



UDA SCHOOL COMPETITION ROUTINE RULES 2018-2019

Effective August 1, 2018

**These rules apply to ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR HIGH and HIGH SCHOOL teams ONLY.*

*Red print denotes a change from prior year**

ALL-STAR TEAMS:

Please visit www.usasf.net for All Star routine rules and regulations.

JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judges for the event will be appointed at the sole discretion of Universal Dance Association. As the teams make their presentations, the judges will score the teams using a 100 point system. Judges scores will be AVERAGED together to determine the overall team score. In the event of a first place tie, the tie will be broken by carrying the decimal places out for the total score. If a tie remains, the ranking points from each judge will then be used to break the tie. Should a tie still remain, the ranking points from the “Overall Effect” portion of the scoresheet will be used to break the tie.

SCORES AND RANKINGS

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. No scores or rankings will be given over the telephone. All ties in each division or group will remain with the exception of first place. The first place tie will be broken based on the criteria stated in the “Judging Procedures” section.

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.

SPORTSMANSHIP

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. 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.

INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

A. 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 rather than the team, the team affected should STOP the routine.
2. 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.

B. 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 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.

C. INJURY

1. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are:
 - a) competition officials,
 - b) the advisor / coach from the team performing or
 - c) an injured individual.
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 at a later time, 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.
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, second the parent (if present) **AND THEN** the head coach/advisor of the competing team.
 - b. If the medical personnel does 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. In the event of a suspected concussion/head injury, the participant cannot return to perform without clearance from a licensed medical professional that has training related to head injuries, even with a waiver from a parent or legal guardian.

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 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 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.

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 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.

PENALTIES

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 (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) time infractions, not enough kicks, costume/shoe rules, ending on or off the marley surface, etc.
- 1.5 points- Routine safety rule violations

If you have any questions concerning the legality of a trick or move, please upload a video to:

<http://eventuploads.varsityspirit.com/> Include your team name, your name, a contact phone number, and the event attending. It must be received at least two weeks prior to the event and will only be accepted from the head coach of the team. Text messages containing videos will not be allowed. Videos from choreographers will not be allowed. For questions please contact Ashley Udashen at audashen@varsity.com.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. 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.
2. All programs should have, and review, an emergency action plan in the event of an injury.
3. Coaches must recognize the entire team's particular ability level and limit the team's activities accordingly.
4. No technical skills should be performed when a coach is not present or providing direct supervision.
5. All practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for the activities of dance, and away from noise and distractions.
6. Warm-up and stretching should precede and conclude all practice sessions, pep rallies, games, competitions, performances, and other physical activities.
7. 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
8. The dance team coach or other knowledgeable designated representative should be in attendance at all practices, functions, and games.

COMPETITION ROUTINE GUIDELINES

1. Substitutions may be made in the event of an injury or other serious circumstance. Substitutes must also abide by the age restrictions in all division in which they compete.
2. Formal, excessive, and choreographed entrances which involve dance, technical skills, and all traditions/chants are not permitted. Dancers should enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
3. 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).
4. Teams may dance off of the performance floor; however, all routine choreography for the entire team must begin and end on the performance surface. Jumping on or off the performance surface is prohibited.
5. Time limit is as follows:
 - a. SCHOOL teams will have a maximum of (2) two minutes to demonstrate their style and expertise. If a team exceeds the time limit, they will be assessed a penalty. If a team exceeds the time limit by more than (3) three seconds, they will be penalized.
 - b. ALL STAR teams will have a minimum of (1:45) one minute forty five seconds and a maximum of (2:15) two minutes fifteen seconds to demonstrate their style and expertise. If a team exceeds the time limit, over or under, by more than (3) three seconds, they will be penalized.
6. 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.

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. These guidelines are as of June 16, 2016. For the most up to date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, cheer teams should email info@usacheer.net. Please check Preferred 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.
4. 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).
5. 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.
6. If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.
7. A challenge can only be made by the official coach of a team competing at the event at which the challenge is being made.
8. 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.
9. Each team is required to have a responsible adult remain at the music station that knows the routine and music. This representative is responsible for starting the music and stopping the music in case of technical malfunction or injury. Please make sure that all devices are fully charged, volume turned up and placed in airplane mode. If using CDs, make sure it's unscratched so it doesn't skip.
10. 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.

CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUMING

1. Routine choreography should be appropriate and entertaining for all audience members. Vulgar or suggestive material, choreography and/or music is not allowed and is defined as any movement or choreography implying something improper or indecent, appearing offensive or sexual in content, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures or implications. Inappropriate choreography, costuming, makeup and/or music may affect the judges' overall impression and/or score of the routine.
2. Shoes, on both feet, must be worn during the competition. Dance paws are acceptable. Shoes with wheels are not allowed (Example: roller skates, roller blades, heelys, etc). Wearing socks and/or footed tights only is not allowed.
3. **When dancers are standing at attention, all costumes/uniforms must cover the midriff area completely. The midriff includes the entire midriff section from the bra line down, front of the body only. Nude body liners are acceptable.**
4. All male dancers' costumes must include a shirt that is fastened, however it can be sleeveless.
5. Jewelry as part of the costume is allowed.

PROPS

Props are not allowed. A prop is defined as anything you dance with that is not attached to your costume. Articles of clothing may be taken off and thrown to the ground; however you may not dance with them. If taken off and danced with, it becomes a prop. Poms being used for a pom routine do not count as props.

HANDS FREE POMS

The use of hands-free poms will be allowed. Hands-free poms are defined as poms with a strap across the palm of the hand, making them easily transferrable to place a clean hand on the ground for skills, tricks, etc. A hair tie, rubber band, or tying pom strings/pieces together will not be counted as a hands free pom.

HIGH KICK

Each routine must have a minimum of 50 kicks. We suggest that your routine have more than 50 to ensure meeting the minimum requirements. A kick is defined as one foot remaining on the floor while the other foot lifts with force at least

one inch from the floor. At least half the team must execute a kick in order for it to be counted. Passe, flicks, turn sequences, toe taps, etc. will not be counted as kicks.

EXCEPTION: Any time the leg extends at or above 90 degrees, contracts and extends again at or above 90 degrees, it will be defined as separate kicks.

SCHOOL DIVISIONS AND CATEGORIES:

All teams in the Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshman, and Junior High divisions must be an official school dance team. The Junior Varsity Division is any official school dance team that is recognized by their school as the Junior Varsity or "B" Team. Individuals are NOT permitted to compete in two divisions within the same school (Example: A dancer is not allowed to compete with both a JV and a Varsity team). Individuals are also NOT permitted to compete on two different school teams. (Example: A dancer is not allowed to compete with ABC Junior High and XYZ High School or ABC High School and XYZ High School). If a school has two Varsity teams, they both must be an official school dance team as deemed by administration. In order to compete two Varsity teams, the following requirements must be met:

- Team members may not be a part of both teams.
- Teams must provide documentation on school letter head, signed by the principal, that there are two Varsity dance teams at the school, as well as a roster for each team. This documentation must be sent to the office prior to attending camp or a regional competition. Registrations for our National Dance Team Championship will not be approved without receipt of this documentation.
- Each team must qualify separately for our National Dance Team Championship either at camp with 7 or more members, or by placing at a regional competitions, so long as they attended overnight camp with 7 or more members.
- If teams choose to have two Varsity teams in the same division (i.e. two Medium Varsity Pom teams), they recognize that they will compete against each other.

- **JUNIOR HIGH**– There will be four categories in this division: Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop and High Kick. Teams may enter one or two of the categories. This must be specified on the competition information form.
- **JUNIOR VARSITY DIVISION** – There will be four categories in the Varsity division; Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, and High Kick. Teams may enter one or two of the four categories. This must be specified on the competition information form.
- **VARSAITY DIVISION** – There will be four categories in the Varsity division; Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, and High Kick. Teams may enter one or two of the four categories. This must be specified on the competition information form.
 - Small Varsity- 7-12 members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop)
 - Medium Varsity- 13-16 members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop)
 - Large Varsity- 17 or more members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop)

****NEW this year****

All Junior High Divisions – 9th Grade and Below Junior High Divisions WILL be allowed 9th grade participants if (1) they attend a school that is under the administrative supervision of the same school board as the junior high school that they are representing AND (2) a minority of the team are 9th graders. Junior High teams with a majority of 9th graders would compete as a Junior Varsity.

All Junior Varsity Divisions – 7th Grade -12th Grade Junior Varsity Divisions WILL be allowed 7th grade participants if they attend a school that is under the administrative supervision of the same school board as the high school that they are representing. Junior Varsity teams must be the official Junior Varsity of the school they represent.

