

Iowa Grocery Industry Association
Iowa Best Bagger Contest Rules and Information
Revised June 2017

The Iowa Best Bagger Contest is held every year during the Iowa State Fair. The Iowa Grocery Industry Association will closely follow the rules of the National Grocers Association (NGA) Best Bagger National Championship. NGA will accept one contestant from each state for the Best Bagger National Championship each year.

Entrants for both the NGA Best Bagger National Championship and the Iowa Best Bagger Contest must spend more than 25% of their time at work bagging groceries to be eligible for both contests. There are no age restrictions for either contest. Previous Iowa State Winners and NGA Best Bagger National Champions are not eligible for any future contests.

Like the NGA Best Bagger National Championship, Iowa Best Bagger contestants will be judged on speed, proper bag building technique, distribution of weight between bags and style, attitude and appearance. Each contestant will bag identical grocery orders consisting of about 30 to 38 commonly purchased items in three reusable bags (no plastic bags will be used) for both the preliminary and final rounds. Contestants should evenly distribute all their grocery items in the three reusable bags given so each bag will be approximately equal in weight. There will not be a crushable bag. Three folded reusable bags will be lying flat on the check-out table for the contestants to use. The contestant is not allowed to touch his/her reusable bags until the whistle is blown to start. Bag racks will be made available at both the Iowa Best Bagger Contest and NGA Best Bagger National Championship; however, contestants are not required to use them. The contestant is also not allowed to move the rack stand from the check-out table during the event if they choose not to use it.

For the Iowa Best Bagger Contest, each contestant will be given a number at registration the day of the event. This is the order in which you will participate in the contest. The number of preliminary rounds will be determined by the number of contestants. After checking in, all contestants will be ushered back stage and will be directed to the stage by an IGIA staff member. All contestants are to remain back stage in contestant order unless ushered to the stage by an IGIA staff member. Time will begin when the whistle is blown. You must raise your hands to stop time. After contestants have competed in their preliminary round, they will go to the front of the stage to be interviewed by the event MC. After being interviewed, the contestant will go backstage. Contestants are NOT allowed to be in the judging/scoring area and cannot ask their score during the event. Contestants can request to have their individual scores emailed to them the week following the contest.

The top six baggers with the highest individual scores from the preliminary rounds (based on points) will participate in the final round. Those not selected for the final round will be dismissed to the audience. The six finalists will be directed on stage for the final round. After the finalists have competed, they will go to the front of the stage to be interviewed again by the event MC. After being interviewed, the contestants will go backstage to await the results. Contestants will come forward to receive their award when announced. The first place winner of the Iowa Best Bagger Contest receives \$500 and will compete at the NGA Best Bagger National Championship in Las Vegas, Nevada. The second place winner receives \$250, the third place winner receives \$150 and the fourth place winner receives \$100.

A Properly Packed Grocery Bag - Criteria for Choosing the Best Bagger Winner of Reusable Bags

Speed – 10 Points

Contestants should bag orders significantly more quickly than the average bagger.

Time	Points
53:00 - 57:00 seconds or less	10
57:01 - 61:00 seconds	9
61:01 - 65:00 seconds	8
65.01 - 69.00 seconds	7
69.01 - 73.00 seconds	6
73.01 - 77.00 seconds	5
77.01 - 81.00 seconds	4
81.01 - 85.00 seconds	3
85.01 - 89.00 seconds	2
More than 89.01 seconds	1

Proper Bag Building Technique – 10 Points

One Point for Each YES Circled

Y/N Cans and jars on the bottom of the bags (no cans on top of cans, jars on top of cans or other jars)?

Y/N Boxes on the sides or walls of bags (cannot be lying flat)?

Y/N Placed crushable items, such as bread, eggs, and bags of chips on top of the bag?

Y/N “Filler” items in spaces between items (e.g., bag of sunflower seeds, seasoning package, Jell-O boxes)?

Y/N No glass bottles next to each other (filler item separating them)?

Y/N Bottles and other glass-encased items are in the center of the bag?

One Point for Each NO Circled

Y/N Items are damaged (bent, torn or dented)?

Y/N Bags are disorderly (items just thrown in the bag)?

Y/N Item(s) left on the check stand (1 point deducted for each item left on check stand)?

Y/N Bag or bags left on the rack(s)?

Distribution of Weight between Bags – 5 Points

Contestants should know how to distribute groceries among three reusable bags so that all bags are approximately equal in weight. To calculate the score, weigh each bag and record the weight. Take the heaviest bag weight, minus the lightest bag weight and subtract the difference from the total possible points.

Example: The heaviest bag weighs 13.15 pounds and the lightest bag weighs 12.05 pounds. The weight difference between the two bags is 1.1 pounds. Subtract this difference from the total possible points (5.00–1.1 = 3.9). The total points to be awarded are 3.9.

Style, Attitude and Appearance – 5 Points

All contestants should present a neat appearance, be polite and convey a customer-oriented attitude. Contestants will be judged in part on their composure and self-confidence.

Total – 30 Points

Best Bagger FAQ's

Q. If a bagger drops an item during the contest, what happens?

A. A bagger must pick up any dropped item. If they have not noticed an item that has fallen to the floor, the Timer may alert the bagger of the item, but the Timer will not pick up the item. Time will continue to run, with one exception, until the dropped items has been bagged.

The one exception is when an item falls from the stage. In the interest of safety, we obviously do not want the bagger diving after the item! In this case, an automatic two point deduction will be taken from the bag building technique score for that round.

Q. What happens if a bagger raises his/her hands because he/she thinks he/she has finished bagging, but has left an item unbagged on the check stand?

A. The Timer will alert the bagger to the item the bagger missed, and time will continue until the item has been bagged. If the Timer inadvertently stops the time before all items are bagged, an automatic deduction of two points will be taken from the bagger's speed score.

Q. What do you do in the case of a tie?

A. A tie score situation is relevant in two situations. The first would be when two or more contestants are tied for the finals. In this event, the total points the baggers earned for speed (10 points) will determine the winner. Should a tie remain at this point, the bagger with the most points for bag building technique (a possible total of 10 points) will be declared the winner. Should a tie remain at this point, the two baggers will have to bag again in a tie-breaker round for final elimination.