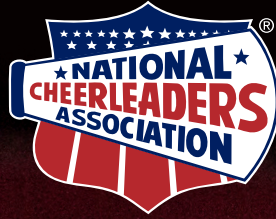


NCA COMPETITION RULE BOOK

FOR SCHOOL TEAMS



THE WORK IS WORTH IT.®



**NCA HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIP**
Dallas, Texas
January 23-24, 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

CODE OF CONDUCT	2
ELIGIBILITY POLICY	2
2020-2021 SCHOOL COMPETITION DIVISIONS	3
PERFORMANCE / GAME PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS	
PERFORMANCE & GAME PERFORMANCE ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS	5-6
2020-2021 NCA SCHOOL DIVISIONS RULES & RESTRICTIONS	7
2020-2021 NCA SCHOOL DIVISION GUIDELINES	8-10
GAME DAY DIVISIONS	
GENERAL GAME DAY ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS	12
GAME DAY GENERAL RULES AND SKILL RESTRICTIONS	
Band Chant	12
Game Situation Response	13
Cheer	13
Fight Song	14
DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS	15-16
LEGALITY VERIFICATION	17
GENERAL INFORMATION	
COMPETITION AREA	18
INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE	18
SCHOOL REPRESENTATION	19
MUSIC FORMAT	20
VIDEO MEDIA POLICY	20
LOGO USAGE	20
HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP	21
MASCOTS	
GENERAL RULES	22
STATE OF TEXAS MASCOT COMPETITION	23

2020 - 2021 USA Cheer SAFETY RULES

For the most up-to-date USA Cheer Safety Rules for the 2020 - 2021 championship season, please visit www.cheerrules.org

NCA SCHOOL COMPETITION RULES

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

CODE OF CONDUCT

NCA fervently encourages and supports sportsmanship, integrity and fairness among participants and coaches in all facets of cheerleading including, but not limited to, team/squad practice and performance. We strive to uphold the highest standards and promote this to the best of our abilities, and believe that coaches are instrumental in promoting and instilling this among their respective team members.

To ensure the most positive experience for all attendees, NCA asks that the following Code of Conduct be adhered to during all NCA Championships:

- Any questions or concerns that affect a team's performance or experience must be communicated by the coach to the AccuScore Table. The appropriate NCA Official will then be called to discuss the situation with the coach.
- Participants, coaches or spectators are prohibited from making contact with the Judges during the competition.
- Judges' rulings are final related to deductions, final team placements and legalities.
- Any unruly, aggressive or belligerent behavior by participants, coaches or spectators toward any other attendee or NCA Event Staff will result in a deduction, potential team disqualification, removal from the event and/or barred participation from future NCA Championships.
- Varsity Spirit reserves the right to remove any persons from a competition for unsafe or unsportsmanlike conduct.

ELIGIBILITY POLICY

High School/Junior High Division squads must consist entirely of students who have not graduated from high school. Divisions are determined by the grade of the participants at the time of the competition, regardless of the participant's current age.

Generally, every member of a team representing a school must be enrolled at that school, must be on a team officially representing the school and must perform in the official uniform of that school. All exceptions to this rule must receive written approval from NCA at least 2 weeks prior to competition. In an approved exception, a cheerleader must be a full-time member of the competing team and may not represent any other school-based team throughout the entire season. Promoting cheerleaders from other campuses for the sole purpose of competition will not be allowed. Members must be officially recognized by the competing school's administration as a member of the competing team's cheerleading squad.

The lowest official grade level for all athletes participating in high school divisions is listed as 9th grade. However, athletes younger than 9th grade will be allowed to participate in High School Open Divisions if they are enrolled in the school they are representing, are recognized as full-time cheerleaders for that school and receive written permission from NCA prior to the competition. Teams competing in Club divisions will not have to adhere by the standard eligibility requirements.

In fairness to all, NCA strictly enforces its age/grade requirements for each division. NCA reserves the right to assess a penalty, disqualify, reclaim any and all awards and/or remove video appearance for any team found to be in violation of the eligibility policy, whether before, during or after the event. A Team Roster Form will be sent to all coaches participating in an NCA Championship. One roster must be completed per team, and should include each participant's name, age, grade and birth date. This form must be signed and given to NCA during the event check-in. A school representative must sign and date this form. For High School and Junior High teams these forms must be notarized by school administration. The Team Roster Form will be reconciled against the Release and Waiver Forms to ensure all members are accounted for.

Participants may not compete in multiple Performance/Game Performance divisions within the School Cheer categories at the same championship (example: performers may not compete on a Junior Varsity and Medium Varsity team).

NCA strongly recommends that you have an alternate (not a member of another competing squad at the same event), who is prepared to substitute in the event of injury, probation, etc. No cheerleader may represent more than one School Performance Division Team, even in the event of injury or emergency. Once a team checks into the championship, the team may not be allowed to change divisions due to an injury.

Note: Cheerleaders may compete in a Performance/Game Performance Division and in the Game Day Divisions.

2020-2021 DIVISION LISTINGS

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

NCA SUPPORT SERVICE

Need help deciding which division to compete in? Email ncasupport@varsity.com for help finding the division best suited for your team's experience level and strengths.

GAME PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS				
Routine Length: 2:30 minutes Entertaining, Visual and Showcases Athleticism Cheer Portion: Emphasizes crowd leading ability with crowd effective material.				
NOVICE	Small Junior High/Middle School	5 - 16 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Large Junior High/Middle School	17 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Non-Building Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	11th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Non-Building Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Junior Club*	5 - 30 members	14 years & younger	Female/Male
INTERMEDIATE	Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Non-Building Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	11th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Non-Tumbling Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/0 - 2 Males
	Non-Building Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
ADVANCED	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Non-Tumbling Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/0 - 2 Males
	Non-Building Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male

*Club divisions are for sideline teams that don't fit into our standard divisions. Elementary teams, rec teams, and other club programs fall into this category.

PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS				
Routine Length: 2:30 minutes Entertaining, visual, and showcases athleticism				
NOVICE	Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
INTERMEDIATE	Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
ADVANCED	Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male

GAME DAY DIVISIONS

Routine Length: 3:00 minute or under

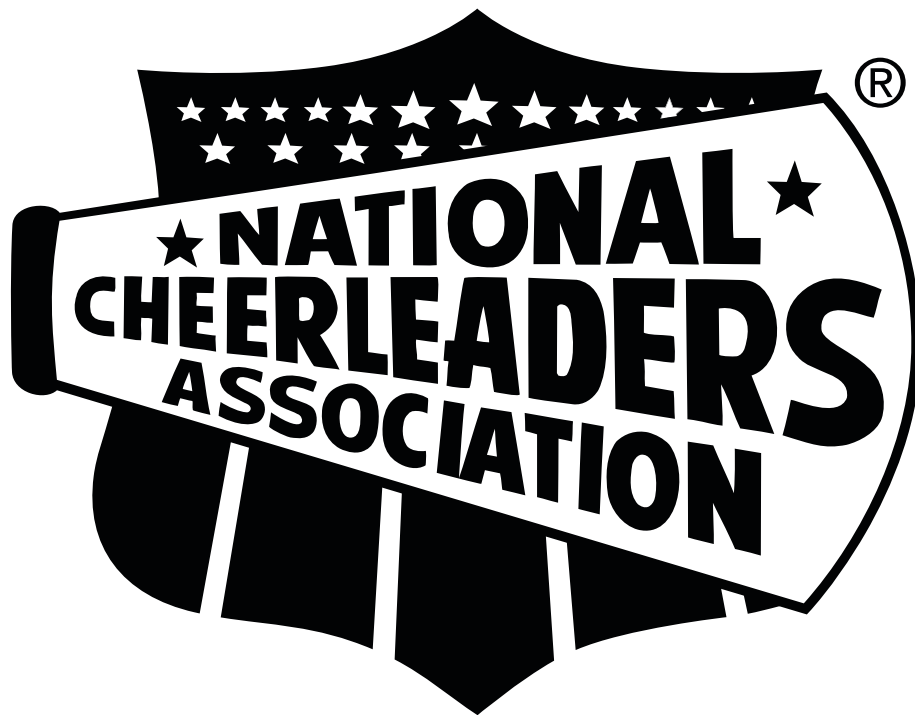
Includes: Band Chat, Game Day Cheer, Situational Response and Fight Song--all crowd leading material suitable for the sideline or pep rallies.

Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	11th grade & below	Female/Male
Small Varsity	5 - 12 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
Medium Varsity	13 - 20 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
Large Varsity	21 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
Spirit Program*	5 + members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male

*Spirit Program must consist of more than cheer and mascot by incorporating other Spirit Program elements such as dance team, drill team, band, drum line, etc.

**All Varsity divisions are for 9th - 12th grade. Athletes younger than 9th grade will be allowed to participate if they are enrolled in the school they are representing, are recognized as full time cheerleaders for that school, and receive written permission from NCA prior to competition.

PERFORMANCE & GAME PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS



PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS

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GAME PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS				
Routine Length: 2:30 minutes Entertaining, Visual and Showcases Athleticism Cheer Portion: Emphasizes crowd leading ability with crowd effective material.				
NOVICE	Small Junior High/Middle School	5 - 16 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Large Junior High/Middle School	17 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Non-Building Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	11th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Non-Building Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Junior Club*	5 - 30 members	14 years & younger	Female/Male
INTERMEDIATE	Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Non-Building Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	11th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Non-Tumbling Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/0 - 2 Males
	Non-Building Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
ADVANCED	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Non-Tumbling Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/0 - 2 Males
	Non-Building Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male

*Club divisions are for sideline teams that don't fit into our standard divisions. Elementary teams, rec teams, and other club programs fall into this category.

PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS				
Routine Length: 2:30 minutes Entertaining, visual, and showcases athleticism				
NOVICE	Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
INTERMEDIATE	Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
ADVANCED	Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
	Small Varsity	5 - 16 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Large Varsity	17 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
	Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male

PERFORMANCE AND GAME PERFORMANCE ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

1. All cheerleading skills including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps must follow the USA Cheer Safety Safety Guidelines. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult coach. See specific skill restrictions for each category.
2. Each team will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed 2 minutes and 30 seconds (150 seconds).
3. Up to 1 minute and 30 seconds (90 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. No voice-overs or words may be recorded to make the team's vocal projection sound louder.
4. Organized, formal entrances or exits that involve organized cheers or run-ons with jumps, tumbling or stunts are not permitted. Cheerleaders must enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
5. Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement or note of music by the team after they are officially announced and have taken the floor. Cheerleaders must have at least one foot on the performing surface when the routine starts.
6. Cheer words should be practical, and flow of words should be easy to understand by the crowd and judges.

PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

PERFORMANCE AND GAME PERFORMANCE ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS (CONT.)

7. In Performance Divisions, mascots will not count towards participant count. Mascots must be appropriately attired so their mobility, vision, etc. are not impaired. Mascots cannot participate in stunts, pyramids, or tumbling skills in any division.
8. The **Game Performance** divisions will follow the above NCA Performance Division Guidelines with Novice, Intermediate or Advanced restrictions and requires a cheer portion that emphasizes crowd-leading ability. Categories on the score sheet include: Spacing and Formations, Crowd Effective Material and Voice/Inflection.
9. The **Non-Tumbling** divisions will follow the above NCA Performance Division Guidelines and, in addition, will prohibit all tumbling, except for inversions into or from load in positions, stunts and pyramids. Tumbling is defined as any skill with feet over head rotation. Exception: a back handspring entry into stunts / pyramids will not be allowed. Non-Tumbling divisions may not be eligible for certain specialty awards.
10. **Non-Building** divisions. In these divisions no partner stunts, pyramids or tosses are allowed. If an athlete is ever lifted off of the performing surface by another athlete or athletes, it would be considered a 'building skill,' and therefore illegal.

*Performance and Game Performance sample score sheets are available online.



NCA SCHOOL DIVISIONS

2020 - 2021 RULES AND RESTRICTIONS



NOVICE SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Novice teams will follow USA Cheer Safety Guidelines with these additional skill restrictions.

STANDING TUMBLING: Standing tumbling is limited to a standing single back handspring. You can connect rolls and walkovers to a single back handspring. Standing back handspring series and jump/back handspring combinations are not allowed. Standing tucks are not allowed.

RUNNING TUMBLING: Running tumbling is limited to front and back handspring series. Flips and aerials are not allowed (no tucks).

STUNTS: Single leg stunts may not be held or pass through an extended position. No extended liberties. Twisting transitions are limited to a ½ twist by the top person. Exception: Log Rolls/Barrel rolls are allowed.

All release moves must land in a cradle.

Released switch ups are not allowed.

The only inversions allowed are transitions from ground level inversions to non-inverted positions. No other inversions are allowed.

Example: Going from a handstand on the ground to a non-inverted stunt such as a shoulder sit is allowed.

Example: Going from a cradle to a handstand or from a prone position to a forward roll is not allowed.

PYRAMIDS: Extended one leg stunts must be braced by at least one person at prep level or below. The connection must be made prior to executing single leg extended stunt.

