

# **Detail & Shine, Street, Unrestored, Special Categories and Full Concours! What's a Concours Division? And Why Do I Have to Pick One?**

By Dave Yertzley

So you'd like to try Concours, but you can't just send in your entry because someone wants you to choose one of those pesky divisions and classes. What's that all about, anyway?

Concours is a form of competition, and like any other type of competitive activity, you can't expect to start at the top. If your choice is chess, you won't be looking across the board at Magnus Carlsen during your first game, and if it's baseball you won't start by pitching for the Yankees during the world series. Even Michael Jordan couldn't make a lateral move directly into major league baseball.



**Concours by the Beach  
Santa Barbara Region, 2012**

The Zone 8 classification structure offers a number of choices with different levels of challenges and a logical order of progression as an entrant becomes more skillful. The eight divisions (Detail & Shine, Street-Vintage, Unrestored-Vintage, Street-Modern, Unrestored-Modern, Special Categories, Full Concours-Vintage and Full Concours-Modern) are the major categories. Almost any Porsche can progress through the divisions as its owner gains experience and confidence. All divisions except Special Categories are defined by which areas of the car are judged. The six judging areas are the Exterior, Interior, Storage Compartment, Engine, Chassis Half (without engine) and Chassis Half (with engine). The judging standards for any area are the same for all divisions, but only in the Full Concours-Vintage division are all six of these areas judged. Within each division, except Special Categories, cars are further divided into classes based on model and vintage. Once you have picked a division, you should find choosing the correct class to be straightforward.

When first preparing a car for Concours competition, you will likely find yourself spending a lot of time on each area getting it ready for an upcoming event. The flaws noticed by the judges become items you will devote particular attention to for the next event. However, as you gain experience, the areas you have worked on will become better prepared and need less attention to keep them ready for competition, and you will also become more proficient at getting your car ready. Since you probably don't have unlimited time to prepare, you'll need these improvements in efficiency to be able to remain competitive as you add judging areas by progressing into more challenging divisions.

If you are entering Concours for the first time, the Detail & Shine division is your best choice. In D&S only the interior and exterior, the parts of the car most often cleaned by owners, are judged. However, the expectations of a Concours judge are likely to be quite a bit higher than those of your neighbors when they admire your freshly washed car in the driveway. Before you protest that you've been preparing cars for D&S your whole life, be cautioned that the first time you enter you'll likely learn about areas that the judges will look at that you never would have thought of preparing by yourself. After you've entered your car in D&S a few times, you will have a better idea of the kinds of places in the car that judges inspect and poke their fingers into.



**A Well-Prepared Engine**

After a season in D&S, you may want to move on to one of the Street (or Unrestored) divisions. Here the Storage Compartment and Engine judging areas are added to the Interior and Exterior areas (depending on the model of car). If your car is at least 20 model years old and still has most (at least 75%) of its original paint and interior, it qualifies for an Unrestored division, which in every other respect is like the corresponding Street division. You will probably find that initially you'll need to spend quite a bit of time preparing your engine, and perhaps also your storage compartment, but as time progresses both of these areas will also require much less time to maintain and prepare.

Based on the age and model of your Porsche, Street, Unrestored, and Full Concours have two flavors, Vintage & Modern. This is because the access to engines in the modern cars is more difficult, both for preparation and for judging.

Ultimately, you may get so good at preparing and maintaining your car that you decide to move to Full Concours. This is a major progression, in that the challenges of preparing the undercarriage can be as great as those involved in preparing the rest of the car combined. However, the rewards of having a completely prepared car may be worth the investment of effort required. The difficulty of preparing the entire car is recognized by the fact that in general the rules allow any car entered in Full Concours to be brought to all shows on a trailer, whereas, with the exception of



**If your Porsche looks like this . .**



**. . or this, then it probably belongs in the Special Categories division.**

cars in the Special Categories division, all other cars must be driven to shows (with the exception of shows that are out of state).

Speaking of the Special Categories division; this division was established for cars which, for any of several reasons, don't fit well in any of the other divisions. This is where your 918 Spyder, 917 or 911 with the Chevy V8 engine belongs. The class

structure is based on the specific reasons that cars might be entered in this division, rather than on car type and vintage as in the other divisions. In Special Categories, only the Exterior and Interior areas are judged. These cars are often not street legal or may be so noisy as to be annoying, and so they may also be transported to events rather than driven. Most cars eligible for this division either cannot be entered in or are not good candidates for entry in the other divisions.

So now that you know how to choose a division and classify your car, you have one less excuse not to enter. Don't let anything I've said about the challenges of Concours intimidate you. The series is intended to be enjoyable for everyone, and you will find that the judges and other organizers will try to help and encourage you. Many people continue to find participating in Concours enjoyable and rewarding even after 10 years or more. One obvious side benefit is that you will really learn how to care for your car and keep in sparkling clean and looking its best.

## References

### Zone 8 Concours Competition Rules

The document which contains the rules governing Concours competition in Zone 8. It defines the divisions and lists all classes. Contained in the Zone 8 Rule Book.

<https://www.zone8.org/events/rules/current.php>

### Why Concours?

A brief discussion of the benefits of participating in Concours competition.

<http://www.zone8.org/assets/docs/WhyConcours.pdf>

### Manual for Concours d'Elegance Judges

Explains judging standards and the judging process, includes lists of representative things that judges might look for in each judging area and provides precise definitions of what is included in each judging area.

<https://www.zone8.org/assets/docs/ConcoursJudgesManual2015.pdf>

### Guide to Concours

An illustrated guide to preparing and showing your car, written by one of Zone 8's past Concours chairmen.

<http://www.zone8.org/assets/docs/concours101.pdf>