment (spray bottles/pails)
- All sanitizing solutions must be clearly labeled and include original labels and/or Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
- Any sanitizing equipment that is not properly labeled will not be allowed onto the competition site.
- Recipes and reference books
- Toolboxes and equipment that does not fit in or on the workstation will be stored in a separate location and will not be accessible during the competition. All equipment must be marked clearly for easy identification.
- Refillable water bottle

Please Note:

- Only the food provided by the committee can be used for the competition.
- It is not permitted to bring any foodstuffs to the contest (including coloring agents, wood for smoking, canned oil sprays or any consumable products).
- Equipment like skewers, shot glasses, etc. are not acceptable.
- Food items and quantities are subject to change without notice, depending on availability and quality; all competitors will have the same conditions.
- **Competitors may not leave the contest site until their workstation is clean and sanitized. Competitors will only be allowed to leave their stations once the following has been completed:**
 - The station and equipment must be left in a clean condition (this will affect Sanitation marks awarded by the Kitchen Judges).
 - This will include (but is not limited to) the cleaning of stoves, sinks, fridges, tables, removing refuse (garbage, recycling, and organics) and packing competitor's equipment.
 - Inspection of the workplace will be performed by a team led by the Head Kitchen Judge forty-five (45) minutes after the final dish has been presented (whether the competitor has finished cleaning or not).
 - It is the responsibility of all competitors and coaches to make sure the kitchen is clean and put back together exactly as we found it.
 - Coaches, family friends, etc. may not help the competitor.

- Only when the competitor has been released by the Head Kitchen Judge may they leave the competition area.
- **Media devices, such as cell phones, smartphones, mp3 players, tablets, laptops, or PDAs are not permitted on the contest site**

JUDGING CRITERIA:

15% Sanitation

- Proper and professional clothes
- Personal hygiene and cleanliness
- Workstation, floor, and fridge cleanliness. Proper food storage methods
- Cutting board hygiene

10% Organization & Product Utilization

- Professional use of tools and equipment
- Food wastage – full utilization of food
- Energy and water - efficient utilization
- Time management – posted work plan
- Proper planning and execution of tasks
- Menu to be submitted at proper time as outlined in the contest project

25% Preparation and Technical Skills

- Proper use of tools and equipment
- Application of correct cooking techniques and methods

15% Presentation

- Portion size in accordance with the test project
- Clean plates
- Harmonious colours Appetizing and artistic presentation of food
- Appropriate and complementary garnishes (compatibility)

35% Taste and Required Menu Components

- Proper textures of foods
- Correct degree of doneness
- Balanced taste and seasonings
- Flavours match the menu specifications and descriptions
- Respected timetable in regard to serving times
- Food served at proper temperatures as specified in the test project and in accordance with industry standards
- All required elements outlined in the test project and the competitor's menu appear on the plate
- Final scores will be weighted by the technical committee to reflect the job interview score which will be 5% of the total overall score.

- The practical component of the competition (that is outlined under assessment) will be weighted at 95% of the total overall score, to determine the overall total score 100%. Every item is pointed on a scale of 1 to 10, and then weighted to reflect the proper percentage allocations.

Tie Breaking – In the event of a numerical tie the following judging criteria will be used to determine the winner: 1) Highest score in Taste and Required elements 2) Highest score in Preparation and Technical Skills 3) Highest score in Presentation

TRANSPORTATION:

Student/Teacher(coach) are responsible for transportation to and from Niagara College. Parking passes will be provided.

TEACHER’S ROLE:

Instructors are expected to acquaint their student participants with all of the enclosed guidelines. Teachers may accompany their students or visit any time during the competition but may not assist the competitors during the challenge.

COMPETITION AGENDA:

8:00- 8:30 am	Sign in/ Arrival/ Set up/Orientation & Opening Remarks
8:30 am	Competition begins
11:00 am	Presentation of Precision Cuts
11:00 am-11: 30 am	***** Lunch will be delivered to the room*****
12:30 pm	Presentation of the appetizer
1:00 pm	Presentation of the main course
1:15 pm	Presentation of the dessert
There is a (5) minute window to present dishes. For example, the dessert must be served between 1:15 and 1:20 pm. After which one point will be deducted per minute.	
1:25 pm	Clean-up
2:00 pm	Judges debrief
2:15 pm	Kitchen inspection
*Coaches will be told the top three competitors in no particular order at the end of the day.	

