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SPIRIT

— COMPETITIONS —



**2023 – 2024 USA HIGH SCHOOL SPIRIT
EVENT INFORMATION PACKET
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Visit usa.varsity.com for the most up-to-date competition and camp information this season!

Information is subject to change.

VERSION 7.1.23



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

We hope that this information packet helps prepare you for one-day events and *“the most spirited weekend of the year!”*

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

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

High School Spirit Nationals – Prior qualification through a USA Regional competition or other sanctioned event/process is required in order to attend. All performers receive a commemorative participation gift and sponsorship “give-aways.” Trophies or plaques are awarded to the top teams in each division. Individual medallions are awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams in each division. An exclusive “Champion” gift is awarded to the first place competitors in each division and a “Champion” banner awarded to the first place team in each division.

Save the Date!



**2024 USA Spirit Nationals
Anaheim Convention Center
Anaheim, CA Anaheim, CA
February 16 - 18, 2024**

Spirit Nationals Qualification Requirements

Show Cheer, Group Stunt and Game Day (Cheer) Divisions: It is required that at least 75% of the cheer members competing at 2024 USA Spirit Nationals in cheer divisions must have completed the summer camp 2023 Varsity Spirit/NFHS Squad Credentialing Program.

All Divisions, including Game Day - Prior qualification through a USA Regional competition or other sanctioned event/process is required in order to attend Spirit Nationals in any division.

Bids to Nationals are awarded to teams receiving 80% of total possible points for all cheer, group stunt and game day cheer divisions and 75% of total possible points for all song, pep flag, mascot, and game day song divisions, regardless of any penalties received.

***Share your journey with us on Instagram and follow
[@usacamps](#) [#USANationals](#)***

2024 NATIONALS REGISTRATION PROCESS

2024 USA Spirit Nationals weekend in Anaheim, CA on February 16 – 18, 2024.

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

REGISTRATION

Registration must be submitted online on or before December 1, 2023.

Please do not wait to qualify before registering, as registration will close before all competitions at which you can qualify have taken place. No money is due until December 15, 2023. If a team does not qualify for Nationals, all monies paid will be refunded.

Performance order will be determined by date registration is entered if the deposit or payment in full is received by the deposit due date. If payment is not received by the deposit due date, performance order will then be determined by the date payment is received. Performance order adjustments may be necessary due to division/team conflicts.

Event registration is done on-line. Please find the link to registration on the USA website at <https://www.varsity.com/usa/school/competitions/highschoolspiritnationals/>. You cannot register for the 2024 USA Spirit Nationals event on myVarsity.com.

Please have the following ready before you start the registration process:

- myVarsity.com account login username and password. If you cannot find or need a login, please contact the USA office at 800-886-4872 or USARegistration@varsity.com.
- Information for all athletes (first name, last name, gender, and birthdate) for team roster
- Divisions in which your teams will compete

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Please wait until registration is verified and you have received a confirmation email from the USA office before submitting payment.

Registrations are not confirmed until payment is received.

Acceptable forms of payment are school check, money order, cashier's check, purchase order or credit card. USA does not accept business checks, personal checks, or multiple check payments from individual squad members.

Registrations, even with payment, do not guarantee event entry as the competition may close prior to the deadlines due to capacity. Registrations that are not paid in full, or guaranteed by school purchase order are subject to cancellation at any time, but will be cancelled no later than February 2, 2024.

DEADLINES

December 1, 2023 – Registration must be submitted online on or before December 1st.

December 15, 2023 – \$100 non-refundable per competitor deposit is due.

January 19, 2024 – Deadline for Division and/or Roster changes due. There are no division changes after January 19, 2024.

January 19, 2024 – Original Spirit Nationals Liability Release and Waiver forms are due in the USA office. Please use the specific Spirit Nationals release form.

February 2, 2024 – Final balance due

ONE-DAY EVENT REGISTRATION

ONE-DAY REGISTRATION POLICIES & FEES

Early Bird Registration Fee The registration must be paid in full 21 days or more prior to the event for which you wish to register to lock in the early bird rate.

On-Time Registration Fee The on-time registration fee will apply to those registrations paid in full 8-20 days prior to the event. New registrations will not be accepted the week of the event. Competitions may close to additional participants at any time, including before the “Early Bird” registration/entry deadline.

Acceptable forms of payment include school purchase order, school check, cashier’s check, money order, or credit card. Personal checks, organizational checks, cash or individual payments are not accepted. The school name and an authorized signature must appear on the PO.

Alternates - Additional team members in attendance but not competing must be on the team roster, submit a release form and be in the proper team uniform in order to go into the back stage/warm up area. If the competition registration is a per person fee, the alternates must also be registered and pay the competition fee.

Requests for refunds, transfers of registration fees (registration fees may be transferred only once and registration fee transfers may not be split) or category/division changes will be accommodated only if notice is submitted in writing 10 days or more prior to the affected event. After that time, all funds become non-transferable and non-refundable. Teams are responsible for the full registration fee(s) for cancellations past the refund deadline, regardless of payment status.

TEAM ONSITE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

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

You will need to submit an alphabetized list of all participating students as well as a signed USA participant release and waiver form for each participating student. We ask that all release and waiver forms be alphabetized by last name.

USA HIGH SCHOOL SPIRIT & GAME DAY DIVISIONS for 2023-2024

Blue indicates a change/update from the 2022-23 competition season.