Any time a top person is released by the bases and braced by other top persons, they may not perform any skill during transition and must land in a cradle.

Inversion in pyramids are not allowed with the exceptions of the inversions allowed under Novice Stunts.

Release moves in pyramids are not allowed with the exception of the release moves allowed under Novice Stunts.

DISMOUNTS: Only straight pop downs, basic straight cradles and ¼ turns are allowed.

TOSSES: The only body position allowed is a straight ride.

INTERMEDIATE SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Intermediate teams will follow USA Cheer Safety Guidelines with these additional skill restrictions.

STANDING TUMBLING: Flips are not allowed. No standing back tucks or back handspring back tucks.

RUNNING TUMBLING: Flips may ONLY be performed in tuck position only and from a round off or round off back handspring(s). Other skills with hand support prior to the round off or round off back handspring are allowed. Punch fronts are not allowed.

No twisting while airborne. (Exception: Aerial cartwheels are allowed.)

No tumbling is allowed after a flip or an aerial cartwheel.

Cartwheel tucked flips and/or cartwheel – back handspring(s) – tucks are not allowed.

STUNTS: Twisting transitions to and from an extended position may not exceed ½ twisting transition. Twisting transitions to, from and at prep level may not exceed 1 twisting transition. Release moves must start below prep level and must be caught at prep level or below. Release moves may not pass above extended arm level. Release moves above prep level are NOT allowed.

PYRAMIDS: Braced flips are not allowed. All pyramid skills must follow stunt rules unless braced from initiation of skill.

DISMOUNTS: Only straight pop downs, basic straight rides, and ¼ turns are allowed from any single leg stunt. Up to 1¼ twists are allowed from any two leg stunt.

TOSSES: Up to 1 trick allowed during a toss. Tosses may not exceed 1 twisting rotation.

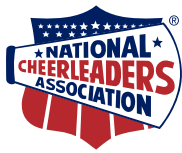
JUNIOR HIGH / MIDDLE SCHOOL / ELEMENTARY SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Junior High, Middle School, and Elementary teams will follow Additional Restrictions as listed in the USA Cheer Safety Guidelines.

ADVANCED SKILLS RESTRICTIONS

Advanced teams will follow the standard USA Cheer Safety Guidelines with no other skill restrictions.

RULES AND RESTRICTIONS TO TAKE EFFECT FOR 2020 - 2021 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON.



2020 - 2021 NCA SCHOOL JUDGING RANGES

The following grid outlines the point ranges for specific skill sets performed by MOST of the team. Skills performed by LESS than most of the team will move the score into a lower range. In each category, most of the team must master each listed skill unless the skills are separated by the word "or." MOST is defined as approximately 75% of the team.

NOVICE DIVISIONS

STUNT DIFFICULTY	PYRAMID DIFFICULTY	TUMBLING DIFFICULTY
3 - 4	3 - 4	3 - 4
Extension Preps or One Leg Variations Below Prep Level	Pyramids involving Extended Two Leg Stunts and/or One Leg Stunts at Prep Level	Cartwheels or Round-offs or Forward/Backward Rolls
4 - 5	4 - 5	4 - 5
Extensions or One Leg Variations at Prep Level	Pyramids involving an Extended One Leg Stunt	Round-off BHS or Standing BHS

TOSSES

Tosses are not required, but may be rewarded in the "Pyramid" category.

JUMP DIFFICULTY (4.0 - 5.0)

*Must be advanced jumps

4.0 – Single jumps

4.2 – Double jump combinations

4.4 – Triple jump combinations with no variety

4.6 – Triple jump combinations with variety

4.8 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations
and a single jump, no variety

5.0 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations
and a single jump, must include variety

TIMING (9.0 - 10.0)

Synchronization and uniformity

ROUTINE COMPOSITION (9.0 - 10.0)

Spacing, seamless movement and patterns, execution of formations

VOICE/INFLECTION (9.0 - 10.0)

Pace of cheer is practical, flow of words is easy to understand

MOTIONS/GIRLS DANCE (9.0 - 10.0)

This category will be judged based on a team's ability to incorporate transitions, level changes, footwork and floorwork, with a variety of visual movement in their dance with a high level of perfection. Motion technique throughout the routine will also be considered.

SHOWMANSHIP (9.0 - 10.0)

Genuine enthusiasm and energy level throughout routine

SCHOOL REPRESENTATION (9.0 - 10.0)

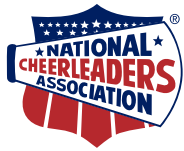
Sportsmanship, performance integrity, make-up, bows

Jump Combination = Jumps connected with continuous movement, using either a whip or prep approach

BHS = Back Handspring

NOTE: Elementary & Junior High/Middle School Teams must follow the additional USA Cheer Safety Restrictions located in the NCA Rule Book.

Advanced Jumps = Toe Touch, Right/Left Hurdles (front or side), Pike



2020 - 2021 NCA SCHOOL JUDGING RANGES

The following grid outlines the point ranges for specific skill sets performed by MOST of the team. Skills performed by LESS than most of the team will move the score into a lower range. In each category, most of the team must master each listed skill unless the skills are separated by the word "or." MOST is defined as approximately 75% of the team.

INTERMEDIATE DIVISIONS

STUNT DIFFICULTY	PYRAMID DIFFICULTY	TUMBLING DIFFICULTY
2 - 3	2 - 3	2 - 3
Extension Preps or One Leg Variations Below Prep Level	Pyramids involving an Extended Two Leg Stunt and/or One Leg Stunt at Prep Level	Cartwheels or Round-offs or Forward/Backward Rolls
3 - 4	3 - 4	3 - 4
Extensions or One Leg Variations at Prep Level	Pyramids involving an Extended One Leg Stunt	Round-off BHS or Stand BHS
4 - 5	4 - 5	4 - 5
Extended One Leg Stunts Required Dismount: Single Twist from Two Leg Stunts	Pyramids involving multiple transitional elements, one of which is a release and multiple extended structures including extended one leg stunts.	Round-off BHS Back Tucks or Round-off Tucks or Standing BHS Series or Jump/BHS Combinations

TOSSES

Tosses are not required, but may be rewarded in the "Pyramid" category.

