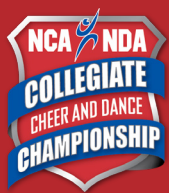
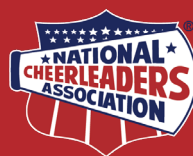


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NCA & NDA COLLEGE RULES & REGULATIONS



APRIL 8-11th, 2026
DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA



BY VARSITY SPIRIT

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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

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CODE OF CONDUCT

Varsity Spirit encourages and supports sportsmanship, integrity and fairness among participants and coaches/owners/directors in all facets of team 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, Varsity Spirit asks that all participants, coaches, gym owners, directors and spectators adhere to and know the Code of Conduct and Prohibited Items for all Regional, Virtual, and Championships events.

To review the entire policy please click here: [Varsity Spirit - Safety](#)

EVENT ELIGIBILITY

Varsity Spirit will require that all coaches, directors, choreographers, and personnel wishing to access the warm up area, backstage, coaches' box, or athlete areas at our competitions have required credentialing, background check, and safeguarding as required by each event.

To review the entire eligibility policy please click here: [Varsity Spirit - Event Eligibility](#)

EVENT GUIDELINES

The coach/director of each team is responsible for understanding and following the Event Guidelines. Event Guidelines include:

- General Guidelines
- Safety Guidelines
- Music Guidelines
- Interruption of Performance
- Competition Area
- Warm Up Room Policy
- Spotter Policy

To review additional information, click here: [Varsity Spirit - Event Guidelines](#)

EVENT POLICIES

All attendees are expected to follow event policies to ensure a respectable and secure environment.

To review the event policies, click here: [Varsity Spirit - Event Policies](#)

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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HOW TO QUALIFY FOR THE NCA & NDA COLLEGIATE CHEER AND DANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

CAMP QUALIFICATION

Squads may qualify for the NCA & NDA Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship at NCA & NDA Collegiate Resident Camps, Day Camps or Elite Home Camps. NCA & NDA will award Bids to Nationals based on the team's successful completion of specific requirements in the areas of participation, conduct, and camp achievements.

Teams must have a minimum of eight (8) participating team members attending the same NCA & NDA Collegiate Summer Camp to be considered for a Bid.

VIDEO QUALIFICATION

All Qualification Videos (including Cheer and Dance teams, Partner Stunt, All Girl Group Stunt and Mascot) must be RECEIVED no later than January 26, 2026. Results of team video entries will be available 2-3 weeks after they are received. Coaches will be notified via email.

Videos will be uploaded to:

https://varsity.tfaforms.net/f/nca_nda_college_nationals_qualification_form

NOTE: Teams may still register for the event prior to receiving their video qualification status.

Results of the Partner Stunt, Group Stunt and Mascot video entries will be posted at nca.varsity.com/college by February 2, 2026, 5:00pm CST.

NOTE: No qualification is needed for the Game Day and Spirit Rally Divisions. GENERAL VIDEO GUIDELINES

- All skills MUST follow USA Cheer College Cheerleading Safety Rules
- No Split Screens, freeze frames, or speed altering is allowed
- All participants must be current eligible members of the school and team they are representing.
- All footage must be of current academic year.
- Teams must also follow specific Division requirements as applicable (e.g. Small Coed, Intermediate, All Girl, etc.).
- There is NO video entry fee for team videos.

NCA CHEER VIDEO ENTRY FORMAT

The video entry format for cheer teams submitting videos to qualify for the NCA & NDA Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship will be as follows: each cheer team video must include four (4) separate segments:

- Stunts
- Tumbling
- Basket/Sponge Tosses
- Pyramids

The skills segment of the video can be a maximum of two (2) minutes.

STUNTS

Must show at least three (3) stunts in their entirety utilizing as many members as possible with the Partners starting with at least one foot on the ground and conclude with the dismounts landing in a cradle position or back to the ground.

TUMBLING

Must show at least two (2) skills of standing tumbling to include as many members as possible (e.g. handsprings, tucks, fulls, toe-backs, etc.). Must also show at least two (2) synchronized running passes with as many members as possible (e.g. handspring series, tucks, fulls, whips, elite passes, etc.) where all participating members start and finish together.

BASKET / SPONGE TOSSES

Must show at least three (3) complete separate tosses to include as many groups as possible. Each of these three tosses must be shown from the

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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mount (at least one foot on the ground) through the cradle.

PYRAMIDS

Must show at least three (3) complete pyramids to include as many people as possible. Each of these three pyramids must be shown from the mount (at least one foot on the ground) through the dismount to a cradle position or back to the ground.

NDA DANCE VIDEO ENTRY FORMAT

TEAM PERFORMANCE VIDEO REQUIREMENTS

Teams competing in the Team Performance Division must submit one video that includes a 30 second Hip Hop routine, a 30 second Jazz routine, a 30 second Pom routine as well as 30 seconds of technical skills (this may be numerous across the floor patterns or a choreographed piece). Only the technical skills segment may contain numerous edits. Split screens are not allowed. The speed of the performance may not be altered on the video. All team members do not need to be in each segment; however, at least seven (7) members must appear in the pom, jazz, and hip-hop segments of the video. All members on the video must be official, eligible team members at time of filming. Videos submitted must be of current year; footage from previous years is prohibited. Teams that qualify for Team Performance will automatically be qualified for the Jazz, Pom, and/ or Hip-Hop Division. Videos submitted for qualification will not be viewed for legalities. A separate video must be sent for this purpose no later than (2) weeks prior to competition.

JAZZ, POM AND HIP HOP VIDEO REQUIREMENTS

Teams competing in the Jazz, Pom and/or Hip-Hop Division must submit, on video, a performance routine of any style, one minute and forty-five seconds (1:45) minimum in length (no editing or split screens). The style exhibited on the video is not required to match the division(s) in which the team registers. Teams that qualify with a Jazz, Pom or Hip- Hop video are qualified to compete in those divisions ONLY. Teams that qualify with a Jazz, Pom or Hip-Hop video do NOT automatically qualify for the Team Performance Division. The speed of the routine may not be altered through video editing. The team must be represented by AT LEAST seven (7) members. All members on the video must be official, eligible team members at time of taping. Videos submitted must be of current year; footage from previous years is prohibited. Videos submitted for qualification will not be viewed for legalities. A separate video must be sent for this purpose no later than two (2) weeks prior to competition.

GROUP STUNT/ PARTNER STUNT/ MASCOT VIDEO ENTRY FORMAT

GROUP STUNT, PARTNER STUNT, MASCOT VIDEO REQUIREMENTS

Qualification videos must be sent with a payment of \$25 per video (You will be invoiced for this amount. If your school is competing at the Championship, this amount will be added to the teams invoice.). All participants representing schools on videos must meet NCA & NDA's current eligibility requirements, as well as the eligibility requirements of their respective school. Participants must be current members of the same team (not program). Segments may NOT be edited. The speed of the performance may not be altered on the video. The use of a tripod is highly encouraged. Routine must follow USA Cheer College Cheerleading Safety Rules.

Video Entry Deadline: January 26, 2026

Videos will be uploaded to: https://varsity.tfaforms.net/f/nca_nda_college_nationals_qualification_form

PARTNER STUNT

Videos must include a 45 second maximum unedited Routine. Routine must be choreographed to music. One spotter is required. Must adhere to all uniform requirements.

ALL GIRL GROUP STUNT

Video must include a 45 second maximum unedited Routine. Routine should be choreographed to music. Groups may have up to four (4) members - all female. Must adhere to all uniform requirements.

MASCOT

Videos must include a 90 second maximum unedited skit. Routine must be performed to music. No live props are allowed. Should follow the same format and rules as stated for the actual Competition.

THE RESULTS OF THE STUNT AND MASCOT VIDEO ENTRIES WILL BE AVAILABLE BY February 2, 2026 5:00 p.m. CST and will be posted

Updated 9/17/2025

COLLEGE RULE BOOK -

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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on nca.varsity.com. Videos submitted for qualification will not be viewed for Competition safety violations. A separate video must be sent for this purpose. Coaches of team videos will be notified individually of their qualifying status, and team video results will NOT be posted on the website.

NCA & NDA CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT PROCEDURES

- Teams with scheduling conflicts must submit a schedule change request. If we are able to accommodate changes, teams will be moved earlier in the schedule for one of the performances.
- In the event of weather-related schedule changes or delays, NCA reserves the right to make the necessary scheduling adjustments in the best interest of the athlete, spectator and staffing safety. These changes may involve changes to venue and/or changes in the day of competition.

SCORES AND RANKINGS

1. Individual category score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores.
2. Any deductions or violations are taken from the raw score. For more information regarding scoring, the NCA score sheets and judging criteria, please visit our Division/Rules and Scoring page here [NCA Rules, Scoring & Divisions - National Cheerleaders Association](#)
3. For all scoring questions, please email ncascoring@varsity.com
4. Ties will not be broken at an NCA National Championship Event.
5. By participating in a Varsity event, teams give their consent for performances and scores to be made publicly available.
6. Varsity TV publishes and makes available all competition routine videos from live-streamed events to recognize the hard work and talent of the athletes competing, and ultimately, to serve and grow the cheerleading and dance community. Due to the sheer number of teams and routines published, Varsity TV is unable to accommodate requests for removal.

