

# Coaches

## Training Manual

OHIO**SCIENCE**OLYMPIAD

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# Welcome

Thank you for volunteering to serve as an Ohio Science Olympiad coach. Whether you are starting a new program or you already have one established, this document is designed to assist you as you prepare your team for the Science Olympiad season. We (Ohio Science Olympiad) pride ourselves on offering the highest quality competition while meeting or exceeding the standards set forth by the Science Olympiad National Office. As such, it is important that coaches prepare their team to compete in a challenging and engaging tournament.

## About Science Olympiad

Science Olympiad is a “pay to play” academic sport that allows students at the K-6 level to participate in a competitive tournament or a hands-on Fun Day or Fun Night event. In grades 6-12 Science Olympiad functions more like a track team, requiring preparation, commitment, coaching and practice throughout the year. Each academic year, school based teams are allowed to register a team of 15 students who will cross train in multiple events within their preferred discipline.

There are three specific divisions;

- Division A for students K-6 (Elementary) - *Division A does not compete at the state or national level*
- Division B for students in grades 6-9
- Division C for students in grades 9-12

Teams in Division B and Division C compete in 23 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) focused events. Every year, Science Olympiad events are rotated to incorporate five different areas of science education:

- Life, Personal, and Social Science
- Earth and Space Science
- Physical Science and Chemistry
- Technology and Engineering
- Inquiry and Nature of Science

Each school-based team identifies a set of students to compete in an event(s) per the Science Olympiad National Rules.

## GENERAL RULES, CODE OF ETHICS, AND SPIRIT OF THE PROBLEM

*Revised by the Science Olympiad Rules Committee Chairs and Executive Board, July 2014*

The goal of competition is to give one’s best effort while displaying honesty, integrity, and good sportsmanship. Everyone is expected to display courtesy and respect. Teams are expected to make an honest effort to follow the rules and act in the spirit of the problem (to not interpret the rules so they have an unfair advantage). Failure by a participant, coach, or guest to abide by the following codes and accepted safety procedures, may result in an assessment of penalty points or, in rare cases, disqualification by the tournament director from the event, the tournament, or future tournaments.

1. Actions and items (e.g., tools, notes, resources, supplies, electronics, etc.) are permitted, unless they are explicitly excluded in the rules, are unsafe, or violate the spirit of the problem.
2. While competing in an event, students may not leave without the event supervisor’s approval and must not receive any external assistance. All electronic devices capable of external communication (including cell phones) must be turned off, unless expressly permitted in the event rules and left in a designated spot if requested.
3. Students, coaches, and other adults are responsible for ensuring that any applicable school or Science Olympiad policy, law, or regulation is not broken. All Science Olympiad content (e.g., policies, requirements, clarifications, FAQs, etc. on soinc.org) must be treated as if it were included in the rules.
4. All pre-built devices presented for judging must be constructed, impounded, and operated by one or more of the 15 current team members unless stated otherwise in the rules. If a device has been removed from the event area (even after the conclusion of the

event), appeals related to that device will not be considered.

5. Officials are encouraged to apply the least restrictive penalty for rules infractions (see examples in the [Scoring Guidelines](#)). Event supervisors must provide prompt notification of any penalty, disqualification, or tier ranking.
6. State and regional tournament directors must notify teams of any site-dependent rule or other rule modification with as much notice as possible, ideally at least 30 days prior to the tournament.

## Glossary

**Alternate** - Teams may bring alternate team members to a competition in case an official team member is unable to compete. Unless replacing an official team member, alternate team members can not compete in any of the 23 official events. They may, however, compete in trial events and fun events.

**Arbitration** - Arbitration is the process through which teams can call attention to questions they have regarding an event supervisor's adherence to the national rules. If it is believed that the rules are not being followed, creating an unfair advantage for another team, the head coach should discuss this with the event supervisor. If the matter is not resolved, the head coach may submit an appeal form to the arbitration team as soon as possible.

**Director** - The tournament or competition director is the person in charge of planning and overseeing the competition. All questions you have regarding Science Olympiad and your upcoming competition should be directed to your tournament/state director.

**Event Supervisor** - Event supervisors are dedicated volunteers and coaches who prepare, facilitate, and score each of the tournament events.

**Headquarters** - Headquarters is the scoring area of each tournament. Event supervisors report to headquarters as soon as they are finished scoring their event.

**Impound** - Impound is when team-built devices are checked-in before the competition begins. OHIO will allow any student member of the team or alternate to impound a device on the day of the State Tournament\*.

