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DANCE

EVENT GUIDELINES



**2024 – 2025 USA HIGH SCHOOL DANCE
EVENT GUIDELINES
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Visit usa.varsity.com for the most up-to-date competition and camp information this season!

Information is subject to change.

VERSION 11.14.24

Ready to Compete?

See the Various Competition Types Below That the United Spirit Association is Proud to Offer

Regionals – No prior qualification is required to compete at this one-day event. Regionals are local qualifying competitions for USA High School Dance Nationals, as well as stand-alone events for those who wish to compete but have no goal to attend the USA Dance Nationals event. All performers receive a participation ribbon (or other commemorative item). Regional awards are presented to top teams in each division.

Classics – No prior qualification is required to compete at this one-day event. Classics are qualifying competitions for USA High School Dance Nationals, as well as stand-alone events for those who wish to compete, but have no goal to attend the USA Dance Nationals event. All performers receive a commemorative participation gift. Sponsorship “give-aways” may be distributed at select events. Trophies or plaques are awarded to 50% of the teams in each division. For all divisions, an exclusive “Champion” event pin is presented to each first place competitor.

NOTE: Not all divisions are offered at every Regional or Classic competition.

High School Dance Nationals – USA Dance Nationals began in 1986. The event takes place in Anaheim, CA and draws teams from throughout the western United States and beyond. Specialty Awards include Judges Award of Excellence, Best Choreography, Sweepstakes Style Awards and Grand Champion. Perform in the Anaheim Convention Center – steps from Disneyland Resort™ in sunny Southern California. Win scholarships, Championship Backpacks, Banners, Medallions & More!

**The USA is proud to offer multiple events for high school teams
this season!**

Save the Date!



March 21 - 23, 2025
Anaheim Convention Center
Anaheim, CA

Dance Nationals Qualification Requirements

Prior qualification through a USA Regional competition or other sanctioned event/process is required in order to attend Dance Nationals in any division (excluding solos and Jr. High teams). If you do not have a USA Dance Regional or Classic in your area, you must attend a virtual regional. Register early! **Teams do not need to wait to qualify for Nationals before registering.**

Bids to Nationals are awarded to teams receiving 80% of total possible points for all Championship divisions and 75% of total possible points for all other team divisions, regardless of any penalties received.

Dance Nationals Tentative Schedule of Events

Friday, March 21 – Solo Champion Prelims/Semi-Finals, Senior, Junior, Sophomore/Freshman Solo Divisions – Prelims/Finals

Saturday, March 22 – Team Division Prelims

Sunday, March 23 – Team Division Finals & Solo Champion Finals

Visit usa.varsity.com for more information or contact
USACompetitions@varsity.com

2025 NATIONALS REGISTRATION PROCESS

2025 USA Dance Nationals in Anaheim, CA on **March 21 - 23, 2025**.

Please visit <https://www.varsity.com/usa/school/competitions/dancenationals/> for the most accurate and up to date event information.

REGISTRATION

Registration must be submitted online on or before December 31st.

Please do not wait to qualify before registering as registration will close before all regional competitions have taken place. No money is due until February 6, 2025. At Nationals a high school can compete **seven (7) routines per team and five (5) soloists. There will be 4 solo divisions. Schools can enter 1 Solo Champion, 1 Senior dancer, 1 Junior dancer and up to 1 Sophomore and 1 Freshman dancer into the Sophomore/Freshman division.** If a school has a JV team, up to 7 additional team performances are permitted for the JV team.

Performance order will be determined by registration date if deposit or payment in full is received by the deposit due date. If payment is not received by the deposit due date, performance order will then be determined by the date payment is received. Performance order subject to change based on event flow, costume change needs, etc.

Event registration is done on-line on myVarsity.com.

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Registrations are not confirmed until payment is received.

Acceptable forms of payment include school purchase order, school check, cashier's check, money order, or credit card. Personal checks, organizational checks, cash or individual payments are not accepted. The school name and an authorized signature must appear on the PO. **If you submit a Purchase Order, the balance is due no later than 30 days after the event.**

Registrations, even with payment, do not guarantee event entry as the competition may close prior to the deadlines due to capacity. Registrations that are not paid in full, or guaranteed by school purchase order are subject to cancellation at any time, but will be cancelled no later than by **March 6, 2025**.