For detailed division limitations for Novice, Intermediate and Advanced please visit the USA website at:

<https://www.varsity.com/usa/school/competitions/rulesandscoreing/>

CHEER & MASCOT DIVISIONS

Show Cheer -- Advanced (Building & Tumbling Skills)			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Freshman	• 9th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 36 Members
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (0-1 Male)	• 5 - 36 Members
Co-Ed Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (2+ Males)	• 5 - 36 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (No Males)	• 5 - 36 Members
Small Co-Ed Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (1 - 4 Males)	• 5 - 36 Members
Large Co-Ed Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (5+ Males)	• 5 - 36 Members
Show Cheer -- Intermediate (Building & Tumbling Skills)			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Freshman	• 9th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 36 Members
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 36 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (0-1 Male)	• 5 - 36 Members
Co-Ed Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (2+ Males)	• 5 - 36 Members
Show Cheer -- Novice (Building & Tumbling Skills)			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Freshman	• 9th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 36 Members
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 36 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (0-1 Male)	• 5 - 36 Members
Co-Ed Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (2+ Males)	• 5 - 36 Members
Show Cheer Non-Tumbling -- Advanced (Building Skills)			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 36 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (0-1 Male)	• 5 - 36 Members
Co-Ed Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (2+ Males)	• 5 - 36 Members
Show Cheer Non-Tumbling -- Novice (Building Skills)			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 36 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (0-1 Male)	• 5 - 36 Members
Co-Ed Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female (2+ Males)	• 5 - 36 Members
Group Stunt			
Routine Length: 1 Minute			
Group Stunt - Intermediate	• 9th - 12th Grade	• All Female or All Male	• 4 - 5 Members
Group Stunt - Advanced	• 9th - 12th Grade	• All Female or All Male	• 4 - 5 Members
Mascot			
Routine Length: 2 Minutes			
Mascot	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 1 - 10 Members
Game Day Band Chant - Cheer			
Routine Length: 1 Minute			
High School	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5+ Members
Game Day Situational Sideline/Cheer - Cheer			
Routine Length: 1 Minute			
High School	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5+ Members

Game Day Fight Song - Cheer			
Routine Length: 1 Minute			
High School	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5+ Members
Crowdleader™ Teams (Combined Band Chant, Fight Song, Situational Sideline/Cheer)			
Routine Length: 4 Minutes			
High School	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5+ Members

2024 Spirit Nationals - Show Cheer, Show Cheer Non-Tumbling, Group Stunt and Game Day (Cheer) Divisions: It is required that at least 75% of the cheer members competing at 2024 USA Spirit Nationals in cheer divisions must have completed the summer camp 2023 Varsity Spirit/NFHS Squad Credentialing Program.

All Divisions, including Game Day - Prior qualification through a USA Regional competition or other sanctioned event/process is required in order to attend Spirit Nationals in any division. Bids to Nationals are awarded to teams receiving 80% of total possible points for all cheer, group stunt and game day cheer divisions and 75% of total possible points for all song, pep flag, mascot, and game day song divisions, regardless of any penalties received.

The United Spirit Association reserves the right to add, delete, combine and/or split divisions in the interest of competition.

All male teams will compete in the appropriate co-ed division, if registered.

Varsity Show Cheer Division Splits

Varsity Show Cheer divisions will be split by size once there are 10 teams (Non-Nationals)/20 teams (Nationals) in the division. There must be at least 3 teams (Non-Nationals)/4 teams (Nationals) in each division once a split occurs to keep the division separated by size.

See grid below for Varsity Show Cheer division splits by team size:

Small Varsity Show Cheer	• 5 - 15 Members
Medium Varsity Show Cheer	• 16 - 19 Members
Large Varsity Show Cheer	• 20 - 23 Members
Super Varsity Show Cheer	• 24 - 36 Members

JV Show Cheer Division Splits

Step 1 - JV Show Cheer divisions will be split by size into Sm/Lg once there are 10 teams (Non-Nationals)/20 teams (Nationals) in the division. There must be at least 3 teams (Non-Nationals)/ 4 teams (Nationals) in each division once a split occurs.

Step 2 - The division will be split again into Sm/Med and/or Lg/Super if there are still 15 teams in the small or large division after the initial split occurred. There must be at least 3 teams (Non-Nationals)/ 4 teams (Nationals) in each division once a split occurs to keep the division separated by size.

See grid below for JV Show Cheer division splits by team size:

Small Junior Varsity Show Cheer	• 5 - 19 Members
Large Junior Varsity Show Cheer	• 20 - 36 Members

Game Day (Cheer) Division Splits

Divisions will be split by size once there are 10 teams (Non-Nationals/Nationals) in the division. There must be at least 4 teams in each division once a split occurs to keep the divisions separated by size.

Crowdleader™ Teams will first be split by size then by All-Girl and Co-Ed.

See grid below for Game Day cheer division splits by team type and/or size:

Junior Varsity - Cheer	• 5+ Members
Small Varsity - Cheer	• 5 - 19 Members
Large Varsity - Cheer	• 20+ Members
Sm GAME DAY - Crowdleader™ Teams	• 5 - 19 Members
Lg GAME DAY - Crowdleader™ Teams	• 20+ Members
Co-Ed GAME DAY - Crowdleader™ Teams	• 5+ Members/2+ cheer males

SONG/POM & PEP FLAG DIVISIONS

Song/Pom -- Advanced			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Song/Pom -- Intermediate			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Song/Pom -- Novice			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Song/Pom			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Freshman	• 9th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Song/Jazz			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Junior Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Varsity	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5 - 23 Members
Pep Flag			
Routine Length: 2:30 Minutes			
Pep Flag -- 2 Flags	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 4 - 23 Members
Game Day All In One Performance - Song/Pom			
Routine Length: 3 Minutes			
High School	• 9th - 12th Grade	• Female/Male	• 5-23 Members

All Divisions, including Game Day - Prior qualification through a USA Regional competition or other sanctioned event/process is required in order to attend Spirit Nationals in any division. Bids to Nationals are awarded to teams receiving 80% of total possible points for all cheer, group stunt and game day cheer divisions and 75% of total possible points for all song, pep flag, mascot, and game day song divisions, regardless of any penalties received.