*(\*Students/coaches should check the rules as impound may vary at different tournament levels)*

**Invitational** - An Invitational is a voluntary practice competition, with no Regional, State, or National impact. It provides coaches and students the opportunity to experience a Science Olympiad competition or explore events they normally wouldn't participate in during a Regional, State or National competition.

**Regional** - Regional competitions are tournaments that determine which teams qualify for the State Tournament.

**Membership Registration** - Science Olympiad has required that all school-based teams (up to 15 members) competing in any Science Olympiad tournament (Invitational, Regional, State or National) must be a member of Science Olympiad Statewide program and paid registration and tournament fees as applicable. Ohio School-based Team registration begins the 3rd week of August. This process officially enters your school into Ohio Science Olympiad for the year and allows your school-based team the ability to compete in the Science Olympiad program around the country.

**Invitational Registration** - Invitational registration takes place in the Fall. A team must be registered with Ohio Science Olympiad to participate in an Invitational.

**Self-Schedule** - Self-schedule is the process through which a coach chooses time slots during which their team will compete in certain events. Self-schedule is done online in the weeks leading up to the competition.

**Self-Schedule Events** - Self-schedule events are events that need to be scheduled by coaches. They are typically technology/building events.

**State Tournament** - The Ohio Science Olympiad State Tournament is held at The Ohio State University. Teams that qualify at their Regional competitions advance to the State Tournament. The top team finishing in each Division (Division B and Division C) will qualify for the National tournament. If Ohio falls within the top ten largest state registrations in a Division we may be allowed to send a second team in that division.

# Ohio Science Olympiad

The Ohio Science Olympiad (OHSO) is a statewide program dedicated to improving the interest of all students in the ever-changing world of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). In an effort to motivate students to excel in and out of the classroom, a strong emphasis is placed on active, hands-on participation to assist students in their overall social development, leadership, and problem solving skills.

Ohio Science Olympiad goals are achieved by active participation in rigorous academic interscholastic competitions, tournaments, and non-competitive events that consist of a series of individual and team events that students prepare for throughout the year.

The Ohio State University has managed the statewide Ohio Science Olympiad program and hosted the State Tournament since 1985. The Ohio Science Olympiad program has become one of the most successful in the nation, annually ranking as one of the top ten largest programs in the United States. Ohio teams consistently place in the top 20 at the National Tournament out of 120 teams.

## Divisions

In Ohio, there are two Science Olympiad competition Divisions; Division B for grades 6-9, and Division C for students in grades 9-12. Division A K-6 (Elementary) is managed by the Ohio Science Olympiad state office; however, there is an elementary program sponsored by The Gelfend STEM Center at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. If you wish to start a Division A team, please contact us for more information.

## Registration and Membership Benefits

Science Olympiad requires all student participants to compete as members of a team, not as individuals. Each team must pay a fee to join a statewide program (i.e Ohio Science Olympiad), which will include the National Membership Fee. The Ohio team membership fee entitles students to participate in invitational tournaments throughout the country (additional costs may apply), a local regional tournament (pending space availability), and the State Tournament and National Tournaments (pending qualification) during the academic year. Multiple teams from a school may register, but **no more than two teams from any individual school may participate in a regional tournament** (space permitting). **Only one team per school may advance from the regional level to the state level.** No registration refunds will be given after the first tournament in Ohio.

## Tournaments

### INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

Invitational tournaments are sometimes called “practice tournaments”. These are optional tournaments teams may attend to practice events or gain experience without impacting their overall advancement. Invitationals typically require their own registration fee and each Invitational determines its own criteria for participation and event schedule. For more information about invitational tournaments in Ohio visit the [OHSO website](#).

### REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS

Ohio currently hosts eight regional tournaments. Teams are assigned to a regional tournament location based upon the county in which the team resides. Tournament directors make every effort to accommodate one team from each school; second teams are placed on a

waitlist until the statewide registration is closed. After registration is closed, regional tournament directors will communicate to all teams assigned to their region (including waitlisted), confirming or denying accommodation based upon space availability. All teams from a school must attend the same regional tournament. The top placing teams (in each division) at a regional tournament will advance to the state tournament. **Only one team per school may advance from the regional level to the state level.**

Organizing and conducting a regional tournament requires significant resources. Therefore, it may be necessary for your team to pay an additional regional tournament fee, depending on the funding available in your region. For more information about your specific regional tournament and any other fees visit the [OHSO website](#) or contact your regional tournament director.

## STATE TOURNAMENT

The Ohio Science Olympiad State Tournament is held at The Ohio State University. Teams that qualify at their regional tournament will advance to State to compete in a fun, exciting, and challenging competition. Teams attending the State Tournament may also have the opportunity to participate in “fun events” or non-scored, hands-on STEM activities on campus.

## NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

The teams that place first in each Division (Division B and Division C) at the Ohio State Tournament advance to the National Tournament to be held in May. If Ohio falls within the top ten largest state registrations in a particular division we may be allowed two teams from that division. For more information about the National Tournament please visit the [national website](#).

# Rules Manual

As a part of Science Olympiad Membership, each team that has registered with their state and paid their annual fee will have access to the Science Olympiad Rules Manual. The Science Olympiad Rules Manuals will now be free online for the public, so the state office will no longer be mailing any school-based teams physical copies of the Rules Manuals. Although the rules are now free, any school-based team must still register with the State Office in order to “play the game.” The rules will also be available for purchase in print format in the Science Olympiad Store. The Rules Manual will include the rules and guidelines for that year’s 23 events. The same manual is used for invitational, regional, state, and national tournaments. Each year the events and rules change so, as the coach, you must review the rules carefully to avoid disqualification and remain current. It is important to check both the [OHSO website](#) and the [national website](#) frequently to stay informed about rule clarifications or changes throughout the SO season. Additionally, rules may be modified based on logistics and/or level of competition. For example, an event may specify a drop height or distance traveled of 5 meters at Regionals, 10 meters at State and 15 meters at Nationals. Sometimes, a host site may not have the facility to accommodate the specified heights and will need to modify the drop height.

Many of the event rules are complex. If rules need to be clarified, you can submit your question through the the National website. At the State Tournament, the event supervisors will receive a copy of the clarifications from the National and State Office.

# Events

A Science Olympiad Tournament consists of up to 23 events spanning five categories: Life, Personal, and Social Science; Earth and Space Science; Physical Science and Chemistry; Technology and Engineering; and Inquiry and Nature of Science. SO events are designed to reinforce and extend classroom learning while giving students’ curiosity the opportunity to flourish. Be familiar with the current rules for each event, as they change annually and keep in mind the event may vary greatly between Division B (middle school) and Division C (high school). Also, be sure that you pay attention to the safety guidelines for each event and ensure that your students have the proper equipment. In addition to the 23 standard events, many tournaments will also include Trial Events to test out possible future events. Students may place in Trial Events and receive medals, but their score will not affect the overall team tournament score. Please email [scienceolympiad@osu.edu](mailto:scienceolympiad@osu.edu) prior to the contest if you have questions.

Science Olympiad events will be one of the following formats:

- Construction / Performance
- Stationary / Lab Practical
- Rotational

## CONSTRUCTION / PERFORMANCE EVENTS

This format requires students to construct a device prior to the tournament, or build a device during the competition. Examples of Construction/Performance Events include Hovercraft and Towers. Make special note of the events that require impounding (see description under [Competition](#) section). It is important for students to be familiar with the specifics for their device.

## STATIONARY / LAB EVENTS

This method is very similar to the typical test that students are accustomed to, but will include hands-on applications. Questions that ask students to observe, analyze, apply, predict, interpret, classify, measure, or explain should be expected. Examples of Stationary/ Lab Events may include Write it Do It and Ecology.

**Lab Events:** Teams will compete at a single lab station (fixed) for the duration of the event. All student teams will have the exact same setup and materials to conduct a specific task identified by the Science Olympiad Rules or event supervisor.

## ROTATIONAL EVENTS

In this format, teams rotate through multiple stations answering questions at each station. Examples of Rotational Events may include Forensics and Invasive Species. Warn students that anyone tampering with the materials in an effort to confuse or delay other teams will be disqualified. It is very important that questions and materials are in the same order throughout the day.

Check out [Science Olympiad YouTube Channel](#) for videos of events!

# Build a Team

## STARTING A TEAM

- Teams consist of 15 students, with a head coach (teacher or other adult approved by a school) in charge. A maximum of five (5) 9th-grade students are permitted on the Division B team. A maximum of seven (7) 12th-grade students are permitted on the Division C team. A school is considered to be a separate school if it has a separate administrator. Students must be from the membership school. Recruiting from neighborhood schools is not permitted. Students are not allowed to be part of the middle school AND the high school team at the same time.
- Extra students may be designated as alternate participants and may compete in Trial Events and Fun Events.
- Schools can have more than one team, as long as each team registers separately, with a different coach for each team. Only one team from a school is permitted to attend the State Tournament.
- For the events, a team may enter no more than one set of competitors in accordance to the event rules..
- All teams must pre-register to compete in ANY Science Olympiad competition. Please refer to the OHSO website for details on how to register. It is not necessary to name the students who will compete in each event as these names can be changed up until the day of the event.

## HOMESCHOOL POLICY

If you would like to start a team of home school students or if your child is home schooled please view the [Homeschool Policy](#) on the national website and reach out to the Ohio State Office.

