



COLLEGE CHEERLEADING & DANCE TEAM NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RULES

C H E E R • D A N C E • M A S C O T

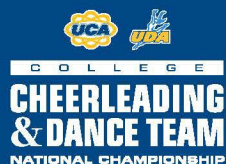


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PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

1. The competition is open to all colleges, universities, and junior colleges in the country.
2. Individuals may not represent more than one team at the National Championship
3. All participants must be registered full-time students for the college or university that they are representing in competition and official members of that school's spirit team (no club teams or competition only teams). Official members of the school's spirit team are recognized by their institution as the actual sideline/courtside spirit team that regularly supports their school athletic teams.
4. **Graduating seniors or graduate students may be enrolled in less hours if working to graduate in the 2023-2024 season.** Verification of eligibility will be required by the school's Registrar's Office (See Eligibility Guidelines for details). Graduating students in the fall would be eligible if the University/College still considers the student part of the team during the Championship.
5. The Dean of Students, Director of Compliance, or Registrar's office must complete the eligibility form and have notarized. The eligibility form must not be dated any earlier than December 1, 2023. Teams violating this rule could forfeit their titles and be prohibited from entering the competition the following year. For any clarification on these rules email College@varsity.com.
6. We recommend that the team and each of its members display an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school.
7. UCA/UDA strongly recommends that you have an alternate (not a member of another competing squad at the same event), who is prepared to substitute in the event of injury, probation, etc. No cheerleader/dancer may represent more than one Team, even in the event of injury or emergency. Once a team checks into the championship, the team will not be allowed to change divisions.
8. By participating in a Varsity event, teams give their consent for performances and scores to be made public.
9. 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 Spirit is unable to accommodate requests for removal.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

A Team Eligibility Form will be required by **(Due January 3, 2024)** all teams/mascots competing in the UCA/UDA College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship. One form must be filled out per team with each team member's name, hours currently enrolled, years of completed eligibility and date of birth. 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 UCA/UDA with registration. Teams must meet the following eligibility requirements to participate in the UCA/UDA College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship.

1. Any university or college competing in a Varsity College National Championship shall not permit a student-athlete to represent their school unless the student-athlete meets all applicable eligibility requirements, and the coach and program administrative supervisor has certified the student-athletes eligibility.
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; a student-athlete may also not compete with the same school in separate championships in the same academic year.
3. At the Junior College level, any student-athlete will only be eligible to compete in a maximum of three (3) National Championships during his/her college career.

4. A student-athlete can be a part of the institution's dance/cheer/program but will only be allowed to compete for a maximum of five (5) National Championships during the course of his/her college career, regardless of the number of universities or colleges they have attended.
5. A student-athlete may not compete in more than five (5) National Championships in combined Junior College and/or 4-year college/university.
6. An alternate or injured student-athlete that does not take the competition floor will not be perceived as a competing member and will not count towards the maximum of five (5) National Championships.
7. This will apply for any student-athlete competing at any one of the Varsity Brands College National Championships (UCA/UDA, NCA/NDA), as well as any other designated College National Championship.
8. 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 and valid.
9. Teams violating the above-mentioned 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 College@varsity.com.
10. Any interpretations or decision of eligibility of the 2024 College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship will be rendered by the Rules Committee, which will consist of the Tournament Director, the UCA/UDA College Program Director and one other UCA/UDA official appointed by the Tournament Director. The Rules Committee will render a judgement in a manner consistent with the general goals of the championship.

Reminder: The 2021 College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship did not count as a year of eligibility.

CODE OF CONDUCT

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

To ensure the most positive experience for all attendees, UCA/UDA asks that the following Code of Conduct be adhered to during all UCA/UDA Regional Competitions and National Championship:

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

COACH MEMBERSHIP

1. USA Cheer has developed a comprehensive Membership Program, which includes a background check, athlete protection training, acknowledgement of concussion training with return to participation guidance, a member code of conduct, and safety training courses on risk management and safety rules.
2. Varsity Spirit will require that all coaches, band directors, choreographers, and personnel wishing to access the warmup area, backstage or coaches' box at our competitions have a USA Cheer Coach, Dance Coach or Professional Membership. At least one coach must have the USA Cheer Coach/Dance Coach Membership that include the USA Cheer Youth Risk Management certification course and must accompany the team at every competition.
3. You must complete your membership requirements before your first competition. Please note that the background check will take 2-10 days to be processed and returned. Coaches without an approved Membership will not be allowed access to the warmup area, backstage or coaches' box.
4. When checking in at Varsity Spirit competitions, you will provide proof of membership for each coach from your organization who wishes to go into the warmup area, backstage or coaches' box. Upon proof of membership, each coach will receive a wristband that will allow them access.
5. The USA Cheer Membership is available on the USA Cheer website. Once your membership is complete, you can print your membership card, or save and display it on your mobile device at event registration along with your photo ID. This season's membership will be active **June 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024**.

MUSIC GUIDELINES

1. I have read and understand the USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative and all sound recordings used in our team's music shall only be used with written license from the owners(s) of the sound recordings.
2. For the most up to date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, cheer teams should email musicinfo@varsity.com. Please check Music Provider list for updates and changes periodically.
3. Teams must be able to provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, during registration at the event. For example:
 - a. Clementine – provide team's invoice from camp.
 - b. Itunes – provide screenshot of the song you are using from your purchased playlist.
 - c. Music Provider – provide a printed copy of proof of licensing.
 - d. Band Music - If you'd like to perform to a recording of your band playing a single musical composition, you will need to provide documentation that confirms the following:
 - The team has secured a compulsory license to make copies of the recording made by the band or orchestra.
 - The band or orchestra recorded the song for and in conjunction with the cheer/dance squad.
 - The school principal or dean was aware of and approved this recording.
 - The band or orchestra does not provide music to other cheer/dance squads.
 - No other musical compositions are embodied in the recording to be used by the authorized cheer/dance squad.
4. If your team is featured in the TV broadcast and uses an original composition created for your performance, your routine music will be used in the show if you also secured synchronization rights. Teams must be able to provide written documentation that synchronization rights were properly secured during registration at the event for the original routine music to be included in the show.
5. When recording your music for the event, coaches or music editors should edit their song in a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) and make sure that the volume of the song is at 0. Things to note: Most DAW's have a default that sets a track at -6 when a track is added. Check to see if there is a normalization process after you render or save your work.
6. If you would like to perform your school's original fight song, you may bring a recording of your marching band playing the song. You will need to get the school's permission to use the song and recording. A letter granting permission for the cheer or dance team to use the fight song on school letterhead is enough. It should be signed by your program's administrative supervisor. Go to varsity.com/music for more details.
7. If a team does not have required paperwork, they will be given the option to count the routine verbally or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts (Provided by Varsity Spirit).

8. If a team does not have the required paperwork and chooses not to count the routine or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts, the team will be disqualified from the competition and not allowed to perform or compete.
9. If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.
10. A challenge can only be made by the official coach of a team competing at the event at which the challenge is being made.
11. Challenge Process
 - a. All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the event director.
 - b. There will be \$100 fee to request a music challenge and must be in the form of a check made out to St Jude Children's Research Hospital.
 - c. Fees collected will be voided if challenge is correct.
 - d. If the team challenged can provide documentation during the event and can be verified, the fees will be donated to St. Jude.
 - e. If the team challenged can provide documentation that requires further review, a decision will be finalized within 48 hours of the event.
12. It is required that each team have a responsible adult remain at the music station that knows the routine and music (no alternates or team members allowed). This representative is responsible for pressing "play". Should an adult choose not to stay at the music table for the duration of the routine, and a malfunction occurs, teams may or may not be permitted to perform the routine again.
13. It is not recommended that a smart phone be used for playing music, due to interference that may be caused during a routine. No cover may be on any MP3 player so that a jack may be easily inserted into the device.
14. All teams must provide their own device for use on the event provided sound system. Music should be on a digital music player/iPod/iPhone. CD's will no longer be allowed, and CD players will not be provided at competition.
15. Please make sure that all devices have a headphone jack to connect to sound system and are fully charged, volume turned up and placed in airplane mode.
16. Please ensure that jacks are clean and free of any debris which may impact connectivity. You will need to acquire an adapter in advance if your player does not have a headphone jack.
17. Teams may not use Disney themes, nor may they have costumes that resemble a Disney character. However, Disney music is acceptable if following the music guidelines.