JUMP DIFFICULTY (4.0 - 5.0)

*Must be advanced jumps

- 4.0 – Single jumps
- 4.2 – Double jump combinations
- 4.4 – Triple jump combinations with no variety
- 4.6 – Triple jump combinations with variety
- 4.8 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations and a single jump, no variety
- 5.0 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations and a single jump, must include variety

TIMING (9.0 - 10.0)

Synchronization and uniformity

ROUTINE COMPOSITION (9.0 - 10.0)

Spacing, seamless movement and patterns, execution of formations

VOICE/INFLECTION (9.0 - 10.0)

Pace of cheer is practical, flow of words is easy to understand

MOTIONS/GIRLS DANCE (9.0 - 10.0)

This category will be judged based on a team's ability to incorporate transitions, level changes, footwork and floorwork, with a variety of visual movement in their dance with a high level of perfection. Motion technique throughout the routine will also be considered.

SHOWMANSHIP (9.0 - 10.0)

Genuine enthusiasm and energy level throughout routine

SCHOOL REPRESENTATION (9.0 - 10.0)

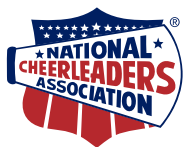
Sportsmanship, performance integrity, hair, make-up, bows

Jump Combination = Jumps connected with continuous movement, using either a whip or prep approach

BHS = Back Handspring

NOTE: Elementary & Junior High/Middle School Teams must follow the additional USA Cheer Safety Restrictions located in the NCA Rule Book.

Advanced Jumps = Toe Touch, Right/Left Hurdlers (front or side), Pike



2020 - 2021 NCA SCHOOL JUDGING RANGES

The following grid outlines the point ranges for specific skill sets performed by MOST of the team. Skills performed by LESS than most of the team will move the score into a lower range. In each category, most of the team must master each listed skill unless the skills are separated by the word "or." MOST is defined as approximately 75% of the team.

ADVANCED DIVISIONS

STUNT DIFFICULTY	PYRAMID DIFFICULTY	TUMBLING DIFFICULTY
2 - 3	2 - 3	2 - 3
Extension Preps or One Leg Variations Below Prep Level Extensions or One Leg Variations at Prep Level	Pyramids involving Extended Two Leg Stunts and/or One Leg Stunts at Prep Level Pyramids involving an Extended One Leg Stunt	Cartwheels or Round-offs or Forward/Backward Rolls Round-off BHS or Standing BHS
3 - 4	3 - 4	3 - 4
Extended One Leg Stunts Required Dismount: Single Twist from Two Leg Stunts	Pyramids involving multiple transitional elements, one of which is a release and multiple extended structures including extended one leg stunts.	Round-off BHS Back Tucks or Round-off Tucks or Standing BHS Series or Jump/BHS Combinations
4 - 5	4 - 5	4 - 5
Required: Elite Skills* Single Twist from One Leg Stunts or Extended Stunt Sequence performed by a Single Base, Unassisted	Pyramids involving Extended One Leg Stunts with Multiple Transitional Sequences, at least one of which is a Braced Flip Transition or Arm Braced Tic Tock [and Multiple Extended Structures]	Layouts or Standing Back Tucks or Standing BHS Back Tucks

STUNTS

ELITE STUNT SKILLS* INCLUDE (BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO):

- Full up to extended position
- Release moves that land in an extended position
- Tick tock variations
- Toss extended stunts
- Other unique mounts and transitions of similar difficulty level

**Advanced Divisions only*

TOSES

Tosses are not required, but may be rewarded in the "Pyramid" category.

JUMP DIFFICULTY (4.0 - 5.0)

*Must be advanced jumps

- 4.0 – Single jumps
- 4.2 – Double jump combinations
- 4.4 – Triple jump combinations with no variety
- 4.6 – Triple jump combinations with variety
- 4.8 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations
and a single jump, no variety
- 5.0 – Quad jump combinations or triple jump combinations
and a single jump, must include variety

Jump Combination = Jumps connected with continuous movement, using either a whip or prep approach

BHS = Back Handspring

NOTE: Elementary & Junior High/Middle School Teams must follow the additional USA Cheer Safety Restrictions located in the NCA Rule Book.

Advanced Jumps = Toe Touch, Right/Left Hurdles (front or side), Pike

TIMING (9.0 - 10.0)

Synchronization and uniformity

ROUTINE COMPOSITION (9.0 - 10.0)

Spacing, seamless movement and patterns, execution of formations

VOICE/INFLECTION (9.0 - 10.0)

Pace of cheer is practical, flow of words is easy to understand

MOTIONS/GIRLS DANCE (9.0 - 10.0)

This category will be judged based on a team's ability to incorporate transitions, level changes, footwork and floorwork, with a variety of visual movement in their dance with a high level of perfection. Motion technique throughout the routine will also be considered.

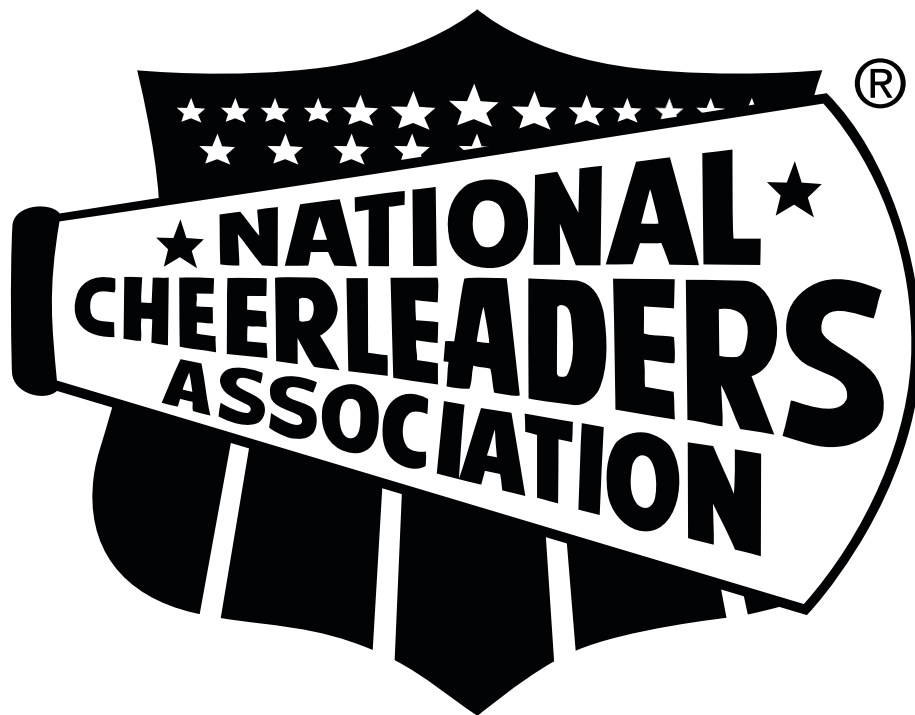
SHOWMANSHIP (9.0 - 10.0)

Genuine enthusiasm and energy level throughout routine

SCHOOL REPRESENTATION (9.0 - 10.0)

Sportsmanship, performance integrity, hair, make-up, bows

GAME DAY DIVISIONS



GAME DAY DIVISIONS

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

GAME DAY DIVISIONS

Routine Length: 3:00 minute or under

Includes: Band Chat, Game Day Cheer, Situational Response and Fight Song--all crowd leading material suitable for the sideline or pep rallies.