INTERPRETATIONS AND / OR RULINGS

Any interpretation of these Event Guidelines or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will render a judgment in an effort to ensure that the competition proceeds in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition. The Rules Committee will consist of the Competition Director, Head Judge, and a designated competition official.

VIOLATIONS

Any team in violation of these Rules and Regulations or any of the above-mentioned guidelines will be assessed a **one (1) point** general deduction. This deduction does not apply to deduction or violations within the point deduction system, or any violation already assigned a lower/higher point value.

NCA/NDA CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS

NCA/NDA INTERMEDIATE & ADVANCED, GAME DAY & SPIRIT RALLY AWARDS

- Trophies will be awarded to the top 5 placements in all NCA divisions.
- Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals will be awarded to the top 3 placements in all NCA divisions.
- All Champions will receive the coveted megaphone trophy, National Champion banner and National Champion jackets. *(Each team will receive 1 jacket for each competing participant plus up to 8 additional National Champion jackets for coaches and alternates)*

NCA GROUP/PARTNER STUNT/MASCOT AWARDS

- Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded to the top three placing groups. The National Champion group will also receive a trophy.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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NDA PERFORMANCE AWARDS

- All teams advancing to Finals will receive a Finalist Banner.
- Trophies will be awarded to the top 5 placements in all NDA divisions.
- Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals will be awarded to the top 3 placements in all NDA divisions.
- All Champions will receive a trophy, National Champion banner and National Champion jackets. *(Each team will receive 1 jacket for each competing participant plus up to 8 additional National Champion jackets for coaches and alternates)*

GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION

- The winners of the advanced cheer divisions and dance divisions (does not include Spirit Rally) will be invited to compete against one another for the right to be named the Grand Champions for 2026.
- Cheer: There will be a separate Grand Championship awarded for All Girl, Small Coed, and Large Coed.
- Dance: There will be a separate Grand Championship awarded for Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop and Team Performance.
- Each Grand Champion will also receive an automatic Gold Paid Bid to the 2027 Collegiate Championship!

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

A Team Eligibility Form will be sent to all Coaches participating in an NCA & NDA Championship. One form must be filled out per team with each team member's name, student ID number, hours currently enrolled and years of completed eligibility. This form must be signed by the Coach as well as signed by the school's Registrar's Office and school Administrative Supervisor and returned to NCA & NDA at Check-In. Teams must meet the following eligibility requirements to participate in the NCA & NDA Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship:

1. Each participating team member must be a current member of the team they are representing, and a full-time student or enrolled in a minimum of 9 credit hours at the institution they are representing. Graduating seniors and graduate students **must be enrolled in at least one (1) class at the time of the Championship**. Verification of eligibility will be required by the school's Registrar's Office and the program's administrative supervisor in addition to the coach. It will be the responsibility of these individuals to verify that all student-provided information and documentation is correct, valid, and meets all the school's eligibility requirements.
2. A student-athlete may only represent ONE (1) school in ONE (1) National Championship competition for each academic year. For example, a student-athlete may not compete for one school in January, transfer and compete for another school in April, nor compete with the same school in separate championships in the same academic year. The only exception is for cheer and dance teams that participate in the NAIA Championship.
3. A student-athlete may not compete in more than five (5) National Championships total (cheer, dance, Junior College, and/or 4-year college/university). **Athletes that compete in both the NCA/NDA Championship and the NAIA Championship in the same year are only charged with one (1) year of eligibility for that year.**
4. At the Junior College level, any student-athlete will only be eligible to compete in a maximum of three (3) National Championships during the course of his/her college career.
5. Eligibility verification for Individual participants such as Partner Stunt and Group Stunt will only apply if the athlete does not compete with a team during that same academic year (e.g. if an athlete only competes in NCA or UCA Partner Stunt any given year, that will count as one (1) year of eligibility used).
6. Once the team eligibility is complete, athletes are no longer eligible for Partner Stunt or Group Stunt unless it is in the same academic year (e.g. an athlete competes on a team at UCA in January to complete five (5) years of eligibility but is still eligible to compete in NCA Partner Stunt that same April, that concludes their total eligibility).
7. An alternate or injured student-athlete that does not take the competition floor will not be considered as a competing member and will not count towards the maximum of five (5) National Championships.
8. Any student-athlete that competed at either the UCA/UDA or NCA/NDA Championships in 2021 either in- person or virtually will NOT be charged a year of eligibility that year due to the pandemic.
9. Each team must always comply with the USA Cheer College Safety Rules.
10. Each cheer team must have a coach that is currently USA Cheer certified to compete. Proof of certification must be included with the Eligibility Form.
11. **All coaches, assistant coaches, trainers, choreographers, administrators, etc. wishing to access the practice or backstage areas with their teams must also complete either the USA Cheer Coach or USA Cheer Professional credentialing program which**

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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includes a USA Cheer background check. These can be found and completed online at USACheer.org.

This will apply for any student-athlete competing at any one of the Varsity Spirit Collegiate Championships (UCA, UDA, NCA & NDA) that award National Champion titles **as well as any other designated College National Championship**. Teams violating these rules could forfeit their titles and rankings as well as be prohibited from entering any other Varsity Brands Championship the following year. For any clarification on these rules, please contact the event producer of the Championship you wish to attend.

NCA DIVISIONS

All teams will be required to compete in Divisions according to NCAA or NAIA Football classifications, or as defined below. Schools that do not have football programs will compete in Divisions according to the school's NCAA or NAIA Basketball program classifications. NCA reserves the right to add, delete or combine Divisions.

Teams from the same school can enter the same Division; however, only the top scoring team may advance to Finals should scores warrant.

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY CATEGORY FOR ATHLETICS:

- DIVISION IA (FBS) Football Schools
- DIVISION I (FCS) Football Schools, or do not have football and compete in Division I basketball.
- DIVISION II
- DIVISION III
- JUNIOR COLLEGE
- NAIA

Note: Teams at schools transitioning to a new athletic division (Example: moving from Division I to Division IA) will compete in that new division at our championship as soon as the school's football/basketball teams begin competing at the new division/conference level. There is no transition period.

INTERNATIONAL/SCHOOLS OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES (based on school's total enrollment):

- 20,000 or above
- 10,000-19,999
- 5,000-9,999
- Less than 5,000

Note: NCA will assign divisions to international teams based on school enrollment and team specifics.

NUMBER OF MALE PARTICIPANTS VS. FEMALE PARTICIPANTS

- **LARGE COED: 5 - 12 MALE PARTICIPANTS**
- 10 – 11 total participants = 6 maximum males
- 12 – 13 total participants = 7 maximum males
- 14 – 15 total participants = 8 maximum males
- 16 – 17 total participants = 10 maximum males
- 18 – 19 total participants = 11 maximum males
- 20 total participants = 12 maximum males

SMALL COED: 1 - 4 MALE PARTICIPANTS

ALL GIRL: NO MALE PARTICIPANTS

NCA TEAM ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS (ADVANCED AND INTERMEDIATE)

1. Routine maximum time limit is 2 minutes and 15 seconds (135 seconds).
2. Teams are limited to a maximum of twenty (20) participants plus **UP TO 2 Mascots ONLY** if 2 DIFFERENT Mascots represent the school. All teams must have a minimum of ten (10) participants (not including the mascot).

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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3. Teams violating this rule will receive a five (5) point deduction per person over or under the maximum or minimum requirements. The mascot may NOT participate in any technical skill (e.g. stunts, pyramids, tosses, or tumbling) and may not serve as a spotter during the performance.
4. Music is allowed for all or part of each routine.
5. Organized, formal entrances that involve organized cheers or run-ons with jumps, tumbling, or stunts are not permitted. Cheerleaders, dancers and mascots should enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
6. Routine timing will begin with the first note of music or choreography meant to be scored on the scoresheet.
7. All performers must have at least one foot on the performing surface when the Routine starts. A .5 deduction will be assessed for any **SKILLS** performed prior to the start of the routine.
8. Teams will be given 30 seconds following the Team Introduction to start their routine. If a team exceeds this time limit, a deduction of .25 will be assessed for 1-5 seconds or a .5-point deduction for 6 seconds or more will be assessed.
9. Routine timing will end with the last organized word, movement, or note of music by the team or individual. Teams or individuals must exit the performance area immediately following the routine as teams will have 30 seconds following the last organized word or movement to exit the performance surface.

NCA COLLEGIATE EXPECTATIONS

COLLEGIATE IMAGE

This category will be utilized to evaluate the overall representation by the team of its institution of higher education, the core values and standards that commonly exist and are mandated by such institution's administration, faculty, staff, alumni and student body. This evaluation will be based on, but not limited to the following:

SPORTSMANSHIP

The team and each participating member/coach should constantly display good sportsmanship throughout the entire performance regarding respect for themselves, other teams and the viewing audience. Teams should refrain from any taunting, bragging or suggestive expressions or gestures as well as discrimination of any nature.

