

2021 Scripps National Spelling Bee season to launch June 12 at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex

The official competition schedule will include three live telecasts of virtual rounds in lead-up to July 8 in-person finals

CINCINNATI – The Scripps National Spelling Bee has determined its official competition and broadcast schedule for its national competition this summer, with the first round of competition set for June 12.

The final rounds of this year's Bee will be hosted in person at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort near Orlando, Florida, on July 8. The finals, featuring 10-12 accomplished spellers, will be broadcast live in primetime on ESPN2.

The 10 to 12 finalists who will travel to Orlando will be determined by a series of virtual spelling rounds that will be held in the lead-up to the July 8 finals: the preliminaries, quarterfinals and semifinals. Each of the virtual rounds of the competition will be broadcast on ESPN platforms, beginning June 12 with the preliminaries and concluding June 27 with the semifinals.

"It will be an excitement-building sequence for the spellers and the audiences watching at home as the action and suspense of 'speller versus the dictionary' plays out over several weeks of competition this year," said Dr. J. Michael Durnil, executive director of the Bee. "Last year was challenging for so many as we learned to cope with the pandemic. Now, as pandemic guidelines across the country continue to evolve, we've charted a path for the 2021 competition and national finals activities by taking enhanced health and safety measures for the spellers, their families and the team of people who support and produce the Bee.

"I'm proud of the program and our safety teams that have worked so diligently to give spellers an opportunity to show off their skills this year while promoting a fun and safe experience for all involved."

The official Scripps National Spelling Bee live broadcast schedule is as follows:

Preliminaries: Saturday, June 12, 10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. ET on ESPN3

Quarterfinals: Tuesday, June 15, noon-6 p.m. on ESPN3

Semifinals: Sunday, June 27, 7-11 p.m. on ESPN2 (Play Along version on ESPNU)

Finals: Thursday, July 8, 8-10 p.m. on ESPN2 (Play Along version on ESPNU)

As the country continues to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person portion of the competition at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Disney will follow protocols based on guidance from health authorities for social distancing and masking. Scripps also is reviewing its COVID-19-related health and safety measures with medical experts at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center to help facilitate an environment that promotes the well-being of all.

For more information, visit spellingbee.com.

About the Scripps National Spelling Bee:

The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program. The purpose of the Scripps National Spelling Bee is to help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all their lives. Visit spellingbee.com for more information about the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which is administered on a not-for-profit basis by The E.W. Scripps Company.

About Scripps

[The E.W. Scripps Company](https://www.escripps.com) (NASDAQ: SSP) is a diversified media company focused on creating a better-informed world. As the nation's fourth-largest local TV broadcaster, Scripps serves communities with quality, objective local journalism and operates a portfolio of 61 stations in 41 markets. The Scripps Networks reach nearly every American through the national news outlets Court TV and Newsy and popular entertainment brands ION, Bounce, Grit, Laff and Court TV Mystery. Scripps is the nation's largest holder of broadcast spectrum. Scripps runs an award-winning investigative reporting newsroom in Washington, D.C., and is the longtime steward of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. Founded in 1878, Scripps has held for decades to the motto, "Give light and the people will find their own way."