

FCCLA®

LIFESMARTS KNOWLEDGE BOWL 2026-2027 GUIDELINES



LifeSmarts
Learn it. Live it.

**COMPETITIVE
EVENTS**



©2026 FCCLA

Additional information available on the FCCLA National Website at fcclainc.org/compete.

FAMILY, CAREER AND COMMUNITY LEADERS OF AMERICA (FCCLA) COMPETITIVE EVENTS

FCCLA's Competitive Events promote the organization's mission to focus on the multiple roles of family member, wage earner, and community leader. Competitive events are designed to help members develop specific lifetime skills in character development, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal communication, practical knowledge, and career preparation. Competitive Events allow members to showcase their college and career-ready knowledge, skills, and abilities.

FCCLA is pleased to provide comprehensive guides to our members and advisers. FCCLA offers five types of competitive events, each with separate guidelines that can be found in the FCCLA Portal.

CHALLENGE TESTS

Comprehensive tests are designed to measure students' understanding and application of specific subject areas related to Family and Consumer Sciences. Challenge Tests cover various topics such as nutrition, child development, interior design, fashion design, culinary arts, and more.

[LEARN MORE](#)

KNOWLEDGE BOWL

In partnership with LifeSmarts, Knowledge Bowl is a team competition that challenges students' knowledge in six content areas related to Family and Consumer Sciences and FCCLA. The content areas include personal finance, consumer rights & responsibilities, technology, health & safety, environment, and FCCLA knowledge.

[LEARN MORE](#)

VIRTUAL BUSINESS CHALLENGE

In partnership with Knowledge Matters, the Virtual Business Challenge is a virtual competition that encourages members to test their Entrepreneurship or Hospitality-Restaurant industry knowledge and skills using a competition version of the Virtual Business classroom software.

[LEARN MORE](#)

SKILL DEMONSTRATION EVENTS

Events that provide opportunities for members to demonstrate college and career-readiness skills in Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) and related occupations. Members use event criteria to demonstrate skills learned in their FCS courses and through their involvement in FCCLA.

[LEARN MORE](#)

STAR EVENTS

Students Taking Action with Recognition (STAR) are competitive events recognizing members' proficiency and achievement in chapter and individual projects, leadership skills, and career preparation. STAR Events offer individual skill development and application of learning through cooperative, individualized, and competitive activities.

[LEARN MORE](#)

COMPETITIVE EVENTS FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS

We value your input and strive to continuously improve Competitive Events to meet the needs of our members. We encourage you to send any feedback or suggestions to competitiveevents@fcclainc.org. National Staff and the Competitive Events Advisory Team will carefully review your feedback to be included in future editions of the guidelines.

The Ultimate Leadership Experience and The Ultimate Consumer Challenge - Combined!

The FCCLA/LifeSmarts Knowledge Bowl is a three-round team competition that tests FCCLA members' knowledge in the six content areas:

1. Personal Finance
2. Consumer Rights & Responsibilities (to include Family, Career & Community Studies)
3. Technology (to include Fashion & Housing Design)
4. Health & Safety (to include Food Science & Nutrition and Early Childhood & Human Development)
5. Environment (to include Hospitality, Tourism & Recreation)
6. FCCLA Knowledge

DATES AND DEADLINES

It is the responsibility of all FCCLA members and advisers to review the National FCCLA Dates and Deadlines found on the [FCCLA website](#).

[VIEW NATIONAL DEADLINES](#)

FCCLA/LifeSmarts Knowledge Bowl Components

- Round 1-FCCLA Fall TeamSmarts NLC Qualifier Quiz
- Round 2-FCCLA Spring Knowledge Bowl TeamSmarts Quiz
- Round 3-Championship at National Leadership Conference

[COMPONENTS](#)

ELIGIBILITY AND TEAM COMPOSITION

- Teams must be comprised of **five** affiliated FCCLA members from the same chapter. All team members must be affiliated at both the state and national levels in order to register to compete. **Teams with fewer than five members are ineligible to compete.**
- Chapters may have more than one team.
- Team members may represent different grade levels. Students in grades 6-8 may compete together, and students in grades 9-12 may compete together.