DEADLINES

December 31, 2024 – Registration must be submitted online on or before December 31st.

February 6, 2025 – \$100, per competitor, deposit and additional paperwork must be received in the USA Office.

February 13, 2025 – Original Dance Nationals Roster is due in the USA office.

February 24, 2025 – Deadline for Division and/or Roster changes. **There are no division or soloist name changes after February 24, 2025.**

February 28, 2025 – All digital waivers must be submitted to registration.

March 6, 2025 – Final balance due

ONE DAY EVENT (NATIONALS QUALIFIER) REGISTRATION

One Day Registration Policy and Fees

Early Registration Fee The registration must be paid in full 35 days or more prior to the event for which you wish to register to lock in the early bird rate.

Standard Registration Fee The standard registration fee will apply to those registrations paid in full 8-34 days prior to the event. New registrations will not be accepted the week of the event. Competitions may close to additional participants at any time, including before the “Early” registration/entry deadline.

Acceptable forms of payment include school purchase order, school check, cashier’s check, money order, or credit card. Personal checks, organizational checks, cash or individual payments are not accepted. The school name and an authorized signature must appear on the PO. **If you submit a Purchase Order, the balance is due no later than 30 days after the event.**

Alternates - Additional team members in attendance but not competing must be registered and pay the “alternate” fee. They must also be on the team roster, submit a release form and be in the proper team uniform in order to go into the back stage/warm up area.

Requests for refunds, transfers of registration fees (registration fees may be transferred only once and registration fee transfers may not be split) or category/division changes will be accommodated only if notice is submitted in writing 14 days or more prior to the affected event. After that time, all funds become non-transferable and non-refundable. Teams are responsible for the full registration fee(s) for cancellations past the refund deadline, regardless of payment status and/or “no shows” on the day of the event.

DIGITAL RELEASE AND WAIVER FORM

A digital participant/adult participant release and waiver form must be submitted for each participating performer, coach and personnel listed on the roster. **COMPETITORS/COACHES/PERSONNEL WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO COMPETE/ENTER THE WARM UP AREA WITHOUT A SUBMITTED DIGITAL WAIVER.**

TEAM ONSITE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

All teams should report to the registration table no later than 45 minutes prior to the beginning of the division in which they are competing.

You will need to submit an event roster of all participating students.

USA CHEER “DANCE COACH” MEMBERSHIP

Varsity Spirit requires that all school dance coaches, choreographers and personnel wishing to access the warmup area, backstage, coaches’ box or music table at our competitions have a USA Cheer “Dance Coach” Membership as proof that safety/security compliance elements have been met to gain access to these competition areas. Visit usacheer.org/usa-cheer-membership-for-varsity-spirit to learn more and to complete the steps required before your first competition. **The USA Cheer “general” membership does not provide access to Varsity events.**

2024–25 USA DANCE COMPETITION DIVISIONS

- Dance Championship – X-Small (2-5), Small (5-14), Large (15+)
- Dance Intermediate – X-Small (2-5), Small (5-14), Large (15+)
- Contemporary Championship – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Contemporary Intermediate – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Hip Hop Championship – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Hip Hop Intermediate – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Lyrical Championship – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Lyrical Intermediate – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Jazz Championship – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Jazz Intermediate – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Dance/Pom Championship – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Dance/Pom Intermediate – Small (5-10), Medium (11-16), Large (17+)
- Military - Small (5-14), Large (15+)
- All-Male (5+)
- Co-Ed (5+)
- Dance/Drill (5+)
- Kick (5+)
- Musical Theater (5+)
- Prop (5+)
- Solo
- JV Divisions: JV Dance (5+), JV Hip Hop (5+), JV Dance/Pom (5+), JV Jazz (5+)
- Jr High Divisions: Jr High Dance (5+), Jr High Hip Hop (5+), Jr High Dance/Pom (5+), Jr High Jazz (5+)

To be considered for the Nationals Grand Champion Title at our 2025 Nationals event your team must compete at least one routine in the following categories Dance/Pom, Kick, Prop, Musical Theater and/or Hip Hop divisions.