VIRTUAL COMPETITION GUIDELINES

1. All videos must be recorded in a single take. Edited footage will not be accepted. Footage may not be edited to add in the template, introduction card, program logo, etc. Editing the template or not including the template will result in a 1-point deduction.
2. Only music capture incidentally will be permitted. No music can be edited into the video. Teams who do edit music into the video will receive a 2-point penalty.
3. All routines will be judged with sound and available for Varsity TV subscriber viewing with sound for 48 hours once the event goes live. After 48 hours, the routines will be available without sound for Varsity TV subscribers. After 5 days, routines will be available free of charge without sound for the duration of the competition season.
4. Filming Guidelines — We've created a step-by-step PDF guide, [HERE](#) with filming requirements and tips.
5. Awards - Division placement banners will be awarded to each team competing that will be mailed following the event. Awards Presentations for each Virtual Competition will be hosted on Varsity TV and will be FREE to all viewers on their scheduled awards day.
6. To upload a performance video, you must create a Varsity TV account. The account does **not** need to have an active subscription in order to upload a video. However, to view the videos on the event day, you need an active Varsity TV subscription. If you have questions about your Varsity TV account, [click here](#).

INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition, venue (power outage, fire alarm, etc.), the coach of the team at the music stand affected should STOP the routine.
 - a. Examples: Equipment Issue – Music volume is all the way down and athletes can't hear the beginning of the routine, etc.
 - b. Venue Emergency – power outage, fire alarm, etc.
2. If the coach chooses not to stop the routine, the team may not have the option to perform again.
3. While masks are not required on the warmup floor and/or performance floor unless dictated by state or local guidance, an athlete may choose to wear a mask. If an athlete chooses to wear a mask during the performance and the mask restricts the athlete's view and/or interferes with skills or otherwise becomes a safety concern, the athlete should either secure or remove the mask. If the athlete does not secure or remove the mask, the routine is subject to being stopped by competition officials.
4. UNIFORM MALFUNCTION As a precaution, each performer is required to take the necessary steps to avoid inappropriate exposure during the performance. Should a uniform malfunction resulting in indecent exposure occur, the routine should be stopped immediately. This is a shared responsibility of all parties involved to recognize a malfunction has occurred.
5. If allowed to perform again, judging will resume from the point at which the injury/interruption occurred as determined by the judges. The routine must be performed full-out from the beginning of the routine. All point deductions accumulated to that point will carry over. If a team prefers not to re-work the routine, at the coach's discretion, they will take the score they have received up to that point. If a skill has not been performed a "0" will be given in the category. Teams that limit/mark skills prior to the point of injury could result in an adjustment in scores based on the skills performed.

FAULT OF TEAM

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed later, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team must perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.

INJURY / ILLNESS

1. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are: competition officials, the advisor/coach of the team performing or an injured individual. This is a shared responsibility of all parties involved to recognize an injury has occurred.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed later, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team must perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
 - a. The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) AND THEN the head coach/advisor of the competing team.
 - b. If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
 - c. An athlete who has a suspected concussion should be removed from the activity immediately and should not be allowed to return to participation the same day of the incident and without being cleared by a medical professional in accordance with state law or organizational policy.

4. In addition, the sponsor and all of the coaches attending the competition must be familiar with all federal, state and local laws applicable to such individuals and relating to such individuals' duties and responsibilities regarding the recognition and treatment of injuries.
5. In the event of an injury or emergency, 1 parent or legal guardian may be escorted backstage during the evaluation process. While backstage, they will need to remain with the athlete or an event staff member.

RE-PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

1. The competition officials will determine whether the team will be allowed to perform at a later time.
2. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed later, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials and must be within thirty minutes after the rest of the division is complete.
3. If allowed to perform again, judging will resume from the point at which the injury/interruption occurred as determined by the judges. The routine must be performed full-out from the beginning of the routine. All point deductions accumulated to that point will carry over.
4. Teams that limit/mark skills prior to the point of interruption could result in an adjustment in scores based on the skills performed.
5. If a team prefers not to re-perform the routine, at the coach's discretion, they will take the score they have received up to that point. If a skill has not been performed a "0" will be given in the category.

SPORTSMANSHIP

1. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine.
2. The advisor and coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents, and other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.
3. When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes, and parents/spectators, they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so may result in a 1-point penalty, removal of coach, or disqualification.

JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judges for the event will be appointed at the sole discretion of Universal Cheerleaders Association and Universal Dance Association. The judges will score each team according to the judging criteria to determine their total score. Judges scores will be averaged together to determine the overall team score. The judges' scores will be combined with deductions being taken off the total scores.

DISQUALIFICATION

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of these "Rules and Regulations" will be subject to disqualification from the competition and will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition.

FINALITY OF DECISIONS

By participating in this competition, each team agrees that all decisions by the judges will be final; questions concerning comments on the score sheet will be allowed, however scores and judges decisions will remain final. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative, or procedural review of such decisions.

HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

1. **RULES & PROCEDURES** - Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the advisor / coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director. Such questions should be made prior to the team's competition performance.
2. **PERFORMANCE** - Any questions concerning the team's performance should be made to the Competition Director immediately after the team's performance and/or following the outcome of the competition. Questions regarding another team and/or their performance will not be allowed.
3. **MUSIC / AGE** - Any questions concerning a specific violation in music compliance must be submitted in writing to the Competition Director immediately following the team's performance.

INTERPRETATIONS AND / OR RULINGS

Any interpretation of any aspect of these Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will render a judgment 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.

VIDEO MEDIA POLICY

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

LOGO USAGE

Teams will not be allowed to use the UCA or UDA logo including banners, rings, bows, t-shirts etc. without prior approval from the UCA/UDA Office. The use of the UCA/UDA letters will be allowed.

VARSITY SPIRIT COMPETITION RULES

While the final details and schedule of any competition could require up to the day adjustments, and all guidelines are subject to change based on state and local guidance, please be assured that Varsity Spirit is committed to delivering the competition experience for which we are known. We appreciate your understanding of the flexibility this will require. By accepting the Terms and Conditions as the authorized person from my program I agree and acknowledge to abide by the Varsity Spirit Competition Rules.

UCA/UDA SPIRIT VIDEO (due Tuesday, December 12, 2023)

SPIRIT VIDEO (formerly called CROWD HIGHLIGHTS)

Highlights of these videos will be shown at the National Championship

All cheer and dance teams competing in the 2024 UCA/UDA College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship will be required to submit a Spirit Video which will count 5% of the team's score in the Championships. This portion of your entry will be due by **5:00pm December 12, 2023**. The time limit is a minimum of 30 seconds with a maximum of 45 seconds with a minimum of five (5) different examples. You may edit this portion of your entry. Here are some tips on getting the best angles and score:

1. Film the team so you can see them interacting with the fans. Side angles are also good. Make sure you can see both the cheerleaders/dancers and the audience.
2. Show your team using a variety of material (signs, flags or traditional chants or band cheers/dances) to get the crowd motivated.
3. All video footage must be the current team from the 2023-2024 school year. The video must be recorded video footage- no still shots/pictures will be counted in scoring. Violation of this rule will be subject to one point deduction per occurrence.
4. Judging for the spirit video is based upon the methods and materials being presented by the cheerleaders/dancers. Cheer teams should avoid doing basket tosses and/or elite stunts that are not being used to effectively "lead the crowd".
5. **Do not label each section. Judges should be able to differentiate the performance opportunity and does not need to be labeled on the video.**
6. See the following sample score sheet for further assistance in compiling your team's entry.
7. Music Guidelines for Crowd Highlights
 - Only music captured incidentally (i.e., in the background of the video) will be permitted.
 - No music can be edited into the video.
 - All music captured from half-times, games, etc. highlighted in the video will need to follow the music guidelines.