[TEAM COMPOSITION](#)

PREPARATION AND RESOURCES

Questions come from a variety of sources. Preparation resources include resources found on the LifeSmarts website and in Family and Consumer Sciences textbooks, reference guides, content area websites, the FCCLA website, and other local or online resources.

[STUDY RESOURCES](#)

Round 1 – FCCLA/LifeSmarts Fall TeamSmarts NLC Qualifier Quiz - October 19 – November 20, 2026

All teams must be registered at <https://lifesmarts.org> and take the Fall TeamSmarts NLC Qualifier Quiz by November 20, 2026. Coaches and students should follow the directions at this page: <https://lifesmarts.org/lifesmarts-registration/>.

All team members are expected to work together to take the FCCLA/LifeSmarts Fall TeamSmarts NLC Qualifier Quiz. **If less than five members take the TeamSmarts Quiz, the team is ineligible to continue in competition.** The TeamSmarts Quiz consists of 75 questions from the following content areas:

1. Personal Finance
2. Consumer Rights & Responsibilities (to include Family, Career & Community Studies)
3. Technology (to include Fashion & Housing Design)
4. Health & Safety (to include Food Science & Nutrition and Early Childhood & Human Development)
5. Environment (to include Hospitality, Tourism & Recreation)

These scores will be used to qualify the top 40 teams that will be invited to compete in the Championship at the National Leadership Conference.

Round 2 – FCCLA/LifeSmarts Spring Knowledge Bowl TeamSmarts Quiz – February 1 – 26, 2027.

All 40 teams that have qualified for the National Leadership Conference are required to participate in this quiz. Teams ranked 41 through 50 are also encouraged to take the quiz for practice, and their scores will be considered if these teams are selected as alternates. The 75-question quiz will feature a format similar to the Round 1 TeamSmarts quiz from the Fall but will include new questions. Teams do not need to re-register, as the quiz will automatically appear in the team captain's quiz list. This quiz is an essential part of the Round 3 competition and serves as the first team score for the National Leadership Conference. It is important for teams to complete the quiz within the specified period and ensure that the team captain has access to it.

Round 3: Championship at National Leadership Conference

Competitors attending the National Leadership Conference **must register** to attend the entire conference and stay within the official meeting/conference hotel block for the length of the conference. If there are extenuating circumstances, a written waiver may be submitted via the State Adviser to National staff for consideration.

40 teams will qualify for the National Championship from the Fall TeamSmarts NLC Qualifier Quiz. Alternates will be selected based upon scores from the Fall TeamSmarts NLC Qualifier Quiz. The top 40 teams must confirm National Championship participation by **February 26** by completing this [RSVP Form](#). We also ask that teams 41-50 also complete the RSVP form so we can contact alternatives if a top 40 team can no longer attend.

Orientation and Buzzer Match Pool Competition

Teams are assigned to one of five competition pools in either the *Morning or Afternoon Competition Session* based upon the Round 2 FCCLA Spring Knowledge Bowl TeamSmarts Quiz. Each pool will have up to 20 teams and each team will compete in three matches. The Round 2 TeamSmarts Quiz score plus the scores from the three matches will be combined to determine the top teams from each pool. Pools will compete simultaneously, and the questions for each round will be the same in each pool. As space allows, teams may have to wait in a holding room. Matches will be adjusted if there are fewer than 40 teams participating.

Important: We will have two competition sessions on the first day. Teams and/or coaches competing in Session 2 may not observe/attend Session 1. Violations may result in disqualification.

Top Sixteen

Once all Pool Competition matches have finished, each team will have the following scores added together to form their final NLC Cumulative Score: Round 2 FCCLA/LifeSmarts Spring Knowledge Bowl TeamSmarts Quiz, and the three matches played in Pool Competition. The top 16 teams (Sweet 16) advance to the knockout rounds on Day 2. The highest scoring team in each room from the morning session, as well as the highest scoring team in each room from the afternoon session will automatically advance to the knockout bracket. The remaining finalist spots will be filled by teams with the next highest NLC Cumulative Scores, regardless of pool, until a total of 16 teams advance. It is possible for more than one non-winning team from the same pool to qualify. Teams are seeded for knockout matches. Teams will be notified through the FCCLA conference app.