Junior High/Middle School	5 - 30 members	9th grade & below	Female/Male
JV/Freshman	5 - 30 members	11th grade & below	Female/Male
Small Varsity	5 - 12 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
Medium Varsity	13 - 20 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
Large Varsity	21 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female
Coed Varsity	5 - 30 members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male
Spirit Program*	5 + members	9th - 12th grade**	Female/Male

*Spirit Program must consist of more than cheer and mascot by incorporating other Spirit Program elements such as dance team, drill team, band, drum line, etc.

**All Varsity divisions are for 9th – 12th grade. Athletes younger than 9th grade will be allowed to participate if they are enrolled in the school they are representing, are recognized as full time cheerleaders for that school, and receive written permission from NCA prior to competition.

NEW! This year at all events (Regionals, Classics, and Nationals), the Game Day format will consist of one 3-minute performance that includes all three Game Day categories, plus a Game Situation Response. These categories will be performed in the following order:

1. **Band Chant**
2. **Game Situation Response**
3. **Game Day Cheer**
4. **Fight Song**

GENERAL GAME DAY ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

1. All cheerleading skills including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps must follow the USA Cheer Safety Guidelines. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult coach.
2. Teams may not set up props in advance of any category.
3. Props may be set once your team has been announced to the floor before your music begins.
4. The maximum performance time must not exceed 3 minutes. Timing will not include the team spirting or rallying, but will begin with the first group movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first.
5. Teams competing in the **Spirit Program** Division will follow a structure identical to the other Game Day Divisions, with the exception of the fact that this division encourages the use of sideline cheerleaders, dancers, school bands, drumlines and mascots, etc.
6. In all Game Day Divisions, including the Spirit Program, any and all participants on the performance surface will count as a member of the team. This includes mascots, band members, flag runners, etc. Mascots must be appropriately attired so their mobility, vision, etc. are not impaired. Only cheerleaders may participate in stunts, pyramids, or tumbling skills in any division.

GAME DAY BAND CHANT REQUIREMENTS

1. Traditional school band chant(s).
2. Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
3. Recorded band music must be used.
4. Timing will begin with the first organized movement, voice or note of music, whichever comes first and end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
5. Camp material may be easily adapted to fit this category.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS

- A. Tumbling and/or stunting of any kind is prohibited, including during entrances and exits.
- B. Dance skills (i.e. turns, leaps, kicks, etc.) are permitted.

GAME DAY DIVISIONS

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

GAME SITUATION RESPONSE

Each team will respond to audio cues by a game announcer, as heard at football and basketball games. In order to imitate the Game Day environment, audio cues will include an announcer-lead situational cue to which the team will show a definitive OFFENSE or DEFENSE response. Squads should focus on crowd effectiveness, motion technique and skills relevant to game day. A general response would not meet the criteria.

*Regardless of the sport, you will receive credit for the Game Situation Response if your chant matches the cue given. (Ex- If your cue is an OFFENSE Football chant and you respond with an OFFENSE Basketball chant, you will still receive credit for this category).

Below are some examples of the announcer-lead situational cues:

OFFENSE SIDELINE:

1. "And that's another (team)- FIRST DOWN."
2. "The (team) keeps the drive alive with that FIRST DOWN play."
3. "What a catch (or run)! That sets up the (team) to SCORE."
4. "The (team) takes control of the ball on their own 25-yard line."
5. "It's 1st and 10 for the (team)."
6. "It's a close game and the (team) are driving down the field for a SCORE."
7. "We're down to the final minute, the (team) needs a TOUCHDOWN for the win"
8. "Pass complete to #7 for another (team) -FIRST DOWN"
9. "That run results in another (team)- FIRST DOWN"

DEFENSE SIDELINE:

1. "The (team) needs to make a STOP to seal the win."
2. "It's 3rd down and the (team) needs to make a big STOP."
3. "After that turnover, the (team) needs to make a big STOP."
4. "The (team) needs a big STOP here, Let's Hold 'Em!"
5. "Our opponent has the ball and it's up to the (team) to STOP them"
6. "That will bring 4th down and short, the (team) need a STOP!"

GAME DAY CHEER REQUIREMENTS

1. No music may be used during the performance. Live drummer and/or drum track is allowed. All specialty skills (i.e. jumps, stunts, tumbling) must be performed within a safe distance of all drummers. Drummers cannot be involved in any type of specialty skill.
2. Each team's presentation must include at least two components required from the following: cheers, chants, traditional yells, and/or drum cadences.
3. Teams should utilize all areas of their squad's crowd-leading strengths. The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is encouraged.
4. Emphasis on crowd involvement and practicality. All material should be suitable for a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS

- A. No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- B. Switch up stunts are allowed.
- C. No inversions from stunts.
- D. No twisting dismounts from stunts.
- E. Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches.
- F. No running tumbling.
- G. Tumbling is limited to a single standing tumbling skill with the highest skill level allowed being a back tuck.

GAME DAY DIVISIONS

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GAME DAY FIGHT SONG REQUIREMENTS

1. Teams are encouraged to use their traditional team fight song.
2. Timing will end with the last organized movement, voice or note of music, whichever comes first and end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
3. Props (poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners) are permitted in this category.
4. Performances can incorporate up to three (3) eight counts of skills (stunts, tumbling and/or jumps). The three (3) eight counts must be consecutive. During the fight song, the three (3) eight counts may be repeated, if performed identically. The three (3) eight counts of skills includes loading and dismounting from stunts (unless routine finishes in stunt/pyramid).
5. Emphasis will be placed on practicality. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS

- A. No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- B. Switch up stunts are allowed.
- C. No inversions from stunts.
- D. No twisting dismounts from stunts.
- E. Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches.
- F. A jump is considered a skill and can only be performed in the three (3) eight count segment.
- G. A kick will not be considered as a skill and can be performed at any time during the routine.
- H. No running tumbling.
- I. Tumbling is limited to a single standing tumbling skill with the highest skill level allowed being a back tuck.

*Game Day sample score sheets are available online.

DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS

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POINT DEDUCTION SYSTEM

*Applies to Performance and Game Performance Divisions only. Teams competing in Game Day Divisions will not be issued Point Deductions.