PERFORMANCE INTEGRITY & SCHOOL REPRESENTATION

All aspects of the performance (music, choreography, skills, language, props, etc.) should represent the highest standards as expected by athletes and elite student body representatives at the collegiate level. All aspects of the performance should also be appropriate for a family viewing audience, as well as highlight the skills being performed in a safe and collegiate style manner

UNIFORM

In general, appropriate attire is required during officially designated practice times, performances and awards ceremonies. NCA reserves the right to make rulings and enforce compliance regarding any participant's attire. It is the combination of garments worn and the proper fit on each athlete that can deem an outfit or uniform appropriate or inappropriate, and this should be taken into consideration more so than the individual guidelines for each garment type outlined below. The following guidelines should assist in defining what is appropriate but should not be deemed a comprehensive and exclusive list. What is appropriate includes but is not limited to the list below.

FEMALE UNIFORM

- Standard shell, crop, or midriff top.
- No "bra top" style or size tops – material must fall at least one inch below the bra line.
- No extremely low-cut necklines.
- No excessively bare or backless style tops.
- Must be secured by straps or material over at least one shoulder or around the neck, no tube tops.
- Must completely cover briefs when feet are shoulder width apart AND, in the back, fall at least 1.5 inches below boy-short briefs or 2 inches below standard briefs. No excessively short or tight skirts. Skirts must fully cover the hips.
- No ultra-low-rise waistbands (no lower than 2 inches below navel) when worn in conjunction with a cropped or midriff baring top.

NOTE: Hair bows may negatively affect the overall collegiate image of the athletes and their performances. Hair bows may only be worn behind the top center of the head and may not have material close to the face at any time. Hair bows should be small to medium in size to not be a distraction

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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from the performance. Violations of this rule during preliminary competition will result in a warning, and violations during final competition can result in a 1.0 "Collegiate Image" deduction from each Panel Judge. Photos may also be submitted to NCAscoring@varsity.com in advance for pre-event concerns.

MALE UNIFORM

- Must be full torso length, covering shoulders to waist and/or the top of the uniform bottom in standing position.
- Must be short or long sleeves, covering at least midway between shoulder and elbow.
- If full length pants, must cover waist to feet.
- If shorts, must fall no higher than mid-thigh.

ALL

- **No risqué, sexually provocative or lingerie-looking or inspired uniform or garments**
- Garments/items should be secure to eliminate any possibility of "wardrobe malfunction."
- Appropriate undergarments must be worn.
- Soft-soled athletic shoes must be worn while competing.

MUSIC

Deductions will be given for music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes but is not limited to swearwords 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 them with sound effects or other words constitutes inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.

CHOREOGRAPHY

All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, music selection and outfitting (cheerleading and dance uniforms or costumes), should be suitable for family viewing and listening. 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. Outfitting for cheerleading performances should follow traditional dress standards. Routines, music and uniforms/ costumes for all team types should be appropriate for the age of the participants performing the routine.

NOTE: If you are concerned about the appropriateness of your music or choreography you should submit the section(s) in question to NCA for feedback. Please note that with multiple performances of a routine, NCA is not able to approve a specific movement due to the chance that the movement may be approved and then modified during competition. Any and all feedback from NCA is just that, feedback, and should be used with your discretion to ensure your team's performance is appropriate for a family viewing audience.

NCA ENTRANCES AND EXITS

1. Organized, formal entrances or exits that involve organized walk out lines, cheers or run-ons with jumps, tumbling or stunts are not permitted. Cheerleaders must enter the performance area in a timely fashion **NOT TO EXCEED** 30 seconds from team announcement until start of performance or 30 seconds exiting the floor.
2. All team breaks, rituals, and traditions need to take place prior to entering the mat.
3. Teams should not have choreographed movements to enter the stage. Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures.
4. Teams have 30 seconds from their introduction to start the routine. If a team exceeds this time limit, a penalty will be assessed.
5. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a deduction. Excessive celebration includes but is not limited to, team huddles, alternates/coaches entering the competition floor, drops to the floor, break dancing, head/hair swinging, split drops, inappropriate gestures, and/or similar moves See: [NCA DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS](#)

NCA ADVANCED/INTERMEDIATE DIVISION TIME LIMITATIONS

1. Routine timing will begin with the first choreographed, movement, voice or note of music by the team after they are officially announced and have taken the floor. This includes any formal, organized entrances. Cheerleaders must have at least one foot on the performing surface when the routine starts.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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2. Routine timing will end with the last choreographed movement, voice or note of music by the team, whichever comes last.
3. If a team exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. See our deductions and violations sheet for a breakdown of overtime violations for each division offered at NCA Events. [NCA DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS](#)
4. The maximum performance time **DOES NOT EXCEED 2 minutes and 15 seconds (135 seconds)**.

NCA JUDGING PANELS

PANEL JUDGES

Panel Judges are responsible for scoring each team's performance based on the NCA score sheet. Each Panel Judge fills out his/her own score sheet for each performance. Panel Judges judge technical ability and the overall routine, but they do not determine or judge deductions or safety violations. Decisions made by Panel Judges are final.

SAFETY JUDGE

The Safety Judge is responsible for administering all rule violations, time violations, and boundary violations. Decisions made by the Safety Judge are final.

POINT DEDUCTION JUDGE

The Point Deduction Judge is responsible for assessing deductions in each routine for mistakes in technical skills. Decisions made by the Point Deduction Judge are final.

Scores for each Category will range from 0-10, including tenths of points (e.g. 5.5, 9.5, etc.). All point deductions and/or penalties will be deducted from the average score to get the FINAL SCORE. Deductions/penalties are assessed at the sole discretion of the judges based on the criteria set forth in this book. All judges' decisions are final. Ties will not be broken; tying teams will share the title and/or ranking.

NCA INTERMEDIATE & ADVANCED SCORING DOCUMENTS

NCA Scoring documents are available online for easy access. These documents can be found on the Division, Rules and Scoring page of our website:

- [OVERALL GUIDELINE](#)
- [SCORING GUIDELINES](#)
- [EXECUTION GUIDELINE](#)
- [SCORE SHEETS](#)
- [STUNT LEVEL APPROPRIATE GUIDES](#)
- [NCA DIVISION RESTRICTIONS](#)

NCA COMPETITION PERFORMANCE 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. NCA Competitions will have a Competition Area measuring 42' deep by 54' wide carpet-bonded foam floor (9strips).
2. All permitted skills (stunts, pyramids, tumbling etc.) must be performed on the competition mat.
3. Poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners or other approved props may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member.
4. Objects cannot be thrown outside the competition floor.
5. Any team member who leaves the performance surface during the performance will receive a boundary violation. See deductions and violations for other specific boundary violation explanations [NCA DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS](#)
6. If a boundary violation has been assessed, the judges' decisions are final and will not be reviewed.
7. Coaching staff, parents, fans and/or other members of the performing team entering the competition boundary before, during or after a performance is not allowed. The only people allowed on the performance floor are the competitors and competition personnel.

NCA PROP GUIDELINES

Use of props in the Cheer divisions are limited to flags, megaphones, poms, signs, and other **traditional** sideline props (this includes rally towels,

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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body flags and foam fingers). For allowable props in our Game Day division, see the Game Day section for more information.

- Props may not be thrown into the crowd
- Props cannot bear the weight of the performer
- No air horns or artificial noise makers are allowed
- All equipment tips on flagpoles must be padded or taped
- All props must be able to fit through a standard size (36") single door
- Team/individual names will be called twice: Teams must set props once the team has been announced to take the floor and perform. See entries and exits for time limitations to set props prior to and following the performance.
- Preliminary and final competitions may be held indoors or outdoors. In the event of either competition being held outdoors, wind and/or sun could be a factor. Practice and prepare accordingly.

If you have specific questions about the legality of your prop, please contact ncascoring@varsity.com. We may request a video submission using our pre-event legality review process.