Knockout Bracket

The top 16 teams will be seeded into a 16-team single-elimination bracket. Winners advance through the bracket until the top two finalists are determined. The top two teams will compete in one final match during a general session to determine first and second place. The third-place winner will be determined through a playoff between the two semifinal teams that did not advance to the final match. The remaining teams will be ranked based on cumulative scores.

Each match will consist of two rounds, Head-to-Head Individual Questions Round and the Challenge Round. In the Head-to-Head round, one multiple-choice question from Categories 1-5 will be asked, with up to two open-ended bonus questions asked after each correct answer. Participants should sit in order, based on their individual topic category.

In the Challenge Round, all questions are open-ended and randomly assorted. Three questions will be asked in each of the categories, except FCCLA Knowledge, which will have one question in the Challenge Round.

During the Head-to-Head round, questions will be asked in the following order:

1. Personal Finance
2. Consumer Rights & Responsibilities (to include Family, Career & Community Studies)
3. Technology (to include Fashion & Housing Design)
4. Health & Safety (to include Food Science & Nutrition and Early Childhood & Human Development)
5. Environment (to include Hospitality, Tourism & Recreation)

During the Challenge Round, questions are open and randomly assorted. Of the 16 Challenge questions, there are guaranteed to be three (3) questions from Categories 1-5 and one (1) question from Category 6, FCCLA Knowledge. Anyone may buzz in to answer a Team Question, unless someone from that team has already given an incorrect response. If the entire question was not read to the first team, the entire question will be read/asked to the other team. Challenge questions will be completely read only once.

Head-to-Head Individual Questions Rules

Head-to-Head Individual Questions are multiple choice. Each team member is assigned a number corresponding to the category they have selected as their focus topic.

1. Personal Finance
2. Consumer Rights & Responsibilities (to include Family, Career & Community Studies)
3. Technology (to include Fashion & Housing Design)
4. Health & Safety (to include Food Science & Nutrition and Early Childhood & Human Development)
5. Environment (to include Hospitality, Tourism & Recreation)

These questions are asked only to the student on each team with the corresponding number. After the question-and-answer choices are read to team members #1, whichever individual buzzes in first has 10 seconds to respond. The individual cannot confer with team members. Individuals may give the full answer, or the letter (a, b, or c) associated with the answer. If the student gives a correct answer, their team is awarded 5 points, and the Question Master will ask up to two additional bonus questions to that individual. There will be 5 questions asked in this round. If the individual who has buzzed cannot answer in the time allowed, or gives an incorrect answer, the opposing individual team member has 10 seconds to provide an answer.

If a member buzzes in before the entire question is read, the Question Master will stop reading the question or answer choices. The individual must give an answer within 10 seconds. If the answer is incorrect, the Question Master will re-read the question-and-answer choices to the corresponding student on the opposing team. This student will have 10 seconds to buzz in and provide a response.

If neither individual buzz in within 10 seconds, or both members give incorrect answers, the Question Master will give the correct answer.

If a student correctly answers the multiple-choice question, that student will be asked an open-ended follow-up question. **The team may discuss this question**, and the answer must be provided by the student who buzzed in. If the follow-up question is answered correctly, then a second open-ended follow-up question will be asked to that student following the same procedures. Up to two follow-up questions may be asked after each multiple-choice question.

If either of the follow-up questions is not answered correctly, the question set ends. The corresponding student on the other team will not get an opportunity to answer the follow-up question. Round continues with the next set, beginning with an individual question asked to the student in the next position.

Each correct answer is worth 5 points. There is no deduction for incorrect answers.

This process is repeated for all team members.

Upon completion of the Head-to-Head round, scores will be tabulated by the scorekeeper and announced.