All deductions may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

ATHLETE FALL .25

- Drops to the performance surface during tumbling and or/jump skills.
Includes the following:
 - Hand, hands or head down in tumbling or jump skill
 - Knee or knees down in tumbling or jump skills

BUILDING FALL .75

- Drops to cradle and/or load in position from a stunt, pyramid and/or toss.
Includes the following:
 - Base or spotter drops to the performance surface during a building skills
 - Drops to a cradle and/or load in position

MAJOR BUILDING FALL 1.25

- Drops to the performance surface from a stunt, pyramid, or toss by the top person and/or the bases/spotters
Includes the following:
 - Top person drops to the performance surface
 - Multiple bases and/or spotters drop to the performance surface
 - Top person lands on base and/or spotter who drops to the performance surface

MAXIMUM 1.75

- When multiple deductions should be assessed during a stunt or toss (by a single group) or during a pyramid skill, then the sum of those deductions will not be greater than 1.75. During pyramids where a fall continues to effect other portions of the pyramid, the deduction will not exceed 1.75. Two separated pyramids will result in separate deductions. The MAX deduction for a pyramid will not exceed 3.5.

SAFETY VIOLATIONS

1. Building skills performed out of level will be issued a 1.0 deduction.
2. Tumbling skills performed out of level and violation of any other General Safety Guidelines will be issued a .5 deduction.

BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

The performance surface is defined as the 42' x 54' competition floor. The competition boundary is defined as the performance surface. A .25 deduction will be assessed per occurrence for an athlete that makes contact with both feet outside the competition boundary. Judges decisions are final.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF ATHLETES

Teams that compete with fewer than the minimum number of athletes required for that division will receive a 1.0 deduction. Teams that compete with more than the maximum number of athletes will be disqualified.

UNIFORM MIDRIFF DEDUCTION

NCA enforces the NFHS ruling that states: "when standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff." If a school or recreational team is found to be in violation of this rule, the team will receive a 1.0 deduction off of their final score.

DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS

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INAPPROPRIATE CHOREOGRAPHY DEDUCTION

A deduction of 1.0 will be given for vulgar or suggestive choreography, which includes, but is not limited to, movements such as hip thrusting and inappropriate touching, gestures, hand/arm movements and signals, slapping, positioning of body parts and positioning to one another. Deductions will be given for music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes, but is not limited to, swear words and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, mention of specific parts of the body torso, and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words constitutes inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.

DIVISION VIOLATIONS

If a team performs with a member participating in more than one Performance/Game Performance division, the second and each subsequent team will receive a 1.0 deduction off their final score for each illegal participant (maximum penalty is 10.0).

TIME LIMIT VIOLATIONS

Teams that exceed division time limits are subject to the following deduction:

1. 1 or more seconds over time will result in a .25 deduction
2. 6 or more seconds over time will result in a 1.0 deduction

Routines that exceed the time limit run a risk of being assessed a deduction. Judges will use a stop watch or similar device to measure the official time. Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatch/clock shows a time that exceeds 3 seconds over the time limit.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT DEDUCTION

When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes and parents/spectators they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so will result in 1.0 deduction and removal of coach or disqualification. Includes the following:

1. Inappropriate and deliberate physical contact between athletes during the event
2. Abuse of equipment or any items associated with the event
3. Using language or a gesture that is obscene, offensive, or insulting
4. Using language or gestures that offend race, religion, color, descent or national or ethnic origin
5. Failing to perform a routine
6. Excessive appealing at AccuScore
7. Showing dissent towards scoring official decision by word or action
8. Threat of assault to an event representative
9. Public criticism of an event related incident or event official

LEGALITY VERIFICATION

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

As a coach, it is important to be current on the NCA & USA Cheer Safety Rules. If you have questions concerning any safety rules or questions regarding specific performance elements, please follow these steps. This will ensure that you receive a timely and accurate response to your questions.

1. All questions must be in written form.
 2. Due to the differences in interpretation and terminology; no phone calls will be accepted.
 3. Do not rely on prior rulings from NCA or Varsity Spirit Championships.
 4. A separate video must be submitted for each competition to ensure legality.
 5. For all Legality questions, you must send a video that contains the skill in question.
 6. Video must include the following:
 - A. Front, side and back view of skill.
 - B. Name of the Championship where you will be performing skill and the Division you will be performing in.
 - C. Include your name, team name, email and phone number with your video.
 - D. Do not send the entire routine, only the SKILL(S) in question. Your video will be kept on file at NCA.
- *Skills must be performed the same in video and at competition

VIDEOS THAT ARE NOT IN THE ABOVE FORMAT WILL NOT BE REVIEWED.

VIDEOS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE NCA OFFICE at least **THREE WEEKS PRIOR** to the championship date. Videos not received in the NCA office three weeks prior to the championship date will **NOT** be reviewed.

You must email your videos to:

ncahighschoolsafety@gmail.com

Note: Emailed videos may not exceed 10MB and should be in either Windows Media Player or QuickTime formats.

**DO NOT DEPEND ON YOUR CHOREOGRAPHER
TO DETERMINE IF SOMETHING IS LEGAL. IF YOU
FEEL THAT SOMETHING MAY BE ILLEGAL, SEND
A VIDEO TO THE NCA OFFICE.**

GENERAL INFORMATION

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COMPETITION AREA

1. NCA Competitions comply with the NFHS and USA Cheer Safety surface ruling that school-based programs may not compete on a spring floor. Most NCA Competitions will have a Competition Area measuring 42' deep by 54' wide carpet-bonded foam floor. See each event for confirmation of the floor type and size.
2. All permitted skills (stunts, pyramids, tumbling etc.) must be performed on the competition mat.
3. Poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member.
4. Objects cannot be thrown outside the competition floor.

INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

INJURY

The Safety Judge, coach, athlete or competition official reserves the right to stop a routine due to an obvious injury. In the event that an injury causes the team's routine to be interrupted during a Nationals' Preliminary competition, Classic Championship or a Regional Championship, the team will have at least 30 minutes to regroup before performing their routine again from the beginning. Judging will resume from the point at which the injury/interruption occurred as determined by the judges. The routine must be performed full-out from the beginning of the routine. All point deductions accumulated to that point will carry over. If a team prefers not to re-work the routine then, at the coach's discretion, they will take the score they have received up to that point. If a skill has not been performed a "0" will be given in the category. In the event that an injury causes the team's routine to be interrupted during Final competition (Nationals), the judges will determine if there is sufficient time and feasibility for the team to complete their performance. If not, scores will be based on the performance prior to the injury.