Divisions specific to JV teams are: JV Dance, JV Hip Hop, JV Dance/Pom, JV Jazz. In categories not specific to JV teams (i.e: Kick, Novelty, etc.), JV teams can compete in Varsity categories as a JV team. JV teams are not permitted to compete in Varsity categories (Sm/Med/Large: Dance, Hip Hop, Dance/Pom or Jazz) already offered as separate JV divisions. A team can only compete in a JV division if their school has a separate JV and Varsity team. An individual may not crossover as a member of both the Varsity team and JV team under any category. JV and Varsity teams may not combine under any category. If a school has separate JV and Varsity teams, these teams must always compete separately, with no dancer (including alternates) crossing over between JV and Varsity.

At Regionals/Classics a high school can compete 7 routines per team and 3 solos per school unless otherwise noted.

At Nationals a high school can compete 7 routines per team and 5 soloists. There will be 4 solo divisions. Schools can enter 1 Solo Champion, 1 Senior dancer, 1 Junior dancer and up to 1 Sophomore and 1 Freshman dancer into the Sophomore/Freshman division.

2024 – 2025 USA DANCE COMPETITIONS SAFETY RULES & GUIDELINES

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Rules are designed to help dancers avoid injury, while allowing for many skills that can be executed safely with proper training and coaching.
2. We want to ensure a penalty free experience for your team. Therefore, if you have any questions regarding our safety rules or would like to submit a video/music for review in preparation for the competition season or prior to the event, please contact USADanceRules@varsity.com.
3. A team must compete in the same category/division at Nationals for which it qualified in at a Regional/Classic unless prior written approval is received from the USA. For example, 1) If you qualify for Hip Hop Championship at a Regional/Classic, you may not compete in Hip Hop Intermediate at Nationals, unless you also qualify for that category at a Regional/Classic. The above is an example – other examples of this also exist.
4. If a team qualifies for Nationals two or more times (80% of total possible points, regardless of any penalties received) in the Championship level at a Regional/Classic competition, then they must compete in the Championship level at Nationals.

COSTUMING/FOOTWEAR/JEWELRY

1. Shoes are not required when performing, but participants that wear shoes must have soft, non-marking soles. Penalty of marking floor results in disqualification. The performing school will be responsible for any charges that may occur as a result of damage to any floor. Performers who do not wear shoes while performing do so at their own risk. Shoes are required at all other times when not directly performing.
2. Costuming must be well secured and appropriate for a family friendly environment.
3. Jewelry and accessories are allowed, provided they are secured appropriately to the dancer.

ROUTINE TIMING

1. **Timing:** Begins with the first note of music or movement, whichever is first. Timing will end with the last note of music or movement, whichever is last.
2. **Solo Routine:** Up to 2 minutes (maximum) per routine - entrance and exit up to 15 seconds each.
3. **ALL Dance, Military, Hip Hop, Jazz, Lyrical, Kick, Dance/Drill, Co-Ed Dance, All-Male and Dance/Pom divisions:** Up to 3 minutes (maximum) per routine - entrance and exit up to 30 seconds each.
4. **Prop & Musical Theater:** Up to 3 minutes (maximum) per routine - entrance and exit up to 1 ½ minutes each.

LIFTS/STUNTS/PARTNERING

1. **Horizontal Lift** – A horizontal lift occurs when the lifted dancer's head is in line with his/her/their hips. While the base is standing on the performance floor, this type of

lift **is legal if** the base(s) maintain direct contact with the lifted dancer throughout the entire skill above the bases' head level, **and** at least one base maintains direct contact with the head/neck/upper body of the lifted dancer.