CHALLENGE ROUND

The questions in the Challenge Round are open-ended. The Question Master will ask a question, and the first person to hit their buzzer will have the opportunity to answer. These questions are open to all team members, though only one student per team may buzz in to answer each question.

A student may buzz in before the entire question is read. If this happens, the Question Master will stop reading the question and will call on the student who buzzed in. The team's name and/or the student's number will be called, and then they have 10 seconds to answer the question. **Team members may not confer, either orally or in writing, during the Challenge Round. Only the team member who buzzed in will be allowed to answer the question.**

If an incorrect answer is given and the entire question was not read, the Question Master will begin re-reading the question, and members from the other team may buzz in at any time. If no one buzzes in within 10 seconds after the question has been read, or both teams give incorrect answers, the Question Master will give the correct answer.

Each correct answer is worth 10 points. There is no deduction for incorrect answers.

This process will continue through all 16 open-ended questions. Upon completion of the team's questions, scores will be tabulated and announced by the scorekeeper and Question Master. If there is a winner, the winner will be announced. If there is a tie that must be broken, tie-breaker questions will be read.

TIE-BREAKER ROUND RULES

Tie-breaker questions are open-ended and are randomly selected from the six topic categories. Each correct answer is worth one point. There is no deduction for incorrect answers. The first team that buzzes in will have 10 seconds to answer. The team that wins the best-of-three tie-breaker questions will be declared the winner. If there is still a tie after a round of three tie-breaker questions, a second set of 3 questions will be used. After that, one "sudden death" tie-breaker question will be used.

ACCEPTABILITY OF ANSWERS

Only the first answer from the team member who buzzes in and is recognized will be accepted. Only one team member may buzz in per question. The Question Master will determine if the answer given by the competitor matches the correct answer. If there is a question about the acceptability of the answer, the Question Master will consult with the room judge(s).

CHALLENGES/APPEALS

During the team round of a buzzer match, a team may appeal a response ruled incorrect by raising a Challenge card, which requests that the question be thrown out and a new question asked in its place. The team may only issue a challenge when points are not awarded in response to an answer given by one of the team members.

Challenges may not be issued once points have been awarded the question. Teams may not challenge during the Head-to-Head round. Teams may not challenge a response given by the opposing team.

The challenge card must be raised before competition moves on (either before the question is re-read for the other team or if the other team has given a response before the following question in the match is read). Any student on the team may issue the challenge. Once the challenged question is thrown out, the new question is open only to the teams who were eligible to answer the question when the Challenge was issued.

Each team is awarded two challenge cards for buzzer matches (at NLC).

DRESS CODE

Participants should follow the approved FCCLA conference dress code for participation in all rounds of competition.

QUESTION MASTER/JUDGE/QUESTION ERROR

If the Question Master misspeaks or misreads a question, but catches the mistake prior to either team buzzing in, they may repeat the question correctly, and the time for answering will begin again at 10 seconds.

The judge and/or Question Master may decide that a replacement question should be used if an answer is prematurely given by the Question Master, judge, or spectator, or if the way a question is read is deemed unfair for either or both teams. Replacement questions will not be used if a competitor reveals the correct answer out of turn or if a competitor or spectator disagrees with the determination of the Question Master and judge.

REPEATING OF QUESTIONS

Individual team members may request a multiple-choice question to be repeated during the Head-to-Head Individual Questions. **No open-ended questions will be repeated once they have been read in their entirety.** If there is an issue in which the Question Master feels the question should be repeated (noise interference or equipment problem) they may repeat the question at their discretion.

SPECTATOR/PARTICIPANT CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

To preserve the integrity, fairness, and professionalism of the competition environment, updated guidelines have been established regarding observation, conduct, and sportsmanship. Spectators will only be permitted during the Sweet 16 Knock-Out matches, which will include the top 16 teams. Observation will not be allowed during preliminary or pool competition rounds. The final decision regarding match visibility and attendance limits will be determined by FCCLA Competitive Events staff and onsite officials.

