



February 2012 MIDLANDS MCM EXPO MASQUERADE ENTRY RULES

Got a query? The MCM Expo Cosplay email address is: cosplay@mcmexpo.net

Announcements and updates for the February 2012 Expo Masquerade:

<http://www.mcmexpogroup.com/forums/viewforum.php?f=395>

<http://www.facebook.com/mcmcosplay>

Keep an eye on the MCM forums or MCM Cosplay Facebook page for updates.

Main Rules

The Masquerade is an opportunity for people who have made costumes to display them on stage.

Cosplay is not limited to costumes from anime and games- whether the source is films, television, comics, bands, cartoons, any costume is welcome. Original costumes can also be entered if supported by concept sketches and an explanation of the inspirations behind the costume.

(As this is a family show costumes of an adult nature may not be entered.)

Supporting material such as reference pictures, progress pictures, performance descriptions, and details of group members can be submitted after you register. We recommend sending them to us as soon as possible even if we cannot immediately confirm your place.

A costume is eligible for entry in the Masquerade if:

- It has been largely constructed by the person wearing it on stage for solo entries, or by one of the group members on stage for a group entry. Bought shoes, wigs and small accessories like glasses or ninja headbands are acceptable.

+AND+

- Bought clothing (trousers, tops, coats etc) are not designed specifically for cosplay, and are either considerably modified by the person wearing it or by one of the group members on stage **OR** are largely inconsequential when considering the costume as a whole.

+AND+

- It has not been entered into a Masquerade at a previous MCM Expo event. Costumes that have previously been entered into competitions at other events are acceptable.

~OR~

- It is being worn by someone under the age of 12 years old. A parent or guardian must sign the entry form on the day for any entrants under 12 years old.

~OR~

- It is part of a performing group- see below for more information regarding performances.

~OR~

- The MCM Cosplay Team have agreed special circumstances for your entry.

Commissioned and bought costumes, or costumes mostly made up of bought general clothing are not suitable for the Masquerade, and will not be permitted even as part of a group with some eligible costumes unless part of a performance group (see below).

Original costumes can be entered if supported by concept sketches and an explanation of the inspirations behind the costume.

You may be filmed or photographed during the Cosplay Masquerade, and MCM or its sponsors may wish to use your image for advertising and promotional purposes or to otherwise distribute or sell. By entering you agree to this; we cannot offer places unless this is consented to.

The Cosplay Team reserve the right to reject applicants at their discretion. Failure to provide evidence in a timely manner that your costume is eligible if asked may result in losing your place.

We recommend visiting the Cosplay Desk early on the day of the Masquerade to confirm you are still entering, test your music, and to confirm times for judging.



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HOW TO ENTER

You may apply to take part in advance by filling in the Masquerade entrance form on the website:

<http://www.midlandsmcmexpo.com/cosplay>

Advance Registration opens for the February Midlands MCM Expo Masquerade on 14/01/12 and closes on 04/02/11. Entries before or after this will not be accepted. As spaces are limited entry to the Masquerade is on a first come, first served basis.

A number of places will also be available on the day on a first come, first served basis.

There are two types of Masquerade entry:

Normal and Performance.

Note that we can only allow up to eight people on stage at a time, and less than this if costumes are particularly large or bulky. If your group is larger than this then we will split you into smaller groups and discuss your preferred stage order with you.

Normal entries are aimed at people who want to simply display their costume. These make up the majority of entries in the Masquerade.

Performance entries are aimed at people who want to do more than display their costumes on stage. See below for more details.

After registering, supply music in an email to cosplay@mcmexpo.net with the subject 'MUSIC for (name of cosplayer)' by 11/02/2012 at the latest. MP3 format is preferred; do not supply DRM protected tracks from iTunes, YouTube links, or similar. Tracks will be played when you go on stage, until you come off stage, so adjust them if you want any pauses or just a particular section to be played.