NCA INTERMEDIATE DIVISION RESTRICTIONS

In addition to the Collegiate Rules outlined by USAcheer.org [2025-2026 USA CHEER COLLEGE RULES](#), NCA offers additional restrictions for our Intermediate Divisions. Be sure to check out these level restrictions found on our Division, Rules and Scoring page of our website [NCA COLLEGE DIVISION RESTRICTIONS](#)

NCA LEGALITY REVIEW AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

NCA LEGALITY VERIFICATION

As a coach, it is important to be current on the NCA, NDA & 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 reviews must be submitted through [NCA Legality Inquiry Form](#)
2. The skill in question must be recorded by the team at practice. We are unable to accept videos from performances, competitions, or of other teams including Tik Tok, Instagram and Facebook links.
3. All submission must include the coach, team, and division.
4. The recording will be reviewed as if every person in the video is included in the skill. This would include additional spotters.
5. Videos are limited to **30 seconds** and must be able to be viewed upright without rotating.
6. All videos must be sent via a **NON-EXPIRING LINK**, make sure the video is 'Unlisted' and not set to Private.
7. All videos will receive either a "legal" or "illegal" response. If the video receives an "illegal" response, the entire video will not be reviewed but stopped at the point that the video was illegal. *If the video is inconclusive, you will receive a response as to why the video was unable to make a judgement. It is up to you as a coach to resubmit the video to be re-reviewed.
8. Please note: Only submitting the skill will make the skill eligible for a warning. NCA can only guarantee this process will be accepted at NCA- branded events. This would not include other Varsity- branded or State Association events.
9. Videos received via text message, facetime, social media, or any other platform outside of this legality review process will not be reviewed. Videos that do not follow the above rules will not receive a response.
10. Videos must be received **NO LATER THAN MARCH 25, 2026**, to guarantee a response
11. Video submissions will only be accepted by the official coach of the team

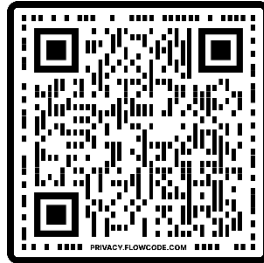
COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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USA CHEER COLLEGE SAFETY RULES

NCA complies with the USA Cheer College Safety Rules. For rules, please visit usacheer.org/safety.

To Submit a Legality review, scan the QR Code:



Please do not wait until the final days to submit these as this greatly slows the process to respond and get feedback returned if any changes may be necessary. Videos submitted for review for The NCA Collegiate National Championship should be submitted prior to March 25, 2026, to allow for turnaround time.

DO NOT DEPEND ON YOUR CHOREOGRAPHER TO DETERMINE IF SOMETHING IS LEGAL. IF YOU FEEL THAT SOMETHING MAY BE ILLEGAL, SEND A VIDEO USING OUR PROCESS OUTLINED ABOVE.

For all Scoring Questions Email: NCAScoring@varsity.com

NCA & NDA GAME DAY DIVISION

OBJECTIVE

To provide a unique and exciting opportunity for school Spirit Programs to work together to showcase their ability to promote school spirit and excitement in support of their school and its athletic teams. This division not only allows the use of traditional sideline cheer and dance teams, but also the incorporation of members of the school Marching Band, Pep Band, Drum Line, Mascot(s), Spirit Group/ Club, etc. The primary responsibility of Spirit Programs is to develop and implement effective methods of generating excitement and often requires close coordination between various campus groups. NCA & NDA now offers a way to showcase this at the highest level on the largest stage in spirit competition at the NCA & NDA Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship.

BENEFITS OF GAME DAY

1. Turn the skills, creativity and school traditions that you utilize on the sideline into a winning routine.
2. Earn the title of National Champion along with the coveted Megaphone trophy and National Champion Banner in a division that embodies college spirit in its purest form.
3. Utilize the preparation for games and game performances to prepare your team to compete.
4. Better develop and display the core elements of your role at games.
5. Increase the value that the entire Spirit Program brings to your school and its athletic events.
6. Develop a successful and dynamic working relationship between ALL spirit-related groups on campus.
7. Earn advancement to FINALS in the historic Daytona Beach Band Shell. (time and weather permitting)
8. Teams might consider game day as a progression as they move from Intermediate divisions to the Advanced divisions for their cheer athletes.

GAME DAY DIVISION SKILL SCORING & RESTRICTIONS

Skill incorporations are allowed and encouraged throughout the Game Day Division as long as they are utilized to effectively promote and encourage crowd involvement and entertainment. The NCA & NDA Point and Safety Deduction System will be utilized.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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Teams competing in the GAME DAY division will adhere to hybrid safety guidelines. Only trained cheer and dance members may perform skill incorporations. Dancers must abide by the NDA College Safety Rules, and Cheerleaders must abide by the USA Cheer College Safety Rules with the following additional permissions and limitations.

STUNTS/PYRAMIDS

- Pyramids sustained at 2 ½ persons high are PERMITTED
- Twisting stunts (i.e. full ups) may not exceed 1 and ¼ twisting rotation

TOSSES

- Flipping tosses are permitted with zero twisting rotations
- Non flipping/twisting tosses may not exceed 2 and ¼ twisting rotations

TUMBLING

- Twisting flips are not permitted- EXCEPTION Aerials are allowed

KEY SCORING REMINDERS

- The perceived practicality of skills performed being conducive in a “real life” Game Day environment will factor into the scoring.
- Included skills must be practical for Game Day and should be executed with strong technique while providing a visual effect that influences the crowd’s participation or entertainment value.
- Poor technique that pulls attention from the crowd will negatively impact the score.
- The NCA & NDA Point and Safety Deduction System will be utilized.
- Use of cheer and dance skill incorporations amount to 30% of the total score. The Game Day effects created by the use of Spirit Programs to lead and entertain the crowd is 70%.

GENERAL RULES

1. Each team may be comprised of a maximum of 30 participating members.
2. Participants may include cheer, dance, mascots, band, drumline, flag corps, etc.
3. All Participating members must meet NCA & NDA eligibility verification requirements and exclusivity policy and must also meet all respective school’s eligibility requirements.
4. Cheer participants may **NOT** also be members of a cheer team competing in another cheer division at the NCA & NDA Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship. (Crossovers are NOT allowed)
 - a. Dance participants from all dance divisions may utilize Game Day as their second routine.
5. All participating members, coaches and directors must follow the championship rules for Code of Conduct, Sportsmanship, and School Representation. (See Rule Book)
6. Performance Area is restricted to the 42’ x 54’ performance mat and must follow cheer boundary rules for the competition for all participants. (See Rule Book)
7. Recorded band music is required and must follow the Varsity Spirit Music Guidelines. Visit Varsity.com/music for more information. No voice-overs or words may be recorded to make the team’s vocal projection sound louder.
8. The use of signs, flags, banners or other spirit related props are highly recommended. Hand held or harnessed instruments are allowed BY the Band
9. Props may be touching out of bounds without penalty; however participants may not step out of bounds with both feet to retrieve the prop.
 - a. No items may be thrown, tossed, or released from the performance area into the crowd.
 - b. Instruments may not be utilized in skills.
 - c. Use of fire, noxious gases, live animals, weapons, and other potentially hazardous elements are strictly prohibited (including, but not limited to, guns, knives, swords, nun-chucks, etc.).

NCA & NDA GAME DAY TIME LIMITATIONS

1. Routine Timing will begin with the first choreographed, movement, voice or note of music by the team after they are officially announced and have taken the floor. This includes any formal, organized entrances. Cheerleaders must have at least one foot on the performing surface when the routine starts.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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2. Routine Timing will end with the last choreographed movement, voice or note of music by the team, whichever comes last.
3. **Teams may not preset props. Once the team name has been announced, the team will have 30 seconds to set all props and begin their routine.**
4. **At the conclusion of the routine, teams will have an additional 30 seconds to remove all props and leave the performance surface.**
5. If a team exceeds the routine time limit or the entries and exits time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. See our deductions and violations sheet for a breakdown of overtime violations for each division offered at NCA Events. [NCA DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS](#)
6. The maximum performance time **must not exceed 3 minutes. (180 seconds)**

For Game Day and Spirit Rally routines, routine timing will NOT include the team spiriting, rallying, or individuals performing jumps, kicks, tumbling or single-based lifts but will begin with the first group movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first. The entrance time limit of 30 seconds does still apply to Game Day and Spirit Rally routines AND does include the setting of props. Game Day and Spirit Rally routines may set props and start at the back of the mat to run on as performed in the past, this must take place within the 30 second entrance after the team is announced and cannot take place before the team has been announced.

PERFORMANCE STRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

ALL teams competing in the Game Day Divisions **MUST** include the following participation requirements. Failure to do so will result in a DIVISION VIOLATION of 5 POINTS AS OUTLINED HERE [NCA COLLEGE DIVISION RESTRICTIONS](#)

- Minimum Band/Pep Band/Drumline = 20%
- Minimum Cheer and/or Dance = 20%
- Minimum Mascot/Color Guard/Majorette/Student Spirit Group = 10%
- **NOTE: Numbers of participants are ROUNDED DOWN. See the chart below for minimum requirements in each category based on total number of participants.**

GAME DAY DIVISION																											
GENERAL <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum of 30 participating members• Maximum time allotted is 3:00		PERFORMANCE STRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS <i>Must include school athletes from the 3 following school programs:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum Band / Pep Band / Drumline = 20%• Minimum Cheer and/or Dance = 20%• Minimum Mascot / Color Guard / Majorette / Student Spirit = 10%																									
STUNTS / PYRAMIDS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pyramids sustained at 2 ½ persons high are PERMITTED.• Twisting stunts (i.e. full ups) may not exceed 1 ¼ twisting rotation		Please use this chart to determine the minimum # of athletes required:																									
TOSSES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flipping tosses are permitted with zero twisting rotations.• Non flipping/twisting tosses may not exceed 2 ¼ twisting rotations		<table><tr><th>#</th><th>Cheer/Dance</th><th>Band/Drum</th><th>Other</th></tr><tr><td>30</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>25-29</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>20-24</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>15-19</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>10-14</td><td>3</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr></table>		#	Cheer/Dance	Band/Drum	Other	30	6	6	1	25-29	5	5	1	20-24	4	4	1	15-19	3	3	1	10-14	3	3	1
#	Cheer/Dance	Band/Drum	Other																								
30	6	6	1																								
25-29	5	5	1																								
20-24	4	4	1																								
15-19	3	3	1																								
10-14	3	3	1																								
TUMBLING <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Twisting flips are not permitted (EXCEPTION: Aerials are allowed)																											