## MAGNET SCHOOL POLICY

Only those schools that accept all levels of students and/or do not have a restrictive academic admissions (e.g. Parochial schools) policy are eligible for Science Olympiad. For more information please visit the [national website](#).

## THE COACH

A team must have a head coach. The duty of a head coach is to register and manage the school's teams via the [OHSO website](#) and serve as the point of contact for tournament organizers. The head coach may be a teacher, parent, principal, community member, or any

other adult approved by the school. The head coach must be aware of all rules, manage the coaching resources, recruit students and assistant coaches, involve parents, and provide a clear reason for the team to prepare and compete. Many successful high school teams run with a student-led committee that handles practices, logistics, etc. while reporting to the head coach. Remember that a coach's job is to train, guide, and teach. Coaches are NOT to design or build devices. This is the students' team, and they must be responsible and accountable for its success.

## Coaches' Pledge

*I pledge to put forth my best effort in the Science Olympiad tournament and to uphold the principles of honest competition. In my events, I will compete with integrity, respect, and sportsmanship towards my fellow competitors. I will display courtesy towards event supervisors and tournament personnel. My actions will exemplify the proud spirit of my school, team, and state.*

*On behalf of the coaches, assistants, and parents that are accompanying my team, I pledge to encourage honesty and respect for Tournament Personnel, our fellow coaches and other team members. We want our efforts to bring honor to our community and school.*

## GENERATE STUDENT INTEREST

- Have a Science Olympiad display and/or demonstration at a school assembly or PTA meeting
- Recruit a photographer/videographer to develop a video of your team's Science Olympiad experience
- Advertise on school bulletin boards, daily announcements, and the school newspaper
- Have science teachers demonstrate a Science Olympiad event in class
- At your initial information meeting, describe or demonstrate some events to build student (and parent) interest. Introduce coaches and existing team members.
- Hold an independent OHSO website or national website scavenger hunt to introduce students to Science Olympiad

## TEAM ORGANIZATION

Science Olympiad teams consist of up to 15 competing students and a variable number of alternates. Alternates are team members that attend the tournament in case one of the official team members is unable to compete. If not replacing an official team member, alternates may not compete in any of the 23 events. They may, however, compete in Trial Events and Fun Events on the state level.

As the coach, how you determine who will be on the team is up to you. Some schools have the coach pick the team members, others have the science department choose. Competitive teams with a lot of interest may host tryouts in the form of a competition in front of the entire school. If this is the first year of Science Olympiad at your school you may want to accept all who apply for the team. Initially, you may have difficulty finding enough students to make a full team. This is normal (and allowed).

If you are having difficulty determining who should be on your team you may want to take the following into consideration:

- Academic ability is valuable but so is a student's commitment to come to practice and competitions.
- Students with a wider background in a variety of disciplines are easier to schedule.
- A mix of students is good. Include quick thinkers, builders, and those who love facts.
- It is okay to start small but, eventually, it is good to have 2 to 4 alternates per team.
- Consider fielding two teams if you have at least 25 students.
- Some schools use a science test to evaluate candidates, others watch them in hands-on events, you could apply both. Whatever method you choose, we encourage you to be as clear as possible to students (and parents) regarding your method.

## STUDENT PLEDGE AND EXPECTATIONS

*I pledge to put forth my best effort in the Science Olympiad tournament and to uphold the principles of honest competition. In my*



*events, I will compete with integrity, respect, and sportsmanship towards my fellow competitors. I will display courtesy towards Event Supervisors and Tournament Personnel. My actions will exemplify the proud spirit of my school, team, and state.*

Students must agree to uphold the Student Pledge. The goal of Science Olympiad is to build character, teamwork, increase the interest of students in science, and promote an overall good attitude. **Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated.**

## RECRUITING ASSISTANT/EVENT COACHES

While choosing your coaching team you may want to take the following points into consideration:

- Many teams have one or more assistants. SO is a team effort for coaches as well as students.
- Hold a parent meeting to discuss involvement.
- Seek help from all school staff members, not just teachers.
- Not all event mentors require a science background, e.g.: Road Scholar, Write It/Do It, social science events.
- Recruit older students (HS) to train younger students (MS and ES).
- Parents can help with event mentoring, team travel, logistics, and fundraising.
- Local colleges and universities will sometimes help students in specific disciplines (e.g.: a geology department may help with rocks, fossils, and minerals).
- Consider local retirees, especially scientists and engineers.
- Look to local nurses and physicians for health related events.
- Be sure to thank all contributors and volunteers in writing. Students should help with this.
- Determine whether or not Criminal Record Screening is Required by your school.
- Choose an assistant / backup coach in case you are unable to attend a tournament.

