



2026-2027 USA DANCE COMPETITION SAFETY RULES

All updates and changes for the 2026-2027 season are denoted in **red text**.

Routines must also follow the rules listed in “**2026-2027 Dance Rules & Regulations**” and the “**2026-2027 Dance Division Limitations**”. All documents listed can be found within the Competitions tab under Divisions, Rules & Scoring for Spirit Divisions.

[Division, Rules & Scoring - USA](#)

Videos and any specific skill and safety questions that pertain to the 2026-2027 Division Limitations or 2026-2027 Safety Rules should be submitted using the following form: [USA Dance Legality Inquiry Form](#)

USA DANCE SAFETY RULES

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.

INDIVIDUAL SKILLS/TUMBLING

1. Front tucks, back tucks (including toe pitch back tucks) and/or layouts are not permitted in any division.
2. Skills with hip over head rotation with hand support are not allowed while holding poms or props in supporting hand(s).
 - a. Example: headspring, cartwheel, front/back walkover.
 - b. Exception: Forward rolls, backward rolls and skills executed with the proper use of hands free poms.
3. Airborne skills without hip over head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position with backward momentum landing onto the neck, shoulders and hands.
 - a. Any kip up motion must initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground.
 - b. Rubber band”/”bronco” kip up skill is not allowed.

- c. Kip ups are not allowed while holding poms or props.
 - i. Exception: The proper use of hands-free poms for kip ups is allowed.
- 4. If a team chooses to use non hands-free poms for Aerial/Side Somis, Front Aerials or Butterfly Aerials 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 penalty will be assessed.
 - a. Aerials, Front Aerials & Butterfly Aerials are not allowed in the Intermediate Division.

LIFTS/STUNTS/PARTNERING

1. Clarification: Lifting with poms is allowed.
2. Horizontal lifting of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided contact between the Executing Dancer and at least one Supporting Dancer(s) must be maintained until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
3. Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided contact between the Executing Dancer and at least one Supporting Dancer(s) must be maintained until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. The following cheer based stunts are not permitted and will result in routine disqualification:
 - a. Extended cheer stunts (the lifted dancer is extended in an upright position over the base(s) who maintain fully extended arms)
 - b. Pyramids and basket tosses.

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Any additional questions may be sent to USADanceRules@varsity.com.