

Fanime 2024 Karaoke Contest Rules & Information

Note: All singers must wear a mask during the performance during the competition.

Contest Summary – What happens during the show?

1. The Karaoke Contest is a singing contest centered around anime and anime fan-culture media! Thus, there are **limits** on which songs you can sing *in the contest*. (See *Song Eligibility* below).
2. The contest takes place across **two rounds** on the first day of the convention. Contestants must be signed up before the contest in order to compete (online or in-person).
 - a. *We don't* take new contestants in the middle of the show.
3. **The Preliminary Round** (“Prelims”) consists of up to 45 contestants.
 - a. All contestants **must check-in** before the show (3pm to 5:30pm) to confirm they're present for the contest.
 - b. During their turn on-stage, Prelim contestants have approx. **1 min, 30 secs** (about the length of an anime opening) to perform. The song fades out after that time.
 - c. Contestants are scored by a panel of judges. The 10 highest-scoring contestants advance to the Round, held on the same day.
4. **The Final Round** consists of 10 contestants.
 - a. During their turn on-stage, Finalists perform their song's **full length** (up to 7 mins).
 - b. Finalists are judged on their performance across both rounds, which rewards consistency.
 - c. After score tabulations, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Winners are announced on-stage and **prizes are awarded!**
 - i. 1st Place wins \$150 & a live stage performance at Fanime Masquerade the following day. 2nd wins \$100. 3rd wins \$50.
 - ii. 1st Place winner may sing one last song to close out the show!

★ *Karaoke staff is always available for further questions or clarification, in addition to further details written below.*

Eligibility Rules

Contestant Eligibility

1. **You must have a valid badge** for the day(s) of the contest.
2. You may compete as an Individual or in a Group, but **not both**.
3. Employees of the Convention (or its parent association), past or present members of Karaoke Staff, and Guests of Honor are **not** eligible for the contest.
4. The previous year's 1st Place winner may **not** compete again in this year's contest.

Song Eligibility

The Karaoke Contest is meant to celebrate anime and anime-adjacent fandoms! Therefore, the songs you choose for the contest must be related to anime fandom in some way. Read below for more details.

1. What are accepted songs for this contest?

- ✓ **Anime song.** Defined as a song originating from or used in a commercially-produced animated production, including...
 - a. Official album releases, such as image songs, band albums, etc.
 - b. Official language dub songs, such as English, Spanish, etc.
 - c. Official media adaptations, such as live-action or stage adaptations.
- ✓ **Video games.** Vocal tracks used in any released video game, in any language.
- ✓ **East Asian popular music.** Songs from East Asian record labels or artists, including Japanese, Korean, Chinese, etc. music in any genre.
 - a. “VTuber” songs are accepted if released under an East Asian record label. Otherwise, refer to the bottom of section 2.
- ✓ **Vocaloid music.** Publicly-released songs featuring Vocaloid-like voice synthesizers.
- ✓ **Japanese-language releases.** Officially-released Japanese-language versions (including covers) of Western songs.
- ✓ **Official remixes.** Officially-released remixes of any otherwise-eligible song.

2. What are not accepted songs for this contest?

- ✗ **No American animation songs.** Songs from animation studios (Disney, Cartoon Network, etc.) are not acceptable for the contest.
 - The spirit of this rule is to encourage niche & international fandoms in this Contest.
- ✗ **No non-original Western songs (The JoJo Rule).** English songs which were not originally created for an anime or video game, or straight covers of such songs, or any other “popular” Western song used as an anime series theme song are not allowed.
 - For example: “Walk Like an Egyptian” from *JoJo’s Bizarre Adventure*, “Fly Me to the Moon” from *Evangelion*, or “Paranoid Android” from *Ergo Proxy*.
- ? **Anything else.** If it’s not covered here, just ask us.
 - If it’s fan-made music, “doujin” music, or anything else that is not quite official, please clear it with us.

