



A Competitor & Parent Guide to the 2021-22 USA Climbing Youth Qualifying Series

The Youth Qualifying Series is an opportunity for young climbers to compete with other climbers and, if desired, earn qualification to championship events (Regional, Divisional, and National) in the USA Climbing competition season. Here are the steps for participating this year.

Step 1: Become a USA Climbing member

Everyone who competes in the Youth Qualifying Series must first become a member of USA Climbing. This is done online through the USAC membership platform at usaclimbing.sport80.com. All memberships are valid for 365 days from the date of purchase and provide members with discounts on USA Climbing merchandise and at USA Climbing partner companies such as The North Face. Instructions for setting up or renewing a membership can be found at usaclimbing.org/memberships.

There are two levels of membership:

- **Competitor:** This enables the member to register for any Youth Qualification Event in their Division (additional per-event registration fees apply) and earn Ranking Points towards qualification for the Regional championships. The cost is \$105 for one year.
- **Introductory:** This enables the member to register for any Youth Qualification Event in their Division (additional per-event registration fees apply); **however, they will not earn Ranking Points or be eligible to compete at Regionals.** The cost is \$30 for one year.

If you are new to competitive climbing this year and are part of a youth team at your local gym, we recommend that you talk to your coach(es) about whether to sign up under the Competitor or Introductory membership. You may upgrade your membership during the season; however, any results achieved before the upgrade will **not** count towards your Regional Ranking.

Competitors are assigned to a Category based on their birth year and gender. For the 2021-2022 season, the age Categories are:

- Youth D - birth year of 2011 or later
- Youth C - birth year of 2009 or 2010
- Youth B - birth year of 2007 or 2008
- Youth A - birth year of 2005 or 2006
- Junior - birth year of 2003 or 2004

When signing up for your USA Climbing membership, it is important to **select the correct Region**, which is based on either your home address or, in some cases, the address of the gym where you train. A map of the 18 USAC Regions is at usaclimbing.org/compete/regions.

If your home and gym are located in different Regions and you are part of a climbing team, consult with your team's coach regarding which Region you should choose.

Step 2: Find a Qualification Event

The Youth Qualifying Series involves all three disciplines of competitive climbing - Bouldering, Lead/Top Rope, and Speed. Climbers may choose to compete in one, two or all three disciplines under their single USAC membership. Each discipline has a different schedule:

- The **Bouldering** Qualifying season runs from October through December, with the Regional championship in January and the Divisional championship in February.
- The **Lead/Top Rope** Qualifying season runs from January through March, with the Regional championship in April and the Divisional championship in May.
- The **Speed** Qualifying season runs from October through May; there is no Regional or Divisional championship for Speed. Competitors can compete at any Speed QE anywhere in the country as they attempt to achieve a qualifying time that makes them eligible to compete at the National championship in the Speed discipline.
- The Youth National championship in July includes all three disciplines.

Each Region will hold no more than six Qualification Events per discipline per year. The calendar of QEs in each Region is posted on its page on the [USAClimbing.org website](https://USAClimbing.org). Information about the QEs and the Regional & Divisional championships in your Region and other useful information are also regularly posted on Region-specific Facebook groups; links to these groups can also be found on your Region's web page.

NOTE: For the Bouldering and Lead/Top Rope disciplines, climbers may compete at Qualification Events in their Region as well as in the other Region in their Division; they may **not** compete in QEs located outside their Division. For example, a climber who lives in Region 61 may only compete at Bouldering or Lead/Top Rope QEs in either Region 61 or 62. For the Speed discipline only, climbers may compete in QEs held anywhere in the country.

Step 3: Register for a Qualification Event

Registration for all USAC-sanctioned competitions, such as Qualification Events, takes place via the membership platform at usaclimbing.sport80.com. After logging into your USA Climbing Member account, click on the Events tab on the left side of the screen. This will show you a list of all USAC events. You can then enter the name of the gym or the Region number where the event is being held in the Search box at the top of the page to quickly find the event you are seeking, which must be in your home Division.

Once you have located the event you want, click on the Open button to see details about the event (including the registration deadline and a list of registered competitors) and then click on Next at the bottom of the page. To register, click on the +Add New Entry button and follow the steps. You will receive an email confirmation once you have completed the registration process. If you do not receive a confirmation email within 15 minutes you should contact events@usaclimbing.org immediately. Once registration has been completed, the competitor's name will appear on the event entry list in your Membership account and on the event page.

Step 4: Compete at a Qualification Event

Qualification Events for Bouldering and Lead/Top Rope are one of three formats:

- Modified Redpoint
- Onsight/Isolation
- Flash (for Lead/Top Rope only)

Modified Redpoint is the most common QE format. In this format, each age/gender category is assigned a specific set of boulders/routes (6 to 10 boulders; 3 to 8 Lead/Top Rope routes). Competitors may only climb the boulders/routes assigned to their category. They will climb in a session lasting a minimum of three hours, during which they may attempt the boulders/routes in whatever order they wish and make many attempts on each one, up to the maximum number of attempts per boulder/route set by the competition organizers. Competitors are allowed to share and receive “beta” with coaches, spectators, and other competitors before and after their attempts (but not while on the wall). Their scores will be recorded by judges at each boulder/route, and their placement at the competition will be based on the total number of tops (and, for Bouldering, the total number of zones) achieved on those designated boulders/routes and the total number of attempts it takes them to achieve them.