2. An **Upside Down Lift** occurs when the lifted dancer's head is below his/her hips. While the base is standing, this type of lift **is legal if** the base(s) maintain direct contact with the lifted dancer throughout the entire skill above the bases' head level, **and** at least one base maintains direct contact with the head/neck/upper body of the lifted dancer.
3. **Standing or stepping on another dancer's torso (whether directly or indirectly) is legal, as long as the lifted dancer is physically supported by at least ONE other dancer. The torso is defined as the front or back of the upper body area, shoulders to hips.**
4. Elevators (lifted dancer's feet are being held at shoulder level by the bases with the dancer in an upright position), thigh stands, chair sits, and shoulder sits are permitted.
5. The following **cheer based stunts are not permitted** and will result in routine **disqualification**:
 - Extended cheer stunts (the lifted dancer is extended in an upright position over the base(s) who maintain fully extended arms)
 - Pyramids and basket tosses

INDIVIDUAL SKILLS/TUMBLING

1. Front tucks, back tucks (including toe pitch back tucks) and/or layouts are not permitted.
2. Airborne skills may not jump from a standing or squatting position backwards onto the neck, back, and/or shoulders. Any "kip up" motion must initiate with the back/shoulder area touching the ground. (NOTE: This rule refers specifically and only to the "rubber band"/"bronco" kip up skill.)
3. If a team chooses to use non-hands free poms for aerial cartwheels they **must be moved to one hand**. If a dancer fails to move both poms to one hand or touches down with the hand that holds both poms during the skill, a 3-point penalty will be assessed.
 - Hands Free Poms: The use of hands-free poms will be allowed. Hands-free Poms are specifically made so that performers do not have to hold the poms but rather the poms are affixed to the performers hand. "Proper use" means bars cannot be in palm of the hand and only an elastic band can be between the supporting hand and performance surface making it possible to safely execute skills. A hair tie, rubber band, or tying pom strings/pieces together will not be counted as a hands-free pom.

RULES/SCORING: INTERMEDIATE DIVISION LIMITATIONS

1. Dancers must have 4 counts between the completion of one technical skill to the execution of another.
 - a) Example: Dancer does a double pirouette and lands on count 1 - dancer can use transitional steps, choreography, or preparatory steps on counts 2, 3 & 4 and legally execute another skill on count 5.
 - i. **Exception: chaines & piques in succession, chaine battement/fan & chaine jete/calypso leap are permitted.**

2. Technical Skill/Element Guidelines:

A. Turning Skills:

- a. Single and double pirouette turns may be executed in passé, coupe, pencil and attitude positions.
- b. A single or double pirouette, plie, into a single turn is permitted. The plie should be clear.

B. Turn sequences:

- a. You are permitted to do a maximum of two separate turn sequences in your routine, which can be performed by one or more team members. Turn sequences may not be performed consecutively.
- b. Pirouettes that are performed separately from fouette turns and second turns are not considered turn sequences.
- c. Traveling turns (i.e., chaine turns, pique turns) are not considered turn sequences.
- d. Turn sequences are limited to fouette turns, A la Seconde turns and pirouettes only. No other skills besides these turns are permitted within a turn sequence. No other skills can be connected and/or executed immediately out of the last turn before ending the turn sequence.
 - i. Single and double pirouette turns within the sequence may be in passé, coupe, pencil, and attitude positions.
 - ii. Any variation of arm positions may be executed within the sequence
 1. Exception: Touching/holding the working leg during the turn sequence is not permitted.
 - iii. Spot direction must remain consistent throughout the entire turn sequence. Changing spot/direction is not permitted
 - iv. Fouette turns, second turns may be performed only as a part of a turn sequence.
 - v. Floats are not permitted
- e. Each turn sequence is limited to one 8-count of turning (not counting the prep or ending/completion of the turn sequence).
 - i. When a turn sequence starts with a fouette turn or second turn, the 8-count will begin when the working leg opens to second position. When a turn sequence begins with a pirouette turn, the eight count begins immediately.
 - ii. The completion of the turn sequence must occur within one 8-count (or in other words be complete by "count 9.") For example – A turn sequence begins with a second turn and the working leg opens to 2nd position on count "1" the landing/completion of the sequence must finish on the following count "1".
 - iii. New Language: **Both feet of the dancer(s) must make contact with the performance surface after the completion of a technical skill.** Dancers must have 4 counts between the completion of one technical skill to the execution of another.

C. Leaps/Jumps:

- a. Switch leaps/Scissor leaps are not permitted.