Spirit Video Score Sheet

Community and Campus Involvement / Spirit Raising Techniques

5 Points

These are examples of squad "spirit raising" by various demonstrations of activities within their campus and local community. These examples can be within game day arena/stadium and should include any event that the team participates, such as games, parades, pep rallies, alumni performances, pre and post-game events, community service performances, school fundraising events, campus tours or any other "involvement" your team has on campus.

This section should be approximately 30 seconds long up to a maximum 45 seconds and include a minimum of five (5) different examples.

Videos must be uploaded in MP4 or MOV files. Please label the file being uploaded with your College / University name. Video Upload Link will be available later.

For questions, please contact College@varsity.com

Upload your Spirit Video [College Spirit Video Upload](#)

UCA / UDA COLLEGE CHAMPIONSHIP REGULATIONS

PRELIMINARIES, SEMI-FINALS, AND FINALS

1. UCA/UDA reserves the right to determine if a preliminary, semi-final, or final round will be necessary. There may be a preliminary competition held in some categories. All divisions with only one round prior to the finals will be classified as a semi-final.
2. 50% of the teams in each group will advance to the next round and will perform in reverse rank order for the final competition. A minimum of 3 teams will advance to the finals round of competition.
3. In the event of a tie for teams advancing to the next round, the tied teams will compete in reserve order of the previous order of competition. In the event of a tie for the final spot advancing, both teams that are tied will move on.
4. Tournament officials will have full authority to make the final determination of the number of teams selected to advance to the next round.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPATION

1. It is understood that teams that participate in the College Cheerleading and Dance Team Championship will NOT knowingly and willingly participate in any other cheer or dance event promoted as a national or international championship for the 2023-2024 school year. (Exception: USA National Championship) This includes all prizes and awards labeled as National or International Champions.
2. Teams cannot compete in another event promoted as a national or international championship (**Exception: ICU World Cheerleading Championships and World University Cheerleading Championships**) for the 2023-2024 school year within a school division or category regardless of team name. This excludes conference championships i.e. NAIA Nationals.
3. A school can compete at UCA and NCA if that team is recognized as a separate team by the school and no athletes are the same. (No athletes can compete at both events)
4. Teams who violate this rule will be subject to disqualification and will forfeit the opportunity to participate in the subsequent College Cheerleading and Dance Team Championship the following year.

TELEVISION COVERAGE

The College Cheerleading and Dance Team Championship will be nationally televised on an ESPN and ESPN2 network. Because of the format of the show, not all finalist teams will be shown on the telecast. Out of respect for the copyrights of others, original music will be composed for all routines featured in the show, in order to meet broadcast licensing requirements. If your team is featured in the TV broadcast and uses an original composition created for your performance, your routine music will be used in the show if you also secured synchronization rights. Teams must be able to provide written documentation that synchronization rights were properly secured during registration at the event for the original routine music to be included in the show.

Please be aware that you may be interviewed and/or appear on television during an event. With that, appropriate attire is always required, including during officially designated practice times, performance, and awards ceremonies.

APPEARANCES, ENDORSEMENTS, AND PUBLICITY

All teams winning titles, awards, or prizes agree to have all appearances, endorsements, and publicity approved through the UCA/UDA office.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

All teams in the final round of competition will receive a trophy. Teams who rank first, second, or third place will additionally receive a bronze, silver, or gold medallion.

TOURNAMENT FACILITY

The competition is scheduled to be held at ESPN's Wide World of Sports® Complex. The tournament officials shall have the right to alter the time and location of the competition in the event changes become necessary due to inclement weather, facility problems, television production requirements, or any other situation deemed by the tournament officials to be essential to the successful execution of the championship.

UCA COLLEGE CHEER DIVISIONS AND SPECIFIC GUIDELINES:

1. College Cheer Traditional Routine Divisions:

- a. Teams may not exceed twenty (20) members in the routine divisions.
- b. Large Coed Divisions will be limited to a maximum number of 11 male participants.
 - o Large Coed division Floating Scale
 - 14 – 15 total participants = 8 maximum males
 - 16 – 17 total participants = 9 maximum males
 - 18 – 19 total participants = 10 maximum males
 - 20 total participants = 11 maximum males
- c. Traditional Routine Cheer Divisions:
 1. Division IA Large Coed (6-11 males, NCAA I – FBS)
 2. Division I Large Coed (6-11 males, NCAA I – FCS & NCAA II)
 3. Open Large Coed (6-11 males, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools)
 4. Division IA All Girl (NCAA I - FBS)
 5. Division I All Girl (NCAA I – FCS & Division II)
 6. Open All Girl (NCAA III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools)
 7. Division IA Small Coed (1-5 males, NCAA I-FBS)
 8. Division I Small Coed (1-5 males, NCAA I-FCS)
 9. Open Small Coed (1-5 males, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools)

2. College Cheer Game Day Divisions:

- a. Teams may not exceed thirty (30) team members in the Game Day Divisions.
 - b. Teams may add up to 1 (one) mascot in their game day routine. The mascot must enter the floor with the team and remain on the floor for the entire routine or an out of bounds penalty will be assessed. Mascots should be used to raise crowd energy and participation. The mascot should not be involved in any stunts or skills with hip over head rotation and should position themselves away from skills being performed. The mascot will not count toward the number of participants allowed but may impact the overall impression score. Mascots will only be allowed to use **the following** traditional sideline props – rally towels, signs, pom, megaphones, or flags.
 - c. Game Day Cheer Divisions:
 1. Division IA Large Coed Cheer Game Day (NCAA Division I – FBS)
 2. Division IA All Girl Cheer Game Day (NCAA Division I - FBS)
 3. Open Coed Cheer Game Day (5 or more males, NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges & NAIA)
 4. Small Coed Cheer Game Day (5 males or less, NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges & NAIA)
 5. Open All Girl Game Day (NCAA Division I – FCS, NCAA II, Division III, Jr. Colleges & NAIA)
- ### 3. College Cheer Game Day LIVE Divisions (Cheer Team and Band):
- a. Teams may add a pep band or drumline into their performance. Pep Bands or Drumlines will not count toward the total number of participants allowed. Pep Bands or Drumlines must be registered with the event as participants. Refer to additional Pep Band guidelines.
 - b. Division IA Game Day LIVE (30 Cheer and 30 Band Combined) (NCAA Division I – FBS)
 - c. Open Game Day LIVE (30 Cheer and 30 Band Combined) (NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges & NAIA)
- ### 4. College Cheer Spirit Program Game Day Divisions (Cheer Team and Dance Team):
- a. Division IA Game Day LIVE (30 Cheer and 30 Dance Combined) (NCAA Division I – FBS)
 - b. Open Game Day LIVE (30 Cheer and 30 Dance Combined) (NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges & NAIA)
- ### 5. College Cheer Spirit Program Game Day LIVE Divisions (Cheer Team, Dance Team and Band):
- a. Teams may add a pep band or drumline into their performance. Pep Bands or Drumlines will not count toward the total number of participants allowed. Pep Bands or Drumlines must be registered with the event as participants.
 - b. Division IA Game Day LIVE (30 Cheer, 30 Dance & 30 Band Combined) (NCAA Division I – FBS)
 - c. Open Game Day LIVE (30 Cheer, 30 Dance & 30 Band Combined) (NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges & NAIA)

For a complete list of divisions please visit [UCA College Cheer Team Divisions](#).