## ROLE OF PARENTS

One of the most important goals of Science Olympiad is for students to be part of a team to engage in science and learning. While it is encouraged that parents and adults help students with their projects and preparation of their events, it is important to stress that parents should only act as guides. Having parents construct a structure will expose and embarrass the student when they are not capable of answering questions asked by the Event Supervisor. Further, even if the student were to successfully compete, the emphasis of Science Olympiad is NOT to have the student win a medal, but rather to get them involved in the process of science.

During the competition, it is important that coaches and parents do not get involved in events. They are to remain away from all events, out of all rooms (except for events open to the public), and shall not interact with any Event Supervisor. To do so could endanger the entire team for disqualification.

For more SO parent tips, please read [Seven Tips for Parents](#).

## NEVER ALONE POLICY

One of the most important goals of Science Olympiad is for students to be part of a team to engage in science and learning. While it is encouraged that parents and adults help students with their projects and preparation of their events, it is important to stress that parents should only act as guides. Having parents construct a structure will expose and embarrass the student when they are not capable of answering questions asked by the Event Supervisor. Further, even if the student were to successfully compete, the emphasis of Science Olympiad is NOT to have the student win a medal, but rather to get them involved in the process of science.

The Ohio State University will not take custodial responsibility for minors while participating in at Ohio Science Olympiad. Custodial responsibility will remain with teachers, parents, legal guardians and chaperones. Minors must be properly supervised at all times.

# Practice

## HOW / WHEN TO HOLD PRACTICES

No two teams have the same practice schedule. You must determine what works best for you and your team and tweak it as you go. It may be best to train at school, but groups may work on specific events at home to involve parents (good for construction events).

Possible Practices:

- Tuesday/Thursday after school for 1 hour
- One practice a week, each week focusing on a different section of events
- Sunday afternoons, whole team meets at a central location
- Before school twice a week
- Dedicated time during the school day for clubs or other activities
- An actual class that competitors are enrolled in
- Have coaches offer event/discipline specific training sessions
- Independent work, coach touches base with each event/discipline team regularly to check on progress, but students are not required to meet at a certain time
- Do off-site training; use your local resources (make permission slip specific as to off-site training if required by school)
- Cross-train with other schools

Financing/Fundraising:

- Have administration set up an account for the team
- Estimate the amount of money you may need for the year
- Elect a treasurer to keep track of donations and expenses
- Seek donations from the school, parents, and companies/organizations in the community
- Encourage donations of equipment and supplies such as attire, equipment, tools and supplies, goggles, resource videos or manuals, calculators, and food/snacks
- Provide (or have parents provide) snacks for practices

## COMMUNICATING

Find an efficient way to communicate with your team as not all students will be able to attend every practice. You could contact your team by e-mail, message boards, a website, a wiki page, etc. You may want to create a team email account to help provide consistency when coaches change. Be sure to keep your school and community updated about your team's progress by submitting articles to the school paper and local newspapers.

## EQUIPMENT

Teams will need the following equipment in order to be successful during competition:

- Safety equipment including goggles

- Required and permitted supplies for each event (listed in the Rules Manual)
- Resource guides and field manuals
- Materials to use during practices
- Optional: T-shirts/lab coats with a unique Science Olympiad logo. Please refer to the National Office website for rules concerning the use of the SO logo.
- Note: Commercially finished or purchased products, unless otherwise permitted in the rules, and those completed by adults will be disqualified.

## COACHES TRAINING WORKSHOP

As you prepare your team, it may be beneficial for you to attend the [Science Olympiad Centerville Coaching Academy](#) held in the Fall.

# Prepare for a Tournament

## SCHEDULING A TEAM / ASSIGNING EVENTS

With 23 events and only 15 team members, scheduling a team to compete in every event can be a difficult task. Each individual event will have a team of two (some have three) competitors. This means that most students will need to compete in three events if you want to participate in every event. Here are several things to keep in mind when scheduling for a tournament:

- Have students rank their top 5 event preferences.
- Try to schedule students into their “strong” event, if possible.
- Note the time and place of events for the tournament so students will not be running from one event to the next (some campuses are quite large). If the events are in the same building and back-to-back, the same team members can probably participate in both.
- Consider scheduling “back-up” team members to be present in case an event runs late and the original scheduled team member(s) can’t make it.
- Last minute problems such as inclement weather may make it necessary for the coach to move students into a different event. Be sure to coach students so they can be flexible enough to accept the challenge of a last minute substitution.
- Students should be flexible in their partners.
- Do not over commit any one student.
- Check the schedule carefully, it may not be the same at all tournaments.