- b. Leaps/jumps may release the head toward the back
- c. Leaps/jumps cannot be connected to any other skill or technical element.
- d. Preparations for traveling leaps and/or jumps are limited to a step or chaise. A chaine turn used as a preparation directly into a leap and/or jump is not permitted.
 - i. Exception: Chaine Jete/Calypso leap are permitted. Any variation of leg positions may be executed. (ex. straight, attitude or both)
- e. New Language: Both feet of the dancer(s) must make contact with the performance surface after the completion of a technical skill. Dancers must have 4 counts between the completion of one technical skill to the execution of another.
 - i. Clarification: Jump sequences or multiple jumps in a row are not permitted

<u>Permitted</u>	<u>Not Permitted</u>
Double Pirouettes (2 rotations)	Triple Pirouettes (3 rotations or more)
Single Leg Hold Turn (1 rotation)	Double Leg Hold Turns (Or more)
Tour Jete	Side Somis
Second Leap (leap in 2 nd position)	Axels
Surprise Leap	Switch/Scissor Leap
Reverse Leap	Turn sequences longer than one 8-count
Toe Touch	Turning Disc/chaine second jump
One 8-count of Fouette Turns/Second Turns	3 or more turn sequences in a routine
Chaine Jete/Calypso Leap	Floats
Kip Ups (with hands)	Aerial/ Front Aerial/ Butterfly Aerial
Headsprings (with hands)	Multiple Jump Sequences
Tilt Jump	

EXCEPTION: In the Intermediate level division, the following exclusions are allowed beyond the guidelines. This is allowed but not required as the scoresheet does not reflect difficulty, but overall execution and choreography performed by the dancer(s).

1. (2) spotlight moments are permitted within a single routine.
 - a. Each spotlight may be a maximum of one 8-count.
 - b. 3 or less dancers may be spotlighted at one time.
 - c. Clarification: The above exclusion only pertains to USA Dance Regionals & Dance National event in March of 2025.

Please Note: For technical skills or combination of skills that are not specifically addressed in the “Intermediate” limitations, the USA has the discretion to determine the level of difficulty of that skill based on the similarity of other skills for that particular division.

RULES/SCORING: CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION LIMITATIONS

There are no technical skill limitation for this division except for those noted in the “2024-25 USA Dance Competitions Safety Rules & Guidelines”.

APPROPRIATENESS

1. All routine choreography, movements, and costuming should be appropriate and entertaining for a family friendly environment and for audience members of all ages.
2. Any movement(s) implying something indecent, offensive, or sexual in content are not allowed.
3. Music cannot contain inappropriate words, phrases, and/or sounds, in any language; this includes direct and/or specific references to the act of consuming alcohol (ex: “sipping champagne”), pejorative words, illegal activities for minors (ex: “smoking cigarettes”), acts of violence or inciting violence against others, sexual references, or offensive language referencing any groups. Inappropriate examples provided above are included to help illustrate potential violations. Violations are not limited to those specific examples.
4. It is the coach’s responsibility to screen all music to ensure that it is appropriate for the students, audience, and community.
5. Explicitly inappropriate music/lyrics, costuming and/or movements will incur a 3-point penalty per infraction.

PROPS / SETS

1. Handheld and wearable props (individually used and carried by dancers i.e. ball, box, or scarf) are permitted in ALL divisions.
 - a. Clarification: A handheld prop that can bear the full weight of one ore more dancers is not permitted.
2. Sets and backdrops are **only** permitted in the Prop and Musical Theatre Divisions. Sets and backdrops may not be used in Dance, Lyrical, Hip Hop, Kick, Dance/Drill, Co-Ed, Military, Solo, Dance/Pom, and All Male.
3. All props must be non-marking. Padding and/or rubber wheels must be used. Penalty is disqualification. The performing school will be responsible for any charges that may occur as a result of damage to the floor.
4. Any props/sets/accessories must be able to fit through a standard door measuring 7 feet high x 63 inches wide. Once your entrance and/or exit time begins, teams may start to assemble props/sets to any size they wish but they must be able to assemble all props/sets within the entrance and exit time allotted. Props may be assembled prior to entrance time and before entering the gym only if they meet the 7 feet high x 63 inches wide requirement after assembly. Otherwise, teams **cannot assemble props/sets/backdrops until they are called on to the performance floor and their entrance time begins.** All teams must enter and exit the gym with ALL props/sets at the time of performance. Storing of props/sets in the venue (before performance or after) will not be permitted, unless otherwise noted in competition information. **Penalty is 10 points per prop infraction.**
5. If a prop/set/accessory stands higher than 4 feet from the performance floor, a dancer

can only jump, tumble, or fall from the prop/set/accessory at the point of 4 feet or below. USA Competition Directors reserve the right to measure assembled props.

