

356 Club of Southern California

2024 Concours d'Elegance

Participant Handbook



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Introduction

So, you're interested in participating in your club's concours event, but you're not sure what's involved, what gets judged or how to prepare your car. This guide will tell you all of this and more. It will cover in detail how the events work, how to prepare your car and what to actually do on the day of the event

What does Concours d'Elegance mean?

Concours d' Elegance is a French term denoting a gathering together of automobiles in competition or judging of their respective merits in terms of coach work design, finish and appointments. (Concours is pronounced without the 's')

On the club's web site (<https://www.356club.org/concours>) is our mission statement for the event.

"The foremost purpose of the So Cal 356 Club Concours is to encourage the owners of Porsche's 356 to preserve, maintain, and present their Porsches in as authentic and clean conditions as possible."

So, at SoCal 356 Club Concours event, we judge authenticity and cleanliness, as if you picked up your brand new car from the factory.

Let's look at the requirements for participating and some of the general rules of the concours

Participation Requirements

- All signups are done through the club's website.
- Once registration is closed, no changes will be allowed. The Head Judge reserves the right to change participant's classification, based on judging logistics.
- Only one participant can represent the car during the judging process.
- **Full Division** – The winning car must sit out the next year (Starting in 2021).
- **Street Division** – The winning car must sit out the next year or move up to Full (Starting in 2021).
- **Wash /Shine Division** – The winning car must sit out the next year or move up to Street (Starting in 2021).
- Only 356s with Porsche engines are allowed in the judged classes.

Concours Format

Now let's look at how the concours is structured.

The Divisions

We have three judged divisions:

- Full
- Street
- Wash /Shine

The Models

We typically have three models

- A
- B
- C

The Classes

Within those three basic models, we break them into classes:

- Open (Cabriolet, Speedster and Conv D/Roadster)
- Closed (Coupes)

On occasion if a particular model (Pre-A, Speedster or Roadster/Conv D) has an abundance of entries, we'll create a class unique to them. The Head Judge makes that call after the sign-ups are closed.

Within the three divisions there are categories that are judged. We'll explain each one in detail later in the handbook.

General Descriptions of the Divisions

Full

In this division, all cars are judged as equals. You compete against all models, open or closed. This is the toughest division to win. Six judges and six categories.

Street

In this division, you compete against cars like yours. A open vs A open, A closed vs A closed. Same with B and C cars.

- A
 - Open
 - Close
- B
 - Open
 - Closed
- C
 - Open
 - Closed

Wash / Shine

Same as Street

- A
 - Open
 - Close
- B
 - Open
 - Closed
- C
 - Open
 - Closed

Again, judging structure can change based on the entries, but we start with the basic structure and then adjust accordingly. The Head Judge makes that call after the sign-ups are closed.

Where do I start?

If you have never entered the club concours before or have never been through the process, then the Wash / Shine is good place to start. In this division, the car is not judged on authenticity. The car is judged on the cleanliness and condition of certain areas (categories) of the car. The level of expectation is the same as the other divisions, but without the authenticity component.

You will get a good feel for what is expected of you and your car as well as the process without the pressure of the authenticity component.

The Basic Function Test

First, all divisions have the same basic inspection requirement. Every car has to go through this. It is very important because the point deductions are big, full points! Fail any of these and it pretty much takes your car out of contention.

Each one of these items are worth 1 point, no half or tenth points, 1 point! They either work or don't work (function tests) or they are missing (owner's manual, jack and spare tire). On the items, we only look to see that you have them. Their condition is judged later in their respective categories.

1. Headlight High/Low beam
2. Tail lights
3. Brake lights
4. Backup light
5. Turn signal Left/Right
6. Horn
7. Engine Idle
 - a. Gearshift in neutral & clutch in
 - b. 30 seconds to start & clear carbs
 - c. Must idle for 30 seconds with foot on accelerator
8. Owner's Manual
9. Jack
10. Spare Tire

This is the Lead Judge's actual checklist that he/she will follow to start the judging process. This is how the procedure actually unfolds.

Head Judge Checklist

- Gather all team members together for introductions
- Introduce each member, including timer to the participant
- Ask participant for Judging sheets
- Confirm the information on the judging sheets matches the Vehicle ID card
- Ask Participant to close all door and lids.
- Check panel fit for 1 minute.
 - Task #1 - Timer calls out when 1 minute is up.
- Ask Storage Judge to move to the front of the car
- Ask Engine Compartment Judge to move to the rear of the car.
- Ask participant to enter the car and perform Basic Requirement tasks 1-6.
- Record results on the Basic function score sheet
- **BEFORE** asking participant to start the car. **SAFETY FIRST**
 - Gear Shift in Neutral
 - Clutch in
- Ask participant to start the car.
 - Timer Task # 2 – Start Car and clear carbs etc. 30 seconds
 - **Timer Task # 3** – Car must idle for **20 seconds** without owner's foot on the gas pedal!
 - Record results on the Basic function score sheet
- Ask Participant to open **ALL** panels
 - Doors
 - Hood
 - Deck Lid
 - Glove box
 - Gas door – if applicable
- Owner's manual present?
- Jack Present?
- Spare Tire Present?

It is actually pretty simple until you have to perform the tasks with a judge standing there with a clip board! So run through it a couple of times by yourself so you are familiar with the process. Practice makes perfect!

Division Details

Wash /Shine

In this division your car is judged on how clean it is and the condition of the parts associated within each of the categories judged. Don't let the division name fool you. The standards are the same in this division as they are in the Full Division. Within Wash/ Shine, the following categories are judged.