★ *When in doubt, please ask us before signing up. Email us: karaoke@fanime.com*

Providing Your Song

1. Your song **must** be provided in one of the following formats:
 - ✓ **Songs from our database.** You may provide the Song Number from our local database, available for browsing at <http://anime-karaoke.com>.
 - a. Songs should be indicated as a “Karaoke” track. Songs that do not have a “Karaoke” variant will need to be vocal dampened and may sound significantly different from the original.
 - ✓ **Song files on a USB flash drive.**
 - a. **Accepted file formats.** mp3, mp4, m4a, flac, wav, wmv.
 - b. **Karaoke tracks.** You are encouraged to use a karaoke version of the song (also known as “off-vocal” or “instrumental” tracks), whenever possible.
 - c. Please name files clearly! For example, the file names can be the song names, or the file names can be “Prelim” and “Finals.”
 - ✓ **Video files on a USB flash drive.** You may use videos that include lyrics on-screen (such as those downloaded from YouTube), as long as it meets Song Eligibility rules.
 - a. **Accepted file formats.** mp4, wmv. It cannot be a streaming video link.
 - b. You can use any free tool to download a YouTube video file, such as [Cobalt](#).
 - c. Videos must not contain any imagery that can be considered distracting or inappropriate. Ideally, the video only features lyrics as the main visual element.
 - d. Videos must be cleared with Karaoke staff before the contest, such as via email or during check-in. You may send a web link when asking us via email.
 - ⊘ **NO phones.** You cannot play your contest audio from your phone, tablet, or other mobile device, due to the sheer number of technical issues that can cause delays to the show.
2. **Lyrics.** The lyrics you sing must be the original lyrics from an officially-released version of your song.
 - a. You may **bring your lyrics** on stage (such as on your phone or on paper).
 - b. If you are providing your own song files, you understand that we will not have lyrics ready for your song. You will need to prepare your own.
3. **Audio alterations?** Your audio file may be altered from the original source, but you must notify Karaoke staff before the contest, such as via email or during check-in.
 - ✓ **Vocal dampening.** Fan-made “karaoke versions” that remove the vocals are allowed.
 - ✓ **Count-off and pitch-centering additions.** You may add a metronomic cue or melodic “start tone,” in order to center yourself vocally before the beginning of a song.
 - ✓ **Cropping.** You may crop or fade your audio to fit the time limit, but you cannot remove lyrical sections from the song. (For example, cropping out a 2-minute guitar solo.)
 - ✓ **Pitch-shifting.** You may modify the pitch/key of your audio to match your vocal range.
 - ⊘ **Prohibited alterations.** While all non-exempted audio changes (as defined above) are prohibited, the following are also subject to disqualification:
 - a. Tempo modification, remix/mash-up work, or the addition of any pre-recorded vocals, backup vocals, instrumentals, or other materials made by a contestant. *This is a karaoke contest, not a music production contest!*

Contest Procedures

Sign-up and Check-in

1. **Sign-ups.** In order to compete in the contest, you must sign up, either before the convention (“online sign-ups”), or at the Karaoke Room during the contest check-in period (“at-con sign-ups”).
 - a. **Stage name.** This is how we will refer to you throughout the contest!
 - b. **Song selection.** Contestants may not sing the same song more than once in the contest (including remixes or variants). Song selection cannot be altered during the contest.
 - c. **Contestant count.** 45 total entries, to keep the length of the contest reasonable.
 - i. Up to 35 spots are reserved for online sign-ups. All remaining spots are reserved for at-con sign-ups on a “first come, first served” basis.
 - d. **Waiting list.** Once the contestant limit has been filled, additional at-con sign-ups will be placed on a waiting list. There is no guarantee that waiting list entries will compete.
 - e. **Contestant order.** We will not have the contestant order ready until the contest begins. We will do our best to accommodate any scheduling needs that contestants inform us about.
2. **Check-in requirements.** All pre-registered contestants are required to check-in with Karaoke staff to confirm their appearance. The check-in period closes 30 minutes before the start of the contest.
 - a. The start and end of the check-in period will be posted in advance on the convention schedule. Karaoke staff generally **will not** allow check-in after this period, as this will delay the contest.
 - b. Contestants who fail to check-in by the cutoff time **will lose their spot** in the contest and will not be called to compete.
3. **Contestant types.** Contestants may compete as either an individual act or in a group, but not both.
 - a. **Individual act.** Defined as a single person competing *throughout* the contest.
 - i. Only the individual who is competing is allowed on-stage as part of their act.
 - b. **Group act.** Defined as two or more people competing *throughout* the contest.
 - i. All members of the group **must** sing during all songs, either as lead or as backup.
 - ii. Contestants may not compete under more than one group. Once you’ve checked in, you may not change group members.
 - iii. If the contest has not yet started, a Group act can convert to Individual act(s) without penalty. (For example, if your singing partner is unable to attend.)
4. **Song Length.**
 - a. **Preliminary Round:** A verse + chorus “TV Size” song, or approximately 1:30 minutes.
 - b. **Final Round:** A full length song, up to 7 minutes.
 - c. Songs longer than these limits will be faded out when the limit is reached. Contestants can elect to fade out or end their song at any desired point, without penalty.