MUSIC

Note the music rules that are in place for the 2024-25 competition season. Be sure you are familiar with these prior to taking any competition floor. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification and forfeiture of all fees (registration, admission or otherwise) associated with a team's performance.

Music Rules & Restrictions

Music is defined as any recorded sound amplified through the competition sound system. One or several selections of music may be used, as long as they follow the music licensing rules. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification and forfeiture of all fees associated with a team's performance.

- Coaches are responsible for reading and understanding the USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative and understanding that all sound recordings used in their team music shall only be used with written license from the owners(s) of the sound recordings.
- For the most up to date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, teams should email musicinfo@varsity.com. Please periodically check the provider list for updates and changes.
- Teams must be able to provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, during registration at the event they are attending.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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).
- 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.
- If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.

- A challenge can only be made by the official coach of a team competing at the event at which the challenge is being made.

Challenge Process

- All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the event director.
 - 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.
 - Fees collected will be voided if challenge is correct.
 - If the team challenged can provide documentation during the event and can be verified, the fees will be donated to St. Jude.
 - If the team challenged can provide documentation that requires further review, a decision will be finalized within 48 hours of the event.
- A sound system will be provided. Speed control is not available. Music must be recorded at the correct tempo. Music checks on the main sound system are not permitted.
 - All teams must provide their own MP3 device (or smart phone) for use on the event-provided sound system. Although it is not recommended due to potential interference that may be caused during a routine, a smart phone may be used for playing music.
 - Each team is required to have a representative (responsible adult recommended) that knows the routine and music remain at the music station (no alternates or team members please). 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 headphone 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.

Virtual Competitions Music Rules

- The USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative will govern all sound recordings used at the event and all sound recordings used in your team’s music shall only be used with written license from the owner(s) of the sound recordings.
- For the most up-to-date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, teams should email musicinfo@varsity.com. Please check the Music Provider list for updates and changes periodically.
- 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. This information is subject to change.

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 USA Varsity Spirit Brand logo, the USA logo or the Game Day logo on 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.

INSURANCE

Each participant must have their own personal insurance. All competitors must submit a USA Medical Release and Appearance Form at each competition in order to compete. The host facility, the host facility district, the directors/sponsors and/or the USA will not be responsible or held liable for any injuries occurring at a USA competition.

First aid staff will be on site at all competitions to provide assistance for emergencies only. Taping of wrists/ankles for individual performers will not be provided, unless medically necessary to treat an injury that occurs at the competition site.

FOOD

At most locations, food and drinks will be available for purchase throughout the competition. Food purchased at the competition venue may or may not be permitted inside the performance venue. Food purchased outside of the competition venue and not provided through the host facility is not permitted inside the performance venue at any location.

DRESSING ROOMS

Dressing rooms, locker rooms and/or restrooms may be available on a limited basis. The USA and/or the host facility will not be responsible for any lost or stolen articles.

SAFETY RULES SUBMISSIONS

We want to help ensure a penalty free experience for your team! Submitting a video is the only way to review a routine for potential safety violation prior to them being performed at a USA competition. For all legality questions regarding specific performance elements, you may email a video that contains the skill in question.

All emailed videos must include the following:

1. Name of the **School** and **Division** in the *Subject Line* of the email
2. Videos should be in either Quicktime formats (.mov) or MPEG-4 Format (.mp4).
3. Clear, close up view of skill in question
4. **Do not send the entire routine**, only the skill(s) in question
5. Include your name, team name, division, and phone number in the body of the email
6. USA will also review any music and/or questionable lyrics prior to USA competitions.
7. All video submissions must be emailed to USADanceRules@varsity.com.
8. All safety video submissions for one-day events must be submitted 14 days or more prior to the competition date.