- Exterior
- Interior
- Front Storage

Wash / Shine – Exterior

What do they look at on the exterior of the car? Everything!

- Glass -All surfaces should be spotless, clear and free of scratches and chips.
- Chrome - All surfaces should be free of any pitting, discoloration and should reflect like a mirror.
- Bright work – All surfaces should be the same as the chrome.
- Tires – Should be clean and zero build-up of “tire dressing”.
- Paint – Free of chip scratches and polish residues.
- Rubber gaskets – Free of splits and discoloration

Here are just some of the items that are judged.

- Windshield Glass
- Windshield Trim
- Wipers
- Headlight Glass
- Headlight Trim – Chrome
- Horn grills - Upper Left & Right
- Horn grills – Lower Left & Right
- Hood Handle
- Turn Signal Assemblies
- Front Bumper Assembly
- Side Mirror
- Rocker deco trim
- Door Handles
- Door Frame Assemblies
- Qrt Window Assemblies
- Rear Glass
- Rear Glass Trim
- Engine grills
- Rear Bumper Assembly

Wash / Shine – Interior

Again, everything should be clean, free of dirt, smudges, stains etc. Many of the same elements on the exterior of your car are inside your car as well.

Glass – Same as the exterior, just on the inside. Remember your gauges have glass surfaces!

Chrome - All surfaces should be free of any pitting, discoloration and should reflect like a mirror (Recliners, Gauge rims, Switch bezels etc.)

Upholstery – All surfaces should clean, free of dirt, smudges and stains. No wear and tear spots. Don't forget the seat rails too!

Here are just some of the items that are judged

- Dash Cover
- Dash Instruments
- Glove Box & Liner
- Door Panels
- Garnish Rails
- Glass
- Seats
- Carpets Frt & Rear

Wash / Shine – Storage

Again, everything should be clean, free of dirt, smudges, stains etc.

Here are just some of the items that are judged

- Hood hinges
- Latch
- Drip Rail
- Hood Seal
- Fuel Tank
- Gas Cap
- Washer Assembly
- Battery Cover
- Spare Tire

Street

Objective: Appear as delivered from the factory. However, because these cars are typically driven more than a Full division entry, there are some requirements and exceptions.

Now we added one more category (Engine Compartment) and the Authenticity component. Again, cleanliness is still very important so don't think it's over looked by the judges.

- Exterior
- Interior
- Storage
- Engine Compartment

Requirements

- Car must be driven to the event and have a current registration tag.

Modifications allowed – No Penalty

The following will be allowed with no penalty, but condition of modification is subject to judging

- Any factory or dealer options is allowed.
 - You must have documentation for the option if there is a discrepancy in the scoring. You have the burden of proof!
- Tires & Rims
 - Wider than stock wheels are allowed.
 - Rims that don't use hubcaps will be allowed (ex. Boyd alloy wheels, Technomag wheels). That allows the condition of the brake drum that is showing where the hubcap is normally located, as well as the lug nuts, to be judged
- 12V, H4 lights, are allowed with no deductions as long as the original look is preserved.

Modifications – With Penalty

- Aftermarket carbs (Webers, Delordos etc.) – 2 pt. deduction
- After market distributors -1 pt. deduction
- Seat belts are mandatory and are a judged item but can be any type.
- Non-original radios, CD Players etc. – 1 pt. deduction.
- Late model mag wheels – 4-point deduction
- Non-original exhausts except period type like Abarth, etc. – 1 pt. deduction.
- Upgrading of A/B drum brakes to C disc brakes - 4-point deduction.

Exterior

In addition to the Wash/Shine elements, here are some general items that are looked at. These general items differ depending on the year and model 356

- Horn grills – Original vs reproduction
- Plugs present when fog lights are installed
- Headlight configuration – 1 & 7 vs 4 & 8
- Tires – Valve stem supports
- Correct style hub caps if present
- Correct logo markings on glass

Interior

- Gauge layout correct – 1956 vs 1957 and on
- Correct combi gauge
- Correct tach range for model car
- Correct speedo range for model car
- Original window crank handles vs repro
- Door panel fastener layout
- Door panel seals present?
- Correct style screws - Seat Recliners
- Courtesy light operations
- Correct time on clock

Storage

- Correct decal layout
- Brake fluid cap
- Hood hinge paint configuration
- Spare Tire wheel weight
- Valve stem wire support
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Engine Compartment

- Fasteners, sheet metal screws (replace those that are “buggered” by the screwdriver)
- Sheet metal and other parts – painted or plated
- Condition of the sound deadening material
- Correct model distributor and fuel pump.
- Decals!
- Wiring – No splicing or mismatched colored wires.

Full

Objective: Appear as delivered from the factory.

This is the toughest division of the three. This is where our most experienced judges are and you now have 6 categories to worry about. It also can be the most rewarding doing well in this division. Couple of general rules for the division:

- Car are not judged based on the Kardex information
- Car **DO NOT** have to be licensed and can be trailered to the event.

Those that are completing at this level know exactly what is expected of them and their car. It literally come down to the smallest details in squeezing out a good score.

Summary

To win in any concours, you have to have a little luck to go with your well-prepared car. Remember your car is judged by human beings, not robots. Each judge will see something different and they don't always look for the same things every year. A well-prepared Judge will have list of items that they will look for based on their category assignment. That list creates consistency in their judging across the number of cars they judge that day. Do they make mistakes? Sure, they do, but that is the human element in the process.

So, control the things that you can control. Bring a well-prepared car AND documentation to support anything that might be questionable in the judging process.

It is a great experience whether you place or not. You will always learn something new about the cars and you meet a lot of people who share your passion for the 356.

Good Luck