WE CANNOT ACCEPT AUDIO TRACKS ON THE DAY

PERFORMANCES

Anything more than a set of poses can be considered a Performance. Here's a few ideas:

- A dance or 'dance off' to one or more songs
- Re-enacting a dramatic scene
- Your own short scene such as an alternate ending
- A short comedy performance
- Mix your characters into a scene or sketch from a different source
- A short musical performance*
- Presenting and interacting with a video*
- Miming or singing a song*
- A choreographed fight scene*
-

**the organisers may need further reassurances before approving these.*

For performance entries, after applying via the website we require a full description of your performance. These should be sent as soon as possible to cosplay@mcmexpo.net.

Rules for All Performances

The length of performances will be limited by the decisions of the MCM Cosplay Team. Singing, dancing, and solo performances will typically be limited to two minutes with one minute thirty seconds recommended; all other performances will usually be limited to three minutes maximum.

The MCM Cosplay Team will provide props and assistance if possible and requested at least a week in advance, however anything that cannot readily be provided has to be supplied by the entrants.

Performances should be recorded and not performed live where possible; performers can use a prop microphone to give a better effect or hide the movement of their mouths. A live microphone may be permitted conditional on having provided a similar performance observed by the MCM Cosplay Team.

Solo, Pair, or Group?

Cosplaying with friends is a great way to enjoy the hobby. For logistical reasons and to keep the Masquerade varied, there is a maximum group size for each type of entry however unless the MCM Cosplay Team have agreed otherwise.

If aiming for a Best Costume prize, note that you will be judged as a group, not just on the best costumes.

The visual impact of a group on stage might tip the judging scales in your favour though- consider all the options carefully!

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We can only accept a single sound file for an entry, which we will start to play when you come on stage and continue until the track ends. Consider including a short quiet piece of music at the start of the track to give you time to get into position.

Music and audio tracks must be submitted by 11/02/12 - we will not accept tracks on the day.

We reserve the right to refuse tracks that are not good enough for the audience to be able to hear clearly and so recommend sending in voice recordings early, so that we can test and inform you if it needs to be improved with plenty of time before the Expo.

Energetic performances involving e.g. running or martial arts displays will need assurance regarding the skills of the performers, and we reserve the right to interrupt performances for safety reasons.

Can we perform with bought costumes?

To try to encourage performances, we are allowing performances with bought costumes. Note that if unable to perform, it will not be possible to change category to Parade or Expert.

If the panel assesses two applications to be of a similar standard, an application with self made costumes will be approved over one with bought costumes.

JUDGING

The contest element is open to ages 12 and up. If you wish for your costume(s) to be judged competitively, you need to make yourselves available at Expo before the Masquerade for judging of construction and accuracy. Be aware that groups will be judged as a whole, and not just on the basis of the best or worst costumes.

For a costume to be judged competitively a picture or photo reference of the character / costume they are representing **MUST** be provided in advance (if you want us to print it for you, provide the actual images in an email to cosplay@mcmexpo.net - please do not just email links!) or you can bring it on the day (your mobile phone screen is not as big as an A4 picture, by the way!).

Do not rely on the judges knowing the character.

A good reference picture will focus judges on the best sections of the costume. Consider getting several angles of the character and put them all together on a single sheet. Progress pictures are useful when talking to the judges- being able to discuss your techniques and even better what problems you overcame can make you a winner!

You will be judged against this reference so it is advisable to make it good! If possible, also provide any other information regarding the costume's construction such as an 'in progress' photograph.

Entries will be judged on Accuracy and Construction before you go on stage.

- A high Accuracy score (maximum points available is 10) will be awarded for correct colours, details, patterns, hair style etc.
- A high Construction score (maximum points available is 10) will be awarded for good workmanship, variety of techniques used, and finish.
- Entries will also be judged on your stage presence (maximum points available is 5) which includes affecting the character's mannerisms and how well you present your costume on stage, for example.

If you are professionally involved with costume making, eligibility for judging will be discussed further depending on the nature of your role and the costume being entered.

All performances are eligible for the 'Best Performance' prize, awarded solely on the basis of the stage performance without consideration of the costumes.

The judges may choose to award a special prize to recognise that both the performance and the costume quality were outstanding- a 'Best in Show' award.

The judges' decision is FINAL.

Please respect the judges and the other participants by accepting their decisions.