During the Sweet 16 matches, all spectators must adhere to strict conduct expectations. Spectators may not enter or exit the competition room while a match is in progress. Cheering, visual signaling, audible conversation, and the use of phones or other electronic devices are strictly prohibited. Any spectator who disrupts the round or is suspected of communicating with a team will be asked to leave immediately by the Room Consultant or Question Master. In cases where matches are being read twice for accuracy, a designated holding room will be provided. Teams involved in these matches must remain in the holding room until called to compete.

STAR EVENTS/SKILL DEMONSTRATION EVENTS/CHALLENGE TESTS

National Leadership Conference: During the National Leadership Conference, participants are permitted to take part in one (1) STAR Event **OR** FCCLA/LifeSmarts Knowledge Bowl. In addition, members can compete in one (1) Skill Demonstration Event and up to ten (10) FCCLA Challenge Tests. However, please note that National FCCLA will not accept any schedule requests or accommodations. It is solely the responsibility of the Chapter Adviser and the participant to coordinate and choose a Skill Demonstration Event/FCCLA Challenge Test that occurs on different days than the FCCLA/LifeSmarts Knowledge Bowl.

SUBSTITUTION

Substitution of team members is permitted. Substitutions must be made prior to **June 15**. To qualify, substituted competitors must be affiliated members of the same FCCLA chapter. Substitutions may be subject to a fee as outlined in the conference registration guidelines.

Teams will receive an email confirmation of their Round 3 participation by March 1. The chapter adviser or team captain must submit any changes to the composition of a Round 3 team in writing to competitiveevents@fcclainc.org by **June 1**. Changes may be made any time between **December 1** and **June 1** of the current school year.

TEAM CAPTAIN

Each team should select one member to serve as the team captain. This member will be responsible for picking up team materials. The team captain will be indicated on the registration form.

TEAM HOLDING ROOM

All teams in Round 3 are required to report at a designated time for orientation and Pool Competition and *may* be required to remain in a holding room when not competing. Teams will receive further instructions on this prior to the NLC. The use of cell phones, or other electronic devices that may record, publish, or receive information, is prohibited in the holding room.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

If a question is not answered by either team, no points will be awarded or lost, and no replacement question will be given. The Question Master will give the correct answer and move on to the next question.

	Round I: Direct Qualifying		Round II:	Round III: National Championship
	Part 1 – Fall TeamSmarts NLC Qualifier 10/19/2026 – 11/20/2026	Part 2 – Top 4 Posted/Shared on Social Media	FCCLA/LifeSmarts Spring Knowledge Bowl TeamSmarts Quiz 2/1/27 – 2/26/2027	National Leadership Conference 6/22/2027 – 6/26/2027
Who?	Any team of five (5) FCCLA members <i>(must be affiliated)</i>	The top 40 teams from the Online Test	The 40 teams that advanced and teams 41-50 for substitution purposes	40 teams
Competition Process	Adviser creates coach account (or logs back in if previously registered) and registers team at https://lifesmarts.org or updates team(s) from previous year. - Students register and join the team and may take practice quizzes - The adviser appoints team captain - When test window opens, the quiz appears automatically in the captain's Quizzes dashboard - Team captain leads team through Online TeamSmarts quiz - Top 40 Teams announced on December 7, 2026.		- Adviser coach may substitute students on online team - Teams keep taking practice quizzes until window opens - When test window opens, quiz appears automatically in the captain's folder - Team captain leads team through Online TeamSmarts quiz	Orientation and Pool Competition - Teams will be assigned to either morning or afternoon competition session - Teams seeded into 5 pools of 4, each team competes in a buzzer match vs. the other 3 teams in their pool. - Scores accumulate.
				-Top 16 teams seeded -
				Knockout Bracket Seeded teams play head-to-head until 2 finalist teams remain. Play-off match for third place team.
Who advances?	All teams	40 teams and alternate teams	40 teams – score is first part of their NLC score	Two finalist teams compete for the Championship on-stage during National Leadership Conference General Session



Family, Career and Community Leaders of America®

13241 Woodland Park Rd STE 100

Herndon, VA 20171

competitiveevents@fcclainc.org

www.fcclainc.org