Onsight/Isolation is a format in which competitors must check into Isolation at a prescribed time for their category, warm up in the Isolation area (only USAC-certified coaches are permitted into Isolation), and then come out one-at-a-time in a randomly set order to climb the boulders/routes assigned to their category, having not previously seen the boulder/routes. Bouldering onsight QEs consist of four boulders per category; Lead/Top Rope QEs will have either two or three routes per category. Competitors may not receive any “beta” prior to or during their attempt. In Bouldering, they will get four minutes to attempt each boulder as many times as they can until they reach the top; in Lead/Top Rope, they get only one attempt per route, with a five- or six-minute time limit per route.

Flash is a format that is only used in Lead/Top Rope QEs. In this format, each category is assigned either two or three routes, which competitors climb in a randomly assigned order. All competitors are provided access to watch pre-recorded videos of the routes being fore-run by members of the routesetting team. In addition, unlike in the Onsight/Isolation format, they may watch other competitors climb the routes prior to their own attempt. However, they still only get one attempt per route, and there is a five- or six-minute time limit per route,

Step 5: Qualifying for the Regional Championships

At each Qualification Event, the competitors are ranked in their category based on their results at that competition. Those climbers who have a Competitor-level membership at the time of the competition and are competing at a QE located in their Division earn Ranking Points based on what place they finish in their category at the QE. On the next page is a table of the Points earned for each Rank placement at a Qualification Event.

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A few things to note:

- Tied competitors will be awarded the average of the Points allocated for the tied rank positions. For example, if two competitors tie for 6th place in a category, they receive the average of the Ranking Points for 6th and 7th place; $(47+43)/2 = 45$
- Competitors who are Introductory members at the time of the QE do not earn Ranking Points, but they still factor in the Rank placements. In other words, if an Introductory Member finishes 3rd at a QE, the 65 points associated with a 3rd place Rank are not allocated to the next highest Competitor member at the comp. They just receive 55 Ranking Points for their 4th place finish.

Rank	Points		Rank	Points		Rank	Points		Rank	Points
1	100		11	31		21	10		31	0.95
2	80		12	28		22	9		32	0.90
3	65		13	26		23	8		33	0.85
4	55		14	24		24	7		34	0.80
5	51		15	22		25	6		35	0.75
6	47		16	20		26	5		36	0.70
7	43		17	18		27	4		37	0.65
8	40		18	16		28	3		38	0.60
9	37		19	14		29	2		39	0.55
10	34		20	12		30	1		40	0.50

To determine a competitor's Regional Ranking, the Ranking Points earned at their two best QE performances in that discipline are added together. Remember: you must have an active Competitor-level membership at the time of the QE for those Ranking Points to count towards a Regional Ranking. Competitors are not required to compete in more than one QE in order to be potentially eligible for Regionals.

To qualify for the Regional Championship in either Bouldering or Lead/Top Rope, a competitor must finish in the top 26 of their age/gender category of that discipline's Regional Ranking at the end of the season. USA Climbing will periodically update the Regional Rankings on its website.

At the conclusion of each discipline's Qualifying Series season (December 18 for Bouldering and March 26 for Lead/Top Rope), competitors finishing in the top 26 of their Regional Ranking - plus others earning eligibility as outlined in section 18.2 of the Rules - will receive an invite to register and compete at the Regional championship for that discipline.

Step 6: Competing at the Championship Events

Regional championships are single-discipline, single-round events run in the Onsite format. All Categories usually compete on the same day, though in some cases, a Regional championship may last two days, with different Categories competing on different days. In 2021-22, the dates for the Regional championships vary by Region but will be one of two weekends (check your Region's webpage for dates and locations):

- Bouldering: either January 15-16 or January 22-23
- Lead/Top Rope: either April 9-10 or April 16-17

From the 26 competitors per Category at Regionals, the top 13 finishers in all Categories except for D advance to the Divisional championships, where they are joined by the advancing competitors from their "sibling" Region. Divisional championships are single-discipline, two-round events held over two days; the top 12 finishers in each Category from the first-day Qualification round advance to the second-day Final round. The top 6 finishers in each Category's Final round earn an invitation to compete in that discipline at the Youth National championship in July. In 2021-22, the dates for the Divisional championships vary by Division but will be one of two weekends (check your Region's webpage for dates and locations):

- Bouldering: either February 12-13 or February 19-20
- Lead/TopRope: either May 7-8 or May 14-15

If you have additional questions about how the USA Climbing Youth Series works, the best sources of information are:

- The USA Climbing Rulebook (<https://usacimbing.org/rules/>)
- Your Region's page on the USA Climbing website (<https://usacimbing.org/compete/regions/>)
- Your Region's Facebook group (link should be posted on your Region's webpage)
- Your gym's coaches and/or other team parents

We look forward to seeing you at one of our Youth Qualification Events soon!