SCORING

Game Day is NOT a Cheer and/or Dance competition, but rather the coordination of multiple school spirit groups working in unison to promote and engage crowd participation in support of the school's athletic teams. While the incorporation of cheer and/or dance skills do consider into the scoring, so does the opinion of the judges as to how applicable such skills are to a live Game Day scenario and environment. Much of the scoring is subjective in terms of overall performance development and implementation, as well as the overall crowd appeal and entertainment value. Judging Panels will consist of experts from both a cheer, dance and band background. Each performance must consist of the following performance sections; however you may determine the order of the sections.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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

BAND CHANT(S)

The Band Chant performance should consist of at least one (1) traditional school band chant. Band chants should promote crowd response and participation. All spirit groups should be performing in a coordinated fashion utilizing crowd-response props and visual tools. Skill incorporations should require minimal formation transitions and be conducive to spontaneous start in a real Game Day or Pep Rally situation. Motion technique, energy level, facial expressions, body language and crowd interaction are all key factors in the scoring of this category. There should be an obvious distinction between the school Band Chant(s) and the school Fight Song for scoring purposes. Teams may be required to provide specific timing designations if these music segments run together.

The Band Chant Section should consist of the following:

1. Traditional school band chant(s).
2. Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
3. Recorded band music must be used and onstage musical instruments may also be utilized.
4. Only trained cheer and dance members may perform skill incorporations.

Scoring in this segment is based on the ability of the performers to promote crowd interaction and participation as well as display excitement and genuine school spirit.

CROWD LEADING

The Crowd-Leading section should be without music but may be accompanied by onstage drum or instrument cadence. Formation and level changes are relevant in the section as desired or required for visual affect, and all crowd-leading props should be incorporated (signs, poms, flags, megaphones). Again, it is important for all spirit groups to be performing in a coordinated fashion to provide a structured appearance that is visually appealing. The focus should be to create a simple and easy to understand method for crowd response while utilizing body language, eye contact, energy level and crowd interaction skills in addition to visual props.

The Crowd Leading section should consist of the following:

1. Traditional school cheers and/or chants.
2. Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
3. No recorded music or voice enhancement is allowed. Onstage instruments are allowed to help set and enhance the rhythm and beats.
4. Only trained cheer and dance members may perform skill incorporations.

Scoring in this segment is based on the ability of the performers to promote crowd interaction and participation as well as display excitement and genuine school spirit.

- Actual crowd response at the Championship is NOT scored.

FIGHT SONG

The Fight Song segment should be the school's traditional fight song at its normal pace and length as it would be played in a Game Day or pep rally setting. Cheer and dance performers should begin in traditional sideline formation displaying a traditional Game Day fight song performance that complement each other in choreography. Transitions should be limited for visual affect, incorporations or the ending portion of the fight song for the conclusion. Skills should be easily incorporated at a quick pace (1-2 8-counts) and appear effortless. Synchronized skills would add value when performed with a high level of execution. Motion technique, facial expressions and eye contact, as well as overall execution and performance appeal will factor into the scoring in this section. The school fight song is commonly played numerous times during an athletic event, so the design and performance should be conducive to spontaneous and repetitive execution with ease. There should be an obvious distinction between the school Band Chant(s) and the school Fight Song for scoring purposes. Teams may be required to provide specific timing designations if these music segments run together.

The Fight Song section should consist of the following:

1. Traditional school fight song
2. Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
3. Recorded band music must be used and onstage musical instruments may also be utilized.
4. Only trained cheer and dance members may perform skill incorporations.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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Scoring in this segment is based on the ability of the performers to effectively and accurately perform a traditional school fight song displaying high energy and solid performance techniques.

NCA & NDA GAME DAY SCORING DOCUMENTS

NCA and NDA Game Day Scoring documents are available online for easy access. These documents can be found on the Division, Rules and Scoring page of both the NCA and the NDA websites:

- [NCA/NDA GAME DAY GUIDELINE](#)
- [NCA/NDA GAME DAY SCORE SHEET](#)
- [NCA COLLEGE DIVISION RESTRICTIONS](#)

NCA & NDA SPIRIT RALLY DIVISIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Division offered by NCA and NDA that emphasizes Crowd Leading skills and high-level execution as well as overall entertainment value.
2. Designed to be a more simplified competition format that does NOT require outside music or choreography.
3. Material utilized is your traditional school game day and/or sideline material.
4. Cheer skill incorporations are limited to only those allowed by the USA Cheer College Safety Rules during basketball timeouts on a hard surface. Refer to the USA Cheer College Safety Rules for basketball timeouts in Section H.3. of the college rules that can be found at USACheer.org. Visit here for violations [NCA COLLEGE DIVISION RESTRICTIONS](#)
5. Dance skill incorporation should follow the safety rules listed in the [NDA Rules & Regulations](#).

HOW TO QUALIFY

- Teams may qualify for the Spirit Rally Division by attending NCA or NDA college summer camp and earning a Bronze, Silver or Gold Paid Bid. Any bid earned at summer camp can be used to enter the Spirit Rally Division and receive all the bid benefits.
- No other qualifying is required for the Spirit Rally Division, and teams may enter and register to compete in the Spirit Rally Division that did not attend NCA/NDA college summer camp. No video qualifying is required.

GENERAL RULES

1. Maximum of 30 participants:
 - a. Cheer - Any combination of cheerleaders and mascots
 - b. Dance – Any combination of dancers and mascots
2. All participants must meet the Eligibility Requirements as specified on the previous pages of the NCA and NDA College Rule Book.
3. Cheer teams must include at least one (1) cheer, at least one (1) sideline chant, and at least one (1) school fight song and/or band chant
4. Dance teams must include one (1) fight song and one (1) timeout performance. The timeout performance may NOT exceed one (1) minute.
5. There is no set order of these elements being performed and the order is not scored
6. Skill incorporation, quantity, execution, and effectiveness WILL factor into the scoring for cheer
7. Standard NCA/NDA deductions will be applied to skill execution and performance errors as well as time violations
8. **Recorded band music is required and must follow the Varsity Spirit Music Guidelines. Visit Varsity.com/music for more information. No voice-overs or words may be recorded to make the team's vocal projection sound louder.**
9. Signs, flags, poms and megaphones **ARE ALL REQUIRED** in at least the cheer and/or sideline chant segments for cheer teams. Dance should utilize crowd leading props and other visual effects. Air horns or artificial noise makers are prohibited. *See dance/tumbling skills section for restrictions..
10. Cheer teams will perform on a regulation cheer mat. Dancers will perform on the standard competition Marley floor.
11. All the same eligibility, uniform, sportsmanship, collegiate image, etc. rules in the NCA/NDA College Rule Book apply to the Spirit Rally Championship.
12. Cheer teams performing in the Spirit Rally Division may NOT enter any other cheer division at the Championship and individual athletes may NOT compete in multiple cheer divisions in the same year.
13. Dance teams may select Spirit Rally as their second performance at the Championship.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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NCA & NDA SPIRIT RALLY TIME LIMITATIONS

1. Timing will begin with the first choreographed, movement, voice or note of music by the team after they are officially announced and have taken the floor. This includes any formal, organized entrances. Cheerleaders must have at least one foot on the performing surface when the routine starts.
2. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement, voice or note of music by the team, whichever comes last.
3. If a team exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. See our deductions and violations sheet for a breakdown of overtime violations for each division offered at NCA Events. [NCA DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS](#)
4. The maximum performance time **must not exceed 2:15 minutes. (135 seconds)**

For Game Day and Spirit Rally routines, routine timing will NOT include the team spiriting, rallying, or individuals performing jumps, kicks, tumbling or single-based lifts but will begin with the first group movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first. The entrance time limit of 30 seconds does still apply to Game Day and Spirit Rally routines AND does include the setting of props. Game Day and Spirit Rally routines may set props and start at the back of the mat to run on as performed in the past, this must take place within the 30 second entrance after the team is announced and cannot take place before the team has been announced.

NCA SPIRIT RALLY PERFORMANCE STRUCTURE

CHEER

- Incorporation of school cheerleaders and mascot(s):
- Incorporation of school traditions
- Incorporation of visual and response enhancing props
- Smooth and seamless transitions between performance categories
- The maximum time limit for the Spirit Rally performance is two minutes and fifteen seconds

SCORING

Spirit Rally is **NOT** a traditional Cheer competition, but rather the display of true Game Day material designed to promote and engage crowd participation in support of the school's athletic teams. While the incorporation of cheer skills does consider into the scoring, so does the opinion of the judges as to how applicable such skills are to a live Game Day scenario and environment. Much of the scoring is subjective in terms of overall performance development and implementation, as well as the overall crowd appeal and entertainment value.