The United Spirit Association reserves the right to add, delete, combine and/or split divisions in the interest of competition.

Varsity Song/Pom and Song/Jazz Division Splits

Varsity Song divisions will be split by size once there are 10 teams (Non-Nationals)/15 teams (Nationals) in the division. There must be at least 3 teams (Non-Nationals)/4 teams (Nationals) in each division once a split occurs to keep the division separated by size.

See grid below for Varsity Song/Pom and Song/Jazz division splits by team size:

Small Varsity Song/Pom	• 5 - 7 Members
Medium Varsity Song/Pom	• 8 - 11 Members
Large Varsity Song/Pom	• 12 - 23 Members
Small Varsity Song/Jazz	• 5 - 7 Members
Medium Varsity Song/Jazz	• 8 - 11 Members
Large Varsity Song/Jazz	• 12 - 23 Members

Junior Varsity Song/Pom and Song/Jazz Division Splits

JV Song divisions will be split by size once there are 10 teams (Non-Nationals and Nationals) in the division. There must be at least 3 teams (Non-Nationals)/4 teams (Nationals) in each division once a split occurs to keep the division separated by size.

See grid below for Junior Varsity Song/Pom and Song/Jazz division splits by team size:

Small Junior Varsity Song/Pom	• 5 -9 Members
Large Junior Varsity Song/Pom	• 10 - 23 Members
Small Junior Varsity Song/Jazz	• 5 - 9 Members
Large Junior Varsity Song/Jazz	• 10 - 23 Members

Game Day (Song) Division Splits

Divisions will be split by size once there are 10 teams (Non-Nationals/Nationals) in the division. There must be at least 4 teams in each division once a split occurs to keep the divisions separated by size.

See grid below for Game Day Song/Pom division splits by type:

Junior Varsity - Song/Pom	• 5-23 Members
Varsity - Song/Pom	• 5-23 Members

Rev. 6-15-23

2023-24 HIGH SCHOOL SPIRIT COMPETITIONS GENERAL INFORMATION

USA CHEER COACH MEMBERSHIP

Varsity Spirit requires that all school coaches, choreographers, and personnel wishing to access the warmup area, backstage or coaches' box at our competitions have a USA Cheer Coach, STUNT Coach, Dance Coach or Professional Membership. Visit usacheer.org/usa-cheer-membership-for-varsity-spirit to learn more and to complete the steps required before your first competition. Each registered cheer team/program must have at least one coach with a Cheer Coach membership and must accompany the team at every competition. Additional coaches can choose to have either a STUNT Coach, Dance Coach or Professional Membership. **The USA Cheer General Membership is not an acceptable membership for restricted area access.**

ELIGIBILITY

At the time of competition, entrants must be registered students in the school they are representing and official full-time members of their team. No members shall be younger than 9th grade or older than 12th grade. The penalty for an eligibility violation will be disqualification.

CATEGORIES/DIVISIONS

The USA and/or its competition personnel reserves the right to delete, combine, or divide categories and divisions as deemed necessary. If categories/divisions are altered, adjustments will be made in the awards.

An individual may not compete against her/himself in the same division/category (i.e., two Group Stunt teams). An individual may not represent more than one school at any given event. An individual may not participate on two teams within the same category type and/or divisions within a category when separated by size, stunt/tumbling/technical limitations, squad level or All-Girl and Co-Ed. For example, 1) Small and Large Varsity Show Cheer divisions 2) Show Cheer Novice and Show Cheer Advanced categories 3) JV Cheer and Varsity Cheer division 4) All-Girl Show and Co-Ed Show Cheer 5) JV Song/Pom and Varsity Song/Pom division. The penalty for this violation will be disqualification of one of the routines.

An individual may not compete at an event at a higher level and then move to a lower level for competition within the same year (i.e., Varsity team for one event, and then JV team for another event).

A team must compete in the same category/division at Nationals for which it qualified in at a Regional unless prior written approval is received from the USA. For example, 1) If you qualify for Show Cheer at a Regional, you may not compete in Co-Ed Show Cheer at Nationals, unless you also qualify for that category at a Regional. 2) If you qualify for Show Cheer - Novice at a Regional, you may not compete in Show Cheer - Advanced at Nationals, unless you also qualify for that category at a Regional. The above are two examples – other examples of this may exist.

If a team qualifies for Nationals two or more times (80% of total possible points for Show Cheer and/or Group Stunt divisions and 75% of total possible points for Song/Pom divisions, regardless of any penalties received) in

the Intermediate or Advanced level at a Regional competition, then that team must receive written permission to move to a lower technical division at Nationals.

A school may not have a co-ed and all-girl team in the same age level (i.e., Varsity Co-Ed Show Cheer and Varsity Show Cheer).

A school cannot have 2 teams in the same category type. For example, 1) Varsity Show Cheer Advanced and Varsity Show Cheer Novice divisions, 2) Show Cheer and Show Cheer Non-Tumbling divisions, 3) Varsity Song/Pom Intermediate and Varsity Song/Pom Novice division. The penalty for this violation will be disqualification of one of the routines. The only exception is Group Stunt (Advanced and Intermediate).

Freshman team members all must be in the 9th grade and must represent a high school. Jr. High/Middle School teams may not compete in a freshman division.

Any exceptions to the above must be requested in writing and pre-approved in writing by the USA office prior to and for the effected event. It is up to the sole discretion of the USA in what division a team may be placed. The USA also reserves the right to deny any team registration for its competition as a result of not having an appropriate division for that particular team.

