



After 4 years, the Yale Physics Olympics is Back! The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Yale Physics Olympics competition for high school science and physics students! This year the competition will take place on **Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup> from 8:30am – 4:30pm**. Mark your calendars! This event is **completely free** to registered participants and includes lunch and commemorative T-shirts plus unique prizes for the winners. Every registering school may enter up to two teams of 4 students each.

The Yale Physics Olympics is a pentathlon, consisting of five 40-minute events. Each event will consist of a task or simple experiment performed by your team of 4 students. The team's performance will be ranked on the basis of their result as observed/measured by the judges for each event. One event is always an order-of-magnitude "Fermi" quiz in which teams must make educated estimates of various quantities. Some sample events (from recent years' competitions) are posted on our website (link below). There will be 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize for the overall winning teams, as well as awards and prizes for teams that win each event. After the final round of events, there will be a physics demonstration show, followed by the closing ceremony when the winners will be presented their awards. As a side note, we always give out an award for the best team-name themed costume/T-shirt. We suggest, however that the costume not interfere with your students' ability to participate in the events. While the events are running we also host a Make-and-Take activity for the coaches/teachers who accompany the teams.

Our goal is for students of all abilities and backgrounds to have an enjoyable experience while thinking actively about science and engaging in some hands-on experimentation. The events are designed to be accessible to the beginning physics student so you should not be concerned about your students being insufficiently prepared. Most important to success is the ability to apply the basic principles of scientific investigation and basic math in a creative way. We also find that the short time available for each event induces creativity and provides incentives to think outside the box.

Our online preregistration system (<http://ypo.yale.edu/>) is now active and works on a first-come-first-served basis. Due to construction at Yale and other logistical issues, this year we are limiting the event to 25 teams, so register early. During the preregistration process, you need only provide reliable contact information. Starting March 31<sup>st</sup> we will require you submit a team name and the names of the coach and all team members that will be attending. Each school may enter two teams of 4 students each (they can have the same coach). However, be aware for fairness and safety reasons we do not allow teams of fewer than 4. If fewer than 25 teams are registered by March 31<sup>st</sup>, third teams will be selected from interested schools on the basis of a random number lottery. We will try to accommodate as many as possible, but we cannot make any predictions at this point. Once the coach has registered, communications will be exchanged through the email address that you provide to the site, so make sure you use one that you check regularly, can accept bcc emails, and does not have an overzealous spam filter. You should receive a confirmation email soon after you preregister. If you do not, please contact me.

We have found that some schools have difficulty arranging transportation on a Saturday; so, make sure to line that up early. Also, before you register, check that the YPO date does not conflict with any school events your team members may need to attend. Unfortunately, this is an issue for a few schools every year, leading to last minute cancellations. As with all Yale sponsored events, we will need certain waivers completed for all participants. Registering coaches will receive an email with a link to the forms that must be filled out and signed prior to the event.

**Please note:** As mentioned above, in late March we will require you to submit a team name and and list the names of the team members and coach that will be attending the event.

We hope you will be entering a team and look forward to seeing you at Yale in April! If you need any more information, please visit our website and feel free to contact me at [stephen.irons@yale.edu](mailto:stephen.irons@yale.edu).

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen H. Irons".

Dr. Stephen H. Irons  
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