

**THE OFFICIAL GUIDE TO
AISLING**

ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW TO
AISLE



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WHAT IS AISLING?

Aisling is a new sport – played on the aisles of a supermarket – in which competitors with shopping carts are given a list of products and must collect them all, in a limited amount of time, by performing choreographed routines set to music. Judges score the routines in various categories. The winner is the person who can ‘shop’ for all the products most impressively.

Athletic ability is one way to earn points, but is not a necessity. Routines can include elements of other athletics, like dance, skateboarding, gymnastics, or martial arts, but originality and creativity in a routine can be as important as physical ability or fitness. It is possible to earn points for theatricality or humor, for character or concept – anything that enhances the impact of your performance in the eyes of the judges. If you are artistic, you might earn points with a good costume. If you are mechanical, you might earn points by customizing your shopping cart.

The sport is about interpretation and individuality, about taking the mundane activity of shopping and turning it into something personal and inspiring.

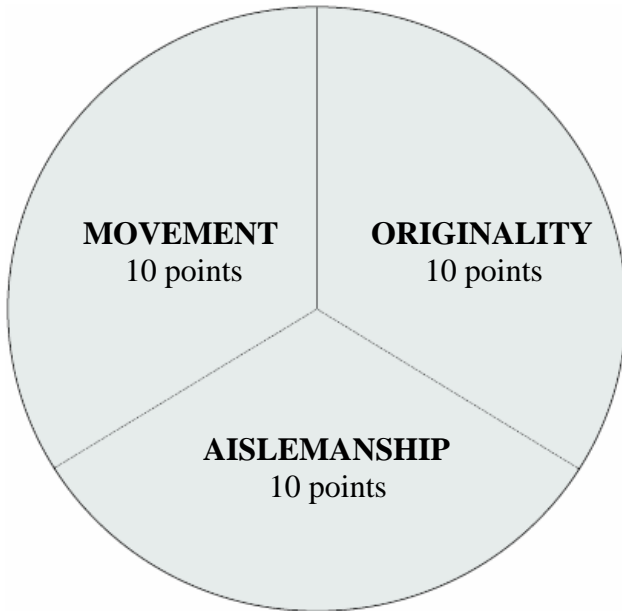
THE ORIGIN OF AISLING

One day in 2004, Jonathan Sawyer, the inventor of *aisling*, was buying groceries at his local supermarket in Los Angeles. He was thinking about something he had read in a newspaper article recently: “The average American shopper spends 6000 hours in his or her lifetime just shopping for food, which is the equivalent of shopping day and night without stopping for 250 days.” As he looked over the store that afternoon, everyone seemed bored pushing their carts around, and it struck him as sad that people had to spend so much time doing an activity that brought them so little pleasure. Aren’t we Americans supposed to be obsessed with shopping? Shouldn’t this be more fun?

That was when the idea for this new sport came to him. Suddenly he pictured carefully choreographed routines set to music, people gliding and spinning and cartwheeling through the aisles with their carts as they collected products from the shelves for points. But he also felt that this sport should be inclusive – that athletic prowess and physical fitness should not be a necessity, that character and shopping-style and originality should be just as important. Each competitor should be able to ‘shop’ the aisles in his or her own way. Sure, the idea was a little goofy, but the more he thought about it, the more he liked it. “Sometimes,” says Jonathan, “right at the edge of ridiculousness, we find some grace.” He decided to call the new sport *aisling*.

SCORING

In *aisling*, your goal is to earn a perfect score – 10 points – in each of three different categories:



There are three official judges. Each judge gives the competitor a score in all the categories. The scores can range from 0 to 10. In each category, the scores of the different judges are averaged together into a single number. These three averaged scores – one for Movement, one for Originality, and one for Aislemanship – are added together to calculate your total final score. **A perfect final score is therefore 30.**

The Movement Score

How good are your moves? Can you dance? Can you do karate? Can you balance ten products in one hand? Show us what you've got! You can earn points for athletic skill, grace, technical finesse, rhythm, style – anything that has to do with your movement.

The Originality Score

How creative are you? You can earn points for a good costume, for coming up with a funny idea for a routine, for customizing your cart in an interesting way – for anything that shows off your personality and a fresh approach to *aisling*.

The Aislemanship Score

How successful are you as an *aisler*? A good *aisler* should “take the mundane activity of shopping and turn it into something personal and inspiring”? How well have you embodied the spirit of *aisling*?

A perfect final score is very difficult to achieve. Note that in an average competition, you usually do not need high scores in all three categories to win! For example, if you don't feel like you can get many points for your movements, don't worry. Focus on the other two categories instead. Find some way to show off your creativity – customize your cart, perhaps, or devise an approach to *aisling* that no one has thought of before - and you can still get very high scores in

Originality and Aislemanship. Good scores in two categories are usually enough to put you in contention.