SPLITTING CATEGORIES BY TEAM SIZE

At non-Nationals high school spirit competitions, Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman Show Cheer and Song/Pom are divided if there are 10 or more teams competing in that category. If there are 10 or more teams entered, indicating a possible division split, then there must be at least 3 teams in each division once a split occurs to keep the divisions separated by size.

MUSIC

Note the music rules that are in place for the 2023-24 competition season. Be sure you are familiar with these prior to taking any competition floor. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification and forfeiture of all fees (registration, admission or otherwise) associated with a team's performance.

Music Rules & Restrictions

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

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

- If your team is featured in a TV and/or virtual broadcast and uses an original composition created for your performance, your routine music will be used in the show if you also secured synchronization rights. Teams must be able to provide written documentation that synchronization rights were properly secured during registration at the event for the original routine music to be included in the show.
- When recording your music for the event, coaches or music editors should edit their song in a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) and make sure that the volume of the song is at 0. Things to note: Most DAW's have a default that sets a track at -6 when a track is added. Check to see if there is a normalization process after you render or save your work.
- If you would like to perform your school's original fight song, you may bring a recording of your marching band playing the song. You will need to get the school's permission to use the song and recording. A letter granting permission for the cheer or dance team to use the fight song on school letterhead is enough. It should be signed by your program's administrative supervisor. Go to varsity.com/music for more details.
- If a team does not have the required paperwork, they will be given the option to count the routine verbally or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts (provided by Varsity Spirit).
- If a team does not have the required paperwork and chooses not to count the routine or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts, the team will be disqualified from the competition and not allowed to perform or compete.
- If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.
- A challenge can only be made by the official coach of a team competing at the event at which the challenge is being made.

Challenge Process

- All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the event director.
 - There will be \$100 fee to request a music challenge and must be in the form of a check made out to St Jude Children's Research Hospital.
 - Fees collected will be voided if challenge is correct.
 - If the team challenged can provide documentation during the event and can be verified, the fees will be donated to St. Jude.
 - If the team challenged can provide documentation that requires further review, a decision will be finalized within 48 hours of the event.
- A sound system will be provided. Speed control is not available. Music must be recorded at the correct tempo. Music checks on the main sound system are not permitted.
 - All teams must provide their own MP3 device (or smart phone) for use on the event-provided sound system. Although it is not recommended due to potential interference that may be caused during a routine, a smart phone may be used for playing music.
 - Each team is required to have a representative (responsible adult recommended) that knows the routine and music remain at the music station (no alternates or team members please). This representative is responsible for starting the music and stopping the music at the routine's end, or in case of technical malfunction or injury. Should an adult choose not to stay at the music station for the duration of the routine, and a malfunction occurs, the team may or may not be permitted to perform the routine again. Please hold on to your music until the time of your performance. If using an MP3, smart phone,

etc. please ensure that there is no case on the device which will obstruct the jack from plugging into the sound system. Please ensure that jacks are clean and free of any debris which may impact connectivity. Note that you may need to acquire an adapter in advance if your player does not have a headphone jack. If you are using a smart phone, please ensure that no interruptions (i.e., phone call, alarm, etc.) occur during your performance. Place the smart phone in “airplane mode,” ensure that the volume is turned up and the phone is fully charged. Interference caused by a smart phone that results in routine delay may receive an overtime or delay of contest penalty.

Virtual Competitions Music Rules

- The USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative will govern all sound recordings used at the event and all sound recordings used in your team’s music shall only be used with written license from the owners(s) of the sound recordings.
- For the most up-to-date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, teams should email musicinfo@varsity.com. Please check the Music Provider list for updates and changes periodically.
- All routines will be judged with sound and available for Varsity TV subscriber viewing with sound for 48 hours once the event goes live. After 48 hours, the routines will be available without sound for Varsity TV subscribers. After 5 days, routines will be available free of charge without sound for the duration of the competition season. This information is subject to change.

VIDEO MEDIA POLICY

No commercial recording (audio or visual) or commercial live streaming is allowed in the event venue or other event-related venues (including, but not limited to, hotels and restaurants) or on the grounds of any such venues (collectively, “Event Locations”). In the event a team authorizes the commercial recording or streaming in any Event Location, the team will be automatically disqualified. In addition, the personal, non-commercial use of live streaming apps (such as Periscope, Facebook Live, etc.) to capture all or any part of a performance during the event is not permitted. By attending/purchasing admission to the event, each attendee grants permission to Varsity Spirit, LLC and its affiliates, designees, agents, licensees, and invitees to use the image, likeness, actions and statements of the attendee in any live or recorded audio, video, film, or photographic display or other transmission, exhibition, publication, or reproduction made of, or at, the event in any medium, whether now known or hereafter created, or context for any purpose, including commercial or promotional purposes, without further authorization or compensation. Any team traveling with a video crew may be disqualified.

LOGO USAGE

Teams will not be allowed to use any USA Varsity Spirit Brand logo, the USA logo or the Game Day logo on banners, rings, bows, t-shirts, etc. without prior approval from the USA office. However, the use of the USA letters (not unique to the USA logo) will be allowed.

ENTRANCE/EXIT

Judges are looking for enthusiasm and showmanship during entrances and exits. Teams and individuals are encouraged to move on and off the floor as quickly as possible.

All team breaks, rituals and traditions need to take place prior to the team being called to the performance floor. Organized entrances and/or marching processions are not allowed by any cheer team and can incur an overall routine length timing penalty. Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures. Example: chest bumps, hugs, hand-shakes, etc. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation may receive a "sportsmanship" penalty. There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

Set-ups and break-downs for props, signs, megaphones, etc. will be timed in the Mascot category.