**** Each competitor will be given a number by their coordinator upon registration at the location and will be judged anonymously during the competition.**

Module A: Conversion Test, and Competencies

- **Conversion Test (See Appendix #2)**
- **Precision Cuts Competency**

Competitors will produce and utilize the following in their menu:

3 x 100g, Vegetable cuts - small dice, julienne, batonnet.

- Amounts used in plates are at the discretion of the competitor but must be written into their menu and must display the core competency.
- Any unused cut vegetables should be labelled and stored in accordance with industry food safety guidelines and utilized in the menu.

- **Chicken Butchery Competency -Timed Test**

Competitors will be provided with a whole chicken and must complete the following tasks within a 20-minute time period. *(Please be advised that this chicken will be used in your 4 main course plates.)*

Task - Break chicken down into bone-In 8 cut. Please see appendix #2, French trimming is optional, skin may be removed but must be shown.

Service Details:

- ◆ Some recipe information is provided. See Appendix #1 (Skills Canada Scope link below)
- ◆ Trays will be provided for the butchery and portion cups for the classic cuts
- ◆ No service wares (China) permitted other than that which is provided by the committee.
- ◆ Must use ingredients from the common table

Additional Instructions:

- ◆ All vegetable cuts must be presented in provided containers.
- ◆ Conversion exercise will have a 30-minute deadline from the start of the contest.
- ◆ Competitors may not gather food until the conversion test is completed.
- ◆ Module B Mise en place is to be stored neatly in your fridge or at your Station.

Evaluation Criteria:

- ◆ **Precision:** Accuracy and cleanliness of cuts.
- ◆ **Speed:** Ability to complete tasks within the given timeframe.
- ◆ **Waste Management:** Minimization of waste
- ◆ **Safety:** Proper handling of knives and adherence to safety protocols.

Module B: Appetizer, Main Course, and Dessert

Prepare four (4) portions of the following three (3) course menu:

Appetizer: Gazpacho Soup

The appetizer must include:

- Tomatoes, Cucumber, Bell pepper, Onion, Garlic, EV Olive oil, Vinegar, Seasoning and a Bread component
- one (1) item from the vegetable cuts

Main Course: Chicken Chasseur

The main course must include:

- Chicken, Shallots or Onions, Garlic, Mushrooms, Tomatoes, Sauce, Parsley
- Must utilize white and dark meat on each plate
- A minimum of one (1) starch preparation
- A minimum of two (2) vegetable preparations
- Two (2) items utilized from the vegetable cuts
- A minimum of one (1) functional edible garnish

Dessert: Tarte Tatin

The dessert must include:

- **Individual Classic Apple Tarte Tatin (pastry provided)**
- **Caramel Sauce**
- **Classic Chantilly Cream**

Service Details:

- ❖ **Appetizer:** minimum 250ml per portion
- ❖ **Main Course:** Minimum of 350 g to maximum 425 g
- ❖ **Dessert:** minimum of 125 g to maximum 185 g

*All cooking temperatures must meet food safety standards no frozen components

Available Ingredients:

- ❖ A list of all ingredients available for this day is included in the ingredient list document.

Special equipment required:

- ❖ 2 of each of the following plateware will be provided:
 - 10" round white bowls for the appetizer
 - 12" round white plates for the Main Course

- 10" round white plates for dessert
- ❖ No Service wares (china) permitted other than that provided
- ❖ Service spoons, glasses, ramekins etc. are not allowed.

***Each competitor is required to plate 2 of each item - 1 for presentation table and one is for judge tasting.**

Skills Canada Project documents:

Here you will find the skills Canada document where the appendixes and recipes are located.

https://www.skillscompetencescanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/SCNC26_34-S_Project_EN_V7-Final-Draft_Nov-27-2025.pdf

COMMON TABLE – SECONDARY

https://www.skillscompetencescanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/SCNC26_Skill34_SPS_Common-Table_EN_FR.pdf

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SCOPE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS THE SKILLS ONTARIO SCOPE HAS NOT YET BEEN RELEASED. YOU SHOULD CHECK IT REGULARLY. IF ANY MAJOR CHANGES ARE MADE YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED.