UDA

2026-2027

RULES & REGULATIONS

SCHOOL DANCE



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*All updates and changes for the 2026-2027 season will be displayed in **RED** font*

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CODE OF CONDUCT

Varsity Spirit encourages and supports sportsmanship, integrity and fairness among participants and coaches/owners/directors in all facets of team practice and performance. We strive to uphold the highest standards and promote this to the best of our abilities and believe that coaches are instrumental in promoting and instilling this among their respective team members.

To ensure the most positive experience for all attendees, Varsity Spirit asks that all participants, coaches, gym owners, directors and spectators adhere to and know the Code of Conduct and Prohibited Items for all Regional, Virtual, and Championships events.

To review the entire policy please click here: Varsity Spirit - Safety

EVENT ELIGIBILITY

Varsity Spirit will require that all coaches, directors, choreographers, and personnel wishing to access the warm up area, backstage, coaches' box, or athlete areas at our competitions have required credentialing, background check, and safeguarding as required by each event.

To review the entire eligibility policy please click here: Varsity Spirit - Event Eligibility

EVENT GUIDELINES

The coach/director of each team is responsible for understanding and following the Event Guidelines. Event Guidelines include:

- General Guidelines
- Safety Guidelines
- Music Guidelines
- Interruption of Performance
- Competition Area
- Warm Up Room Policy
- Spotter Policy

To review additional information, click here: Varsity Spirit - Event Guidelines

EVENT POLICIES

All attendees are expected to follow event policies to ensure a respectable and secure environment.

To review the event policies, click here: Varsity Spirit - Event Policies

UDA SCHOOL DIVISIONS

Please visit uda.varsity.com for a complete listing of divisions for regional competitions as well as the National Dance Team Championship.

UDA School Divisions include Junior High, Junior Varsity, Varsity Intermediate, and Varsity. All teams in the Varsity, Junior Varsity or Junior High divisions must be the 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. Exception: Dance Game Day and Spirit Program Game Day. (Example: A dancer is not allowed to compete with both a JV and a Varsity team in Pom, Hip Hop, Jazz, or High Kick. Junior Varsity and Varsity teams may combine to compete in the Varsity Game Day division. Teams that combine to compete in Varsity Game Day may not also compete separately in their respective Junior Varsity or Varsity Game Day divisions at the same event. All athletes must meet Varsity age requirements (8th–12th grade).). 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). Individuals must be enrolled members at their school to participate.

All Junior High Divisions – 9th Grade and Below

Junior High Divisions WILL allow 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 9th graders being the majority, would compete as a Junior Varsity.

- JH Pom: 5+ members
- JH Jazz: 5+ members
- JH Hip Hop: 5+ members
- JH Kick: 5+ members
- JH Game Day: 5+ members
- JH Spirit Program Game Day: 5-75 members (ONLY at select regionals)
- **Please Note:** Junior high teams will not be split at any event.

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.

- JV Pom: 5+ members
- JV Jazz: 5+ members
- JV Hip Hop: 5+ members
- JV Kick: 5+members
- JV Game Day: 5+ members
- Varsity Spirit Program Game Day: 5-75 members.

NOTE: Starting in the 2027-2028 season, Schools with only one dance team are not eligible to compete in the Junior Varsity division. Example: Junior Varsity may not be the primary competitive dance team at the school.

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.

- Varsity Intermediate: 5+ members (Pom, Jazz, and Hip Hop)
- Small Varsity DI: 5-12 members (Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, and High Kick)
- Medium Varsity DI: 13-16 members (Pom, Jazz, and Hip Hop)
- Large Varsity DI: 17+ members (Pom, Jazz, and Hip Hop)

- Small Varsity DI High Kick: 5-14 members (High Kick only)
- Large Varsity DI High Kick: 15+ members (High Kick only)
- Small Varsity DII: 5-12 members (Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, and High Kick)
- Large Varsity DII: 13-40 members (Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, and High Kick)

Varsity Game Day

- Small Varsity Game Day Division: 5-12 members
- Medium Varsity Game Day Division: 13-16 members
- Large Varsity Game Day Division: 17+ members
    - Junior Varsity and Varsity teams may combine to compete in the Varsity Game Day division and Spirit Program Game Day Divisions. Teams that combine to compete in Varsity Game Day may not also compete separately in their respective Junior Varsity or Varsity Game Day divisions at the same event. All athletes must meet Varsity age requirements (8th–12th grade).
- Small Varsity DI Spirit Program Game Day: 5-39 members (ONLY at select regionals)
- Large Varsity DI Spirit Program Game Day: 40-75 members (ONLY at select regionals)
- Small Varsity DII Spirit Program Game Day: 5-34 members (ONLY at select regionals)
- Large Varsity DII Spirit Program Game Day: 35-75 members (ONLY at select regionals)

Regional Division Splits

1. Junior High and Junior Varsity divisions will not be split at any event.
2. Varsity divisions will FIRST be split into DI and DII if there are 11 or more teams registered.
3. Furthermore, if there are 11 or more teams in the DI or DII split, there will be an additional split into size. Exception: DI High Kick will only be split Small (5-14 members) and Large (15+ members). DI Pom, Jazz, and Hip Hop will split Small, Medium, and Large.
    - PERFORMANCE CATEGORY EXAMPLE: Varsity Jazz has 16 registered teams.
        i. First, the Varsity Jazz category will be split into Varsity Jazz DI and Varsity Jazz DII.
        ii. Varsity Jazz DI now has 11 teams and Varsity Jazz DII has 5 teams.
        iii. Furthermore, Varsity Jazz DI will be split into Small, Medium, and Large. Varsity Jazz DII will remain together with 5 teams.
    - GAME DAY EXAMPLE: Varsity Game Day has 25 registered teams.
        i. First, the Varsity Game Day category will be split into Varsity Game Day DI and Varsity Game Day DII. Varsity Game Day DI now has 10 teams and Varsity Game Day DII has 15 teams.
        ii. Furthermore, Varsity Game Day DI will remain together with 10 teams and Varsity Game Day DII will be split into Small, Medium, & Large.
    - Recreational Division will only be split at regional competitions by age and category. No Rec Divisions will be split by size.

Schools with Multiple Varsity Teams: If a school has two Varsity teams (VA pom and VA jazz, OR VA Intermediate Hip Hop and VA Pom), they both must be deemed an official school dance team by administration. To compete with two Varsity teams, the following requirements must be met:

1. Team members can NOT be a part of both teams.
2. Teams must provide documentation on school letterhead, 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.
3. Each team must be credentialed and qualify separately for our National Dance Team Championship with 75% of the team or a minimum of 5 participants, either at camp or by placing at a regional competition.

4. If teams choose to have two Varsity teams in the same division (i.e., two Small Varsity Pom teams), they recognize that they will compete against each other.

All College Divisions – Teams who participate in the competition will have the opportunity to compete in two of the three performance categories. College Game Day categories will not be offered at regionals. The minimum number of dancers a team may compete with at Regionals is five (5). The minimum number of dancers a team may compete with at Nationals is seven (7)*. The maximum number of dancers a team may compete with is twenty (20). A minimum of 25% of the dancers must be the same in both routines. If you dance different numbers in each routine, 25% will be based on the largest number of dancers in the routine performed. If your team chooses pom as one of your categories, male dancers are not required to use poms. Teams will follow the dance team participant guidelines listed here for all regional competitions throughout the season.
*NOTE: If your team drops below the minimum, please contact udarules@varsity.com

DIVISION GUIDELINES

TEAM PARTICIPANTS

1. Dancers competing at a regional/local event run by UDA may compete in multiple routines.
2. Dancers competing at a regional with a school and all-star program, may only compete a max of six (6) times between both programs. Dancers must pay BOTH the school fee and the all-star fee to compete with both teams.
3. The minimum number of participants a team can have for a regional competition is five (5). See pages 4-6 for all division breakdowns and categories.
4. UDA strongly recommends that you have alternates (not a member of another competing team at the same event), who are prepared to substitute in the event of injury, probation, etc. No dancer may represent more than one team, even in the event of injury or emergency.
5. For teams competing at NSSC/NDTC, please refer to page 21 for further clarification on the number of performances at that event.
6. Teams competing at any State Association event, in partnership with Varsity Spirit, must follow their state guidelines and regulations for number of performances, divisions entered, etc.
7. An athlete MAY NOT compete with a Rec team and a school team at the same competition **or** across NSSC weekends.

TRADE OUT RULES

Performance Category Trade Out Rules:

1. Teams competing in multiple performance categories must stay in the same division size but can have different numbers in routines.
    a. *Exception*: Teams who compete in DI High Kick and one other performance category (Pom, Jazz, or Hip Hop) will base their second performance on the division size chosen for High Kick. Teams will be permitted to compete in their second performance category (Pom, Jazz, or Hip Hop) in one division smaller or one division larger than their Kick division.
        i. *Example 1*: Team A chooses Large High Kick (15+) with 15 participants, allowing them the option to compete Medium (13-16) or Large (17+) Pom, Jazz, or Hip Hop.
        ii. *Example 2*: Team B chooses Small High Kick (5-14) with 14 participants, allowing them the option to compete Small (5-12) or Medium (13-16) Pom, Jazz, or Hip Hop.
2. Because DII division sizes are consistent, teams who compete in DII High Kick and one other performance category (Pom, Jazz, or Hip Hop) must stay within their division size.
3. Junior High, Junior Varsity, and Varsity Intermediate teams may trade out, remove, or add athletes between their categories, but must also follow the Varsity division size rules.
        i. *Example 1*: A Junior High D1 Team is competing in Hip Hop and Jazz. They have 18 dancers in Hip Hop. For Jazz, they traded out 4 dancers and added 2 dancers; therefore, they are dancing 20 in Jazz.

ii. *Example 2*: A Varsity Intermediate D2 team is competing in Pom and Kick. They have 12 dancers in Kick. For Pom, the team traded out 2 dancers and removed 3 dancers; therefore, they are dancing 10 in Pom. They would be Small D2 for Kick and Varsity Intermediate D2 for Pom.

Game Day Trade Out Rules:

1. Teams competing in game day will not be able to compete with less athletes than the performance category with the highest number of athletes.
    a. Teams who compete in DI High Kick, one other performance category (Pom, Jazz, or Hip Hop), and game day will not be able to compete game day with less athletes than the performance category with the highest number of athletes.
        i. *Example 1*: A Varsity DI team is competing in Jazz, Kick, and Game Day. They have the same 16 dancers in all three routines; therefore, they will compete in Medium Jazz, Large Kick, and Medium Game Day.
    b. Teams who compete in DII performance categories (Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, or High Kick) NOTE: Your division size for game day could be smaller than your performance category size, but the number of athletes on the performance floor must be the same or greater than your performance category with the highest number of athletes.
        i. *DII Example 1*: Team A dances 15 in Large Jazz, 16 in Large Hip Hop, and 16 in Medium Game Day. This would be allowed.
        ii. *DII Example 2*: Team B dances 13 in Small Hip Hop, 13 in Small Pom, and 13 in Medium Game Day. This would be allowed.
        iii. *DII Example 3*: Team C dances 13 in Small Pom, 14 in Small Jazz, and 12 in Small Game Day. This is NOT allowed due to dancing less in Game Day than their performance category with the highest number of athletes.

UDA ELIGIBILITY POLICY

1. All members of the dance team must be current members of the official school spirit squads and must attend the school they are representing.
    a. *Exception 1*: Single-gender schools may use athletes from co-operative schools if they are official members of the squad. These teams must support the school(s) athletics/ endeavors throughout the year and not solely combined for competition purposes.
    b. *Exception 2*: An 8th grade athlete does not have to attend high school but must be a member of the official spirit squad throughout the season for sideline AND competition.
    c. *Exception 3*: A 9th grade athlete competing on a Junior High team does not have to attend the school they are representing but must be a member of the official team throughout the season for sideline AND competition.
    d. Seniors who graduate in the fall would be eligible to compete at NSSC/NDTC if the school still considers the athlete an official member of the team during the championship. Documentation must be provided by the school administration. Athletes may not be enrolled in any other school at the time of the championship.
2. If a school district or state association has more or less restrictions, teams will be required to follow the more restrictive set of rules.
    a. *Example 1*: State A allows 7th grade students to participate on Varsity Teams. Teams from State A will still be required to follow the 8th - 12th grade restrictions for Varsity Teams. These teams are NOT allowed to move into Junior Varsity Division.
    b. *Example 2*: State B does not allow 9th grade or below participation on Varsity Sports. Teams from State B would then need to follow their State Restrictions.
3. Individuals are NOT permitted to compete on **two different School/Rec Teams** at the same event or across DI and DII NSSC weekends. They are permitted on both a School Team and an All Star Team at the same event.
4. Teams may participate in more than one local or regional competition during the season.

5. All athletes and coaches must be registered and listed on the Event Roster to be submitted at check-in for each event. Roster Forms can be found at UDA Competition Required Forms under Regional Competition Forms & FAQs.
6. Schools participating in cooperative sports agreement must have written permission from their single governing school board and send in an official request on school board letterhead to NSSC@varsity.com for approval to the Rules Committee to compete as one team by **October 1, 2026**.
    a. Cooperative teams are limited to combining from no more than 2 (two) schools*.
    b. Both schools must be in one school district or governed by one school board.
    c. Cooperative teams must support the school(s) athletics/ endeavors throughout the year and not solely combined for competition purposes.
    d. If each school has its own official spirit squad, the two schools would not be allowed to combine athletes from both teams onto one combined competition team.
    e. Any approved team must use the combined total enrollment for both schools when submitting the enrollment letter for DI/DII classification.
    f. If approved, the team must compete as one for the entire 2026-2027 event season.
    g. *Any co-operative agreements outside of these parameters, please email NDTC@varsity.com.
7. Student-athletes who are subject to an open criminal proceeding relating to any offense involving sexual misconduct or violence, who have a criminal conviction for any offense involving sexual misconduct or violence, or whose names are listed on temporary or permanent ineligible lists maintained by USA Cheer or the U.S. All Star Federation are prohibited from participating in any Varsity Spirit competition.

ENROLLMENT

All teams must submit an official school enrollment letter for determination of DI/DII division status. School enrollment is defined as all students registered as in-school students at the school and any other students also eligible to participate in athletics at that school.

1. High school enrollment is defined as all students in 9th-12th grade and also includes all students registered for attendance at the school for the school the team represents.
2. The total enrollment must also include all virtual, co-curricular, and/or home school students if they are eligible for athletics at the school.
3. For the 2026-27 season, any team representing a single gender school that includes athletes from co-operative (co-op) schools will have its DI/DII classification determined by the combined total enrollment of all participating schools. Teams must submit:
    a. The enrollment number for each co-op school from which athletes are pulled from, and
    b. The number of athletes on the roster representing each of those schools.
4. Cooperative teams must include total enrollment from both schools.
5. Magnet or affiliated school enrollment should be included if students from that school are members of the spirit squad.
6. Enrollment letters must include the number of students enrolled at the school and must be submitted no sooner than thirty (30) days from the start of school and no later than October 1, 2026.
    a. Link to enrollment form and details: *COMING SOON*
    b. Any supporting documents must come from the school's principal or athletic director on official school letterhead and include a copy of the registrar's/attendance office documentation of enrollment by grade/student type.

NDTC divisions are split into DI (1400+ school enrollment) & DII (1399 or less school enrollment).

RECREATIONAL GUIDELINES

1. Athlete eligibility will be based on the birth year, or partial year listed to be eligible for that division. All recreational divisions can be found on the UDA Division Sheet found here – 26-27 UDA School & Recreational Divisions
2. Teams must submit a Varsity Recreational Roster Verification Form at each event. This form can be found online under Required Forms.

3. Recreational Teams will require all coaches to have USA Cheer Membership. At least one coach must have the USA Cheer Coach membership that includes the USA Cheer Youth Safety Risk Management certification course and must accompany the team at every competition. Proof of certification is required upon registration for every event.
4. Recreational teams will follow all UDA Routine Safety Rules and Regulations as listed below.
5. For the 2026-2027 event season, Recreational divisions will be offered at regionals only and not eligible to compete at the NDTC on either DI or DII weekend.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout and post event. This includes but is not limited to social media posts and comments. The coach of each team is responsible for seeing 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 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 attend all practices, functions, and games.