Set-ups for props, signs, megaphones, etc. will be timed in the Crowleader™ category.

Pep/Short Flags will be limited to **30 seconds** for entrance (from announcement of team's name) and **30 seconds** for exit (from conclusion of routine music). Choreographed entrances and exits will not be judged.

PERFORMANCE AREA

Performance boundaries at competitions will be a regulation basketball court (unless otherwise noted). All Regionals will have a carpet bonded foam mat on the performance area that measures 54'x42'. Unless otherwise noted, the mat will be removed for the song/pom, jazz, mascot and/or pep flag/short flag categories/divisions.

There will be no practicing on the performance floor prior to the competition.

Spring floors will not be used for school-based cheer divisions.

All stunts and/or tumbling must be executed on the mat. At a Regional, a warning will be given for any infraction of this rule.

At Spirit Nationals, a 3-point penalty will be assessed for any stunting or tumbling executed off of the mat. Tumbling and stunting are considered outside the matted area when both feet are entirely off of the performance mat.

You will not receive a penalty if you step off of the mat at any USA competition (not tumbling or stunting related).

PERFORMANCE ORDER/SCHEDULES

Typically, performance order is based on the receipt of registrations. The first registration received will be the last to perform in that division and the last registration received will be the first to perform. Adjustments may be necessary due to division/team conflicts.

All teams (cheer, song/pom, jazz and/or pep flag) will be given an assigned check-in and warm-up time prior to competition. Warm up areas will vary depending on the location of the competition.

The "Person to Receive Correspondence" will be sent/emailed a tentative line up with performance times at least 10 days prior to the competition. These times are subject to change. The final schedule will be available by checking usa.varsity.com after 5:00 p.m. (PST) the Wednesday prior to your competition. On that Wednesday, performance times usually remain the same regardless of scratches. It is the director's/coach's responsibility to check the schedule for accuracy prior to the day of competition.

COMPETITION STANDARD FOR SPOTTERS

Guidelines

1. "Team Spotters" are a part of the performing team and are required for specific types of stunting/pyramid/tosses, etc. skills.
2. USA competition-provided additional spotters will be mandatory on the competition floor.

PENALTIES

Points will be deducted from the final team average for violations of safety rules, division limitations and/or time limits, etc. Below are some penalties that are in addition to the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book, 2023-24 USA High School Teams Show Cheer Division Limitations, 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules and the 2023-24 USA High School Teams Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag Division Limitations. See usa.varsity.com for these documents.

A. Safety Rules

Two (2) points will be deducted from the final team average score for EACH occurrence of a safety rule violation or specialty skill/division level restriction.

B. Time

For all divisions, timing will begin on the first note of music, the first vocal command (for cheer squads), the first organized cheer or the first movement, and will stop with the end of the cheer or last note of the music. See categories/divisions rules for total routine time. There is no minimum time requirement.

Timing for prop set-up in the Mascot category will begin at the drop of the starter's hand. Set-up timing will stop when the routine begins. Mascots have 1 minute to set-up props and 1 minute to exit the floor at the end of their performance.

Pep/Short Flags will be limited to **30 seconds** for entrance (from announcement of team's name) and **30 seconds** for exit (from conclusion of routine music). Choreographed entrances and exits will not be judged.

Penalties will be deducted from the final averaged score for going over the total routine time limit. Penalties will be assessed as follows: 1-5 seconds over = 1 point penalty; 6 or more seconds over = 2 point penalty, etc.

For show cheer teams, up to **1:45** (105 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. Penalties will be deducted from the final averaged score for going over the 1:45 total music time limit. Penalties will be assessed as follows: 1-5 seconds over = 1 point penalty; 6 or more seconds over = 2-point penalty.

In Song/Pom, female members must use two poms for 80% of the routine. There will be a 1-point penalty for every 5 seconds under the time requirement for pom use. (1-5 seconds under = 1 point penalty; 6-10 seconds under = 2-point penalty, etc.)

Due to the variability in sound systems, you should build leeway into your routine to avoid timing penalties. It is suggested that routines end 3-5 seconds prior to the routine length time limit.

C. Performance Order/Division Changes

Preliminary competition schedules will be posted on the USA website at usa.varsity.com by 5:00 p.m. (PST) 10 days prior to your competition date. It is the advisor's/coach's responsibility to check the preliminary schedule for accuracy of categories/divisions prior to the day of competition.

All changes to your original competition registration must be put in writing and e-mailed to USARegistration@varsity.com. At the USA's and/or competition director's discretion, a penalty may be assessed for any requested changes from the schedule that was posted on-line. To help avoid this penalty, any changes must be received in the USA office in writing by 5:00 p.m. (PST) the Friday one week prior to your competition date.

Division changes may not be made the day of a Regional. At a Regional competition, a team performing in an incorrect division may be disqualified from competition but may perform for evaluation only to qualify for Nationals.

Division changes made the day of competition at Nationals may incur a 3-point penalty for "Unnecessary Change in Performance Order."

D. School/Organization Representation

The team and each participating member/coach should constantly display good sportsmanship throughout the entire performance regarding respect for themselves, other teams and the viewing audience. Teams

should refrain from any taunting, bragging, or suggestive expressions or gestures as well as discrimination of any nature. We recommend that the team and each of its members display an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school regarding grooming, traditional and appropriate attire, make-up, uniformity, etc.

Uniforms

Appropriate attire suitable for all athletes should be worn. In all divisions (excluding mascots), an official school uniform that is worn for game/sideline cheering or performing must be worn (i.e., skirt and top). Costuming is not allowed. If an accessory (i.e., hair bows) or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered "costuming." A deduction of 3 points will be taken if "costuming" is used. (Exception: Costuming is allowed in the Jazz category and for mascots).

All participant uniforms must cover the midriff when standing at attention. Covered midriff includes nude/skin-tone mesh, uniforms with colored mesh, body suits and liners. Fringe or other such uniform designs are not considered a cover. If a violation occurs, a 3-point deduction will be incurred.

Uniform Distractions

The Legality Official, Head Judge or other competition official reserves the right to stop a routine, assess a deduction, and/or disqualify a team for a uniform distraction (e.g., garment not being securely fastened/attached, straps break, pants split, etc.). Each performer is required to take the necessary steps to avoid inappropriate exposure prior to the performance.

Shoes

All participants must wear soft-soled, non-marking shoes on both feet while competing. Shoes must have a solid sole and cover the toe and heel. This is a safety rule and if a violation occurs, a 3-point deduction will be incurred. (Exception: Half-sole shoes/dance paws/turners are acceptable in the Song/Pom and Song/Jazz categories. Performers who wear half-sole shoes/dance paws/turners while performing do so at their own risk. Shoes that cover the toe and heel are required at all other times when not directly performing).

Penalty of marking the floor is disqualification. The performing school will be responsible for any charges that may occur as a result of damage to any floor.

Make-Up

If worn, make-up should be appropriate for both the performance and the age of the athletes, utilizing colors for skin tone.

Hair

Hair for all athletes does not have to be worn the same but must be secured off the face (cheer teams) with a simple and unexaggerated style that is acceptable to all diversities.

E. Props

Props are not allowed (excluding the exceptions below). A deduction of 3 points will be taken if props are used. A prop is defined as any physical object used to enhance the overall effect and/or theme of your routine. Exception: hand-held signs, school/team flags, poms and/or megaphones are permitted.

Signs and school/team flags are permitted but may not be worn as an article of clothing or accessory.

See mascot division for specific restrictions related to props for that division.

F. Appropriateness of Choreography, Music, and Outfitting

All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, music selection, outfitting and cheer words should be suitable for family viewing and listening. Uniforms for all team types should be appropriate for the age of the participants performing the routine. Cheer words should promote school pride, honor, tradition and sportsmanship in the cheer. Cheers that are negative, insulting to other teams or the judges may reflect a lower School Representation or Crowd Appeal score.

In general, performances from school-based teams, including but not limited to the actual routine, signs, cheers, chants and hand signals/gestures, should adhere to outfitting, performance and music guidelines and criteria in place and approved by the administration or institution which the team represents.

Deductions will be given for vulgar or suggestive choreography, which includes, but is not limited to, movements such as hip thrusting and inappropriate touching, gestures, hand/arm movements and signals, slapping, positioning of body parts and positioning to one another.

Deductions will be given for music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes, but is not limited, to profanity and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, mention of specific parts of the body, and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and/or replacing with sound effects or other words may be considered inappropriate, and deductions will be made accordingly.

Any uniform, choreography, words or music in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be submitted to the USA for approval prior to competing.

INSURANCE

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

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

FOOD

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

DRESSING ROOMS

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

CATEGORIES AND DIVISION RULES

Sample score sheets for all USA competitions will be available on-line by visiting usa.varsity.com.

You must visit the USA website for a complete listing of the following:

- 2023-24 USA Spirit Competition Divisions
- 2023-24 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations
- 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book <https://www.nfhs.org/activities-sports/spirit/>
- 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules
- 2023-24 USA High School Teams Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag Division Limitations
- 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep Flag Glossary of Terms

Website: <https://www.varsity.com/usa/school/competitions/rulesandscoreing/>

SHOW CHEER DIVISIONS

Number on Team

5-36 members

Divisions

Refer to division grid on usa.varsity.com under Competitions/Divisions, Rules & Scoring

Routine Procedure

Execute routine of your choice using a combination of music and words. An emphasis on practical and effective audience participation (i.e., use of signs, spell-outs, crowd response chants, etc.), especially during the cheer section, is encouraged. Props and/or costuming are not allowed [see D) Uniforms and E) Props above]. Up to **1:45** (105 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. Penalties will be deducted from the final averaged score for going over the 1:45 total music time limit.

Total Routine Time Limit

2 ½ minutes maximum

Safety Rules

As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. Additional Division Limitations may apply to your chosen category.

DIVISION RULES: SHOW CHEER – ADVANCED

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are no tumbling or stunt/pyramid/toss restrictions in this Advanced division besides those listed in the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book.

DIVISION RULES: SHOW CHEER – INTERMEDIATE

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are additional stunting and tumbling restrictions in this Intermediate division. Please refer to the 2023-24 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations document for all specialty skill restrictions for this division.

DIVISION RULES: SHOW CHEER – NOVICE

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are additional stunting and tumbling restrictions in this Novice division. Please refer to the 2023-24 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations document for all specialty skill restrictions for this division.

DIVISION RULES: SHOW CHEER – NON-TUMBLING (ADVANCED AND NOVICE)

Safety/Division Rules

The Non-Tumbling division prohibits all standing and/or running tumbling. Tumbling is defined as any skill with feet over head rotation. This includes forward and backward rolls, cartwheels, round-offs, handsprings, tucks (flips), etc. Skills connected and/or within stunts are allowed. Example: Braced forward $\frac{3}{4}$ suspended roll dismount is allowed. As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book.

DIVISION RULES: SHOW CHEER – NON-TUMBLING ADVANCED

Specialty Skills Restrictions (Non-Tumbling Advanced)

There are no stunt/pyramid/dismount/toss restrictions in this Advanced division besides those listed in the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. No tumbling is allowed.