UCA TIME LIMITATIONS

1. **Traditional Routine** - Each team's presentation must include at least one cheer and / or sideline chant. Each Performance Routine will have a maximum of 2 minutes and 30 seconds (1 minute 45 seconds maximum of music) to demonstrate its cheerleading expertise.
2. **Game Day & Spirit Program** - Each Game Day performance should consist of a Fight Song, Situational Sideline (offence / defense) and a Game Day Timeout. The maximum performance time must not exceed (3) three minutes.
3. **Game Day LIVE & Spirit Program Game Day LIVE** - Each Game Day LIVE performance should consist of a Fight Song, Situational Sideline (offence / defense) and a Game Day Timeout. The maximum performance time must not exceed (5) five minutes.
4. Timing will begin with the first movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first. Each section should have a beginning and end. Note: Spirited crowd leading interaction between each section is encouraged to continue the game day feel.
5. Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatches show a time of 2:33/3:03/5:03. If a routine is retimed as part of a review, the exact time will be used without the 3 second allowance listed above.
6. If a team exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. One (1) point deduction for 1 – 5 seconds over and Two (2) point deduction for 6 seconds or more.
7. Because penalties are severe, it is recommended that all teams time their performance several times prior to competition and leave a several second cushion to all for variations in sound equipment.
8. Introductions
 - a. All introductions (tumbling, entrances, chants, spellouts, etc. are considered part of the routine and will be timed as part of the performance.
 - b. All team breaks, rituals and traditions need to take place prior to entering the mat.
 - c. Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures. Example: chest bumps, hugs, handshakes, etc. This would include running of the flags or other similar entrances and exits.
 - d. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a ONE (1) point deduction.
 - e. There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

UCA COMPETITION AREA

1. Participants must start in the competition area with at least one foot on the ground.
2. Teams may line up anywhere inside the competition area.
3. Approximate cheer floor size will be fifty-four feet wide by forty-two feet deep (9 strips).
4. In the Spirit Program Divisions - cheer and dance teams will split the performance surface 1/2 mat (approx.. 25 feet deep and 42 feet wide - **4 strips**) and 1/2 Marley (approx. 25 feet deep and 53.5 feet wide for Dance). Cheerleaders and dancers may stand or perform on either surface and must stay within the 53.5 X 53.5 area. Skills must be performed on the surface that is legal for the skill being performed. Athletes must follow the specific Safety Rules and Regulations for their team (cheer/dance).
5. Pep Band or Drumline Performance Area will enter to the side of the stage and must remain off the performing surface. An area will be designated in each performance venue. If the venue has a raised stage the pep band or drumline will be off stage on the floor. Pep Band or drumlines will be allowed to enter the area prior to the cheer or dance team being introduced for the competition.
6. Any team member stepping outside or touching outside the performance area will cause the squad to receive a .5 penalty per occurrence. Pep Band members must remain in designated area during the performance.
 - a. The white line is considered a warning mark.

- b. A penalty will be assessed when any ONE full hand, foot or body part touches outside of the performance surface.
- c. Once a team member takes the floor, they must remain on the floor until the end of the performance.
- 7. Signs or props may be safely placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member who must remain inside the competition area. A HALF (0.5) point penalty will be assessed for Props (signs, etc.) that are made of solid material or have sharp edges/corners released from a top person. A HALF (0.5) point penalty will be assessed for persons on the ground throwing hard props (signs, mags, etc.) - breaking of the wrist or if the arm extends away from the body.
- 8. A center mark will be provided for all performance floors. Teams are prohibited from bringing any non-used props to the performance area.
- 9. Designated Pep Band Performance Area.
 - a. Pep Bands will line up anywhere center stage within the performing surface (54 X 42) and their timing will begin the first beat of music. Game Day Live performances will allow one (1) minute for Pep Bands to play prior to the cheer/dance team being called. Pep Bands may play any cadence or song. Only the pep band is scored during this time.
 - b. Pep bands must remain on the raised stage in the designated areas of approximately 5 feet wide by 42 feet deep on either side of the performance surface.
 - c. Pep Bands will be limited to 30 total band members. Teams may place those members to the side only with a maximum of 20 members in each location.
 - d. During the performance, Pep Band members are allowed to change formation but must remain in the designated performance area in which they started.
 - e. Once a team member takes the floor, they must remain on the floor until the end of the performance.

CHEER SPOTTER POLICY

UCA will allow teams to provide additional spotters in the warm-up room only at the College Cheerleading and Dance Team National Championship. The use of additional spotters is left to the discretion of the coach. College/University teams at the Championship may use up to 4 additional spotters for each warm-up; however, additional spotters are not required. The use of additional spotters is not mandatory and will be at the discretion of the coach. Spotters will be available on the main competition floor at all venues.

Guidelines for Additional Spotters:

1. Should only be used during the stunt, pyramid, and/or basket toss sections. Additional spotters should stand at the back of the floor when not spotting those sections.
2. Should not touch, assist, or save skills being performed.
3. Additional spotters should only be used to prevent a fall to the competition floor.
4. Spotters are not allowed to count or coach while on the floor.
5. Should be dressed so that they are presentable, professional, and distinguishable from the performing athletes. Program provided additional spotters should not wear clothing similar to the performing team's uniform.
6. Should not dress or act in a manner that distracts from the athletes and their performance.
7. Should be at least 18 years old, listed on the official event roster and familiar with spotting the skills of the performing team.

Note: Teams should not attempt skills beyond their ability level.

CHEER SCORES AND RANKINGS

1. Individual 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 and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches or captains at the conclusion of the competition. Judges' decisions are final.
2. Any deductions or violations will be taken off the final score. For more information on scoring, score sheet and judging criteria, please visit uca.varsity.com.
3. TIE BREAKER POLICY - The judges for the event will be appointed at the sole discretion of Universal Cheerleaders Association. The judges will score each squad according to the judging criteria to determine their total score. The judges' scores will be combined with deductions being taken off the total scores. All ties in each division or group will remain. In the event of a first place tie in the final round of competition, the team with the lessor deductions will be awarded first place. If the deductions remain equal, the tie will not be broken and both teams will be awarded first place.
4. By participating in a Varsity event, teams give their consent for performances and scores to be made public.
5. 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 Spirit is unable to accommodate requests for removal.

UCA COLLEGE CHEER JUDGING CRITERIA AND SAFETY GUIDELINES:

1. Traditional Routine Criteria
 - a. The judges will score teams using the criteria listed on the UCA score sheet.
 - b. **Cheer will count for 30 points, Building Skills will count for 50 points and Overall will count for 15 points. 5 points will be awarded from the Spirit Video score.**
 - c. Any deductions or violations will be taken off of the final score. For more information on scoring, score sheet and judging criteria, please visit uca.varsity.com.
2. UCA Game Day Routine Criteria
 - a. The College Game Day Divisions and the Spirit Program Divisions showcases what traditional cheerleading is all about – leading the crowd! Teams will be evaluated on their ability to lead the crowd, proper game day skill incorporations, execution of skills, motion technique and overall routine.
 - b. The use of crowd leading tools such as rally towels, signs, poms, flags and/or megaphones is recommended. (All are not required) No other props, musical instruments, etc. may be used by anyone on the performance floor. Props may not be thrown into the crowd. **Props must be handheld and cannot bear the weight of the performer. This includes sideline cheer/dance boxes used at games.**
 - c. The order for the College Game Day Championship will be Fight Song, Situations Sideline (offence / defense) and a Game Day Timeout (in this order).
 - d. The judges will score teams using the criteria listed on the UCA Game Day score sheets. Each team will be evaluated on a **95 point system with 5 points being awarded from the Spirit Video score.** For detailed score sheets please visit uca.varsity.com. In the Spirit Program Divisions – cheer and dance scores will be averaged together.
 - e. Fight Song
 1. Should represent the traditional Fight Song your school has always done at games.
 2. Skills should be minimal and practical.
 3. You should start from you sideline formation.
 - f. Situational Sideline
 1. Will be situational for each team performing.