PROPS

Use of props in both Performance and Game Day divisions is limited to flags, megaphones, pom, signs, and other traditional sideline props. If you have specific questions about the legality of your prop please contact ncahighschoolsafety@gmail.com.

INTERPRETATIONS / RULINGS

NCA has the authority to make a decision on any issue, protest, penalty or rule that is unclear or not specifically addressed in this book. NCA will render a judgment in an effort to ensure that the competition is conducted in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition and NCA.

MUSIC

In the event a technical error causes a team's music to be interrupted, the coach will have the opportunity to stop the performance. Generally, the team will perform immediately unless NCA determines for safety reasons they should be moved later in the performance order. It is recommended that coaches have a backup music player with them at the music table. Judging and timing will resume from the point at which the malfunction occurred as determined by the judges.

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SCHOOL REPRESENTATION

HAIR

Hair for all athletes does not have to be worn the same but must be secured off the face with a simple and unexaggerated style that is acceptable to all diversities.

BOWS

Bows are not required, however if worn bows should not be excessive in size and shouldn't be a distraction to the performance. Bows should be worn in a manner to minimize risk for the participants, should be adequately secured on the back of the head with the tails facing down and should not fall over the forehead into the participants' eyes or block the view of the participants while performing.

MAKE-UP

We recommend that the team displays an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school with traditional and appropriate attire suitable for all athletes. If worn make-up should be appropriate for both the performance and age of the athletes, utilizing neutral colors for eyes and skin tone.

UNIFORMS

Outfitting for cheerleading performances should follow traditional dress standards. All participant uniforms must cover the midriff when standing at attention. Covered midriff includes nude/skin mesh, uniforms with colored mesh, body suits and liners; however, fringe would not count as a cover. Uniforms for all team types should be appropriate for the age of the participants performing the routine.

All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, music selection, outfitting (cheerleading), and cheer words should be suitable for family viewing and listening. Uniforms for all team types should be appropriate for the age of the participants performing the routine. Outfitting for cheerleading performances should follow traditional dress standards. In general, school performances, including but not limited to the actual routine, signs, cheers, chants and hand signals/gestures, should adhere to outfitting, performance and music guidelines and criteria in place and approved by the administration or institution to which the school team belongs. *

Any uniform or music in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be submitted to NCA for approval. Because multiple performances of the same routine will generally lack distinction, NCA is not able to approve with absoluteness the appropriateness of choreography (since movements can be easily modified, NCA could feasibly approve a particular movement when viewed on a video or in person, only to have it performed differently during competition). However, choreography, if questionable, may be submitted to NCA for feedback.

Cheer words should incorporate school pride, honor, and tradition as well as sportsmanship in their cheer. Cheers that are negative, insulting to other teams or the judges may reflect a lower School Representation score.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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MUSIC FORMAT

NCA will follow the Varsity Spirit Music Guidelines for all competitions. Please visit varsity.com/music for the most up-to-date guidelines and latest resources. For further questions on Music Licensing please email ncasupport@varsity.com.

Music should be on a digital music player/iPod. CD Players will not be available at Nationals or Classics. NCA & NDA will provide an auxiliary cord. Depending on the type of phone, please make sure you have all necessary adapters to plug into the auxiliary cord. Be sure to follow these steps below prior to your performance:

- Set up a playlist for each routine
- Turn OFF any equalizer, sound check and/or volume limit
- Turn your volume up to 100%
- Turn off all notifications
- If using a phone, make sure it is in airplane mode to avoid incoming calls during performance

VIDEO MEDIA POLICY

No commercial recording (audio or visual) or commercial live streaming is allowed in the event venue or other event-related venues (including, but not limited to, hotels and restaurants) or on the grounds of any such venues (collectively, "Event Locations"). In the event a team authorizes the commercial recording or streaming in any Event Location, the team will be automatically disqualified. In addition, the personal, non-commercial use of live streaming apps (such as Periscope, Facebook Live, etc.) to capture all or any part of a performance during the event is not permitted. By attending/purchasing admission to the event, each attendee grants permission to Varsity Spirit, LLC and its affiliates, designees, agents, licensees, and invitees to use the image, likeness, actions and statements of the attendee in any live or recorded audio, video, film, or photographic display or other transmission, exhibition, publication, or reproduction made of, or at, the event in any medium, whether now known or hereafter created, or context for any purpose, including commercial or promotional purposes, without further authorization or compensation.

LOGO USAGE

Teams will not be allowed to use any Varsity Spirit Brand logo including: banners, rings, bows, t-shirts, etc. without prior approval from the Varsity Spirit office. The use of the brand letters will be allowed.

2020 NCA HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

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HOW TO QUALIFY

All teams attending NCA High School National Championship must complete the Varsity Spirit/NFHS Squad Credentialing program at a Varsity Spirit Summer or Fall camp in 2020. At least 75% of the athletes competing at Nationals must meet the credentialing requirement (a mascot would count towards the 75% requirement).

- NO QUALIFICATION BID NECESSARY FOR GAME DAY OR SPIRIT PROGRAM DIVISIONS / CATEGORIES

CAMP QUALIFICATION

Squads may qualify for the NCA High School National Championship at NCA Summer Camp by meeting specific criteria as measured by the NCA Staff. Bids are based on overall performance and potential. For more information, contact the NCA office.

**NCA requires each team to have one coach with current USA Cheer Safety certification*

VIDEO QUALIFICATION

Teams wanting to qualify for NCA Nationals must be NFHS credentialed. If you are not yet NFHS credentialed, email your NCA State Director, or call 1-800-527-4422, to review your options.

Please email [Kip Winterowd at kwinterowd@varsity.com](mailto:kwinterowd@varsity.com) for more information on how to submit your video.

Videos submitted for qualification will not be viewed for legalities. For more information on legalities, see page 17.

**If you have questions regarding NFHS Credentialing due to COVID-19, please email Justin Carrier at jcarrier@varsity.com.*

REGIONAL OR CLASSIC CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFICATION

Squads may qualify for the NCA High School National Championship at an NCA Competition by December 13, 2020 (teams attending later competitions are responsible for payment deadlines). Squads placing in the top three of each division (in Divisions with 5 or more teams) and first place teams (in Divisions with less than 5 teams), or receiving a final score of 70 or above will receive a bid. Refer to each specific competition for complete details on performance and payment requirements. The routine must adhere to the NCA Rules. Teams receiving a bid at a Regional or Classic must also have the NFHS Credential from a Varsity Spirit Summer or Fall Camp before registering.