Judging

1. **Criteria.** Contestants are scored by a panel of judges who are seated in front of the stage during the contest. Our scoring system and judging methods are designed to reward vocal consistency more than having one “perfect” performance.
 - a. **Vocal Performance:** Heavily weighted. This includes, but is not limited to: pitch, rhythm, tone, overall vocal quality, and vocal support.



- b. **Showmanship & Presentation:** Moderately weighted. This includes, but is not limited to: Song choice/difficulty, stage presence, and overall emotiveness.
2. **Lyrics.** As this is a karaoke contest, contestants are always permitted to read lyrics from any source without impacting their score. (However, note that memorizing lyrics generally does result in a stronger performance.)
3. **Advancement.** After Prelims, the top 10 contestants advance to the Finals. After Finals, the top 3 are awarded.
4. **Ties.** If multiple contestants have an equivalent score at the end of round, this is considered a Tie.
 - a. In the event of a tie in the Preliminary Round, all tied acts will advance, even if this forces the Final Round to have more than 10 contestants.
 - b. In the event of a tie in the Final Round, the Final Round score will serve as the tiebreaker.
5. All decisions made by the judges are final.
6. All scores and judging notes are confidential. Score sheets are not available to contestants. However, you are welcome to ask the judges for general feedback after the contest is over.

Performance Rules

1. **A Cappella singing.** Contestants may not sing "a cappella" style in the contest.
2. **Interaction with staff.** No direct interaction with the showrunners, judges, or Karaoke staff is permitted as part of your performance (i.e., once the music starts). Contestants may not touch or approach the judges' table.
 - a. You can always signal the Karaoke staff when you want your audio to fade out.
3. **Audience participation.** Contestants may not go into the audience, invite an audience member on stage, or use an audience member in their act. General audience participation (such as asking people to clap) is allowed.
4. **Props.** Any props carried on stage must be relevant to your costume/outfit and not disrupt your performance in any way. Cosplay prop usage may be considered as a minimal factor in your overall stage presence/performance but will not impact your score.
5. **Musical instruments & noisemakers.** Musical instruments (including tambourines, castanets, whistles, etc.), noisemakers, or any prop that creates an additional audio effect are not allowed in the contest. Clapping is not a prop and is allowed. (Note that musicians are encouraged to compete in the *Acoustikaraoke!* Contest instead.)
6. **Victory Lap.** At the end of the contest, and if time permits, the 1st Place winner may choose to perform one more song of any kind to close out the show.

What can I sing in Karaoke Events?

(See the Official Rules for detailed definitions and explanations.)

	Karaoke Contest	Open Mic hours	Acousti-karaoke!	Dumpster Fire Talent Show
Anime songs	○	○	○	○
Video Game songs	○	○	○	○
J-pop, K-pop	○	○	○	○
Western cartoons (Disney, etc.)	✗	○	○	○
Western songs (American pop, etc.)	✗	○	○	○
<i>A cappella</i> singing	✗	○	✗	○
Memes	✗	○	○	○
Audio from your phone ( mode advised.)	✗	○	○	○
Streaming audio/video	✗	○	✗	○
Something you made up	✗	○	○	○
Music instruments (Bring your own marimba.)	✗	○	○	○
Getting married on stage	✗	✗	✗	