

2020 – 21 USA DANCE COMPETITIONS

DIVISIONS & SIZING

How to qualify for USA Nationals:

If your team competes in any of the divisions listed under “Qualifying Divisions”, and you would like to compete at USA Dance Nationals, you must first pre-qualify at a USA Dance Regional or Classic. *If you do not have a USA Dance Regional in your area, you must qualify by video. Registration for USA Dance Nationals opens in October. Register early!* **Teams do not need to wait to qualify for Nationals.** The USA will place each team in the “Open” or “Championship” division once the team has performed at a USA Regional, for all qualifying divisions.

QUALIFYING DIVISIONS

- **Dance – New Sizing** X-Small (2-4), Small (5-10), Medium (11-17), Large (18+)
- Hip Hop - Small (5-10), Medium (11-17), Large (18+)
- Lyrical - Small (5-10), Medium (11-17), Large (18+)
- Jazz - Small (5-10), Medium (11-17), Large (18+)
- Military - Small (5-14), Large (15+)
- Prop (5+)
- Kick (5+)
- All-Male (5+)
- Novelty/Musical Theater (5+) **
- Character Dance (5+) **
- Dance/Pom (5+)

****At any USA competition a school may enter into either the Novelty/Musical Theater or the Character Dance division, but may not enter into both.**

For qualifying divisions, teams who receive an average score of 85 points or greater (excluding penalties) for a given routine at a USA Regional will qualify for (and must compete in) the “Championship” division at Dance Nationals. Teams who score an 84.9 or below for a given routine at a USA Regional will qualify for (and must compete in) the “Open” division at Dance Nationals. Only the judges’ scores can determine the qualification for “Open” or “Championship” divisions.

NON-QUALIFYING DIVISIONS

The following divisions **do not** require prior qualification at a USA Regional or via video entry in order to compete at USA Dance Nationals. The non-qualifying divisions include:

- Co-Ed (5+)
- Small Dance/Drill (5+)
- JV Dance (5+)
- JV Hip Hop (5+)
- JV Dance/Pom (5+)
- Solo

* JV teams can choose to compete in any division. An individual may not compete in the same division at different levels i.e. JV Dance/Pom and Dance/Pom. **NEW** – A team can only compete in the JV Division if their school has a separate Varsity team.

DIVISION DESCRIPTIONS

*Please note: the only divisions which have gender restrictions are Co-Ed Dance & All-Male Dance (see below).

Sample scoresheets for all USA competitions will be available on-line by visiting <https://www.varsity.com/usa/> after September 1, 2020.

The contest director may cancel, combine or divide divisions as deemed necessary. If divisions are sub-divided, adjustments will be made in the number of available awards. Teams will be limited to entering **8 team divisions** and a maximum of 3 soloists at Regionals. Multiple teams from a school will be allowed (i.e. Drill Team vs. Dance Team or JV vs. Varsity) as long as individuals are not competing on both teams. For example, if the same dancer competes on both the Dance Team and the Drill Team for their high school, those teams will then need to share the **8** maximum number of routines. An individual may not compete against her/himself in the same division/category (i.e. perform in two X-Small Dance routines).

INDIVIDUAL SOLO COMPETITION

All contestants must perform a solo dance routine up to 2 minutes (maximum) in length: entrance up to 15 seconds and exit up to 15 seconds. Any dance style or combination of styles may be used.

DANCE

Overall effect must be dance in nature. Any dance style or combination of styles are acceptable. Dance attire or school uniforms may be used.

DANCE SHOWCASE

This division is the perfect opportunity for any performing arts program or team to gain valuable performance experience for evaluation only! Performances in this division will be evaluated against the USA scoresheet for an overall rating based on scoring. **This division is for evaluation only!** Any dance style or combination of styles are acceptable. This division is currently offered at USA Regional and Classic events only.

CO-ED DANCE

This team must consist of at least 2 males and 2 females. Routine may be of any dance style or combination of styles. Routine emphasis must be on partnering interactions for at least 50% of the routine.

ALL-MALE DANCE

This team must consist of all males. Routine may be of any dance style or combination of styles.

LYRICAL

A routine where all dancers interpret the lyrics, mood or intent of a song (with or without words), using ballet and/or jazz and/or modern technique. This form has a quality of movement that uses the music and/or lyrics as the guide. Incorporating balance / sustained movement, as well as facial and body emotion, is expected.

DANCE/POM

Routine emphasis must be on the use of pom. Teams must use two poms for at least three-fourths of the routine. Standard school uniforms, dance or military clothing may be worn.

HIP HOP

A routine where all dancers perform grounded street-style movement. Difficulty should not be emphasized through technical jazz technique, but rather through specific hip hop styles. For example, styles should include (but are not limited to): body control, isolations, rhythm, pop/locking, tutting, whacking, krumping, breaking, etc. Any genre of music may be used as long as the routine as a whole focuses on hip hop style.

MILITARY

Routine must be military in nature with an emphasis on precision & sharpness through the dancer's entire body. Routine must include: military maneuvers, pattern formations, visual effects, various arm/hand sequences and a variety of marching styles (i.e. glide, high knee, prance, pony, chug, etc.). School uniforms or military attire/costume must be worn. In keeping with the military tradition, all maneuvering/marching/traveling must begin on the left foot. All difficulty and technical elements must be in keeping with military style/quality.

DANCE/DRILL

Routine must incorporate a combination of the Military division and Dance division guidelines. (Please read the descriptions of both the Military & Dance divisions before competing in the Dance/Drill division). This routine must incorporate 1/2 dance and 1/2 military movements. (i.e. dance style must not be emphasized over military style and vice versa.)

KICK

Routine emphasis must be on kicks. Kicks must be the focal point of the routine and must be used for more than 3/4 of the total routine length. Any style of movement may be used, as long as the kicks are the focal point of the routine. Routine must include a variety of kick sequences, as well as a variety of different kick types overall.

JAZZ

Routine is rooted within the broad spectrum of jazz dance, utilizing vocabulary from any style of jazz dance technique, including: theatrical, vernacular, technical, stylized, classical/concert, pop, etc. Choreography should include the aesthetic foundation of jazz dance, emphasizing bold dramatic body movements, isolations, contractions, rhythm, musicality, energy/expression and dynamics.

PROP

Routine emphasis must be on the creative and visual use of a prop or props. Any style of dance may be used. However, the manipulation of the prop must be the focal point of the presentation, rather than the focus being on the movement of the dancer. The prop must be used in at least 3/4 of the routine. Routine and/or uniform may be thematic in nature, but must not be the focal point of the routine. Standard school uniforms or costumes may be worn.

NOVELTY/MUSICAL THEATER – **NEW DESCRIPTION**

Routine emphasis must be of a unique thematic nature. The entire routine must emphasize a story line or present a musical theater concept which does not rely on any prior knowledge (on part of the audience/judges) of the theme's origin. Routine may include technical dance movements, permitting these movements make sense within the theme and/or story line. Props are permitted but should not be the focal point of the routine. Props should only serve to enhance the story/theme. Themed costumes should be worn. Sets and backdrops are permitted, but not required.

CHARACTER DANCE

Routine emphasis must focus on a specific character (person, animal, object, thing). All movements should make sense for the dancers to execute 'in character.' Multiple dance styles may be used, but only if each style enhances the character development. The routine must create the characterization through the use of music, costuming, choreography, and may not rely on any prior knowledge (of the audience/judges) of the theme's origin.

A school will be permitted to compete in either Novelty/Musical Theater or Character Dance, not both.

Scoresheets and Safety Rules & Guidelines are available at:
<https://www.varsity.com/usa/school/competitions/rules-scoring/>