2. With either an offensive or defensive scenario, the squad will determine which sideline to do based on the cues.
 3. Teams are encouraged to use spirit raising props. The following props are allowed; signs, poms, flags and/or megaphones. No other props, musical instruments, etc. may be used by anyone on the performance floor. Props may not be thrown into the crowd.
 4. Skills should be minimal and practical.
- g. Game Day Timeout
1. Similar to a 60 second extended band chant that is designed for crowd interaction and involves crowd response.
 2. This is the best time to showcase your squad's energy, leadership, visual appeal and connection to the crowd.
- h. Skills must be practical for Game Day and executed with strong technique while providing a visual effect that influences the crowd's participation. The incorporation of skills will be allowed with the following restrictions:
1. Flips into or from partner stunts and pyramids will be prohibited.
 2. Twisting stunts and dismounts may not exceed $1\frac{1}{4}$ rotation.
 3. Flipping tosses are permitted with zero twisting rotations.
 4. No twisting airborne tumbling is allowed. Exception – Aerials are allowed.
- i. Any deductions or violations will be taken off of the final score. For more information on scoring, score sheets and judging criteria, please visit uca.varsity.com
- j. Traditional game day uniform is required.

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR PARTNER STUNTS, PYRAMIDS AND TOSSES

All teams attending the UCA College Cheerleading Championship will follow the USA Cheer Guidelines. Rules are subject to change by USA Cheer. For the most recent safety rules and information, [2023-2024 USA Cheer College Rules](#)

Universal Cheerleaders Association offers a service to help teams with legality and safety questions. Teams will be able to email skills in throughout the year to receive a legality or safety response. This service will help teams get a response with a video attached back to use in situations where the skill may be in question. Teams are not required, but encouraged, to submit a safety video.

To email a video, the following must be included:

1. 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.
2. All submissions must include the coach, team, and division.
3. The recording will be reviewed as if every person in the video is included in the skill. This would include additional spotters.
4. Videos are limited to 30 seconds and must be able to be viewed upright without rotating.
5. The recording will be limited to attachments only. Links, video sharing and YouTube style videos will not be accepted. While this does limit the video size, you are able to submit multiple videos.
6. 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 we were unable to make a judgement on the video. It is up to you as a coach to resubmit the video to be re-reviewed.
7. Please note: Only submitting the skill will make the skill eligible for a warning. UCA can only guarantee this process will be accepted at UCA-branded events. This would not include other Varsity-branded and state association events.

Videos via text message or facetime will not be reviewed. If you know that your video does not meet all the requirements above, please refilm/resubmit the video. Only videos that meet the above requirements will be reviewed.

Please send all videos to UCARules@varsity.com. Due to volume, please allow up to 7 business days to get back to you.

If you have any questions concerning the legality of a skill, please email the video to UCARules@varsity.com. Include your team name, your name, division and a contact phone number. It must be received by **January 3, 2024**, and will only be accepted from the head coach of the team. If received after the deadline, the video is not guaranteed a response.

PEP BAND GUIDELINES (GAME DAY LIVE DIVISIONS WITH CHEER OR DANCE)

1. Pep Band members will be allowed to play for multiple performances; however, they may only play for the school they attend. The pep band must be current members of the official pep band for the school they are representing.
2. The pep band must be in a school-related, coordinated outfit (i.e., traditional team uniform, coordinated outfit representing your school colors, letters, mascot, etc.).
3. The entire performance may not exceed 5 minutes with entry and exit of all performers.
4. ONLY Handheld or harnessed instruments allowed in the pep band.
5. Pep Bands will be responsible for transportation of all equipment to and from the event.
6. Pep bands may use props; however, props must conform to the cheer/dance guidelines. **Props must be handheld and cannot bear the weight of the performer. This includes sideline cheer/dance boxes used at games.**
7. Pep band member may not be involved in any stunts / tumbling.
8. Designated Pep Band Performance Area.
 - a. Pep Bands will line up anywhere center stage within the performing surface (54 X 42) and their timing will begin the first beat of music. Game Day Live performances will allow one (1) minute for Pep Bands to play prior to the cheer/dance team being called. Pep Bands may play any cadence or song. Only the pep band is scored during this time.
 - f. Pep bands must remain on the raised stage in the designated areas of approximately 5 feet wide by 42 feet deep on either side of the performance surface.
 - g. Pep Bands will be limited to 30 total band members. Teams may place those members to the side only with a maximum of 20 members in each location.
 - h. During the performance, Pep Band members are allowed to change formation but must remain in the designated performance area in which they started.
 - i. Once a team member takes the floor, they must remain on the floor until the end of the performance.
9. Game Day LIVE Format
 - b. Game Day Live performances will allow one (1) minute for Pep Bands to play prior to the cheer/dance team being called. Pep Bands may play any cadence or song. Only the pep band is scored during this time.
 - c. By the end of the 1 minute section, the Pep Band must relocate to the area designated outside of the performance surface (30 seconds to move formation). Please ensure the entrance for the athletes is clear. Pep Bands may play any cadence or song during the 30 second team introduction. Only the pep band is scored during this time
 - a. FIGHT SONG: The fight song should reflect your school's traditional Fight Song. For teams that do not have an official Fight Song, it is recommended to use a second selection of band chant music. When performing the fight song, the pep band should focus on sound quality, technical accuracy, musicality and engagement. They should lead the cheerleaders/dancers and the crowd with their performance, as well as participate in call-backs, if applicable.
 - b. SITUATIONAL SIDELINE: The pep band should provide a cadence that the team and crowd back home could easily yell along with, eliciting a crowd response.
 - c. TIMEOUT ROUTINE: The pep band should focus on playing spirited music that reflects a game day environment, and that the cheerleaders/dancers can incorporate visual movements to.
 - d. PERFORMANCE ROUTINE (Dance Game Day Live ONLY): The pep band should provide music that is upbeat, engaging, reflects a game day environment and focuses on overall entertainment value.
 - e. RUN OFF: The pep band has 30 seconds to play original, spirited music while the cheerleaders/dancers exit the competition floor. Once the piece ends, the pep band may exit. Only the pep band is scored during this time.

UDA COLLEGE DANCE DIVISIONS AND SPECIFIC GUIDELINES:

Traditional Dance Divisions:

1. **Division IA** - NCAA I-FBS
2. **Division I** - NCAA I-FCS
3. **Open Division** - NCAA II, III, Jr. College, NAIA and all other schools

Please see UDA College Game Day and Game Day Live Format Guidelines for Game Day division specifics

DANCE TEAM PARTICIPANTS

College Championship: Teams who participate in the competition will have the opportunity to compete in two of the three categories. The minimum number of dancers a team may compete with is seven (7)*. The maximum number of dancers a team may compete with is twenty (20). Teams with ten (10) members or less who choose to enter two categories must have all the original members perform in both routines. Teams with ten (10) members or more who choose to enter two categories must have at least 10 of the same members perform in both routines. Teams who compete in two (2) categories do not have to have the same number in each routine, if 10 are the same for both performances. If your team chooses pom as one of your categories, male dancers are not required to use poms.

*NOTE: If your team drops below the minimum, (7) please contact Jessica Pettitt at jpettitt@varsity.com.

NUMBER OF DANCE PERFORMANCES

Teams can enter two of the following three categories: pom, jazz, and/or hip hop. Teams who are also entering a Game Day division may do so as a third performance. Teams may not compete in one traditional category and two game day divisions.

GENERAL DANCE GUIDELINES

- A. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the event. The coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents, and any other person affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly.
- B. All programs should have, and review, an emergency action plan in the event of an injury.
- C. Coaches must recognize the entire team's ability level and limit the team's activities accordingly.
- D. No technical skills should be performed when a coach is not present or providing direct supervision.
- E. All practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for the activities of dance, and away from noise and distractions.
- F. Warm-up and stretching should precede and conclude all practice sessions, pep rallies, games, competitions, performances, and other physical activities.
- G. The performance surface should be taken into consideration before engaging in any technical aspect of dance. The performance area should be reasonably free of obstructions. Dancers should not perform technical skills on:
 - a. Concrete, asphalt, or any other hard or uncovered surface
 - b. Wet surfaces
 - c. Uneven surfaces
 - d. Surfaces with obstructions
- H. The dance team coach or other knowledgeable designated representative should attend all practices, functions, and games.