BAND CHANT

The Band Chant performance (if included) should consist of traditional school band chant. Band chants should promote crowd response and participation. All participants should be performing in a coordinated fashion utilizing crowd-response props and visual tools. Skill incorporations should require minimal formation transitions and be conducive to spontaneous start in a real Game Day or Pep Rally situation. Motion technique, energy level, facial expressions, body language and crowd interaction are all key factors in the scoring of this category.

CROWD-LEADING

The Crowd-Leading section should be without music and consist of at least one cheer and one sideline chant. Formation and level changes are relevant in this section as desired or required for visual affect, and all crowd-leading props should be incorporated (signs, poms, flags, megaphones). Again, it is important for the team to be performing in a coordinated fashion to provide a structured appearance that is visually appealing. The focus should be to create a simple and easy to understand method for crowd response while utilizing body language, eye contact, energy level and crowd interaction skills in addition to visual props.

FIGHT SONG

The Fight Song segment should be the school's traditional fight song at its normal pace and length as it would be played in a Game Day or pep rally setting. Cheerleaders should begin in traditional sideline formation displaying a traditional Game Day fight song performance. Transitions should be limited for visual affect, skill incorporations or the ending portion of the fight song for the conclusion. Skills should be easily incorporated at a quick pace (1-2 8- counts) and appear effortless. Synchronized skills would add value when performed with a high level of execution. Motion technique, facial expressions and eye contact, as well as overall execution and performance appeal will factor into the scoring in this section. The school fight song is commonly played numerous times during an athletic event, so the design and performance should be conducive to spontaneous and repetitive execution with ease.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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NCA SPIRIT RALLY SCORING DOCUMENTS

NCA Spirit Rally Scoring documents are available online for easy access. These documents can be found on the Division, Rules and Scoring page of the NCA website:

- [NCA SPIRIT RALLY GUIDELINE](#)
- [NCA SPIRIT RALLY SCORE SHEET](#)
- [NCA COLLEGE DIVISION RESTRICTIONS](#)

NDA SPIRIT RALLY PERFORMANCE STRUCTURE

DANCE

Incorporation of school dancers and mascot(s) Incorporation of school traditions Incorporation of crowd leading visual effects

Smooth and seamless transitions between performance categories

The maximum time limit for the Spirit Rally performance is two minutes and fifteen seconds

SCORING

Spirit Rally is **NOT** a traditional dance category, but rather the display of true Game Day material designed to promote and engage crowd participation to generate school spirit. Scoring will be based on the dancer's ability to create crowd appeal and entertainment value true to their school's game day

FIGHT SONG

Routine should consist of visual effects that are relevant **to the game day environment** (typically performed on the sidelines/ court); choreography that represents your school's traditional Fight Song that teams perform at games and within the community **to promote school pride and unity**.

Characteristics of an **effective** Fight Song include precise motion work, crowd interaction **opportunities, staging that effectively spans the performance area, and other traditional engagement**.

TIMEOUT PERFORMANCE

Routine should showcase the team's energy and connection to the crowd with high energy, game day specific choreography designed for entertainment in either jazz, pom, hip hop or kick or any combination of these styles. This routine is pre-planned and choreographed to a specific piece of music; a highlight piece for the dance team at a game. The routine should complement the team's strengths while also providing exceptional visuals and crowd appeal. This portion has a maximum time limit of 1:00 minute.

NDA SPIRIT RALLY SCORING DOCUMENTS

NDA Spirit Rally Scoring documents are available online for easy access. These documents can be found on the Division, Rules and Scoring page of the NDA website:

- [NDA SCORING GUIDELINES](#)
- [NDA SPIRIT RALLY SCORE SHEET](#)

NDA COLLEGE DANCE DIVISIONS AND SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

All teams will be required to compete in Divisions according to NCAA or NAIA Football classifications. Schools that do not have football programs will compete in Divisions according to the school's NCAA or NAIA Basketball program classifications.

1. Every member of every team representing a school must meet NDA's current eligibility requirements.
2. Teams in these divisions must follow the NDA Collegiate Dance Safety Rules.
3. Teams are limited to a maximum of twenty participants and must have a minimum of seven participants. A .5 general rule deduction will be given for below the minimum participant number.
4. A team may not enter more than two (2) divisions, and a team may not compete the same routine in more than one division.
5. At the discretion of NDA, divisions within categories may be combined based upon the number of teams registered. (Example: Pom Division II & Pom Division III may be combined into Pom Open Division).
6. A dancer may not compete in more than two (2) division categories.
7. Teams from the same school can enter the same Division; however, only the top scoring team may advance to Finals should scores

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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NOTE: Teams at schools transitioning to a new athletic division (Example: moving from Division I to Division IA) will compete in that new division at our championship as soon as the school's football/basketball teams begin competing at the new division/conference level. There is no transition period.

Division	Part. #	Category	Time Limit	International School Enrollment
Division IA (FBS) Football Schools	7-20 members	TP, Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, SR*, GMD***	2 minutes */***	20,000 or above
Division I (FCS) Football Schools, or do not have football and compete in Division I basketball	7-20 members	TP, Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, SR*, GMD***	2 minutes */***	10,000 - 19,999
Division II	7-20 members	TP, Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, SR*, GMD***	2 minutes */***	5,000 - 9,999
Division III	7-20 members	TP, Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, SR*, GMD***	2 minutes */***	Less than 5,000
Junior College	2-20 members	TP, Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, SR*, GMD***	2 minutes */***	N/A
NAIA	2-20 members	TP, Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, SR*, GMD***	2 minutes */***	N/A

TP = Team Performance SR = Spirit Rally

*All Spirit Rally Division time limits are 2 minutes 15 seconds (2:15)

GMD = Game Day ***All Game Day Division time limits are 3 minutes (3:00)

Note: At NDA's discretion, divisions will be combined into open divisions if there are not at least 3 teams registered within the split divisions.

SELECTION OF FINALISTS AND PERFORMANCE ORDER

60% of each division will advance to the Final round. For any division with 4 or less teams, all teams will advance to Finals. Late or canceled registrations that occur once the competition begin will not affect the predetermined number of finalists. For the Preliminary Competition, a team's performance order will be determined by how they qualified and when they registered for the event. For the Final Competition, teams will perform in reverse order of their preliminary ranking (e.g. Teams finishing first in the Preliminary Competition will compete last in the Final Competition).

NDA ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

1. Teams must have at least 7 members. Any person on the performance floor is considered a team member.
2. **Teams competing in the Team Performance**, Jazz, Pom and Hip Hop Divisions will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed 2 minutes (2:00) to demonstrate their style and expertise. Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement or note of the music. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement or note of the music, whichever comes last. Teams must exit the performance area immediately following the Routine.
3. **Formal entrances which involve dance or technical skills are not permitted. Dancers should enter the performance area in a timely fashion. Entrances/exits will not be judged as part of the routine. Teams will be given 30 seconds following the Team Introduction to start their routine. If a team exceeds this time limit, a deduction of .25 will be assessed.**
4. All performers (unless injured) must remain within the performance area throughout the entire performance. Dancers can only enter and exit through the designated entry and exit points.
5. Substitutions may be made in the event of any injury or other serious circumstance.
6. The team's name will be called twice: once as the team is on deck and once as the performing team.

NDA COLLEGIATE EXPECTATIONS

CHOREOGRAPHY

All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, costuming and music selection should be suitable for family viewing and listening. Any music in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be submitted to NDA for approval.

Updated 9/17/2025

COLLEGE RULE BOOK -

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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

A deduction of **.25** per violation will be given for vulgar or suggestive choreography or costuming, which includes but is not limited to movements such as hip thrusting and inappropriate touching, 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 swearwords 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 them with sound effects or other words constitutes inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.

Because multiple performances of a Routine when compared to one another will generally lack distinction, NDA is not able to approve with absoluteness the appropriateness of choreography (since movements can be easily modified, NDA 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 NDA for feedback.

MUSIC

Deductions will be given for music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes but is not limited to swearwords 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 them with sound effects or other words constitutes inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.

NDA ENTRANCES AND EXITS

1. Organized, formal entrances or exits that involve dance or technical skills are not permitted. **Dancers must enter the performance area in a timely fashion NOT TO EXCEED 30 seconds from team announcement until start of performance or 30 seconds exiting the floor.**
2. All team breaks, rituals, and traditions need to take place prior to entering the mat.
3. Teams should not have choreographed movements to enter the stage. Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures.

All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a deduction. Excessive celebration includes but is not limited to, team huddles, alternates/coaches entering the competition floor, drops to the floor, break dancing, head/hair swinging, split drops, inappropriate gestures, and/or similar moves.