Remember – ultimately, this is a *performance*. You are doing a routine in front of an audience. It is set to music. Try to show them something special, something inspired, something they will applaud because it is amazing, funny, clever, surprising, exciting – whatever you can come up with! As in any performance, personality and enthusiasm can go a long way. Even though each of the competitors will have different approaches to *aisling*, everyone is trying to achieve the same goal: to turn shopping into something entertaining and impressive *for an audience to watch*.

R U L E S

Several weeks before the competition date, the organizers will announce the specifics of the event: the course (i.e. the starting position, which aisles of the market will be used, etc.), the time limit and the list of products that need to be collected. This gives the competitors a training period during which they can visit the supermarket, identify the location of the products, and plan and rehearse their routines accordingly. A standard *aisling* competition requires a list of 15 products to be collected in 3 minutes, but variations are possible.

Competitors are able to check out shopping carts and keep them for the duration of the training period. If you plan to customize your shopping cart so extensively that it cannot

be returned to its original form, you may purchase a cart from the event organizers at a special discount.

The rules for *aisling* are as follows:

1. Only one competitor performs at a time!

The order in which competitors perform is determined by lottery.

2. You must use a regulation shopping cart!

Most types of shopping carts are acceptable, but always check with the organizers of your event to see if there are any special restrictions.

Can I customize my shopping cart?

Yes. You may customize your shopping cart in any way you see fit, but you must utilize the entire cart. This means that you can add things to it or take it apart into pieces and rearrange it, but you cannot subtract anything – you must use all the original parts of the cart in your design. If you replace the wheels, for example, you must still have the original wheels somewhere in or on the cart when you perform.

Will I get a higher score if I customize my cart?

Not necessarily. An interestingly-customized cart is likely to increase your Originality score, but if the judges feel that the customization of the cart does not mesh well with your routine as a whole, you will likely lose points in your Aislemanship score.

3. Your routine must be set to music!

Choose your own music, whatever best suits your routine, but always ask the organizers of your event if there are any special music restrictions.

4. You must collect all the products on the list – nothing more, nothing less!

Several weeks before the event, you will be provided with a list of products you need to collect during the competition. Everyone gets the same list. The products need to be *in your cart* at the end of your routine to count. Products in your hands or pockets are invalid. You will lose 2 points for any listed product you have failed to collect. You will lose 1 point for any product in your cart that is not on the list, or for any duplicate products – e.g., if the list says one can of corn, and you end up with two cans of corn.

4a. Bonus Item Rule

You have the option, but are not required to collect a specific bonus item. This item is optional because it adds a level of complexity to the *aisling* routine. A bonus item can increase your overall *aisling* performance and therefore your score. However it also increases the likelihood you'll break other *aisling* rules. The bonus item is usually stocked in hard-to-reach locations or is precariously stacked such that the risk of dropping products, bumping into displays and otherwise causing damage, increases – e.g., picking an orange out of a neatly stacked pile of oranges.

You will receive 5 bonus points for the bonus item successfully collected. There is a limit of one bonus item per routine.

5. Do not damage your products!

A damaged product is invalid. For example, if eggs are on the list and you break them, they will not count. You will lose 2 points for each product you damage.

What should I do if I damage one of the products I need for the list?

If you damage a product you need, leave it in your cart and try to get a replacement before the end of your routine. Since damaged products do not count as duplicates, you will not be penalized for keeping the damaged item in your cart – for having two cartons of eggs, for example, if the first one is broken.

What is the definition of “damaged”? What if I just dent a can, for example?

A product is considered damaged if, under ordinary circumstances, the supermarket would no longer offer it for sale. If there is a question about whether a product is officially damaged, someone from the supermarket’s quality control department will judge.

6. Do not bump into anything with the cart!

You will lose 1 point each time your cart bumps into anything – the side of the aisle, a display stand, a checkout counter, etc.

7. Do not knock over or otherwise damage any product arrangements or displays!

If, for example, you grab a box of pasta off the shelf, and you knock over the box next to it in the process, you will lose 1 point.

What if I knock over many boxes at once – do I get penalized for each one?

No. You lose 1 point each time you upset a display, regardless of the number of products affected. On the other hand, you will also lose 2 points for any box that gets damaged in the fall.

8. You must complete your routine within the given time limit!

Once again, please note that the list and the time limit are provided several weeks before the competition, giving the competitors time to visit the supermarket, identify the location of the products they will need to collect, and to plan and rehearse their routines accordingly.

If I do not finish my routine within the time limit, will I be disqualified?

No. But the judges will not consider any part of your performance that occurs after the time limit has expired, and having an unfinished performance will likely hurt your scores.

What if I have finished my routine, but my music is still playing when the time limit expires?

There is no penalty. Also, before performing, you can instruct the audio technician to fade your music out when your routine is over.

PENALTIES

- You have duplicate products in your cart: -1 point
- You fail to collect a product on the list: -2 points
- You finish your routine with an extra item: -1 point
- You damage a product: -2 points
- Your cart bumps into something: -1 point
- You knock over a product in a display: -1 point

BONUS POINTS

- You successfully collect the bonus item: +5 points

NOTES



AISLING!!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON AISLING:

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