GAME DAY FORMAT AT NCA HIGH SCHOOL NATIONALS

GAME DAY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

The Game Day format will consist of one 3 minute performance that includes all three Game Day categories plus a Game Situation Response. These categories will be performed in the following order:

1. **Band Chant**
2. **Game Situation Response** (See Game Day Situation Response on the following page)
3. **Game Day Cheer**
4. **Fight Song**

Every team registered automatically qualifies for the Sunday round of competition. Scores will not carry over to Sunday, but teams will perform in reverse order of how they rank after Saturday's competition.

GAME DAY DIVISION NATIONAL CHAMPION AWARDS

If a team wins a Game Day National Championship title, and also wins a National Title in a Performance/Game Performance division, individuals will only receive one National Championship jacket. Teams will receive a banner and trophy for each national title.

CALIFORNIA TEAMS COMPETING UNDER CIF RULES

Teams that fall under the California Interscholastic Federation will be able to compete in a preliminary round and a final round at our championship without competing on a Sunday. Each team competes within their chosen division for a preliminary round on Saturday which accounts for 25% of their final score. On Saturday evening, the California teams return to perform their final round which accounts for the remaining 75% of their final score. The judges score the routine at that time and the performance is recorded. On Sunday, the teams from California are placed into the performance order, however, the video of their performance is played for the crowd during that time. The judges will review the scores and finalize. California teams are then welcomed onto the mat for their Final Awards Ceremony to receive their awards.

MASCOTS

NCA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BE THE ARBITRATOR AND INTERPRETER OF ALL RULES COVERED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

GENERAL MASCOT SAFETY RULES

1. Be sure that the character is tailored to meet health and safety needs. Your character should be well ventilated so heat can escape. The costume should be designed so that it is easy to remove the head, hands, and feet. Removing these items will allow for proper aeration and cooling breaks.
2. Take breaks approximately every 15-20 minutes. Prior to each game you should set-up a private room (or area out of view by anyone) to which you can retreat and take breaks. Make sure to have plenty of fluids available. Ideally, drink water before, during and after your appearances.
3. Always have a trailer (a person responsible to stay near you) to help with crowd control. When you are in a familiar area you may be able to maneuver quite well. However, many mascots have poor vision. A trailer not only helps you to maneuver more safely, but also can keep crowds from getting out of control (especially in open festivals, malls, and parade situations).
4. Be prepared if you begin to feel extremely overheated. Have a plan, including an emergency signal with your coach, squad, and trainer. Do not get out of character immediately after an appearance (especially if in air conditioning) or you may cool down too quickly. Walk around in costume and gain control of your breathing, then remove the head, hands, and feet. Sip fluids, recline, and if necessary place ice packs on the back of your neck and hands. Note: Prevent heat exhaustion and related symptoms by building tolerance, stretching properly, drinking fluids, and following a proper diet.
5. Dress-up before you dress-out. During an appearance, your body heat can rise in excess of 100 degrees (especially during fall football games). To prepare your body for this increase in temperature, you should wear sweats or warm clothing prior to each appearance. Eventually, your body temperature will automatically rise before each appearance and you may experience a chill.
6. Be aware of your limits when performing and be aware of the limitations that the character places on you. Pay attention to obstacles and people around you to prevent injury. When walking into a new area, scan the layout and try to memorize the location of obstacles. Also, count stairs as you go; chances are you will use those stairs again.
7. Protect your character and protect your image. Use common sense not to become too reckless while in character. This could result in putting yourself and your audience in danger. Never let an untrained person perform for you. Protect your image through regular maintenance of your character. Always make sure it is clean and in good condition. Avoid doing stunts that may cause damage. Your school, in many cases, has invested a great deal of money in your mascot costume.

MASCOTS

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STATE OF TEXAS MASCOT COMPETITION

1. Competition is open to all Middle School and High School mascots (Schools may have more than one mascot compete if each character maintains their own identity- Ex. Mr. Wuf & Ms. Wuf). Division splits will be dependent upon registrations.
2. Only ONE costumed mascot can perform. NO other live props are allowed.
3. Each mascot will perform a routine lasting a maximum of 1 minute and 30 seconds (90 seconds) not including set-up and tear-down time.

The following overtime penalties will occur:

- A. 1 - 5 seconds over time will result in a .5 deduction
 - B. 6 or more seconds over time will result in a 1.0 deduction
4. Other people may assist with the set-up, support and tear-down. These assistants may not participate in any activity within the skit, others than to support props.
 5. Mascots are allowed a total maximum set-up/tear-down time of 1 minute and 30 seconds (90 seconds).

The following overtime penalties will occur:

- A. 1 - 5 seconds over time will result in a .5 deduction
- B. 6 or more seconds over time will result in a 1.0 deduction

NOTE: This penalty is separate from the routine time penalty. For example, if your set-up time is 1 minute, your routine is 1 minute 33 seconds and your tear-down time is 40 seconds you would be assessed a .5 penalty for going 3 seconds overtime for your performance and a 1.0 penalty for going 10 seconds overtime on your set-up/tear-down time.

6. The routine should contain a theme and should be well organized and understandable.
7. Music may be used and must be compliant with copyright laws. Music must be in digital format.

The routine should include the following elements:

- A. 20 consecutive seconds minimum of dance with music
- B. 20 consecutive seconds minimum of prop utilization
- C. 20 consecutive seconds minimum of crowd interaction/response material

**For questions on Music Licensing please email ncasupport@varsity.com*

8. Mascots should enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
9. Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement, or note of music after they are officially announced.
10. Timing will end with the last organized word, movement, or note of music by the mascot.
11. Any size props may be used. Props that may cause damage to the matted surface may not be used. Confetti, water, paints or other such props that may delay Competition are prohibited. Violations will result in a 2.0 deduction or disqualification.
12. Mascots may not utilize any type of height increasing apparatus (mini tramps, spring boards, etc.).
13. Participants must always be dressed in the school's official mascot costume including set-up. The costume must be the school's official mascot.
14. Routines must be appropriate for family viewing. Any vulgar or suggestive movements, words or music will result in a 2.0 score deduction or possible disqualification.
15. Mascots should utilize all areas of technical strengths including actions/reactions, motions/emotions, character traits and habits, pantomime, crowd interaction, crowd appeal, prop utilization, and overall impression.
16. Mascots will be judged on the following categories with each valued at 10 points:
 - A. Characterization
 - B. Creativity
 - C. Crowd Leading
 - D. Dance
 - E. Prop Design/Effectiveness
 - F. Overall Impression
17. Must follow the 2020-2021 School Cheer Rule Book.

**Mascot sample score sheets are available online.*