***Note that submission of a routine and/or its elements does not preclude a team from being assessed a penalty while at a specific USA competition, as performances from the video submission may differ from those executed on the competition floor. Submission of a routine does not guarantee that it can be reviewed.**

Please contact USADanceRules@varsity.com if you need clarification on any of the above safety rules.

DIVISION DESCRIPTIONS

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

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

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. 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 **seven (7)** 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. **A soloist from any team may compete only one solo per USA event.**

Dance

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

Contemporary

A routine with movement emphasizing use of space, body awareness, a variety of movement qualities, gestural motions & potential motifs (ex. suspension, off center movement, momentum & gravity). It tends to express movement through the entire body and does not follow strict ballet or jazz forms.

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. Routine should incorporate visual routine staging and complexity of pom movement. 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 dancers perform a variety of street style movements that showcases the artistry and technique of hip hop, or that have evolved as part of hip-hop culture. Difficulty should be emphasized through body awareness/muscle control, textures, dynamic and diversity in the various hip hop styles. (Ex: Vogue, Locking, Breaking, Popping, Whacking, House). 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.

Musical Theater

Routine emphasis must be of a unique thematic nature. The entire routine must emphasize a story line, character 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, character 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/character/theme. Themed costumes should be worn. Sets and backdrops are permitted, but not required.

2024-25 LEGALITY SCORING GUIDELINES

ALL DANCE COMPETITION DIVISIONS

NUMBER OF PERFORMER VIOLATION – (0.50) per occurrence over/under. Given when a team's number of performers falls outside the size limitations for that division.

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION LIMITATION VIOLATION – (2.0) per occurrence

Given when a skill is performed beyond division limitations that is not allowed by 2024-2025 Intermediate guidelines.

SOLO DIVISION 15 SECOND ENTRANCE/EXIT TIMING – (0.1) for every second over time limit. (1 = 0.10 point; 2 = 0.20 points; etc.)

GROUP DIVISION 30 SECOND ENTRANCE/EXIT TIMING – (0.1) for every second over time limit. (1 = 0.10 point; 2 = 0.20 points; etc.)

GROUP DIVISION (PROP & MUSICAL THEATER) 1.5 MINUTE ENTRANCE/EXIT TIMING – (0.10) for every second over time limit. (1 = 0.10 point; 2 = 0.20 points; etc.)

TIME LIMIT VIOLATION FOR TOTAL ROUTINE LENGTH – (1 second over time limit = 0.10 point; 2 seconds over time limit = 0.10 point; etc.)

EQUIPMENT/ACCESSORY DROPPED – (.50) per occurrence during a single performance period. Given when any equipment/accessory is dropped. This includes pom drops in the Dance/Pom division.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/LYRICS, APPEARANCE AND/OR MOVEMENTS – (3.0) determined by competition officials/directors in accordance with the guidelines listed in the General Information

ILLEGAL TUMBLING, PROP DISMOUNT AND/OR DANCE LIFTS – (3.0) Given when any individual skill or partnering skill is performed that breaks the Dance Safety Rules Guidelines. This includes when a non hands-free pom is touch down on the execution of tumbling.

ILLEGAL PROP RESTRICTION – (10.0) Given when a prop breaks the Dance Safety Rules Guidelines or is used in any other division than the Musical Theater or Prop Division (This does not include handheld props).

UNNECESSARY CHANGE IN PERFORMANCE ORDER – (2.0) determined by competition officials/directors

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT – (3.0)

When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes, and/or parents/spectators, they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so may result in a 3.0 deduction and removal of coach from event. Severity of infraction may lead to team disqualification. Penalty determined by competition officials/directors.

DISQUALIFICATION PENALTIES – Examples include violation of eligibility requirements, age/grade requirements, participating on two teams within the same category type/and or divisions, entering/performing in the incorrect category/division, failing to provide proof of music licensing, and severe sportsmanlike conduct. Disqualification will be determined by event officials and the Director of Special Events.

Rev. 10/1/24