

# TECHNICAL JUDGING MANUAL

Songbird Canary Section



National Bird Judges Association NBJA



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# 1. Purpose of the Manual

This manual establishes the **technical and methodological principles** for the evaluation of song canaries in official competitions recognized by the **National Bird Judges Association (NBJA)**.

Its objective is to ensure:

- uniformity in judging
- technical rigor
- respect for the musical nature of the canary.

# 2. Principles of Song Judging

The judging of song canaries is based on the evaluation of the following elements:

## **Musical Quality**

The sonic beauty and structural organization of the song.

## **Clarity**

The clearness and purity of the notes.

## **Rhythm**

The temporal organization of the song phrases.

## **Variety**

The diversity of vocal resources used by the bird.

### **Harmony**

The balance between the different musical elements of the song.

## **3. Fundamental Concepts**

### **Tour**

A structural unit of the song formed by an organized sequence of notes.

### **Note**

The basic sound element produced by the bird's vocal apparatus.

### **Variation**

A modification of the pattern of a tour.

### **Musical Phrase**

A sequence of tours forming a complete musical structure.

## **4. Physiological Basis of Song**

The song of the canary is produced through the interaction of several physiological systems:

### **Syrinx**

A specialized vocal organ responsible for sound production.

### **Air Sacs**

Structures that regulate air pressure and resonance.

### **Neurological Control**

Specialized brain centers are responsible for vocal learning and control.

The song is the result of the interaction between:

- genetics
- learning
- environment.

## 5. Phases of Song Development

### 1. Sensory Phase

The bird listens to and memorizes song patterns.

### 2. Sensorimotor Phase

The bird begins producing **subsong**, an early vocal practice stage.

### 3. Plastic Song

The song evolves and undergoes structural reorganization.

### 4. Crystallization

The song stabilizes into its mature structure.

## 6. Elements Evaluated by the Judge

The judge must evaluate:

### Timbre

The tonal color of the sound.

### Intensity

The level of acoustic energy.

### Rhythm

The temporal regularity of the song.

### Fluency

The continuity and flow of the song.

### **Musicality**

The overall aesthetic expression of the song.

## **7. Musical Tours**

Tours are classified according to their acoustic nature.

### **Continuous Tours**

Tours that flow smoothly without interruption.

### **Segmented Tours**

Tours composed of distinct sound segments.

### **Ornamental Tours**

Decorative musical elements that enrich the song.

## **8. Song Defects**

The judge must penalize the following defects:

### **Harsh Metallic Notes**

Rough or unpleasant sounds.

### **Song Breaks**

Abrupt interruptions in the song.

### **Strident Sounds**

Excessively aggressive or piercing sounds.

### **Excessive Repetition**

Lack of vocal variety.

## 9. Judging Methodology

The judge must follow these steps:

1. Listen carefully to the bird.
2. Identify the traits present in the song.
3. Evaluate the quality and structure of the song.
4. Compare performance with the established standard.

The evaluation must be carried out with **impartiality, concentration, and technical judgment.**

## 10. Judging Conditions

For proper evaluation, the following conditions must be ensured:

- quiet environment
- adequate lighting
- regulation cages
- sufficient listening time.

## 11. Scoring System

The judge will evaluate:

- song quality
- variety
- rhythm
- harmony
- absence of defects.

Each criterion contributes to the **final score of the specimen.**

## 12. Ethics of the Song Judge

The judge must:

- maintain objectivity
- avoid favoritism
- respect the welfare of the bird
- act with professionalism.

## 13. Educational Role of the Judge

The judge does not only evaluate.

The judge must also:

- guide breeders
- promote the improvement of song quality
- preserve the musical tradition of the breed.