DANCE COMPETITION ROUTINE GUIDELINES

- A. Formal entrances which involve dance, technical skills, and all traditions/chants are not permitted. Dancers should enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
- B. All staging, backdrops, special effects, or any items that may damage or otherwise alter the performance floor or environment are prohibited (water, powder, glitter, fire, sliding oil, etc.).
- C. Center markers will not be allowed. This includes but is not limited to- stuffed animals, toys, alternate dancers, spacing ropes, etc.
- D. All performers (unless injured) must remain within the performance area throughout the entire routine. Dancers can only enter the performance area through the designated entry at the beginning of the routine and exit at the designated exit at the end of the routine. Athletes will not be penalized for leaving the performance surface but must stay within the performance area throughout the duration of the routine.
- E. Teams will have a maximum of (2) two minutes to demonstrate their style and expertise. If a team exceeds the time limit by more than (3) three seconds, they will be issued a penalty.
- F. Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement or note of music, whichever is first. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement or note of music, whichever is last.

DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUMING

- A. All facets of a performance/routine, including both choreography and music selection, should be appropriate and suitable for family viewing and listening. Examples of inappropriate choreography may include, but are not limited to, vulgar or suggestive movement appearing offensive or sexual in content, displaying acts of violence, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures. Music containing words unsuitable for family listening is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, swearwords and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing them with sound effects or other words may still constitute 'inappropriate.' Music or movement in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be assumed by the coach to be inappropriate and removed to not put their team in an unfortunate situation.
- B. 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.
- C. Teams competing at the College Cheerleading and Dance Team Championships and/or any competition at Walt Disney World may NOT use Disney costumes that resemble a Disney character or movie.
- D. All male dancers' costumes must include a shirt that is fastened; however, it can be sleeveless.
- E. Jewelry as part of the costume is allowed.

DANCE PROPS

Props are allowed in all Hip Hop, Jazz, and Pom categories; however, they must fit through a standard 36-inch door. Props must be handheld and cannot be used to bear the weight of the dancer. Standing props that can be used to bear the weight of the dancer are not allowed (Examples- chairs, stools, benches, ladders, boxes, stairs, etc.) Any props used must first be approved through the UDA National Office. To get them approved, please send a video of the prop in use to udarules@varsity.com. **Deadline to submit props is January 3, 2024.** For prop rules and guidelines as they pertain to Game Day categories, please visit the Game Day section beginning on page 22.

DANCE HANDS FREE POMS

The use of hands-free poms will be allowed. Hands-free poms are defined as poms specifically made so that performers do not have to hold the poms but rather, they are affixed to the performers hand. Proper use means bars cannot be in the palm of the hand and only an elastic band can be between the supporting hand and the performance surface for skills, tricks, etc. A hair tie, rubber band, or tying pom strings/pieces together will not be counted as a hands-free pom.

UDA ROUTINE SAFETY RULES

TUMBLING AND SKILLS (EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS)

1. Hip over-head rotation skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms in the supporting hand. (Exception: Forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed). The proper use of hands-free poms for hip over-head skills is allowed. *Please reference the Hands-Free Poms section for more details*
2. Hip over-head rotation skills with hand support that are not airborne in approach are limited to 3 connected skills. (Example: 3 consecutive handsprings 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. May not connect to any other hip over-head rotation skill.
 - b. May not be done consecutively without a stop or stall in momentum in between each skill.
 - c. Involves no more than one twisting transition.
 - d. Standing full twisting back flip will not be permitted.
4. Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
5. Choreographed drops 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	Back Tucks
Front Aerials	Back Handsprings
Front Handsprings	Front Tucks
Front/Back Walkovers	Round Offs (with or without hands)
Side Somi	Head spins
Forward Rolls	Windmills
Backward Rolls	Kip Ups
Cartwheels	Shoulder Rolls
Headstands	Handsprings (with hands)
Handstands	Backbends
Stalls/Freezes	

NOT ALLOWED:

Shushanova	Toe Pitch Back Tucks
Dive Rolls	No handed handsprings
Layouts	

DANCE LIFTS AND PARTNERING (Executed in pairs or groups)

1. The Executing Dancer must receive support from a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the performance surface through the entire skill. (Exception: Kick Line Leaps).
2. At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with the Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill.
 - a. Lifting with poms is allowed.
 - b. Extensions, pyramids, and basket tosses are NOT allowed.
3. Swinging in and out of lifts and tricks is allowed in the prone and/or supine positions; swinging forwards, backwards, or making a complete circular rotation will not be allowed if the Executing Dancer is in a prone position (body facing the ground).
4. Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) may occur if a Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
5. Vertical Inversions are allowed if:
 - a. The Supporting Dancer(s) maintain contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position.
 - b. When the height of the Executing Dancers shoulders exceeds shoulder level of the Supporting dancer, there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear weight.

RELEASE MOVES/UNASSISTED DISMOUNTS TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE

1. An Executing Dancer may jump, leap, step, or push off a Supporting Dancer if:
 - a. The highest point of the released skill does not elevate the Executing Dancer's feet above head level of the Supporting Dancer.

Exception: toe touches off a dancers back/leapfrog jumps will be allowed
 - b. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the prone or inverted position after the release.
 - c. Toe pitch back tucks are not allowed.
2. A Supporting Dancer may release/toss an Executing Dancer if:
 - a. The highest point of the release/toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above head level of the Supporting Dancer.
 - b. The Executing Dancer is not supine or inverted when released.
 - c. The Executing Dancer does not pass through a prone or inverted position after release.
 - d. Toe Pitch back tucks are not allowed.

DANCE PENALTIES

- A. A deduction will be given for EACH safety/general competition rule violation. The point value of this deduction will be as follows:
 - 0.5 points- performance error- any skill or trick executed incorrectly that then makes it an illegal skill/trick (example: touching down on an aerial cartwheel with non- hands-free poms in hand)
 - 1.0 points- General rules violations including (but not limited to) timing infractions of 1-5 seconds over time, costume/shoe rules, Incorrect Situational Sideline response including calling a general sideline, prop rules, editing in templates for virtual events, not including a template for virtual uploads, etc.
 - 1.5 points- Timing infractions of 6 or more seconds over time, routine safety rule violations
- B. If you have any questions concerning the legality of a trick or move, please email the video to udarules@varsity.com. Include your team's name, your name, contact phone number, and the event attending. It must be received by **January 3, 2024 and** will only be accepted by the head coach of the team. If received after the deadline, the video is not guaranteed a response. Videos from choreographers will not be allowed. Videos sent via text message will not be allowed. For questions, please contact udarules@varsity.com.

SCORES AND RANKINGS

1. Individual 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 and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches at the conclusion of the competition. Judges' decisions are final.
2. Any deductions or violations will be taken off the final score. For more information on scoring, score sheet and judging criteria, please visit uda.varsity.com.
3. In the event of a first-place tie, event officials will look at the raw scores per judge to see which team was ranked higher most often in each caption. Should a tie remain, the ranking points from the "overall impression" portion of the score sheet will be used to break the tie. No first-place ties in a preliminary or semi-final round will be broken.
4. Questions regarding penalties can be made by the head coach of the team only and must be done within 30 minutes of the final performance of the division or prior to final awards-whichever happens first. Once results have been announced, no rules violation challenges will be accepted.
5. By participating in a Varsity event, teams give their consent for performances and scores to be made public.
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 Spirit is unable to accommodate requests for removal.

FLOOR DIMENSIONS (College Championship Only)

1. All floors will have 10 panels of Marley floor, each panel approximately 5 feet 3.5 inches wide making the full floor approximately 53.5 x 53.5.
2. Jumping on or off a raised performance surface is prohibited. This rule applies in all categories, including Game Day and Game Day Live.
3. All performers (unless injured) must remain within the performance area throughout the entire routine. Dancers can only enter the performance area through the designated entry at the beginning of the routine and exit at the designated exit at the end of the routine. Athletes will not be penalized for leaving the performance surface but must stay within the performance area throughout the duration of the routine.
4. In the Spirit Program Divisions - cheer and dance teams will split the performance surface 1/2 mat (approx.. 25 feet deep and 42 feet wide - 4 strips) and 1/2 Marley (approx. 25 feet deep and 53.5 feet wide for Dance). Cheerleaders and dancers may stand or perform on either surface and must stay within the 53.5 X 53.5 area. Skills must be performed on the surface that is legal for the skill being performed. Athletes must follow the specific Safety Rules and Regulations for their team (cheer/dance).