COMPETITION ROUTINE GUIDELINES

1. 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.)
2. The center will be marked on all performance surfaces. Center markers will not be allowed. This includes but is not limited to - stuffed animals, toys, alternate dancers, etc. Teams are prohibited from bringing any non-used props to the performance area. Regional competitions that do not have Marley will have a spacing rope marker provided by UDA. These will be the ONLY spacing rope markers allowed.
3. All performers (unless injured or sick) must remain within the performance area throughout the entire routine. Dancers can only enter the performance area through the designated entry at the beginning of the routine and exit at the designated exit at the end of the routine. Athletes will not be penalized for leaving the performance surface but must stay within the performance area throughout the duration of the routine.
4. Coaching staff, parents, fans and/or other members of the performing team entering the competition boundary before, during or after a performance is not allowed. The only people allowed on the performance floor are the competitors.

CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUMING

1. All facets of a performance/routine, including costuming, choreography and music selection, should be appropriate and suitable for family viewing and listening. Examples of inappropriate choreography may include, but are not limited to, vulgar or suggestive movement appearing offensive or sexual in content, displaying acts of violence, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures. Music containing words unsuitable for family listening is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, swearwords and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, and/or

violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words may still constitute 'inappropriate.' Music, costuming, or movement in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be assumed by the coach to be inappropriate and removed as to not put their team in an unfortunate situation. Costuming must be well secured and appropriate for a family friendly environment.

2. Shoes, on both feet, are recommended but not required while on the performance surface. Please note that dancers should choose to wear shoes, anything with wheels is not allowed (example: roller skate, roller blades, heelys, etc.). Wearing socks, and or footed tights only is not allowed. (Clarification: Socks designed for dance that provide shock absorption, arch support, ankle stability, traction are allowed.)
3. Teams competing at the National Dance Team Championship and/or any competition at Walt Disney World may NOT use Disney costumes that resemble a Disney character or movie. Any use of Disney music requires prior approval and must be sent to musicinfo@varsity.com at least one month prior to your first competition. Any use of Disney theme and costuming requires prior approval and must be sent to udarules@varsity.com at least one month prior to your first competition.
4. When all dancers are standing at attention, all costumes/uniforms must cover the midriff area completely. The midriff includes the entire midriff section from the bottom of the sternum/diaphragm down, front of the body only. Nude body liners are acceptable. This rule applies to all Pom, Jazz, Kick, Hip Hop, Game Day, and Intermediate divisions.
5. Tights are HIGHLY recommended to be worn for all athletes with costumes but not required.
6. Costuming must be well secured and appropriate for a family friendly environment.
7. Jewelry as part of the costume is allowed. Safety of the dancers should be considered.

PROPS

1. Props are NOT allowed.
2. Wearable items used to enhance the routine are allowed but must remain connected to the garment/costume throughout the entire performance. If taken off and danced with, it becomes a prop. Wearable items cannot be taken off and discarded.
3. See page 13 for Game Day Prop rules.
4. Signs and/or rally towels being used in a Game Day routine ONLY, will not count as props.
5. Prop approvals or prop questions can be submitted to UDArules@varsity.com and must be received at least 2 weeks prior to your event.

HANDS FREE POMS

The use of hands-free poms will be allowed. Hands-free poms are defined as poms specifically made so that performers do not have to hold the poms but rather, they are affixed to the performers' hand. Proper use means bars cannot be in the palm of the hand and only an elastic band can be between the supporting hand and the performance surface for skills, tricks, etc. A hair tie, rubber band, or tying pom strings/pieces together will not be counted as a hands-free pom.

ENTRANCES AND EXITS

1. Formal entrances which involve choreography, technical skills, and all traditions/chants are not permitted. Dancers should enter the performance area in a timely fashion. Exception: Dance Game Day. See clarification under Dance Game Day Time Limitations below on page 11.
2. Teams have 30 seconds from the team's introduction to start the routine and 30 seconds after routine completion to exit the stage. If a team exceeds this time limit, a penalty of a .25-point deduction for 1-5 seconds or a .5-point deduction for 6 or more seconds will be assessed. This 30 second time limit is not included in your two (2) minute max routine time limit.
3. At NSSC/NDTC, the official timing will begin when the first dancer touches the Marley or performance area.

4. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a 1.0 deduction. Excessive celebration includes, but is not limited to, alternates/coaches entering the competition floor, head/hair swinging, inappropriate gestures, and/or other similar moves.

ROUTINE TIME LIMITATIONS

1. Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement, voice, note of music, or whichever comes first. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement, voice, note of music, or whichever comes last.
2. If a team exceeds the time limit by 3-5 seconds, they will be issued a 0.5 deduction. If a team exceeds the time limit by (6) six or more seconds, they will be issued a 1.5 deduction.
3. Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, judges will not issue a deduction until 3 seconds over the allowed time. If a routine is retimed as part of a review, the exact time will be used without the 3 second allowance listed above.
4. Because penalties are severe, it is recommended that all teams time their performance several times prior to competition and leave cushion to allow for variations in sound equipment.

PERFORMANCE ROUTINE TIME

1. School teams will have a **maximum** of 2:00 minutes for performance routines (Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, and High Kick).

DANCE GAME DAY TIME

1. For Game Day Routines, timing of the routine will NOT include the team spiriting, rallying, or individuals performing skills (jumps, kicks, tumbling) onto the performance surface but will begin with the first group movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first. The entrance time limit of 30 seconds still applies for Game Day routines.
2. The overall time limit (including transitions) should not exceed 3 minutes (3:00) for both regionals and NDTC. Timing will begin with your fight song music, any choreographed movement/chants or after exceeding the 30 seconds allotted after team introduction - whichever happens first.
3. Teams must show a clear separation between elements. Teams are highly encouraged to show spirited interaction as a clear transition with no music, voice-overs/recorded or overlayed words being played during these transitions.

HIGH KICK DIVISION GUIDELINES

Each routine must have a minimum of 60 kicks. We suggest that your routine have more than 60 to ensure you meet 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.

1. At least half the team must execute a simultaneous kick for it to be counted. Teams with an odd number of dancers will have the allowance of one less (Example: A team has 15 members. Both 8 dancers executing a kick AND 7 dancers executing a kick will count as the "majority".)
2. Tick-tock kick lines: Each set of the tick-tock will count as one kick, as long as a majority of the team executes the tick-tock sequence. (See glossary for tick-tock definition)
    a. *Example 1*: A team has a total of 20 dancers. They perform 5 sets of tick-tock kicks. Five (5) kicks will count toward the required minimum, as a majority (20) was executing the tick-tock sequence.
    b. *Example 2*: A team has a total of 20 dancers. Three groups of 3 dancers (9 total) execute lifts while a line of 11 dancers executes 3 sets of tick-tock kicks. Three (3) kicks will count towards the required minimum.
    c. *Example 3*: A team has a total of 20 dancers. Twelve dancers perform a turn sequence center stage while 2 sets of 4 dancers (8 dancers total) perform 6 sets of tick-tock kicks. No kicks will count towards the required minimum, as there was never a majority of team members executing kicks.
3. Leg Holds: If the leg hold is lifted off the ground with force at or above 90 degrees and is performed by most of the team, it is considered a kick that counts towards the requirement.

4. Ripple/Contagions: When a kick is performed in a ripple or a contagion by most of the team, it will count as one (1) total kick toward the required minimum. Chasing ripples will count as one (1) kick however many times it is completed by a majority.
    a. *Example:* A chasing ripple of 3 high kicks goes down the line of an entire team, and all 3 kicks are performed by all dancers. This will count a 3 kicks total towards the minimum requirement.
5. Contracted/Can-Can Kicks: 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.
6. Passe, flick kicks which kick behind the dancer, turn sequences, toe taps, kicks while kneeling or sitting, etc. will not be counted as kicks. Leg placement in the attitude position will not be counted as a kick, front or back attitude.

GAME DAY ROUTINE FORMAT

This will serve as the format for ALL 2026-2027 Dance Game Day categories regionally and nationally. Please refer to the rules and regulations section below for a full list of rules and guidelines, including but not limited to division sizes, costuming, music, etc.

Dance Game Day will take place in the following order:

1. Fight Song

- Skills and choreography should represent a traditional Fight Song that your team performs at games and community events.
- No voice-overs or words may be recorded and overlayed on the music tracks for Game Day routines in Fight Song or Spirit Raising. Any voices captured in the original recording are allowed.

2. Spirit Raising

- Teams will choose to perform ONE of the following:
    - Sideline Routine
    - Stand Routine
    - Drum Cadence
- The performance of your choice should have an emphasis on crowd appeal.
- No voice-overs or words may be recorded and overlayed on the music tracks for Game Day routines in Fight Song or Spirit Raising. Any voices captured in the original recording are allowed.

3. Performance Routine

- A routine (can be any style) that is designed for crowd entertainment. This is the best time to showcase your team's energy and connection to the crowd.
- There is a max time limit of one-minute (1:00)
- Voice-overs and words recorded or overlayed on the music tracks are only allowed during Performance Routines.

UDA GAME DAY ROUTINE RULES

These rules apply to Junior High, Junior Varsity, and Varsity teams competing in the Dance Game Day category at ALL events (UDA regionals and NDTC). For Spirit Program Game Day and Spirit Program Game Day LIVE rules and regulations, please see page 14.

TEAM GUIDELINES

1. The competition is open to all Junior High, Junior Varsity, and Varsity teams in the country.
2. Teams must have a minimum of five (5) dancers - the maximum is forty (40) dancers.
3. Individuals may not represent more than one team at any UDA competition. (Exception: Junior Varsity and Varsity teams may combine to compete in the Varsity Game Day division and Spirit Program Game Day Divisions. Teams that combine to compete in Varsity Game Day may not also compete separately in their respective Junior Varsity or Varsity Game Day divisions at the same event. All athletes must meet Varsity age requirements (8th–12th grade).

4. Teams are allowed to compete in Dance Game Day and one of the Spirit Program Game Day categories. (Spirit Program Game Day or Spirit Program Game Day LIVE) For more information on Spirit Program Game Day categories, please see page 14.
5. Teams will not be able to compete Game Day with less team members than their performance categories (Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, and/or High Kick).
6. Varsity divisions will be split at regionals ONLY if there are 11 or more Varsity teams entered. JH and JV divisions will not be split at any event.

GENERAL NOTES AND GAME DAY PROPS

1. The performance will follow this order: Fight Song, Spirit Raising, and Performance Routine.
2. Teams are required to wear a traditional uniform that you would wear when representing your school. These should be in school colors; uniforms must follow all midriff rules, which states when all dancers are standing at attention, all costumes/uniforms must cover the midriff area completely. The midriff includes the entire midriff section from the bottom of the sternum/diaphragm down, front of the body only. Nude body liners are acceptable.
3. Teams may use poms, but they are not required.
4. Signs/Poms/Rally Towels will be permitted in Game Day.
    a. Clarification: Signs are only allowed in Fight Song and Spirit Raising. Signs are not allowed in the Performance Routine section.
5. Signs, poms, or rally towels must be safely placed or dropped inside the competition area and cannot be tossed or thrown off the stage or into the crowd.
6. Megaphones, Flags, and all other props are not allowed in the Dance ONLY Game Day (Spirit Program Game Day will have prop exceptions). All other prop rules outlined on page 10 must be followed as well.
7. Signs must be made of poster board, corrugated plastic, or fabric.
8. Signs may not be larger than 3 feet in any direction.
9. Hip over-head rotation skills (with or without hand support) may not be done with signs in hand.
10. Voice-overs and words recorded or overlayed on the music tracks are only allowed during Performance Routines. No voice-overs or words may be recorded and overlayed on the music tracks for Game Day routines in Fight Song or Spirit Raising. Any voices captured in the original recording are allowed.
11. Bands/drum lines/pep bands are not allowed in Dance Game Day.
12. Teams competing in Dance Game Day, must follow all the routine safety rules and regulations at any regional or NDTC event. Refer to page 15 for more information.

Mascots Performing in Dance Game Day

1. Teams may add up to 2 (two) mascots in their Game Day and/or Spirit Program routines.
2. The mascot(s) must meet all the eligibility requirements as the athletes.
3. The mascot(s) must be a student of the school.
4. The mascot(s) will not count toward the number of participants allowed but may impact the overall impression score.
5. The mascot(s) are limited to performing in a maximum of 3 divisions per individual within an event.
6. The mascot(s) may only perform one role throughout the entirety of the routine.
7. The mascot(s) must remain in costume. Mascots in costume will not be allowed outside of the competition venues.
8. The mascot(s) must enter the floor with the team and remain on the floor for the entire routine.
9. The mascot(s) is not allowed to be involved in any lifts or skills with hip overhead rotation and should position themselves away from any skills being performed.
    a. Prep level or higher stunts, multi base stunts, shoulder sits, aerials, back handsprings, front handsprings, headsprings, etc. are not allowed.

Mascot Game Day Props:

1. The mascot(s) will only be allowed to use traditional sideline props, such as signs and/or poms and/or rally towels.

2. No other props are allowed, and all prop rules as outlined on page 10 will apply.
3. Uniform/costume pieces must be worn from the beginning of the routine. Items/articles of clothing brought on to the stage but not worn will be considered a prop.
4. If any part of your mascot uniform/costume is taken off, it must be immediately put down.

SPIRIT PROGRAM GAME DAY

Spirit Program Game Day division specific guidelines can be found here - Spirit Program Game Day - Guidelines

DEDUCTIONS

A deduction will be given for EACH safety/general competition rule violation. Please see below for all Routine Safety Rules. The point value of this deduction will be as follows:

- 0.25 points – exceeding the allotted 30 seconds to begin a performance once announced to the floor by 1-5 seconds, costume/shoe rules.
- 0.5 points - performance error- any skill or trick executed incorrectly that then makes it an illegal skill/trick (example: touching down on an aerial cartwheel with non- hands-free poms in hand), exceeding the allotted 30 seconds to begin a performance once announced to the floor by more than 6 seconds, routine timing infractions of 3-5 seconds over time.
- 1.0 points - General rules violations including (but not limited to) not enough kicks, prop rules, excessive celebration following the team's performance, music during Game Day transitions, recorded or overlayed voiceovers on the music tracks during Game Day routines (Fight Song & Spirit Raising), adult and or representative leaving the music table during the performance, etc.
- 1.5 points - Routine safety rule violations listed below, Timing infractions of 6 or more seconds over time

Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, judges will not issue a deduction until 3 seconds over the allowed time. If a routine is retimed as part of a review, the exact time will be used without the 3 second allowance listed above.

If you have any questions concerning the legality of a trick or move, please email the video to udarules@varsity.com. Include your team's name, your name, contact phone number, and the event attending. It must be received two weeks prior to the event and will only be accepted by the head coach of the team. If received after the deadline, the video is not guaranteed a response. Videos from choreographers will not be allowed. Videos sent via text message will not be allowed. For questions, please contact udarules@varsity.com.

Please note: Performing the skill at a prior event does not ensure that a skill is legal nor that it would have warranted a legality warning. Only submitting the skill will make the skill eligible for a warning. UDA can only guarantee this process will be accepted at UDA-branded events. UDA can only guarantee this process will be accepted at UDA-branded events or state association events run by Varsity/UDA.

VIRTUAL COMPETITION GUIDELINES

1. Virtual events are not categorized as bid eligible events for NDTC. For states in which no regional event is available within close proximity, teams may request prior approval for a virtual bid. Email NDTC@varsity.com
2. All videos must be recorded in a single take. Edited footage will not be accepted.
3. Virtual Event Information: UDA Virtual Competitions - UDA
4. Awards - Division placement banners will be awarded to each team competing that will be mailed following the event. Results will be posted in the Event BAND group for coaches. To view the routine videos from the event, you need an active Varsity TV subscription. If you have questions about your Varsity TV account, click here.

5. VIRTUAL COMPETITION MUSIC GUIDELINES
    a. All routines will be 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.
    b. Only music capture incidentally will be permitted. No music can be edited into the video. Teams who edit music into the video will receive a 2-point penalty.

LEGALITY REVIEW

A deduction will be given for EACH safety/general competition rule violation. The review process for UDA can be found here: UDA Review Process. Each event is a new event and reference to previous events within the season will not be allowed during the review of legality of skills.

If you have any questions concerning the legality of a trick or move, please email the video to udarules@varsity.com. Include your team's name, your name, contact phone number, and the event attending. Videos sent via text message will not be accepted. Videos submitted for a regional/local event must be received two weeks prior to the event and must be labeled with the event attending. Videos for NDTC and NSSC must be received by January 13th, 2027 for all DII schools and January 20th, 2027 for all DI schools. All videos will only be accepted by the head coach of the team. If received after the deadline, the video is not guaranteed a response. Videos from choreographers will not be allowed. Do not rely on prior legality rulings from UDA Regionals. Legality rulings will not be provided with a digital dance critique; a separate legality verification must be submitted. For questions, please contact udarules@varsity.com.

Please note: Performing the skill at a prior event or in a prior round of competition does not ensure that a skill is legal nor that it would have warranted a legality warning. Only submitting the skill to udarules@varsity.com will make the skill eligible for a warning. UDA can only guarantee this process will be accepted at UDA-branded events or state association events run by Varsity/UDA.

UDA SUMMER CAMP HOME ROUTINE RULES

UDA Home Routine rules and regulations for 2026 Summer Camps can be found here - UDA Home Routine Rules and Regulations

UDA ROUTINE SAFETY RULES

- *Intermediate division routine safety rules can be found on pages 17-20*
- *All-Star teams please visit www.usasf.net for routine rules and regulations*

TUMBLING AND SKILLS (EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS)

1. 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).
    a. The proper use of hands-free poms for hip over head skills is allowed. *Please reference the Hands-Free Poms section for more details*
2. Tumbling skills with hip over head rotation:
    a. Airborne skills with hand support may not be airborne in approach but may be airborne in descent. (Exception: Dive Rolls are not allowed).
        i. Standing back handsprings are allowed but cannot be connected to any other hip over head tumbling skill.
    b. Airborne skills with or without hand support that land in a perpendicular inversion may not have backward momentum in the approach.

    c. Non airborne tumbling skills with hip over head rotation are limited to 3 connected skills. (Example: 3 consecutive headsprings are allowed; 4 are not allowed).
3. Hip over head airborne skills without hand support are not allowed. (Exception: Aerials and/or side somis not connected to any other hip over head rotation skill are allowed.)
    a. Recommendation: If using non-hands free poms in an aerial and/or side somi, dancers should place both poms in non-dominant hand. If a dancer bears weight on the performance surface with a hand that is holding a pom during the skill, the dancer would be in violation of rule 1 and a deduction will be assessed.
    b. Aerials/Front Aerials that include a twisting motion or blind landing are allowed.
    c. Aerial "snap downs" or aerials to a seated position are allowed.
4. Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
5. Choreographed 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 is allowed from a standing or kneeling position or from a jump with forward momentum. All variations of a shushanova are not allowed. (Exception: Standing Back Handsprings can have alternate landings, including a push up position.)
7. Airborne skills without hip over head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position backwards onto the neck, head, back, shoulder, and/or hands.
    a. 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.)

Below are some examples of commonly known dance skills. This does NOT mean that they are required for your routine, nor does this list encompass all skills that are legal/illegal. The above rules still apply*

ALLOWED:

Aerial Cartwheels	Front/Back Walkovers
Front Handsprings	Round Offs (with or without hands)
Side Somi	Stalls/Freezes
Forward Rolls	Head Spins
Backward Rolls	Windmills
Carthweels	Kip Ups
Handstands	Shoulder Rolls
Headstands	Headsprings (with hands)
Backbends	Front Aerials
Standing Back Handspring	Webster
No handed Kip Ups	

NOT ALLOWED:

Front Tucks	Dive Rolls
No handed Headsprings	Shushunova
Layouts	Toe Pitch Back Tucks
Back Tucks	

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. At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill.

a. Lifting with poms is allowed.
b. Extensions, pyramids, and basket tosses are NOT allowed.

3. Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) may occur if a Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
4. Vertical Inversions are allowed if:
    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.
        i. (Exception: When there are 3 or more Supporting Dancers, an additional spot is not required.)

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 release does not elevate the Executing Dancer's feet above head level of the Supporting Dancer.
        i. Exception: toe touches off a dancers back/leapfrog jumps will be allowed
    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 of the Supporting Dancer.
    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.

UDA INTERMEDIATE DIVISION SKILL RESTRICTIONS

These rules apply to all Varsity teams entered in Intermediate Pom, Intermediate Jazz, and Intermediate Hip Hop, for both regionals and the National Dance Team Championship.

INTERMEDIATE TECHNICAL SKILL/ELEMENT RESTRICTIONS

Connecting skills are not required but are permitted. Dancers may connect up to two skills (tumbling, technical, and/or lifts) within a single sequence, provided they follow the skill restrictions listed below. After completing a skill or connected sequence, dancers must perform at least 8 counts of choreography before initiating another skill or sequence. These skill restrictions apply to all intermediate sections below.

1. Example 1: Chaine' connecting to a calypso is allowed.
2. Example 2: Double Pirouette into a toe touch is allowed.
3. Example 3: Leg extension into a soutenu into a turn sequence is NOT allowed (exceeds two connected skills).

Turn sequences are the exception and may not be connected to any other skill, technical element, or sequence. Dancers must perform at least 8 counts of choreography before and after a turn sequence.

1. Example 1: A leap into a fouetté turn sequence is NOT allowed (turn sequences may not be connected).

1. STATIONARY TURNS ARE ALLOWED PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING:

a. Pirouette turns may be executed in a passe, coupe, pencil, or attitude position and are limited to two rotations.
b. Leg hold turns and illusions are limited to one rotation.
c. Axels and/or tours are not permitted.
d. Chaine' and pique turns may be performed in succession; however, no more than two connected skills may be included in a sequence.

e. Piques are limited to a single rotation.

2. FOUETTE TURN/ A LA SECONDE TURN SEQUENCES ARE ALLOWED PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING:

a. Turn sequences may include Fouette turns, A la Seconde turns, and one set of single or double pirouettes as permitted below.
   i. Single and double pirouette turns within the sequence may be in passé, coupe, pencil, and attitude positions.
   ii. Floats are not permitted.
   iii. No leg hold turns of any kind are permitted in turn sequences.
   iv. No changing spots/directions
   v. Turn sequences are limited to three a la seconde turns into a double pirouette. This does not include the preparation or ending/completion of the turn sequence. (Example: Preparation on counts 7-8, three a la seconde turns into a double pirouette on counts 1-8, completion/landing on count 1.)

b. Dancer(s) must come to a complete stop with both feet on the performance surface in turn sequences.

c. Turn sequences may not be connected to any other skill, technical element, or sequence. Dancers must perform at least 8 counts of choreography before and after a turn sequence.

3. LEAPS/JUMPS ARE ALLOWED PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING:

a. Preparations for traveling leaps and/or jumps are limited to a step, chasse, or chaine'.

b. Choreographed landings must first bear weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet. Dancers can use a bug, roll, or soutenu as an optional landing for Leaps/Jumps.

c. Switch leaps in any form are not permitted.

d. 540 leaps are not permitted.

4. KICKS/KICKLINES:

a. Kicks/Kicklines are allowed and are not restricted in number.

***Note: The following are lists of commonly known dance skills. This does not mean that they are required for your routine, nor does this list encompass all skills that are legal/illegal. ***

INTERMEDIATE ALLOWED:

Chaine Turn	Toe Touch
Pique Turn	Grand Jete
Pirouette	C Jump
Fouette Turn	Side Leap
A La Seconde Turn	Firebird
Leg Hold Turn	Illusion
Calypso	

INTERMEDIATE NOT ALLOWED:

Switch Leap	Renverse Jump
Floats	Turning Disc
Switch Tilt	Turning Switch Tilt
Axels	Turning C Jump
540 Jump	

INTERMEDIATE TUMBLING AND SKILLS (Executed by Individuals)

1. 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).

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

2. Tumbling skills with hip over head rotation:
    a. Airborne skills, with or without hand support, are not allowed. (Exception: Round off and headsprings are allowed. See the full Intermediate Allowed list below for permitted skills.)
3. Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
4. Choreographed 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.
5. 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.
    a. All variations of a shushunova are not allowed.
6. Airborne skills without hip over head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position backwards onto the neck, head, back, shoulder, and/or hands.
    a. 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.)

***Note: The following are lists of commonly known dance skills. This does not mean that they are required for your routine, nor does this list encompass all skills that are legal/illegal. ***

INTERMEDIATE ALLOWED:

Front/Back Walkovers	Forward Rolls
Kip Ups (with hands)	Backbends
Round Off	Backward Rolls
Shoulder Rolls	Handstands
Stalls/Freezes	Cartwheels
Headsprings (with hands)	Headstands

INTERMEDIATE NOT ALLOWED:

Front Tucks	Back Tucks
Back Handsprings	Layouts
Front Aerials	Shushanova
Barani	Side Somi
Aerial Cartwheels	Front Handsprings
No handed Headsprings	Windmills
Dive Rolls	Head Spins
No handed Kip Ups	Toe Pitch

INTERMEDIATE 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. Thigh stands, shoulder sits, and chair sits are allowed.
3. The following cheer-based stunts are not allowed:
    a. Elevators
    b. Extended cheer stunts (the lifted dancer is extended in an upright position over the base(s) who maintain fully extended arms and have the lifted dancers' feet in hands)
    c. Pyramids and basket tosses

4. If Executing Dancer(s) is not in direct contact with the performance surface, then hip over head rotations are not allowed.
    a. Example: Partner cartwheels are not allowed.
5. If Executing Dancer(s) is not in direct contact with the performance surface, then Vertical Inversion are not allowed.
    a. Example: Assisted handstands with executing dancer's hands not touching the performance surface, are not allowed.
6. Assisted kip ups with hand support are allowed; the Executing Dancer must receive support from a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the performance surface through the entire skill.

INTERMEDIATE RELEASE MOVES

1. The Executing Dancer(s) may not be released or tossed.
2. The Executing Dancer may jump, leap, step or push off a Supporting Dancer if:
    a. The highest point of the release does not elevate the Executing Dancer's feet above hip level.
    b. The Executing Dancer's hip may not cross the vertical axis after the release if airborne and/or inverted.
    c. "Leap Frog" jumping over a standing Supporting Dancer is not allowed.
    d. Toe pitches are not allowed.

This ends the Intermediate Rules and Skill Restriction section.

SCORES AND RANKINGS

1. Individual 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 and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches at the end of the event. Please note that all judges' decisions are FINAL.
2. Any deductions or violations will be taken off the final score. For more information on scoring, score sheet and judging criteria, please visit uda.varsity.com - UDA Divisions, Rules, & Scoring
3. Please send any scoring questions to udascoring@varsity.com at the conclusion of the event. Please note: DII and DI Championships are back to back weekends. Our response times will be delayed. All scoring inquires will be addressed post DI weekend in the order they were received.
4. In the event of a tie, tie's will not be broken. See NDTC tie break policy on page 22.
5. 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 a portion of the score sheet. Judges' scores will be AVERAGED together to determine the overall team score.
6. Varsity TV publishes and makes available all competition routine videos from live-streamed events to recognize the hard work and talent of the athletes competing, and ultimately, to serve and grow the cheerleading and dance community. Due to the sheer number of teams and routines published, Varsity Spirit is unable to accommodate requests for removal.

VIOLATIONS

Any team in violation of these UDA Event Guidelines or any of the above-mentioned guidelines will be assessed a one (1) point general deduction. This deduction does not apply to deduction or violations within the point deduction system or already assigned a lower/higher point value. Go to uda.varsity.com for more specifics.

NATIONAL DANCE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP INFORMATION

Please note that the following rules, guidelines, and divisions are specific to the National Dance Team Championship in conjunction with the National School Spirit Championship. (DII January 29th – January 31st, 2027 & DI February 4th – February 7th, 2027). Additionally, all other rules and guidelines apply. Please visit uda.varsity.com for all divisions, rules and scoring information.

HOW TO QUALIFY FOR THE 2027 NATIONAL DANCE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP

All teams attending the 2027 UDA High School National Dance Team Championship must complete Varsity Spirit/NFHS Squad Credentialing and receive a bid to be eligible. Squad Credentialing must be completed by December 31, 2026.

A. CAMP QUALIFICATION (Varsity Spirit/NFHS Squad Credentialing & Nationals Bid)

Teams will continue to complete NFHS Squad Credentialing and have a chance to earn a bid. At UDA Camp we will go through the credentialing process, as well as the three ways to receive your bid.

1. All Home Routine trophy winners at a UDA Camp*+
2. All Superior trophy winners at UDA Camp+
3. Teams attending any Varsity Branded camp that do not receive a bid may also qualify but must receive their bid at a UDA Regional Competition.*
    - 75% of the team (with a minimum of 5 participants) must be credentialed to be eligible to earn a bid to compete at a Varsity Spirit National Championship. Teams must attend an overnight camp, day camps, or home camp that is at least 2 days in length to be eligible. Please note: only 2+ day UDA Camps offer both Varsity Spirit/NFHS Squad Credentialing and award bids to qualify for UDA Nationals.
    - Teams will continue to qualify for a Superior trophy at an overnight and day camp by athletes being evaluated in all routine evaluations. To qualify for a Superior trophy at home camps each athlete must be evaluated on a minimum of 2 camp routines.

Please note that hotel camps and resort/convention camps will fall under the “Overnight Camp” category. Teams are not eligible to qualify at one day clinics, day camps, spirit days, etc. Video entry bids are not awarded to school teams.

Click here to start your journey to Nationals at a UDA Camp or contact your State Director to set up a Home Camp.

B. SQUAD CREDENTIALING PROGRAM (Varsity Spirit/NFHS Squad Credentialing ONLY)

To learn more about this program, please contact your State Director.

C. REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (Nationals Bid ONLY)

1. Teams may qualify for the 2027 UDA National Dance Team Championship by receiving a placement trophy at a UDA Regional before December 31, 2026. Click here to learn more about UDA Competitions and contact your state director!
2. Teams that wish to receive a bid for NDTC at a UDA regional must also complete the Varsity Spirit/NFHS Credentialing program.

NDTC NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES

The max number of performances a dancer may compete in at NDTC with a school team is two (2) performance routines (Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, and/or High Kick), one (1) Dance only Game Day, and one (1) Spirit Program Game Day, for a total of four (4) performances. There are **NO** exceptions to this rule.

- Dancers may compete in only 2 performance routines (Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, and/or High Kick).
- Dancers may compete in one Dance only Game Day and one Spirit Program division.
- Mascot participants are limited to performing in a maximum of 3 divisions per individual within an event.

NDTC FLOOR DIMENSIONS

The performance surface for all main floors and warm up will have 10 panels of marley floor, each panel approximately 5 feet 3.5 inches wide making the full floor approximately 53.5 x 53.5. In the event there are adjustments to the warm up space/size, all teams will be notified at least one month prior to competition. All performers must remain within the performance area throughout the entire routine. In the event of illness or injury, an athlete may leave the performance area. Dancers can only enter the performance area through the designated entry at the beginning of the routine and exit at the designated exit at the end of the routine. Athletes will not be penalized for leaving the performance surface but must stay within the performance area throughout the duration of the routine.

NDTC ROUNDS OF COMPETITION

1. UDA reserves the right to determine if a preliminary, semi-final, or final round will be necessary; this will be determined by the following guidelines for Varsity teams ONLY:
    a. 0-24 teams - 2 rounds (Semis/Finals)
    b. 25-40 teams - 3 rounds (Prelims, Semis, Finals)
    c. 41 or more teams - 3 rounds (Prelims, Semis, Finals) A/B Semi-Finals and a C/D Semi-Finals
2. Teams will be placed in random order in their first round of competition.
3. Preliminary groups will be split based on previous placement and geography.
4. Advancing rounds will be determined by reverse rank with the lowest ranking team performing first. If this creates a conflict for your routines, adjustments will be made to the order of competition. Teams will first be moved earlier in their division to alleviate the conflict. If a conflict still remains, teams may be put later in the order to allow enough time.
5. From each round of competition, 50%* of the teams in each round/group will advance.
    a. In divisions with 5 or less teams, a minimum of 5 will advance to the final round of competition.
    b. In divisions with 6 teams, a minimum of 4 teams will advance to the final round of competition.
6. The top team in each preliminary round will automatically advance to the finals in their respective division.
7. The final number of division rounds will be confirmed one month prior to the championship; however, all advancements will be based on the actual number of teams that perform in each round/group on the day of competition.
8. UDA has the right to make advancement changes in the best interest of the division.
9. UDA will combine divisions in the best interest of providing a competitive environment. When/If a division has less than 3 teams, they may be combined into the same age/size division. Division combinations will be finalized no later than 2 weeks prior to the NDTC.
10. All divisions with only one round prior to the finals will be classified as a semi-final.