NDA SCORING DOCUMENTS

NDA Scoring documents are available online for easy access. These documents can be found on the Division, Rules and Scoring page of our website:

- [SCORING GUIDELINES](#)
- [SCORE SHEETS](#)

NDA JUDGING PANELS

HEAD JUDGE

The Head Judge is responsible for overseeing the Panel Judges. Each Head Judge fills out his/her own score sheet for each performance. Select divisions may have a non-scoring Head Judge. Decisions made by Head Judges are final.

PANEL JUDGES

Panel Judges are responsible for scoring each team's performance based on the NDA score sheet. Each Panel Judge fills out his/her own score sheet for each performance. Panel Judges do not determine or judge deductions or safety violations. Decisions made by Panel Judges are reviewed by the Head Judge and deemed final.

LEGALITY OFFICIAL

The Legality Official is responsible for administering all safety/general competition rule violations. Decisions made by the Legality Official are final.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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NDA COMPETITION PERFORMANCE AREA

All dance teams competing in the NCA & NDA Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship will perform on Marley. Each panel will be 38' deep x 4'11" wide. Dance floor dimensions are as follows:

- Practice Room: 10 strips
- Ocean Center (All Prelims & Finals): 10 strips

NDA DANCE COSTUME REQUIREMENTS

In general, appropriate attire is required during officially designated practice times, performances and awards ceremonies. NDA reserves the right to make rulings and enforce compliance regarding any participant's attire during these times. It is the combination of garments worn that can deem an outfit appropriate or inappropriate. This should be taken into consideration more so than the individual guidelines outlines below. Any costume in which the appropriateness is questionable should be submitted to NDA for approval.

Shoes, on both feet, are recommended but not required while on the performance surface. Please note that should dancers choose to wear shoes, anything with wheels is not allowed (example: roller skate, roller blades, Heelys, etc.). Wearing socks and or footed tights only is not allowed.

Warning: Due to the outdoor location of Hip Hop Finals, the dance floor may become extremely hot. We recommend footwear conducive to performing on a hot surface.

Jewelry as a part of a costume is allowed.

The following guidelines should assist in defining what is appropriate but should not be deemed a comprehensive and exclusive list. What is appropriate includes but is not limited to the list below.

No risqué, sexually provocative or lingerie-looking or inspired costumes or garments

Garments/items should be secure to eliminate any possibility of "wardrobe malfunction"

- Appropriate undergarments must be worn
- Exercise good judgment when using sheer material in the costume and use it in an appropriate fashion.
- No "bra" style or size tops
- No extremely low-cut necklines
- No excessively bare or backless costumes
- No "tube tops"
- Skirts and/or pants must cover the hips at the waistband
- Skirts must completely cover briefs when feet are shoulder width apart
- Briefs must completely cover the buttocks

NDA DANCE PROPS

Poms, handheld props, and costuming may be used. Wearable and handheld items are allowed in all categories and can be removed and discarded from the body in a safe and controlled manner. If taken off and danced with, it becomes a prop. Standing items such as chairs, stools, ladders, etc. are not allowed. If you are unsure if your prop falls within the given definition, please contact the NDA office. Props may not be "stored" in the offstage wings of the performance space.

Please see Spirit Rally section on (page 18) for Prop rules specific to Spirit Rally Division.

NDA COMPETITION SAFETY GUIDELINES

The competition will be held indoors. All staging, backdrops, special effects, costumes, or any items that may damage or otherwise alter the performance floor or environment, including the practice area and backstage, are prohibited, including but not limited to water, baby powder, feathers, sliding oil, fire, etc.

NDA GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

1. All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified coach/instructor.
2. Coaches/Instructors must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the dancer and team skill level with regard to proper performance placement.

Updated 9/17/2025

COLLEGE RULE BOOK -

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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3. All programs should have, and review, an emergency action plan in the event of an injury.
4. No technical skills should be performed when a coach is not present or providing direct supervision.
5. All practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for the activities of dance, and away from noise and distractions.
6. Warm-up and stretching should precede and conclude all practice sessions, pep rallies, games, competitions, performances, and other physical activities.
7. The performance surface should be taken into consideration before engaging in any technical aspect of dance. The performing area should be reasonably free of obstructions.
Dancers should not perform technical skills on:
 - concrete, asphalt, or any other hard, uncovered surface
 - wet surfaces
 - uneven surfaces
 - surfaces with obstructions

NDA ROUTINE SAFETY RULES

TUMBLING AND SKILLS (EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS)

1. Hip over-head rotation skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props in the supporting hand. (Exception: Forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed).
 - a. The proper use of hands-free poms for hip over-head skills is allowed.
2. Hip over-head rotation skills with hand support that are not airborne in approach are limited to 3 connected skills. (Example: 3 consecutive headsprings are allowed; 4 are not allowed).
3. Hip over-head rotation skills with hand support that are airborne in approach OR hip over-head rotation skills without hand support are allowed provided the following:
 - a. Can only connect to one other hip over-head rotation skill with or without hand support. (Example: Aerial into a standing back tuck is allowed).
 - b. Involves no more than one twisting transition
 - c. Standing full twisting back flip will not be permitted
 - d. Clarification: Dive rolls are allowed if peak does not surpass shoulder height, and the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) before head/neck/shoulders make contact with performance surface.
 - e. Recommendation: If using NON hands-free poms in an airborne hip over head rotation without hand support, dancers SHOULD place both poms in non-dominant hand.
 - i. If a dancer bears weight on the performance surface with a hand that is holding a pom during the skill, the dancer would be in violation of rule 1.
4. Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
5. Choreographed drops/landings to the knee, thigh, back, front, head, shoulder, or seat onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.
6. Landing in a push-up position on the performance surface is allowed from a standing or kneeling position or from a jump with forward momentum. All variations of a shushanova are not allowed.

****Below are some examples of commonly known dance skills. This does NOT mean that they are required for your routine, nor does this list encompass all skills that are legal/illegal. The above rules still apply ****

ALLOWED:

Aerial Cartwheels	Front Aerials
Back Handsprings	Front Handsprings
Standing Front Tucks	Front/Back Walkovers
Round Offs (with or without hands)	Side Somi
Head Spins	Standing Back Tucks
Forward Rolls	Backward Rolls
Windmills	Kip Ups
Shoulder Rolls	Cartwheels
Headstands	Headsprings (with or without hands)

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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Handstands
Stalls/Freeze
Cartwheel/Round Off Back Tuck

Backbends
Cartwheel/Round Off Back Handspring
Aerial Back Layout

NOT ALLOWED

Shushanova
Toe Pitch Back Tucks
Round off back handspring back tuck
Aerial Back Handspring Step Out Back Layout

DANCE LIFTS AND PARTNERING (Executed in pairs or groups)

DANCE LIFTS AND PARTNERING ARE PERMITTED AND ARE DEFINED BELOW:

1. The Executing Dancer must receive support from a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the performance surface (exception: kick line leaps/jumps, partner aerial cartwheels, and partner kip ups).
2. At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with the Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill above shoulder level.
 - a. Lifting with poms is allowed.
 - b. Extensions, pyramids, and basket tosses are NOT allowed.
3. Hip overhead rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed if a Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
4. A Vertical Inversion is allowed if:
 - a. The Supporting Dancer(s) maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position.
 - b. When the height of the Executing Dancer's shoulders exceeds shoulder level there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear weight. (Exception: When there are 3 or more Supporting Dancers, an additional spotter is not required.)

RELEASE MOVES/UNASSISTED DISMOUNTS TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE

1. An Executing Dancer may jump, leap, step or push off a Supporting Dancer(s) if:
 - a. The highest point of the release (when supporting dancer releases contact from executing dancer) does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above head level. The Executing Dancer's hips may not cross the vertical axis after the release if airborne and/or inverted.
 - b. Toe pitches are not allowed.
2. The Supporting Dancer(s) may toss an Executing Dancer if:
 - a. The highest point of the toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above head level. B
 - b. Executing Dancer may be supine or inverted when released but s/he must land on their foot/feet.
 - c. The Executing dancer's hips may not cross the vertical axis while airborne and/or inverted.
 - d. Toe pitches are not allowed. (See glossary).

Please see NDA Glossary for definitions of skills and props: [NDA GLOSSARY OF DANCE TERMINOLOGY](#)

NDA LEGALITIES AND DEDUCTIONS

Scores for each caption will range from 0-10, including tenths of points (i.e. 5.5, 9.2, etc.). The maximum number of points on each score sheet does not total 100, so the scores will be entered into a computer that will add the raw totals, average them, and then convert the average score into a 100 point scale. All penalties will be deducted from the converted 100 point scale score to get the FINAL SCORE.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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DEDUCTION VALUES

- a. .25 – Timing Infraction: exceeding the allotted 30 seconds to begin a performance once announced to the floor, costume/choreography/shoe rules, Team Performance category minimum
- b. .5 – Performance Errors – any skill or trick executed incorrectly making it illegal (example: touching down on an aerial with non hands-free poms), Timing Infraction (3-5 seconds over), Major Falls, Team Performance routine requirements
- c. 1.0 – General Rules – prop rules
- d. 1.5 – Safety Rule Violations, Timing Infraction (6-10 seconds over time)
- e. 2.5 – Timing Infraction (11 or more seconds over time)

MAJOR FALLS

Serious falls incurred by one or more dancers that could result in injury or falls from a lift to the performance surface will result in a .5 deduction for each incident. Note: these falls are typically a result of dancers performing skills beyond their proficiency.

