



2021 DANCE NATIONALS RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. **GENERAL RULES**

The competition will follow the same general information and safety rules as set forth in the 2020-21 Dance Regional Competition "General Information" link. (Available on-line at usa.varsity.com). Each team is responsible for reading and understanding the guidelines set forth in the 2020-21 Competitions "General Information" and "Safety Updates" literature. **All penalties/safety infractions found in routines at Nationals will be upheld, regardless of whether the penalty was assessed or found at the Regional level.** Entrants may submit a "Safety Guideline Video" by March 26th, 2021 for review of safety legalities in their routine(s) prior to Nationals. The USA will respond officially to the team's inquiry and file the response for review (if necessary) at USA Dance Nationals

The competition will consist of the categories/divisions listed in the 2020-21 Dance Regional Competition "General Information" link posted at usa.varsity.com.

Categories/divisions may be subdivided or combined at the discretion of the competition director/officials if the total number of teams in a division warrant this. **The USA reserves the right to adjust days of performance for all divisions based upon final competition enrollment.**

Schools may enter a maximum of **EIGHT** categories (excluding solo divisions); however, no individual may participate on two teams in the same division. (Example: An individual cannot perform in two routines competing in the Small Dance division).

There is no limit to the number of individuals permitted on a team in the largest division of any category, if the routine can be performed safely within the given floor size constraints.

Athlete Eligibility

Entrants in all divisions must be registered students in the school they are representing **and** official members of the team at the time of competition.

Routine Violations

All teams must compete in the same qualifying categories in which they qualified for USA Dance Nationals through a USA Regional Competition (Small Dance, Medium Military, etc.).

Teams can enter **either** the Novelty **or** the Character Dance divisions but may not enter into both.

Teams may not compete the same competition routine at both USA Spirit Nationals and USA Dance Nationals within the same season. For example, the same "Pom" or "Jazz" routine cannot compete in a Song/Pom or Song/Jazz division at USA Spirit Nationals and then the Dance/Pom or Jazz division at USA Dance Nationals. Teams which do not adhere to this may be subject to disqualification.

Time Limitations

Timing of a routine will begin on the first note of music or movement made, whichever comes first. Set-up timing will stop when the routine begins. Penalties for exceeding the entrance or exit time and/or the routine time limit will be deducted from the final averaged score. Please refer to the 2020-21 Dance Competitions "Safety Updates" for time limits in each category. (Available on-line at usa.varsity.com.) **We recommend that you "time" your performance several times prior to the competition and give yourself at least five seconds of "cushion" to allow for speed variations in sound equipment.**

Teams and individuals are encouraged to move on and off the floor as quickly as possible. Set-ups and break-downs will be timed in all categories.

Music Guidelines

- a) 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 owner(s) of the sound recordings.
- b) For the most up to date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, dance teams should email dancemusic@varsity.com. Please periodically check the provider list for updates and changes.
- c) Teams must be able to provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, during registration at the event they are attending.
- d) If your team is featured in a TV and/or virtual 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.
- e) 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.
- f) 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.
- g) 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).
- h) 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.
- i) If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.
- j) A challenge can only be made by the official coach of a team competing at the event at which the challenge is being made.
- k) Challenge Process
 - i) All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the event director.
 - ii) 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.
 - iii) Fees collected will be voided if challenge is correct.
 - iv) If the team challenged can provide documentation during the event and can be verified, the fees will be donated to St. Jude.
 - v) If the team challenged can provide documentation that requires further review, a decision will be finalized within 48 hours of the event.

- vii) Each team is required to have a responsible adult that knows the routine and music as a representative remain at the music station (no alternates or team members allowed). This representative is responsible for starting the music and stopping the music at the routine's end, or in case of technical malfunction or injury. Should an adult choose not to stay at the music station for the duration of the routine, and a malfunction occurs, the team may or may not be permitted to perform the routine again. Please hold on to your music until the time of your performance. If using an MP3, smart phone, etc. please ensure that there is no case on the device which will obstruct the jack from plugging into the sound system. Please ensure that jacks are clean and free of any debris which may impact connectivity. Note that you may need to acquire an adapter in advance if your player does not have a head phone jack. If you are using a smart phone, please ensure that no interruptions (i.e. phone call, alarm, etc.) occur during your performance. Place the smart phone in "airplane mode," ensure that the volume is turned up and the phone is fully charged. Interference caused by a smart phone that results in routine delay may receive an overtime or delay of contest penalty.
- l) Virtual Competitions Music Guidelines
 - i) The USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative will govern all sound recordings used at the event 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.
 - ii) For the most up-to-date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, dance teams should email dancemusic@varsity.com. Please check the Music Provider list for updates and changes periodically.
 - iii) 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.

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. Any team traveling with a video crew may be disqualified.

Logo Usage

Teams will not be allowed to use any Varsity Spirit Brand logo, the USA Logo, or the Dance Nationals Logo including banners, rings, bows, t-shirts, etc. without prior approval from the USA office. However, the use of the USA letters (not unique to the USA logo) will be allowed.

Performance Area

All team competitions (other than all x-small and small divisions) will take place on a basketball court/parquet/marley or similar type dance floor measuring at least 50' (front to back) and 94' (side to side). Competition in all x-small and small divisions (Open and Championship) will take place on a parquet/marley or similar type dance floor measuring at least 39' x 60.' Floor size is subject to change.