All Varsity Divisions – 8th Grade - 12th Grade-7th grade participants will NOT be allowed on a Varsity team; however 8th grade participants will be allowed to participate on a Varsity team if the school they attend is under the direct administrative supervision of the same school board as the Varsity team they are representing

Please Note: In the event that a team has an equal amount of 8th and 9th graders on the team, they will be required to compete in the Junior Varsity Division.

TEAM PARTICIPANTS

The minimum number of participants a team can have for a regional competition is five (5). There is no maximum. Teams competing with two routines must stay in the same division, but can have different numbers in both routines. Teams will be able to trade out, remove, or add a designated number of dancers between their 2 categories, based on their division. See below for division breakdowns. Teams may continue to trade out dancers and maintain the same number of performers in both routines.

Teams who compete in Kick and one other category will follow the rules based on how many dancers they have for their other category (ie Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop).

The breakdown is as follows and is based on the number of dancers performing.

- Small Varsity teams may trade out, remove or add up to two (2) dancers.
- Medium Varsity teams may trade out, remove or add up to three (3) dancers.
- Large Varsity teams may trade out, remove or add up to four (4) dancers.

Junior High and Junior Varsity teams are allowed to trade out, add or remove dancers.

The breakdown is as follows:

- If you have 7-12 members on your team, you may trade out, remove or add up to two (2) dancers.
- If you have 13-16 members on your team, you may trade out, remove or add up to three (3) dancers.
- If you have 17 or more members on your team, you may trade out, remove or add up to four (4) dancers.

Example:

A Small Varsity team is competing Jazz and Pom. They have 10 dancers in Jazz. For Pom, the team traded out 0 dancers and added 2 dancers; therefore they are dancing 12 in Pom.

A Medium Varsity team is competing in Pom and Hip Hop. They have 14 dancers in Pom. For Hip Hop, the team traded out 1 dancer, and also added 2 dancers; therefore they are dancing 16 in Hip Hop.

A Large Varsity team is competing in Pom and Kick. They have 24 dancers in Pom. For Kick, the team traded out 2 dancers and removed 2 dancers; therefore they are dancing 22 in Kick.

ROUTINE SAFETY RULES

WEIGHT BEARING SKILLS

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 use of hands free poms for hip over-head skills is allowed. ***Please reference the Hands Free Poms section for more details***

TUMBLING AND TRICKS (Executed by Individuals)

ALLOWED

Aerial Cartwheels
Forward/Backward Rolls
Shoulder Rolls
Cartwheels
Headstands
Handstands
Backbends
Front/Back Walkovers
Stalls/Freezes
Head spins
Windmills
Kip up
Round Off

NOT ALLOWED

Front Aerials
Front/Back Handsprings
Front/Back Tucks
Side Somi
Layouts
Shushunova
Headsprings (without hand support)
Dive Rolls (In any position)
Continuous double (partner) cartwheels
Toe Pitch Back Tucks

Headsprings (with hand support)

1. Airborne skills without hand support are not allowed. (Exception: Headsprings with hand support and aerial cartwheels not connected to any tumbling skill are allowed).
2. Aerial cartwheels are not allowed while holding poms. They must be placed in one hand, or be executed with hands free poms. There are no exceptions to this rule. **If a team chooses to move the poms to one hand, and later touches down with that hand then a penalty will be issued.**
3. Tumbling skills with hip over-head rotation is limited to 3 connected skills. (Example: 3 consecutive headsprings are allowed; 4 are not allowed).
4. Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
5. 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 onto the performance surface from a jump in which the legs are in front of the body and swing behind are not allowed. All variations of a shushunova are not allowed.
7. Airborne skills without hip over-head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position backwards onto the neck, head, back, shoulders, and/or hands. Any kip up motion must initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground. (NOTE: This rule refers specifically and only to the “rubber band” /”bronco” kip up skill, as well as any skill jumping backwards into a headstand/handstand stall).

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. Elevators, thigh stands, shoulder sits, and chair sits are allowed. Extensions and all other cheer based stunts 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 as long as 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 as long as:
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.

ON BEHALF OF MY TEAM, I HEREBY ACCEPT THE COMPETITION AND ROUTINE RULES AND GUIDELINES AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THESE RULES.

(School/Team Name)

(Date)

(City/State)

(Advisor / Coach's Signature)

(Division — Junior High, Senior All Star, etc.)

(Administrator's Signature)

[Retain a copy of these rules for your files](#)