NDTC TIE BREAKER POLICY

1. In the event of a tie for the final spot advancing, both teams that are tied will move on.
2. If there is a tie for first in the preliminary round, both teams will automatically advance to the final round. UDA will have full authority to make the final determination of the number of teams selected to advance to the next round.
3. In the event of a first-place tie, event officials will look at the raw scores per judge to see which team was ranked higher most often in each caption. Should a tie remain, the ranking points from the “Overall Effect” portion of the score sheet will be used to break the tie. No first-place ties in a preliminary or semi-final round will be broken.

NDTC PARTICIPATION

1. It is understood that teams participating in the National Dance Team Championship will NOT knowingly and willingly participate in any other dance event promoted as a “national championship”, “virtual national championship”, or “international championship” for the 2026-2027 school year. (Exception: USA Spirit and Dance Nationals). This includes all awards and prizes labeled as National or International Champions.

2. Teams cannot compete in another event promoted as a National or International Championship (Exception: ICU World Cheerleading Championships and World School & Performance Cheerleading Championships) for the 2026-2027 school year within a school division or category regardless of team name.
3. A school can compete at UDA and NDA if that team is recognized as a separate team by the school and no athletes are the same. (No athletes can compete at both events)
4. Teams who violate this rule will be subject to disqualification and will forfeit the opportunity to participate in the subsequent National Dance Team Championship the following year.

NDTC TELEVISION COVERAGE

The National Dance Team Championship, now a part of the National School Spirit Championship, will be nationally televised on ESPN network. Because of the format of the show, not all finalist teams will be shown on the telecast. Out of respect for the copyrights of others, original music will be composed for all the routines featured in the show, to meet broadcast licensing requirements. If your team is featured in the TV 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.

NDTC APPEARANCES, ENDORCEMENTS, AND PUBLICITY

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

NDTC PRIZES AND AWARDS

1. All athletes performing on the team must be registered and rostered for the event.
2. All teams in the final round of competition will receive a trophy.
3. Teams who rank first, second, or third place will additionally receive a bronze, silver, or gold medallions for each athlete who performed on the floor plus two coaches and up to 5 additional rostered alternates, administrators or other.
4. National Champion teams will receive a champion banner.
5. National Champion teams will receive a National Champion jacket for each division/category. Jackets will be awarded for each athlete who performed on the floor plus two coaches and up to 5 additional rostered alternates.
6. Additional medallions and jackets may be requested at the conclusion of the event. Additional award requests will be shipped, based on availability, following the event.

RULES AND REGULATIONS AGREEMENT

By accepting the Terms and Conditions as the authorized person from my program I agree and acknowledge that:

1. I am the sponsor/director of the team.
2. I have read and understand the foregoing.
3. I will be solely responsible for communicating the foregoing to all coaches/directors in my program that will coach and direct teams at any UDA Regional Competition and NDTC.
4. I will ensure that my teams will always comply with all rules and regulations.
5. My team will support the results of the competition, as I am a role model for my programs.
6. I have read and reviewed both the NDTC specific rules and the UDA Rules and Regulations.

UDA GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Aerial:** An hip over head airborne tumbling skill that takes off from one foot and lands on one or two feet without placing hands on the ground.
- **Airborne (executed by individual):** A state in which the dancer is free of contact from a person and/or the performing surface.
- **Airborne Hip Over Head Rotation (executed by individual)**: An action where hips rotate over the head in a tumbling skill and there is no contact with the performance surface (e.g. Round off or a Back handspring).
- **Airborne Skill (executed by individual)**: A skill in which the dancer is free of contact with the performance surface (e.g. Tour Jeté or Butterfly).
- **Attitude (a-tee-tewd)**: A position in which the working leg is lifted front, side, or behind with the knee bent at an angle of 90°; can be executed as a turn.
- **Axle (aka Axel) (AK-sel)**: A turn in which the working leg rond de jambes to passé as the supporting leg pushes off the ground and tucks under the body-after rotation in air, land on original supporting leg.
- **Back Bend**: A face-up body position where the hands and feet are in contact with the surface and the hips are pushed upwards into an arch position.
- **Back Walkover**: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer reaches backward with an arched torso through an inverted position, hands make contact with the ground, then the hips rotate over the head and the torso hollows bringing the dancer to an upright position, landing one foot/leg at a time.
- **Battement (bat-mahn)**: A kick; the working leg is brushed/raised from the hip, with a straight knee, into the air and brought down again.
- **C - Jump**: A jump in which the dancer creates an arch in the back allowing the knees to bend and the feet reach behind the body.
- **Calypso (ka-lip-SO)**: A turning leap in which the working leg extends making a circle in the air as the supporting leg lifts off the ground enabling the dancer to perform a rotation in the air then the supporting (back) leg reaches behind the body, often in an attitude, and then lands on the original working leg.
- **Cartwheel**: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer supports the weight of the body with the arm(s) while rotating sideways through an inverted position landing on one foot at a time.
- **Category**: Denoting the style of a performance piece/competition routine (e.g. Jazz, Pom or Hip Hop).
- **Châiné (sheh-NAY):** A turn, or series of turns, executed with feet in 1st position, typically following one line of direction. Can be executed in a rapid series, and can be executed en relevé or en plié.
- **Chassé (sha-SAY)**: A step in which one foot “chases” the other and assumes its original position.
- **Consecutive/Connected Skills**: An action in which the dancer connects skills immediately, without step, pause or break in between (e.g. Double Pirouette or Double Toe Touch).
- **Costume Jewelry**: Jewelry that enhances the costume and is worn by ALL members of the team.
- **Coupé (koo-PAY)**: Meaning to cut or cutting; when one foot quickly takes the place of the other.
- **Dance Lift (executed as partners or in a group)**: A skill in which a dancer(s) is elevated from the performance surface by one or more dancers and set down. A Dance Lift is comprised of “Supporting” dancer(s) and “Executing” dancer(s).”

- **Dismount (executed by Groups or Pairs)**: An action in which the Executing Dancer(s) returns to the performance surface or upright position with or without assistance from a Supporting Dancer(s) with whom there was prior contact.
- **Dive Roll**: An airborne tumbling skill in which the dancer does a forward roll where the hands and feet are off of the performing surface simultaneously.
- **Division**: Denoting the composition of a competing group of dancers (e.g. Varsity, Junior Varsity, Junior High, etc.).
- **Drop**: An Action in which an airborne dancer lands on a body part other than his/her hands or feet without first bearing weight on the hands/feet.
- **Drops**: Dropping to the knee, thigh, seat, front, back, or split position onto the performing surface from a jump, stand or inverted position without first bearing most of the weight on the hands/feet which breaks the impact of the drop.
- **Elevated Dancer**: A dancer who is lifted from the performance surface as a part of a Dance Lift.
- **Elevated**: An action in which a dancer is moved to a higher position or place from a lower one.
- **Executing Dancer**: A dancer who performs a skill as a part of a Dance Trick or uses support from another dancer or dancers when Partnering.
- **Extension (executed by individuals)**: Term used to describe the ability of a dancer to raise and hold the extended leg in the air.
- **Extension (executed by groups)**: A group lift in which the supporting dancers, standing straight, hold the executing dancer's feet with straight arms, so that the executing dancer is standing straight up.
- **Firebird**: See Ring Jump.
- **Fouetté (foo-eh-TAY)**: A turning step, usually done in a series, in which the working leg makes a circle in the air and then into passé as the dancer turns bending (plié) and rising (relevé) at each revolution; meaning to whip. Fouetté turns can also be done to the side or in second position (Fouetté a la Seconde).
- **Fouetté a la Seconde**: A turning step done in a series in which the working leg makes a circle in the air and extends at a 90°angle from the supporting leg remaining parallel to the ground as the dancer turns with a plié and relevé at each revolution.
- **Front Aerial**: (an airborne hip over head rotation skill without hand support) A skill which emulates a front walkover but is executed without placing hands on the ground.
- **Front Walkover**: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer rotates forward with a hollow torso through an inverted position and arches up bringing the legs and hips over the head to a non-inverted position legs landing one foot/leg at a time.
- **Hands-free Poms**: Poms specifically made so that performers do not have to hold the poms but rather they 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. (Clarification: No part of the pom can be between the hand and the floor when used correctly.)
- **Hand-held Props**: Items that are used by performing team as an extension of the arm/hand, that are easily carried by one person. Hand held props include, but are not limited to, boas, scarves, top hats, derby hats, or canes, etc.
- **Handstand**: A non-airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill where the dancer supports his/herself vertically on his/her hands in an inverted position and the arms are extended straight by the head and ears.
- **Head Level**: A designated height; the height of standing dancer's head (at the "crown") while standing upright with straight legs. (Clarification: This is an approximate to measure space and is not changed by bending, inverting, etc.)