## SELF-SCHEDULE EVENTS

Many tournaments (including the Ohio State Tournament) require coaches to self-schedule some events before the competition. As a coach, you will choose time slots during which your team will compete in certain events. Self-Schedule Events are typically technology/building events in which students bring a device they construct before the tournament and perform preassigned tasks. The Ohio State Tournament uses an online scheduling platform found here ([Event Schedule](#)) for all Self-Schedule Events. You will also be able to sign up for Trial Events and Fun Events using this link.

## FUN EVENTS

Fun events are additional STEM opportunities and activities that will be available for all students including alternates, to participate in while at the State Tournament.

## SECOND TEAM LOGIN

After all eligible teams register for the State Tournament Self-Schedule Events you may ask for a second team registration login. This

login does NOT allow you to bring a second team, rather, this is designed so that you may sign up for additional spaces in Trial Events and Fun Events for your team (including alternates).

## UNDERSTANDING EVENT RULES

As a coach, it is your responsibility to understand event rules, this includes keeping up with any National and Local Event Clarifications that may be posted while you are preparing for tournaments.

## WHAT TO BRING

As you get ready for a tournament, keep in mind that you will need to bring event supplies as well as day of resources for your students.

## HOW TO PACK SUPPLIES FOR EVENTS

Many teams pack large ziplock bags (if you can find the 2 gallon ones they work great) or plastic totes with materials for each event. Be sure to include safety equipment, calculators, etc. that the school provides/loans and any resources the student is permitted to bring. The day of the competition the individual event team can grab the bag and go. You may want to pack an “extras” tub/toolbox for the building events with things like scissors, duct tape, a glue gun, super-glue, etc. Provide a list of everything included in each bag/box for better organization. A list of required and permitted items for each event can be found in the Rules Manual.

## COACHING SUPPLIES

As a coach, you may want to bring the following items:

- Sharpies
- Extra pencils with good erasers
- Copies of all required/submitted paperwork
- Emergency phone numbers (possibly on medical forms)
- Extra non-programmable calculators
- Extra safety goggles
- Copies of graphs, energy transfer lists, or other documents needed to be submitted to Event Supervisors
- A photo ID
- Roll of duct tape, screwdriver, glue, etc. for minor repairs
- Trash bags to clean up homeroom
- Cell phone
- Camera - take lots of pictures to post on your website, use in yearbook, etc.

Note: You may also want to appoint a backup coach to fill in for you in case of emergency.

## LUNCH AND SNACKS

Each tournament is different in terms of how they handle lunch. Tournament directors will post information about this on their tournament page. Always check out what is near or on campus. If students have never eaten on a college campus the dining hall may be an option. Some teams have parents bring a potluck for the group. Ordering ahead and then picking up pizza or a boxed meal may work as well. It depends on what is available. Have lunch ready to go 30 minutes before the end of an event block near lunch and make sure you have enough food for those who are coming between back-to-back events. Many teams ask parents to provide snacks for students to eat throughout the day.

The Ohio State Tournament does not provide food for teams; however, meals may be available through Potbelly Sandwiches or other vendors. We may provide discount meal tickets for some campus dining halls. For more information, please refer to the [OHSO website](#).

## SUPERVISION ON TOURNAMENT DAY

In addition to providing snacks for the tournament, you may want to rely on some parents to help you for the day. Your team is your responsibility for the entire day and there needs to be adequate adult supervision (especially on a large campus). Students should not be

alone in a homeroom or wandering around a campus alone and they should know how to contact their coach in case of an emergency. Assign parents and assistant coaches to supervise the homeroom and escort younger students to and from events.

## TEAM VOLUNTEERS

In order to participate in the Ohio State Tournament each team is expected to provide at least 8 hours of volunteer service or they may be penalized. Please have volunteers report to the event assigned to your team no later than 30 min before the start of the event unless notified otherwise. Assignments can be found here ([Ohio Science Olympiad](#)).

## NOTIFICATIONS

Event updates will be sent via text message through Remind. If you have not signed up please consider doing so. Text @sosta to 81010 from your mobile device (you must sign-up every tournament year). The state office will not respond to emails after the Thursday before the state tournament.

## TOURNAMENT CHECKLIST

- Have you secured transportation to the tournament?
- Have you booked hotel rooms for your team if you plan to stay overnight?
- Have you filled out field trip paperwork as required by your school? (OHSO does not want you to turn this in, but your school may require this)
- Do you have a plan for lunches/snacks?
- Do you know who your team volunteers are and where they are reporting?
- Do competitors and their families understand where to meet you and how to contact you on tournament day?
- Do you have all your construction devices and supplies needed for every event?
- Has your team and your principal filled out the Final Team Registration Form (see below)?
- Have you, your students, and all attending parents signed the Code of Ethics, Spirit of the Problem Form (see below)?
- Have you scheduled your students for any Self-Schedule Events?
- Have you given students a schedule of their events?
- Have you signed up for Remind?