UDA COLLEGE GAME DAY AND GAME DAY LIVE FORMAT GUIDELINES

1. There are FIVE separate UDA Game Day divisions:
 - a. Division IA Dance Game Day (NCAA Division I – FBS) – Male/ Female (Max 30 Members)
 - b. Division I Dance Game Day (NCAA Division I – FCS) – Male/ Female (Max 30 Members)
 - c. Open Dance Game Day (NCAA II, Division III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA and all other schools) – Male/ Female Only (Max 30 Members)
 - d. Division IA Spirit Program Game Day (NCAA Division I – FBS) (Max 30 members)
 - e. Open Spirit Program Game Day (NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges & NAIA) (Max 30 Members)
2. There are FOUR separate UDA Game Day Live divisions:
 - a. Teams may add a pep band or drumline into their performance. Pep Bands or Drumlines will not count toward the total number of participants allowed. Pep Bands or Drumlines must be registered with the event as participants. Refer to additional Pep Band guidelines for Game Day Live specifics.
 - b. Open Dance Game Day Live (NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA, and all other schools) (Max 30 Members)
 - c. Division IA Dance Game Day Live (NCAA Division I – FBS) (Max 30 members)
 - d. Open Spirit Program Game Day Live (NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges, NAIA, and all other schools) (Max 30 Members)
 - e. Division IA Spirit Program Game Day Live (NCAA Division I – FBS) (Max 30 members)
3. The order for the Dance Game Day and Game Day Live Divisions **will be** Fight Song, Game Situation (offense/defense), Performance Routine.
 - a. Fight Song
 1. Skills and choreography should represent a traditional fight song your team performs at games.
 - b. Game Situation
 1. This component of the Game Day Championship includes two elements. Teams are encouraged to use spirit raising props. The following props are allowed: signs, poms, flags and/or megaphones.
 - A real-life scenario where the team will react to an audio cue with an offense or defense game chant. **These chants should be specific to the verbal cue given.** An incorrect situational sideline response including calling a general sideline will result in a one-point penalty.
 - Timeout (band music/traditional team music) designed for crowd interaction. The timeout should be the same, regardless of what situation (offense or defense) you are given.
 - c. Performance Routine
 1. A routine (any style) that is designed for crowd entertainment. This routine has a max time limit of 30 seconds.
 2. This is the best time to showcase your team’s energy and connection to the crowd.
4. The order for the Spirit Program Game Day and Spirit Program Game Day Live Divisions **will be** Fight Song, Situational Sideline (offense/ defense), Timeout.
 - a. Fight Song
 1. Skills and choreography should represent a traditional fight song your team performs at games.
 - b. Situational Sideline
 1. This component of the Spirit Program Game Day includes one element.
 2. A real-life scenario where the team will react to an audio cue with an offense or defense game chant. **These chants should be specific to the verbal cue given.** An incorrect situational sideline response including calling a general sideline will result in a one-point penalty.
 - c. Timeout
 1. Band Chant music or traditional team music designed for crowd interaction.
 2. This is the best time to showcase your team’s energy, leadership, visual appeal and connection to the crowd.
 3. In previous years, this component was included in the second part of Dance Game Day. With Spirit Program Gameday, we are omitting the Performance Routine and have split the Game Situation into two separate components.

5. Teams will be evaluated and scored on each section of the Game Day Competition. Within each section, performances will be scored on synchronization, execution of motions/skills and overall effect. In addition, other components that pertain specifically to each section will be judged. For more information visit uda.varsity.com.
6. The use of spirit raising props is recommended but not required. The following props are allowed: signs, poms, megaphones, flags, and rally towels. No other props, musical instruments, etc. may be used by anyone on the performance floor.
7. Props cannot be tossed or thrown except for a pom toss. Props may not be thrown into the crowd and hip over-head rotation skills (with or without hand support) with props (exception: poms) will be prohibited. See page 16 for the hands-free pom rules as they pertain to hip over-head rotation skills.
8. For cheer and dance teams competing in the Game Day divisions, we will allow teams to have up to a maximum of 30 seconds to enter the floor and set their props. The announcer will call the first cue at or before (if team is set) the 30 seconds. All entry and rules guidelines will still apply, and keep in mind that your entry to the floor will not be judged; however, deductions will still be assessed. The overall time limit is 3:00.
9. Teams may add up to 1 (one) mascot in their routine. The mascot must enter the floor with the team and remain on the floor for the entire routine or an out of bounds penalty will be assessed. Mascots should be used to raise crowd energy and participation. The mascot should not be involved in any stunts or skills with hip overhead rotation and should position themselves away from skills being performed. The mascot will not count toward the number of participants allowed but may impact the overall impression score. Mascots will only be allowed to use traditional sideline props. The following props are allowed: signs, poms, megaphones, flags, and rally towels. Uniform/costume pieces must be worn from the beginning of the routine. Items/articles of clothing brought on to the stage but not worn will be considered a prop. If any part of your mascot uniform / costume is taken off, it must be immediately put down.
10. The judges will score teams using the criteria listed on the UDA Game Day Championship score sheet. Each team will be evaluated on a 100-point system. For detailed score sheets please visit uda.varsity.com.
11. All teams attending the UDA College Dance Team Championship will follow UDA College Nationals Rules and Regulation.
12. Any deductions or violations will be taken off the final average score. For more information on scoring, score sheets and judging criteria, please visit uda.varsity.com
13. Traditional game day uniform is required. Uniform pieces must be worn from beginning of the routine. Items/articles of clothing brought on to the stage but not worn will be considered a prop. If any part of your uniform is taken off, it must be immediately put down.

DANCE GAME DAY ROUTINE SAFETY RULES

Teams competing in the game day divisions must follow all the routine safety rules and regulations at any regional or championship event. Refer to pages 18-19 for more information.

COLLEGE MASCOT ENTRY GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

MASCOT DIVISIONS

1. Mascot Division IA (NCAA I – FBS)
2. Open Mascot (NCAA I – FCS, NCAA II, NCAA III, Jr. Colleges & NAIA)

ENTRY GUIDELINES

1. The competition is open to all officially recognized mascots.
2. 50% of the video entry score will carry over for the National Finals.
3. Mascots will upload a two-minute highlight segment from the current season in MP4 or MOV format with their registration to qualify for the College Mascot National Championship by 5:00 pm **Tuesday November 7, 2023**.
4. Highlights must be actual speed and cannot be sped up for visual effect.
5. 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.
6. If a mascot exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. One (1) point deduction for 1-5 seconds over and Two (2) point deduction for 6 seconds over.
7. Please include highlights from school events, games, community activities and/or public appearances, etc. Be sure to follow the judging sheet below to ensure you meet all judging criteria.
8. Schools with more than one student playing the role of the same character may submit tapes together but only one mascot per character may compete. If both or all want to compete, each mascot must send in separate tapes and will be judged and ranked separately.
9. Safety Guidelines for Highlight Video:
 - a. The use of mini-tramps and /or springboards is prohibited.
 - b. Tumbling or flipping skills will NOT be allowed off of a prop or over a prop.
 - c. No pyrotechnics, discharge of arms, pressurized canisters, dangerous materials, flammable liquids or animals will be permitted.

MUSIC GUIDELINES FOR MASCOT ENTRY TAPE

All music will need to follow the music guidelines listed on page 4-5

1. Only music captured incidentally (i.e., in the background of the video) will be permitted
2. No music can be edited into the video

BIDS AWARDED

1. The top 10 Division IA Mascots and the Top 5 Open Mascots will advance to The Mascot Championship in Orlando, FL. Paid bids will be awarded to the top four (4) Division IA and the top (1) Open Mascots to compete.