SAFETY RULES: SHOW CHEER – NON-TUMBLING NOVICE

Specialty Skills Restrictions (Non-Tumbling Novice)

There are additional stunting restrictions in this Novice division. Please refer to the 2023-24 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations document for all specialty skill restrictions for this division. No tumbling is allowed.

GROUP STUNT

Number on Team

Four/Five members, including spotter. There is no Co-Ed division, teams must be all female or all male.

Divisions

Refer to division grid on usa.varsity.com under Competitions/Divisions, Rules & Scoring

Routine Procedure

The participants all must be from the same school. Execute stunts of your choice. Background music is encouraged but must meet music licensing requirements. For further details visit www.varsity.com/music. Additional spotters are not permitted.

Total Routine Time Limit

1 minute maximum

Safety Rules

As with all categories, routines in these divisions must follow the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. Additional Division Limitations may apply to your chosen category.

DIVISION RULES: GROUP STUNT – ADVANCED

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are no tumbling or stunt/pyramid/toss restrictions in this Group Stunt Advanced division besides those listed in the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book.

DIVISION RULES: GROUP STUNT – INTERMEDIATE

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are additional stunting and tumbling restrictions in this Intermediate Group Stunt division. Please refer to the 2023-24 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations document for all specialty skill restrictions for this division.

MASCOT

Number on Team

1-10 members

Mascots may perform as individuals or as mascot groups. Participants in this category must be the official mascot(s) of the school and be in official mascot uniform or some other form of costume related to the theme of the routine. Proof from the school that an individual is an officially recognized mascot for the school may be required. Additional individuals, (i.e., cheerleaders and/or song/pom, etc.), are not permitted to be visible and/or perform as part of this routine.

Routine Procedure

Execute any type of skit or novelty routine. Use of a theme and crowd involvement are encouraged. Competitors may use music, props, costumes and accessories. All props/accessories (either assembled or disassembled) are limited to “hand-held” in size. A back-drop to conceal props and/or non-visible members providing support for the routine is permitted. This back-drop may measure no more than 10' high x 20' wide and may be assembled prior to taking the performance floor. Moving the back-drop to the performance floor is part of the set-up and breakdown time limit for props. Please, no use of water, glitter or other substances that would be harmful to the floor and/or to another competitor. Individuals assisting with props may not be visible during the routine. Materials that require clean up (i.e., confetti) are not permitted. Pyramids and/or basket tosses are illegal. Tumbling is not allowed. Tossing, throwing or other projecting any type of object into the crowd is not allowed. A 3-point penalty will be assessed for any infraction of the above rules.

Total Routine Time Limit

2 minutes maximum. You will be limited to 1 minute to set-up your props and 1 minute to breakdown your props. (See “Time” section penalty)

SONG/POM DIVISIONS – VARSITY/JV

Number on Team

5-23 members

Divisions

Refer to division grid on usa.varsity.com under Competitions/Divisions, Rules & Scoring

Routine Procedure

A song/pom advanced routine consists of visuals effects, synchronization, clean/sharp pom motions and advanced technical skills. Visual effects include level changes, opposition, group work, transitions and formations. Emphasis should be placed on proper pom/motion technique, proper dance technique, timing, and showmanship. All female members must use two pompons for 80% of the routine (See B – Time). Props and/or costuming are not allowed (See D – Uniforms and E - Props).

Total Routine Time Limit

2 ½ minutes maximum

Uniform

An official school uniform that is worn for game/sideline cheering or performing must be worn. Costuming is not allowed. If an accessory or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered “costuming”. A deduction of 3 points will be taken if “costuming” is used. (Exception: Costuming is allowed in the Song/Jazz Category).

Safety Rules

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

DIVISION RULES: SONG/POM – ADVANCED

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are no additional restrictions in this Advanced division besides those listed in the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

DIVISION RULES: SONG/POM – INTERMEDIATE

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are additional technical/specialty skill restrictions in this Intermediate division. Please refer to the 2023-24 High School Teams Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag Division Limitations document.

DIVISION RULES: SONG/POM – NOVICE

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are additional technical/specialty skill restrictions in this Novice division. Please refer to the 2023-24 High School Teams Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag Division Limitations document.

SONG/POM – FRESHMAN

Number on Team

5-23 members

Divisions

Refer to division grid on usa.varsity.com under Competitions/Divisions, Rules & Scoring

Routine Procedure

A song/pom routine consists of visuals effects, synchronization, clean/sharp pom motions and technical skills. Visual effects include level changes, opposition, group work, transitions and formations. Emphasis should be placed on proper pom/motion technique, proper dance technique, timing, and showmanship. All female members must use two pompons for 80% of the routine. (See B – Time). Props and/or costuming are not allowed (See D – Uniforms and E - Props).

Total Routine Time Limit

2 ½ minutes maximum

Uniform

An official school uniform that is worn for game/sideline cheering or performing must be worn. Costuming is not allowed. If an accessory or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered “costuming”. A deduction of 3 points will be taken if “costuming” is used. (Exception: Costuming is allowed in the Song/Jazz Category).

Safety Rules

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are no additional restrictions besides those listed in the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

SONG/JAZZ

Number on Team

5-23 members

Divisions

Refer to division grid on usa.varsity.com under Competitions/Divisions, Rules & Scoring

Routine Procedure

A song-jazz routine incorporates stylized jazz dance movements and combinations, visuals effects, level changes, formation changes and dance technique. Emphasis should be on uniformity of the selected jazz style, proper dance technique, timing and showmanship. Props are not allowed (See E - Props). Costuming is allowed in this category.