## Compete

As members of Ohio Science Olympiad your team is allowed to compete in invitational tournaments, a regional tournament, and, if they qualify, the State and National Tournaments. For more information, please see the "Tournaments" section above ([LINK](#)).

## NATIONAL AND LOCAL EVENT CLARIFICATIONS

Review the rules carefully to avoid disqualification or penalties. Sometimes rule clarifications are needed. It is important to check the national website for [national rules clarifications](#). In addition, be sure to stay up to date on any Local Event Clarifications for the tournament you will be attending. Some rules may need to be modified due to logistics. For example, a host site may not have the facility to accommodate specific rules. If you have a need rule to be clarified, you contact the National Office.

## CHECK-IN

It is important for coaches to check-in at Headquarters prior to finding their event area. At check-in you will receive important information for the tournament day. At check-in you will turn in the following documents.

- **Final Team Registration Form** – In order to compete at the Ohio Science Olympiad Tournament, each team MUST turn in a [Final Team Registration Form](#). This document must be signed preferably in blue ink, by the coach and the principal of your school.
- **Code of Ethics and the Spirit of the Problem** – In order to compete at the Ohio Science Olympiad Tournament, every team MUST turn in a [Code of Ethics and Spirit of the Problem Form](#). This document must be signed preferably in blue ink, by the coach, team members, and any parents attending the tournament.

## WRISTBAND POLICY

**Wristbands must be worn on the student's wrist to compete in the Ohio Science Olympiad State Tournament.** Students will NOT be permitted to compete in an event without a wristband.

- Must be worn on the wrist ONLY (NOT on ankles, belts, belt loops, neck, etc.).
- Must be secured tight enough so they cannot be slipped off, but not too tight. Wristbands may be confiscated if they can be slipped off.
- Wristbands are NOT interchangeable between students. Event Supervisors are advised to send all students without a wristband back to their coach.
- If a wristband is defective, damaged or needs replaced, the coach must bring the wristband AND the student to Headquarters for a replacement before they are allowed to compete.
- Event supervisors will check to see that students have their wristband in place before their event begins. This may be done while taking attendance.
- Trial Events: Alternates do not need to wear a wristband to compete in trial events (wristbands are not required for Trial Events).
- Fun Events: Wristbands are not required to participate.

Please be sure your student writes both their name and team number (found on wristband) on all tests!

## SAFETY INFORMATION

It is your responsibility to insure that students have the proper safety equipment for their events. A list of the required safety equipment and a detailed description of acceptable goggles can be found in the Rules Manual. Be aware of tournament specific emergency procedures and choose a team meeting place outside in case of fire.

## COACH / PARENT INTERFERENCE

Interference occurs when students, coaches, teachers, chaperones, parents, or any other person associated with a team assists, hinders, obstructs, or gives outside help to competitors during an event. Examples include:

- Entering an area where an event is set up for competition or in progress without proper authorization to do so
- Giving any verbal or nonverbal “coaching” or outside assistance to a participant during an event
- Disrupting the Event Supervisor or the flow of an event
- Providing resources, tools, or help to a competitor during an event without prior authorization

Teams will be penalized for receiving outside help during construction events open to the public. Please advise all involved with your team that they must not yell instructions or gesture to a team while they are inside the competition area.

## DEVICE IMPOUND

Impound is the process during which team-built devices are checked in before the competition begins. If an event's rules show “Impound: Yes” at the top they must be impounded. OHIO will allow any student member of the team or alternates to impound a device on the day of the State Tournament. The event supervisor may have questions, so it is best if one of the students competing with the device is available during impound. The event supervisor will inspect the device for construction violations and then students will return at their

assigned time to compete with the device. Impounding is designed to prevent teams from seeing what others have done and making last minute modifications.

*\*Students/coaches should check the rules as impound may vary at different tournament levels. Please note that neither parents nor teachers can impound devices for students.*

## SCORING PROCEDURES

All teams who participate and compete according to the rules will be scored and ranked. Individual event raw scores will be ranked from 1st place to Nth place (N = number of teams competing). Teams will be awarded points for each place as follows: 1st place = 1 point, 2nd = 2 points, up to Nth place for every event. The Overall Team Score will be the sum of the event points with the smallest number of points being the 1st place team (see below).

### Ties

Every effort will be made to break ties following the guidelines under the section of the event rules where applicable. Event tests are designed to break ties.