TIME LIMIT VIOLATIONS

- **Team Performance**, Jazz, Pom and Hip Hop Division time limit = 2 minutes (2:00)

Time limit violations (for both the music portion and/or total Routine time) are as follows:

- 3 - 5 seconds over time will result in a .5 deduction
- 6 - 10 seconds over time will result in a 1.5 deduction
- 11 or more seconds over time will result in a 2.5 deduction

A two (2) second buffer is allowed for human and/or mechanical error.

A deduction will be given for EACH safety/general competition rule violation. The point value of this deduction will range from .25 to 2.5, depending upon the severity of the violation ([see above for Deduction values](#)). Safety Violations are in effect until the team leaves the performance floor. Please read and study the appropriate NDA Safety Rules section to ensure your team does not have any safety violations. NDA reserves the right to make decisions on any violations not covered in this book and interpretation of rules covered. Deductions and/or penalties are assessed at the sole discretion of the judges based on the criteria set forth in this book. All judges' decisions are final. Ties will not be broken. Tying teams will share the title and/or ranking.

Note: Legality Officials may issue warnings for perceived or possible violations during preliminary performance. Teams must then verify compliance with the Judge Liaison or make appropriate changes as approved by the Judge Liaison prior to the next performance. Legality Officials will not issue any deductions for corrected warnings during the remaining performances. DEDUCTIONS WILL BE ISSUED IN PRELIMS FOR BLATANT VIOLATIONS.

Any deductions for time violations, safety/general rule violations, inappropriate choreography/music or costuming will be subtracted from the FINAL averaged score.

NDA LEGALITY VERIFICATION

As a coach, it is important to be current on the NCA, NDA & 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 video inquiry.

- All questions must be in written form.
- Due to the differences in interpretation and terminology, no phone calls will be accepted.
- Due to variance in camera angles/perspective, rulings on videos are not guaranteed. It is ultimately up to the final ruling of the Safety Judges on-site.
- Do not rely on prior rulings from NCA & NDA Championships.
- Legality rulings will not be provided with a digital dance critique, a separate legality verification must be submitted.
- A separate video must be submitted for each Competition to ensure legality.
- For all Legality questions, you must send a video that contains the skill in question.

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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

- Video must include the following:
 - Front, side and back view of skill.
 - Name of the Championship where you will be performing skill and the Division you will be performing in.
 - Include your name, team name, email and phone number with your video.
 - Do not send the entire Routine, only the skill(s) in question. Your video will be kept on file at NCA & NDA.
- Costume approval must be submitted in photograph format with at least one (1) athlete wearing the costume in question. Front and back view of costume must be shown. Official approval cannot be given to sketches or drawings.
- Music approval must be submitted in mp3 or WAV format.

VIDEOS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE NCA & NDA OFFICE at least **TWO WEEKS PRIOR** to the championship. Videos not received in the NDA office three weeks prior to the championship date will **NOT** be reviewed. Do not depend on your choreographer, State Director, or Coach to determine if something is legal. If you feel that something may be illegal, send a video to the NDA Office.

You must email your videos to: ndascoring@varsity.com

NCA COLLEGIATE MASCOT CHAMPIONSHIP

GENERAL

Each mascot must qualify at an NCA College Summer Camp or through Video Qualification. Only ONE costumed mascot is allowed to perform. NO other live props are allowed.

SET-UP/TEAR-DOWN

1. 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
 - i. 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. Pending weather conditions, NCA reserves the right to allocate more time for set up.
2. Other people may assist with set-up and tear-down.
3. Mascots must be dressed in the school's official mascot costume for both set-up and tear-down.

ROUTINE

1. Mascots must be dressed in the school's official mascot costume.
2. 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.
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.
4. Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement, or note of music after they are officially announced.
5. The routine should contain a theme and should be well organized and understandable
6. Music may be used and is encouraged. Music should be downloaded on a device which will remain in airplane mode for the duration of the performance. Mascots must be compliant with Varsity Music Policy. 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
7. 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.
8. Mascots will be judged on the following categories, each valued at 10 points:
 - a. Characterization
 - b. Creativity
 - c. Crowd Leading
 - d. Dance

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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- e. Prop Design/Effectiveness
 - f. Overall Impression
9. Mascots must comply with the USA Cheer College Safety Rules when performing athletic skills in their mascot skit.
 10. Mascots may not utilize any type of height increasing apparatus (mini tramps, spring boards, etc.). A box is permitted however the height of the box cannot exceed 3 feet.
 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. Any hard or yielding props may NOT be thrown. Any props MUST be placed and remain within the performing surface (unless weather related). Violations will result in a 2.0 deduction or disqualification.
 12. Other people may assist with support of props ONLY IF the event is outside to reduce weather related issues. These assistants may not participate in any activity within the skit, other than to support props. This includes but is not limited to hand-offs, manipulating props to make move or spin, or any other function other than basic support. Violations will result in a 2.0 deduction
 13. Use of fire, noxious gases, live animals, weapons, and other potentially hazardous elements are strictly prohibited (including, but not limited to, guns, knives, swords, nun-chucks, etc.)
 14. Timing will end with the last organized word, movement, or note of music by the mascot.
 15. See the [NCA COLLEGE DIVISION RESTRICTIONS](#) for a breakdown of penalties for the mascot division

COLLEGE MASCOT GENERAL 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
5. 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.
6. 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.
 7. Be aware of your limits when performing. 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.
 8. 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.

NCA GROUP/PARTNER STUNT COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS

1. Participants must be official members of the school and cheerleading team (not program) they are representing and meet all of their school's eligibility requirements. The official NCA Eligibility Form must be submitted prior to the competition.
2. The routine should be performed to music. Music must comply with Varsity Music copyright guidelines.
3. For group stunt, ALL participants must be female. (Maximum of 4 participants are allowed)
4. For partner stunt, each participating couple should provide one spotter. Only one spotter may be on the mat as needed to make the stunt legal. Spotter may not assist with performance. Spotter may not touch or assist any stunts. In the event a spotter touches or assists a stunt a 2.0 deduction will be assessed per occurrence (exception: may assist in dismounts or drops when mandated by USA Cheer Guidelines).

COLLEGE COMPETITION RULES

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5. The routine and music must be suitable for family viewing. Violations will result in a 2.0 deduction or disqualification.
6. A participant may take part in only ONE (1) partner stunt Routine.
7. A participant may only compete with the group/partner with whom they qualified.
8. Participants MUST follow the USA Cheer College Cheerleading Safety Rules.
9. Must follow previously stated Uniform Requirements.
10. Props are not allowed

NCA GROUP/PARTNER STUNT ROUTINE MUSIC AND TIME LIMITATIONS

1. All routines must be "Music Only", and performance time may not exceed 45 seconds in length.
2. There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.
3. Timing will begin with the first movement, voice, or note of the music, whichever comes first. Judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatches show a time of three (3) seconds over the allotted time.
4. If a partner/group stunt routine exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. A (.5) point deduction for 1-5 seconds over and One (1) point deduction for 6 seconds over. If a partner/group stunt routine is re-timed as part of a review, the exact time will be used without the 3 second allowance. See [NCA DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS](#)

NCA GROUP/PARTNER STUNT VIOLATIONS

1. Please refer to the [NCA DEDUCTIONS AND VIOLATIONS](#) for all penalties that will be assessed.
2. Any partner/group stunt routine in violation of any of the Specific Safety Guidelines or these Rules and Regulations will be assessed a three (3) point deduction for each violation. This deduction does not apply to violations mentioned above that are designated a lesser point value.
3. Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of these "Rules and Regulations" will be subject to deductions and/or disqualification from the competition, will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition, and may also forfeit the opportunity to participate in the competition or the National Championship the following year.
4. See the [NCA COLLEGE DIVISION RESTRICTIONS](#) for a breakdown of all group/partner stunt penalties that may be assessed.

NCA GROUP/PARTNER STUNT JUDGING CATEGORIES (Total possible score 75 points)

- Execution of Top Person- 15 points
- Execution of Base(s)- 15 points
- Degree of Difficulty- 15 points
- Transitions and Flow- 10 points
- Performance and Showmanship- 10 points
- Overall Impression- 10 points

NCA & NDA COLLEGE RULES & REGULATIONS AGREEMENT

By accepting the Terms and Conditions as the authorized person from my program I agree and acknowledge that (i) I am the sponsor/director of the team (ii) I have read and understand the foregoing, (iii) I will be solely responsible for communicating the foregoing to all coaches/directors in my program that will be coaching and directing teams at the NCA/NDA Collegiate National Championship, (iv) I will ensure that my teams will comply with all rules and regulations at all times, and (v) my team will support the results of the competition, as I am a role model for my programs. I have read and reviewed both these specific NCA & NDA Collegiate Championship Rules and Regulations.

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