

New Horizons District Pinewood Derby 2026 Design Rules



Happy 250th Birthday America

2026
Rules Update Summary

Design Rules

Updates from 2019

- Eligibility: Inclusion of Lion Scouts
- Categories –
 - Updated Theme Category to 2026 “Happy 250th Birthday America” Theme

2026
New Horizons District
Pinewood Derby

Design Competition

Eligibility: All registered Cub Scouts in the New Horizons District, from Lion to 2nd Year Webelos, including those 2nd year Webelos that have crossed over to a Troop prior to the District Race.

There is NO Design Competition entry fee again this year.

The Design Competition rules are:

1. Cars entering the Design Competition must be newly built after September 1, 2026 (the current School/Scout year).
2. Design cars MUST include all parts provided in the stock Pinewood Derby kit including: wooden block, 4 axles and 4 wheels. Kit parts can be modified or used in any way in the design; however, all 9 parts listed above must be visible and recognizable by the judges.
3. Registration for the Design Competition can take place any time between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. There is no required pre-registration for this event, however, it is suggested. Online registration is available on the District Pinewood Derby website. Parents/Scouts will be able to register at the race via smart phone.
4. Entrants must register their cars at the Design Registration table and declare which design category they would like to enter. They will then receive an official District Pinewood Derby Design Pit Pass and District Derby patch.
 - 4.1. **Two cars, two competitions**: If an entrant is entering a different car in the speed race, they should arrive 30 minutes to an hour prior to their race time to provide sufficient time to enter a design entry AND a speed entry. Exceptions are not able to be made for late entries in the design competition. For anyone unsure of how long it will take to enter the speed car, remember that registration opens at 9:00 a.m. and Design entries are accepted until the cutoff at 12:00 p.m.
 - 4.2. **One car, two competitions**: If a participant is entered in the speed portion of the derby, and is outside the cutoff for the speed finals no later than 11:50 a.m., the Scout may retrieve his car from the race venue, and enter it into the design competition before design registration closes at 12:00 p.m. Cars that qualify for the speed finals, or those eliminated from the running after 11:50 a.m. will not be eligible to be entered into the Design Competition. Those Scouts, however, are always welcome to enter a second car in Design if they would like.
5. Scouts are limited to entry of one (1) design car. Sibling entries are not allowed.

6. Judging of the Design cars will begin promptly at 12:15 p.m.

The Design Competition categories are:

2026 Happy 250th Birthday America Themed cars: Best design of your favorite holiday. There are many of them to choose from some are listed above but don't forget some of the others such as Flag Day, Arbor Day or maybe a holiday that embraces your culture and traditions.

Best Automotive Design Car: Best realistic representation of an actual or concept car with unusual attention to detail and shape. For example: Police cars with lights and markings, Fire Trucks with hoses and ladders, Food Trucks with signage, specific models of cars like Volkswagon Beetle, etcetera.

Original Design: Best reflects the most unusual approach in a **NON-CAR** design. For Example: a pool table, dragon, pirate ship, submarine, fish, etcetera.

Cub Special: Best use of the Cub Scout colors, BLUE & GOLD, or a Cub Scout oriented activity. For example: Arrow of Light, Campsite, Pinewood Derby Track, etcetera

Cub Built: Best 99% Cub built car. ***Remember, a Scout is Trustworthy.*** Either a car or a non-car design.

Design Awards:

Judge's Special: Best overall entry from all design categories. This entry is chosen *before* all other design categories are chosen.

1st and 2nd Place: Awards will be given for the top two cars in each category