

FAQs and other thoughts for SkillsUSA: Baking and Pastry

- SkillsUSA focuses on specifically following the formulas as written, without variation. For this reason, it is not recommended to make changes to any recipe. The judges will have copies of the recipes to compare the final items from each competitor with the stated recipes. *However*, certain recipes will require cook's judgment to be used in order for successful execution. For example, in pate a choux, if all eggs are not needed, it is not necessary to add all the eggs listed in the recipe.
- SkillsUSA lists details that need to be followed in the execution of recipes. An example of this is found in the decorated cake. It states that a minimum of 3 roses is the requirement, but if the competitor chooses to make more, it is acceptable. But, if these are not executed poorly, the competitor could lose points.
- All competitors will share both convection and conventional ovens for the competition which will be set and labeled by the judges ahead of the competition. These ovens can **ONLY** be changed by the floor judge during the competition. It is my intent to have the conventional oven set for French bread and the convection oven for the remaining recipes.
- All equipment (mixer, pots, bowls, pans, sheetpans, turntables, etc) will be provided for competitors.
- All competitors must bring their own hand tools (spatulas, pastry tips, bench scrapers, etc).
 - Disposable pastry bags, food coloring, and cake boards will be provided. You can bring your own, if preferred.
 - Minimal pastry tips will be available if a competitor needs them, but they must be borrowed before the competition begins.
- Timing:
 - 6:30 – 6:45 – pre-contest meeting
 - 6:45 – 7:00 – station set up for contestants
 - 7:15 – 12:15 – competition
 - 12:15 – 1:00 – lunch and clean up (contact Meghan Roddy with dietary needs)
 - 1:00 – speaking with judges for critique, if desired

- Specific recipe notes:
 - Scones:
 - 1 x recipe to be made
 - Rolling pins (dowels/French rolling pins) and round cutters are supplied
 - Egg wash isn't stated in recipe, but is allowed based on cook's judgment

 - Apple galette:
 - 1 x recipe to be made
 - Dowel rods and French rolling pins are available for rolling out dough. If a traditional rolling pin is desired, you will want to bring your own.

 - French bread:
 - 1 recipe to be made
 - A large Hobart (12 or 20 qt bowl) will be available for use
 - Will be baked in deck oven but steaming will **not** be allowed

 - Pate a choux:
 - ½ x recipe
 - Disposable pastry bags will be provided; if other is desired, competitor can bring their own.
 - Chantilly cream or other whipped topping will be provided to fill the required number of puffs and eclairs

- The recipes state how many to fill and leave unfinished; take note of this, remembering that Skills wants the competitors to follow recipes precisely

- Cake decorating:
 - 2 cakes, whipped icing, American/simple buttercream, cake boards, turntables, food coloring, and pastry bags will be provided per competitor – competitors must bring their own tips