II. **INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE**

Unforeseen Circumstances

- a) 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 rather than the team, the team affected should **STOP** the routine.
- b) The team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials.

Fault of Team

- a) 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.
- b) The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.

Injury

- a) The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are a) competition officials, b) the director/coach from the team performing or c) an injured individual.
- b) The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform later. 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 may perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.
- c) The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
 - i) The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) **AND THEN** the head coach/director of the competing team.
 - ii) 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.
 - iii) Any athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms consistent with concussion should be removed from the activity at that time and should not be allowed to return to activity that day. The athlete should not return to activity on a subsequent day until evaluated by and receives written clearance for such participation from a qualified physician (**MD or DO specifically trained in concussion management**).

Uniform Distractions

- a) The Legality Official, Head Judge or any other competition official reserves the right to stop a routine, assess a deduction, and/or disqualify a team for a uniform distraction (e.g. garment not being securely fastened/attached, straps break, pants split, etc.).
- b) Each performer is required to take the necessary steps to avoid inappropriate exposure prior to the performance.
- c) If a judge stops the routine the penalty will vary from 3 three points to possible disqualification of the routine.

III. **APPROPRIATENESS OF CHOREOGRAPHY, MUSIC, OUTFITTING**

All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, music selection and outfitting, should be suitable for family viewing and listening. Uniforms for all team types should be appropriate for the age of the participants performing the routine.

In general, performances from school-based teams, 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.

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

Any uniform or music in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be submitted to the USA for approval prior to the performance taking place.

IV. PRELIMINARY COMPETITIONS

There will be a preliminary competition held in the following categories/divisions: Championship Dance, Championship Jazz, Championship Military, Championship Lyrical, Championship Prop, Championship Novelty, Championship Dance/Pom, Championship All Male, Championship Character Dance, Championship Kick, Championship Hip Hop and Solos (Super Dancer and USA Dance Nationals Solo Champion). The judges and tournament officials have full authority to make final determination of the number of teams selected for the Finals in each category/division (the number will be no less than 20% of the total teams that performed in the division for preliminaries, excluding solos) and/or if a category/division not listed above will proceed to Finals. Should a routine advance from Prelims to Finals at a given event, the overall routine composition and music used (if any) for the routine must be the same in Finals as was performed in Prelims. Adjustments to skills may be made for strategic purposes; however, the spirit of this rule precludes a team/individual from performing an entirely new routine in their Finals performance. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

V. HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the officer, coach or the director of the team and will be directed only to the Competition/Venue Director or their designee. **The competition judges should not be approached at any time.** Such questions must be made prior to the team's competition performance. Any questions concerning the performance of the team must be made to the Competition/Venue Director immediately after the performance. **Should a director or coach wish to lodge a formal complaint against another team in the competition for any violation of "Policies & Procedures" or competition rules, this complaint must be submitted in writing, signed, dated and presented to the Competition/Venue Director prior to any awards ceremony for which the team in question may be eligible to receive an award. It is to the discretion of the Competition/Venue Director whether investigation into the complaint will be completed prior to or after the awards ceremony.**

VI. SPORTSMANSHIP

All participants and spectators affiliated with them agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying positive sportsmanship throughout the competition. The director, coach and/or officer of the team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents and any other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Un-sportsmanlike conduct will include, but is not limited to, approaching other teams, competition judges and/or any competition personnel with inappropriate comments, outbursts or gestures; confrontation with members of another team and/or between spectators of teams. Cases of un-sportsmanlike conduct at any time during the Nationals event are grounds to receive a penalty, up to disqualification, and the USA also has the right to deny entrance to or to remove an individual from the competition site. Additionally, disbarment from future USA events may occur. Payment for any damage caused by participants, parents, family and/or friends to hotel and/or convention center property will be the sole responsibility of the individual(s) and/or the school involved. School administration may be notified of any damages that occur.

VII. SCORES AND RANKINGS

Individual judges' score sheets are for the exclusive use of each judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores prior to the results of each division being announced. Score sheets will be available at the conclusion of the competitions on Friday and Saturday. Score sheets are **only** available to the person(s) listed on this document. The person(s) will need to show picture identification before receiving the score sheets. No scores or rankings will be given over the phone. Recaps will be ready for pick-up and included in scoresheet packets at Nationals.

Scoring officials will only discuss my routines and/or scores/deductions. Coaches/directors may not challenge scores/deductions of other teams.

VIII. APPEARANCES, ENDORSEMENTS AND PUBLICITY

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

Teams will not be permitted to use the USA and/or Varsity logos, without the express written permission of the United Spirit Association. This includes usage on items such as banners, rings, t-shirts, bows, etc.

IX. INTERPRETATIONS AND RULINGS

Any interpretation of any aspect of these Policies & Procedures or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Competition Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will render a judgement 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 but is not limited to the Event Director(s), the USA Dance Program Director and the Director of Special Events.

X. FINALTY OF DECISIONS

By participating in this competition, each team agrees that decisions by the judges will be final and will not be subject for review. 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.

Any school/team and/or individual that does not adhere to the terms and procedures in the "Policies & Procedures" may receive a penalty, up to disqualification from the competition, and automatically forfeit the right to any awards presented by the competition. In addition, the school/team and/or individual may also forfeit the opportunity to participate in any competition produced by the United Spirit Association the following season or subsequent seasons. Any fees (team and/or spectator based) associated with participation in the event will be forfeited in the event of disqualification. The USA reserves the right to deny registration to any team.