SAMPLE OF MASCOT ENTRY SCORE SHEET

Overall Character Development	30 points
Game Situations	15 points
Crowd Involvement	15 points
Cheer/Dance/Band Integration	10 points
Community Service	10 points
School Activities (Non-Sporting)	10 points
Overall Impression	10 points

Mascot can register online at myVarsity.com

Upload your video to
[Mascot Video Entry Video Upload](#)

COLLEGE MASCOT CHAMPIONSHIP GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

1. The competition is open to all officially recognized mascots that qualified from the video entry preliminaries.
2. **Mascots who officially qualified for the Championship must submit skit themes for pre-approval by 5:00 pm on December 1, 2023, to College@varsity.com. Mascots with similar skit themes may be asked to select a new theme.**
3. **Skits should be appropriate for all audiences. Any vulgar or suggestive movements, words, or music will result in a 2.0 deduction.** Skits should represent good sportsmanship with competing mascots.
4. 50% of the video entry score will carry over for the National Finals.
5. Mascots will have 1 minute to set up and 1 minute to take down their set. Mascots may have TWO assistants to set up and take down props, but you may not use live assistance in your skit. The assistants must be appropriately dressed in their school's spirit program t-shirts and / or warmups.
6. Each mascot will perform a 1 minute and 30 second skit to music. 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.
7. If a mascot exceeds either time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. One (1) point deduction for 1-5 seconds over and Two (2) point deduction for 6 seconds over. If a skit is retimed as part of a review, the exact time will be used with the 3 second allowance.
8. Mascots must have a representative to play their music.
9. Specific Rules for props:
 - a. Mascots are limited to no more than 5 props.
 - b. Each prop may not exceed 36" in height, width or depth and must be able to fit through a standard size (72") double door. Props will be measured at their largest size so any flips or mechanics should be considered in the measurement of the height and width of the props. Wheels can be used on the bottom of props for ease of movement and will not be considered an attachment however; they will count in the overall height of the prop.
 - c. No attachments will be allowed.
 - d. Props can be stacked but cannot be attached or bound together. Each prop must enter the stage separately and then be stacked to show a clear separation of props.
 - e. Hinges can be used but when expanded must be part of the original prop measurement and cannot exceed the maximum prop measurements (36" in height, width or depth)
 - f. The bottom of all props, flats and scenery made of wood, metal or PVC type plastic must be padded or taped. To avoid damage to the competition floor, props should be constructed so that they may easily be carried or moved to the performance area.
 - g. Wood, metal, PVC, screws, zip ties, tape, and other adhesives may be used for the purpose of constructing a base or supporting structure for the above props.
 - h. All equipment tips on batons, prop rifles, flagpoles, and prop sabres must be padded or taped.
 - i. Clapping hands or poms are considered one prop.
 - j. If any part of your uniform / costume is taken off it must be immediately put down. If you use it in your skit it becomes one of your props.
10. Safety Guidelines for Props:
 - a. The use of mini-tramps and /or springboards is prohibited.
 - b. Tumbling or flipping skills will NOT be allowed off of a prop or over a prop.
 - c. No pyrotechnics, discharge of arms, pressurized canisters, dangerous materials, flammable liquids or animals will be permitted.
 - d. Electrical (plug-in or battery operated) or compressed air apparatuses, including lights, lasers, and flashcubes (electrical or chemical) will not be allowed.
 - e. Smoke machines will not be allowed.
 - f. The use of powder, dirt or any other airborne substance that lingers in the competition area shall be strictly prohibited.
 - g. Balloons, confetti, dry ice, water guns, motorized devices, fire extinguishers or noise-making devices will not be allowed.

11. Mascots are responsible for transporting props to and from the competition venue.
12. Mascots will be required to bring any necessary tools to properly disassemble and discard all props after the final competition.
13. Mascots in costume will not be allowed outside of the competition venues.
14. Any violation of the specific Rules and Regulations will result in a three 3.0 point deduction.

SAMPLE OF JUDGING MASCOT SCORE SHEET (CHAMPIONSHIP)

SAMPLE OF JUDGING SCORE SHEET	
Crowd Appeal & Crowd Interaction	10 points
Creativity	10 points
Animation / Enthusiasm	10 points
Prop Usage	10 points
Overall Impression	10 points

COLLEGE PARTNER STUNT ENTRY GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

The competition is open to all coed and all girl partner stunt groups who are presently registered full-time students and members of their school's official 2023-2024 College / University cheerleading squad. All entries must follow the eligibility guidelines listed above.

1. Divisions

- Coed Partner Stunt Division must be one male and one female.
- Girls Partner Stunt division may have four female team members.

2. Music and Time Limitations

- All routines must be "Music Only", and performance time may not exceed one minute in length.
- Timing will begin with the first movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first.
- There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.
- 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.
- If a partner stunt group exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. One (1) point deduction for 1-5 seconds over and Two (2) point deduction for 6 seconds over. If a partner stunt group is retimed as part of a review, the exact time will be used without the 3 second allowance.

3. Music Guidelines for Partner Stunt Tape

- Only music captured incidentally (i.e., in the background of the video) will be permitted.
- No music can be edited into the video.
- All music captured from half-times, games, etc. highlighted in the video will need to follow the music guidelines.
- Any violation of these music guidelines will result in a 1 point penalty.**

4. How to register

- Submit a one-minute, **unedited** video along with a \$25 entry fee per couple/group. Payment must be included with your video entry to qualify.
- All Videos must be uploaded to uca.varsity.com and should be submitted in MP4 or MOV files.
- Complete and return the registration form.
- Your video and entry fee must be in our office no later than 5:00pm on **November 7, 2023**.

5. College Partner Stunt Qualification

- The top groups in each division will qualify to compete in the Partner Stunt Championship in Orlando.
- Paid Bids will not be awarded from the video entry. Stunt groups will compete in reverse ranking order for the Finals in Orlando based on the video entry placement.

PARTNER STUNT SCORING:

STUNT EXECUTION

Top: 20 POINTS

Proper Technique, Form, Flexibility, Appearance of Stunts

Base(s): 20 POINTS

Proper Technique, Completion of Skills, Minimal Movement

STUNT DIFFICULTY

Top: 15 POINTS

Level of Skill, Type and Number of Body Positions,

Type of Transitions, Variety

Base(s): 15 POINTS

Level of Skill, Type of Transitions, Variety

OVERALL PERFORMANCE – 30 POINTS

TRANSITIONS 10 POINTS

Number of Transitions, Continuous Pace, Flow of Routine, Creativity

OVERALL EFFECT 10 POINTS

Routine Fit to Music, Choreography, Visual Appeal

SHOWMANSHIP 10 POINTS

Excitement Level of Routine, Presentation, Traditional Team Image

All Partner Stunt Groups MUST complete the Online Registration Form. Registration form, entry fee and video are due by Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

COLLEGE PARTNER STUNT COMPETITION RULES

GENERAL RULES

1. Participants may not represent more than one stunt group.
2. Partner groups must begin their routine with both feet on the ground.
3. Partner Stunt Groups must wear a school uniform for BOTH entry and finals. (No bra tops or shorts).
4. You are required to have a spotter throughout your routine. Spotters will be provided for the National Finals.
Spotters must wear a school uniform or team warmup.
5. Tumbling into a stunt is allowed. (i.e. back handspring toss to extension).
6. Participants are required to follow the National Championship Safety Rules and Regulations. All skills that require an additional spotter are allowed; however, skills that require two bases to perform are not allowed for coed partner stunt groups.

VIOLATIONS

1. Please refer to the deduction explanation for all penalties that will be assessed.
2. Any partner stunt group 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.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

1. Each group will receive a critique of their performance.
2. Finalists will have the opportunity to compete in the College Partner Stunt Competition at the **Walt Disney World® Resort** in Florida.
3. Winners will receive medals and trophies.

RULES AND 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 coaching and directing teams at the College Cheerleading and Dance Team 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.