### Tiering

Teams/Devices that do not meet the requirements in the event rules will be allowed to compete if possible and are to be scored and ranked below (tiered) those who met all specifications. They will be awarded points in relation to their rank. Event Supervisors may, at their discretion, allow students to modify any device before the expiration of the impound period. Supervisors may not provide assistance regarding the type of modifications or how to accomplish them prior to, or at any time during the tournament day.

### No Shows

If a team does not show up or does not make an honest attempt to participate, the team will be listed as a “No Show” or “NS” for the raw score on the score sheet and awarded N+1 point. This includes teams who may be present but display no preparation for the competition.

### Disqualification

Teams should be Disqualified or “DQ” only for misbehavior (including excessive use of vulgar language) or cheating. A “DQ” as a raw score will be awarded N+2 points on the score sheet. A note will be made as to the reason why the team was disqualified. The Event Supervisor must inform the student and remind them to inform their coach as soon as a problem occurs.

### Lowest Score Wins

After all event points have been awarded, they are added and the team with the LOWEST number of event points is the first-place winner, the team with the second LOWEST number of event points is the second-place overall winner and so forth. In the event that an overall team score tie occurs, points will be awarded according to the highest number of first place event finishes, then the highest number of second place finishes, and so on.

To make the awards ceremony meaningful and dramatic, scores are not posted prior to the ceremony. Coaches are given one hour after the receipt of the final scores to appeal any recording error. In case of an error, the policy is not to take away any medals or trophies, but provide additional awards where appropriate.

## ARBITRATION AND APPEALS

Arbitration is the process through which teams can call attention to questions they have regarding an Event Supervisor’s adherence to the National Rules. If it is believed that the rules are not being followed, creating an unfair advantage for another team, the HEAD COACH should discuss this with the event supervisor. If the matter is not resolved, ONLY the HEAD COACH may submit an appeal form to the arbitration team at headquarters as soon as possible. The Ohio State Tournament headquarters is located in Physical Activity and Educational Services Building (PAES). All Appeal Forms must be submitted to the Arbitration Team by 3:30 pm. Arbitrators will speak with HEAD COACHES ONLY.

## OFFICIAL SCORES

At the end of the Science Olympiad State Tournament Awards Ceremony, each team’s head coach will be provided one copy of the final scores. Places are tentative and may change if any scoring inconsistencies are brought to the attention of the state director and arbitrators and verified within one hour after the ceremony is completed. If changes occur, the appropriate medals and trophies will be awarded. Teams will not be asked to return awards. In the rare case of a problem, call the State Tournament Director (head coach only). Once the results are final, the State Director will submit the names of qualifying teams to the National Tournament Coordinator. Final scores will be posted on the OHSO website.

## POST-COMPETITION OVERVIEW

On the first day back to school after the competition, gather all the students that competed and discuss how they felt they did. Have them record information on the events, the way they were run, and what they could have done differently. Have them discuss their preparations for the events, and how they could have changed their planning to do better. Keep in mind that the goal of Science Olympiad is not solely to win the events. However, the evaluation of performance is an essential part of learning. Students must focus on what they did, why they did it, and how they can improve.

Here are some things to consider as the students evaluate their performance:

- Which events did I compete in?
- Was I prepared?
- Did I have the proper resources?
- Did I spend enough time preparing?
- Did I work smart, not just hard?
- If there was a problem, did I communicate it clearly with the event supervisor and my coach?
- Did I work well with my team member?
- Did I clearly understand the rules and follow them?
- Were there any rules that were unclear?
- Was it easy to find the location?
- What did I do well and succeed in?
- What positive things occurred during the day?
- Once the results are final, the State Director will submit the names of qualifying teams to the National Tournament Coordinator. Final scores will be posted on the OHSO website.

## SUCCESSION PLAN AND MENTORSHIP

At the end of the Science Olympiad State Tournament Awards Ceremony, each team's head coach will be provided one copy of the final scores. Places are tentative and may change if any scoring inconsistencies are brought to the attention of the state director and arbitrators and verified within one hour after the ceremony is completed. If changes occur, the appropriate medals and trophies will be awarded. Teams will not be asked to return awards. In the rare case of a problem, call the State Tournament Director (head coach only). Once the results are final, the State Director will submit the names of qualifying teams to the National Tournament Coordinator. Final scores will be posted on the OHSO website.

## Resources and Contact Information

If you would like more information about anything mentioned in this packet, please refer to the [national website](#) and the [OHSO website](#) for more information.

If you have any questions, please contact the Ohio Science Olympiad State Office at [scienceolympiad@osu.edu](mailto:scienceolympiad@osu.edu).