



Timer Instructions for Online Speech Contests

Definition of Timer Roles

Official Timer – This person is solely responsible for tracking and recording the timing for each speaker. The official timer prepares and submits the Timers Sheet to the Chief Judge upon completion of the competition. The official timer is not responsible for signaling the speaker.

Primary Timer – This person is responsible for signaling each speaker with the green, yellow and red signals during the competition. Each contestant is to recognize this timer as the formal indicator of the time status of their speech.

Secondary Timer – This person is also responsible for signaling each speaker with the green, yellow and red signals during the competition. However, this timer is to be considered as a back-up to the primary timer and is to only be acknowledged by the speaker if the primary timer becomes no longer visible during the speaker's delivery.

Contest Procedure

1. Contestants will be advised in their briefing to “pin” you to their screen, so they can clearly see the color indicators.
2. It is recommended that timers “pin” contestants when they are called to speak to reduce any distractions. To “pin” someone, either right-click on the contestant's image or click on the 3 dots in the top right corner of the contestant's image, and select “pin”. Once the contestant has finished speaking, you “unpin” them using the same method of pinning them.
3. Timers may either download and use the official Toastmasters International [time record sheet](#), use a Google form, or any other mutually agreed upon tracking mechanism to record time.
4. All timers will utilize their own timing device to time the speakers. The primary and secondary timers will signal the speakers according to the time shown on their personal device. There will be no coordination between the individual timers to synchronize timing.
5. All timers should record the time they captured for each individual speaker, even if they are not submitting it to the Chief Judge as official.

6. All communication between the timers and the Chief Judge or other contest officiators will be conducted via text messaging or other communication platform mutually agreed upon. ZOOM chat will not be used.
7. Before being introduced, the Toastmaster will ask each contestant if they are ready. This is intended to be a final A/C check for the contestant and is not part of the speech. Do not begin timing at this point.
8. Once the speaker has been introduced, timing should start at the first spoken word by the contestant, or at the first gesture that would indicate the speaker is starting their performance.
9. It is common to observe occasional freezing of both the audio and video of the speaker during their delivery. If such an event is observed by the timer during a speech, the timer should not stop timing. Instead, the timer should mentally count off 5 seconds (1001, 1002, 1003...) If after 5 seconds the speaker is still frozen, then the timer should stop timing and wait for the problem to correct itself before resuming timing. If after 20 seconds the speaker is still frozen, and if no instructions have been issued by the Chief Judge or Contest Chair, then the timer should immediately notify the Chief Judge and Contest Chair of their situation.
10. In the event of a major technical fault such as the timer losing connectivity to the meeting, the timer should immediately stop timing and notify the Chief Judge. The timer should then await further instructions.
11. The official timer is responsible for recording the time for each individual speaker and submitting this information to the Chief Judge. However, should the official timer experience technical difficulties during a contestant's speech, then the time captured by the primary timer for that contestant will be used for the record. Additionally, if the official timer experiences technical difficulties during the majority of the contest then the primary timer will become the official timer for the contest. The secondary timer will become the primary timer.
12. The timer should immediately stop timing if notified to do so by the Chief Judge. The timer should then await further instructions.