- **Headspring**: (an airborne hip over head rotation skill with hand support) A skill where a dancer moves forward with the hands then head, making contact with the performance surface, then rotates the hips over the head passing through an arched position. It is non-airborne in approach but airborne in descent after hips pass through perpendicular.
- **Headstand**: A non-airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill where the dancer supports his/herself vertically on his/her head in an inverted position and the hands are on the floor supporting the body.
- **Hip Level**: A designated height; the height of a standing dancers' hips while standing upright with straight legs (clarification: this is an approximate height to measure space, and is not changed by bending, inverting, etc.).
- **Hip Over Head Rotation (executed by individuals)**: An action where a dancers hips rotate over the head in a tumbling skill (e.g. Back Walkover or Cartwheel).
- **Hip Over Head Rotation (executed in groups or pairs)**: An action where the Executing Dancers' hips rotate over the head in a lift or partnering skill.
- **Inversion**: A position in which the dancer's waist and hips and feet are higher than his/her head and shoulders.
- **Invert**: A Freeze utilizing strength, flexibility and balance where the dancer's weight is placed on both hands with head facing knees and legs parallel to the floor.
- **Jeté (juh-TAY)**: A skill in which the dancer takes off from one foot by brushing the feet into the ground and swiftly 'whipping' them into the position and then landing on one foot. A jeté can be executed in various directions, sizes and positions.
- **Jump**: Movement taking off and landing on same foot or both feet.
- **Kip Up**: A skill where the dancer begins in a supine position, rolls back onto their shoulders elevating their hips off the performance surface and into an inverted position. Using their arms and/or legs, core, and momentum, the dancer thrusts their body in an upward direction away from the floor. The movement is completed by bringing the feet to the performance surface keeping the body inline and following to an upright position.
- **Leap**: A skill in which the dancer pushes off the ground, from a plié (bend), off of one leg becoming airborne and landing on the opposite leg (also known as grand jeté).
- **Leap Frog**: The executing dancer places hands on supporting dancer's shoulders, jumps in a straddle position and presses over the back/head of the supporting dancer.
- **Lifting Dancer**: A dancer(s), who is part of a dance lift and lifts an Elevated Dancer as a part of a Dance Lift. The supporting dancer may also be considered a Lifting Dancer.
- **Lifts**: An action in which the partner is elevated to any height and set down. Refer to the rules for Dance Lifts and Partnering for a full definition.
- **Parallel**: A position in which the thighs, knees and toes of both legs are facing straight ahead.
- **Partnering (executed in pairs)**: A skill in which two dancers use support from one another. Partnering can involve both "Supporting" and "Executing" skills.
- **Passé (pa-SAY)**: A position or movement in which the working leg bends connecting the pointed foot to or near the knee of the supporting leg; meaning to pass. Passé can be executed with the hips parallel or turned out.
- **Pencil Turn**: A turn executed with the working leg held straight and next to the supporting leg.
- **Penché (pahn-SHAY)**: Leaning, inclining. As, for example, in arabesque penché.

- **Perpendicular Inversion (Executed by individuals)**: A skill that begins with backward airborne momentum and lands on the hands and head in an inverted position in which the dancer's head, neck and shoulders are directly aligned with the performance surface, creati a 90 degree angle between the head and floor.
- **Piqué (pee-KAY)**: Stepping directly onto a straight leg in relevé; can be performed while turning and in various positions (arabesque, attitude, etc.)
- **Pirouette (peer-o-WET)**: A skill in which the dancer bends (plié) with one foot in front of the other (fourth position) and rises (relevé) to one leg making a complete rotation of the body; meaning to whirl. A pirouette can be executed in a variety of positions.
- **Pivot**: Movement step used to change direction; working leg steps forward assuming weight of body, body changes direction, support leg reassumes weight of body; can be executed front to back, side to side.
- **Plié (plee-AY)**: A preparatory and landing skill in which the dancer bends, softens his/her knees; meaning to bend.
- **Prone**: A position in which the front of the dancers' body is facing the ground, and the back of the dancers body is facing up.
- **Prop**: An object that can be manipulated. A glove is a part of the uniform. If it is taken off and danced with, it then becomes a prop.
- **Relevé (rell-eh-VAY)**: Dancer rises from a plié to balance on one or both feet on at least demi-pointe (balls of the feet), or possibly full pointe
- **Shoulder Level**: A designated height; the height of a standing dancers' shoulders while standing upright with straight legs (clarification: this is an approximate height to measure space, and is not changed by bending, inverting, etc.).
- **Shoulder Roll (forward/back)**: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer rolls with the back of the shoulder and maintains contact with the floor and the head is tilted to the side to avoid contact with the floor.
- **Shushunova (Shush-A-nova)**: A jump variation in which the dancer lifts extended legs to a toe touch or pike position and then circles them behind the body dropping the chest and landing in a prone support (push up position).
- **Sign**: A hand held object that can be manipulated to showcase team letters, colors, mascot, etc.
- **Sous-sus (soo-SYEW)**: In tight fifth position relevé.
- **Soutenu turn (soot-NEW)**: From sousus, turning towards back leg one revolution, the other foot ending in front.
- **Supine**: A position in which the back of the dancers' body is facing the ground, and the front of the dancers body is facing up.
- **Supporting Dancer**: A supporting dancer(s), who part of a dance trick and bears the primary weight of a lifted dancer. A supporting dancer(s) holds or tosses and/or maintains contact with an Executing dancer as a part of a Dance Trick or Partnering skill. The supporting dancer may also be considered a Lifting Dancer.
- **Supporting Leg:** The leg of a dancer that supports the weight of the body, during a skill.
- **Switch Leap**: A jump popping straight up in the air, not traveling forward; working leg stays straight and lifts front, support leg pliés, working leg swings back while support leg lifts to assume a split position in the air.
- **Technical Skill**: Any leap, jump, turn or move that emphasize technical foundation/ability. (Clarification – a roll or slide to the floor is not considered a technical skill.)
- **Tendu (tawn DEW)**: To stretch, pushing the foot away from the supporting leg while keeping the toe on the floor.

- **Tick – Tock Kick:** Tik Tock Kicks are defined as a kick sequence performed by two or more groups (lines) of dancers who alternate kicks on separate counts. One group executes a kick while the other group remains stationary, then alternates on the following count(s). Alternating kicks between groups are considered separate counts, not simultaneous.
- **Tilt**: A skill, typically performed in a leap or jump, in which the working leg sweeps up into the air and the supporting leg points toward the ground.
- **Toe Pitch (executed by groups or pairs)**: A toss in which the Executing Dancer(s) foot is in the hands of the Supporting Dancer(s) and she/he is propelled upward causing the executing dancer to rotate hip over head, landing unassisted on the performance area.
- **Toe Touch**: A jump in which the dancer lifts the legs through a straddle rotating the hips so that the legs are rotating up toward the (upright) chest.
- **Toss**: A release move where Supporting Dancer(s) execute a throwing motion to increase the height of the executing dancer. The Executing Dancer is free from the performance surface when toss is initiated.
- **Tumbling Skill(s)**: A collection of skills that emphasize acrobatic or gymnastic ability, ar executed by an individual dancer without contact, assistance or support of another dancer(s) and begin and end on the performance surface (clarification: tumbling skills do not have to include hip over head rotation).
- **Vertical Inversion (executed in groups or pairs)**: A position in which the Executing Dancer is inverted and bears direct weight on the Supporting Dancer by a stop, stall or change in momentum.
- **Weight Bearing**: A skill in which the dancer's weight is supported by one body part without any other body part on the ground.
- **Working Leg:** The leg that moves, stretches, and/or extends; the leg that is responsible for momentum and/or position.

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