Total Routine Time Limit

2 ½ minutes maximum

Safety Rules

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are no additional restrictions besides those listed in the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

PEP FLAG/SHORT FLAG (2 FLAG)

Number on Team

4-23 members

Divisions

Refer to division grid on usa.varsity.com under Competitions/Divisions, Rules & Scoring

Routine Procedure

A pep flag/short flag routine consists of visual effects, synchronization, twirls, tricks and tosses. Visual effects include level changes, opposition, group work, formations and transitions. Emphasis should be placed on proper twirling technique, timing, and showmanship. All team members must use flags for 80% of the routine. A deduction of .5 will be taken for each dropped flag shaft. A dropped flag is defined as a flag that is unintentionally released onto the performance surface. Props and/or costuming are not allowed (See D – Uniforms and E - Props).

Total Routine Time Limit

2 ½ minutes maximum. Pep/Short Flags will be limited to **30 seconds** for entrance (from announcement of team's name) and **30 seconds** for exit (from conclusion of routine music). Choreographed entrances and exits will not be judged.

Safety Rules

Routines in these divisions must also follow all the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

Specialty Skills Restrictions

There are no additional restrictions besides those listed in the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

Equipment

To avoid floor damage, pep flag shafts must be covered on both ends.

SAFETY RULES REVIEW CHEER/SONG/POM/PEP FLAG

Routines at all USA competitions must follow the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book, 2023-24 USA High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations or 2023-24 USA Song/Pom/Pep Flag Safety Rules and the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom Division Limitations.

Submitting an electronic video is the only way to review a routine for potential safety violations. All video review for safety rule legalities, for one-day events, must be submitted 14 days or more prior to the competition date.

For all legality, division limitations, or questions regarding specific performance elements, you may email a video that contains the skill in question.

All emailed videos must include the following:

1. Name of the school and USA competitive division in the SUBJECT LINE of the email
2. Videos should be in either Windows Media Player or Quicktime formats
3. Clear, close-up view of skill in question
4. Include your name, team name, division level, e-mail address and phone number in the body of the email

Cheerleading videos should be emailed to USARules@varsity.com

Song/Pom and Pep Flag videos should be emailed to USADanceRules@varsity.com

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

USA rules and division limitations may be downloaded at
<https://www.varsity.com/usa/school/competitions/rulesandscoreing/>

For specific cheerleading stunt and safety questions that pertain to the NFHS Spirit Rules Book, or to the 2023-24 High School Teams Show Cheer and Group Stunt Division Limitations please email USARules@varsity.com.

For specific song/pom, song/jazz or pep flag/short flag safety questions that only pertain to the USA Song/Pom/Jazz Pep Flag Safety Rules, or to the 2023-24 Song/Pom, Pep Flag Division Limitations please email USADanceRules@varsity.com.

2023-2024 HIGH SCHOOL SHOW CHEER AND GROUP STUNT DIVISION LIMITATIONS

In addition to all rules covered in the “2023-24 National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Spirit Rules Book” the following restrictions also apply to teams entering these divisions:

Show Cheer – Novice and Show Cheer – Novice Non-Tumbling

Show Cheer and/or Group Stunt – Intermediate

Show Cheer and/or Group Stunt – Advanced and Show Cheer – Advanced Non-Tumbling

SHOW CHEER -- NOVICE Division Limitations

TUMBLING:

Standing tumbling: “Standing tumbling” is defined as any tumbling skill not originating from a cartwheel or round-off.

Limited in difficulty to a standing single back handspring.

Jump/handspring combinations and standing handspring series are not allowed. Connecting rolls and/or walkovers to handspring is not allowed. Standing tucks and/or aerials are not allowed.

Running tumbling: “Running tumbling” is defined as tumbling that involves a forward step or a hurdle used to gain momentum as an entry to a tumbling skill.

Limited in difficulty to front handspring and/or back handspring series. Flips (tucks), aerials, and punch fronts are not allowed.

STUNTS:

1. Extended stunts are limited to both feet in the base(s) hands at all times. Both of the top person’s feet must be held throughout the entire transition to/from the extended position.
2. Single leg stunts may not be held or pass through an extended position.
3. Twisting stunt transitions are limited to a ½ twist. Exception: A single full twisting log/barrel roll is allowed if it starts and ends in a cradle position, does not involve any skill other than the twist, and is not assisted by and/or connected to another top person. *Simultaneously performing a half twist while turning, and/or while bases are turning, is not allowed.*
4. All release moves must land in a cradle. Released switch ups are not allowed.
5. The only stunt inversions allowed are:
 - a. Transitions from ground level inversions *up* to non-inverted positions. Example: Going from a handstand on the ground to a non-inverted stunt such as a shoulder sit is allowed. *Ground level inversions may not be released from base(s).*
 - b. Suspended forward rolls where two people on the performing surface control the top person in a suspended forward roll with continuous hand-to-hand contact **and/or hand-to-wrist contact** to a stunt, two-person cradle, loading position, or the performing surface. If caught in a cradle, load, or stunt, the new catchers must be in place and may not be involved in any other skill when the suspended forward roll is initiated. During the roll, *no twisting is allowed*, and the feet of the top person must be released.

c. Inversions to the performing surface: The following three skills are the only allowable inversions to the performing surface. 1. A cradle to a back walkover out. 2. Prone position at *waist level* to a forward roll out. 3. *A cartwheel from a horizontal position at waist level (there must be a pause in the horizontal position before the cartwheel).*

PYRAMIDS:

1. All single leg extended stunts must be braced by two top persons at prep level or lower. The braced connection must be established at prep level or lower before the stunt passes into the extended level, and constant contact between the top person and the bracers must be maintained while the top person is on one leg above prep level.
2. Any time a top person is released by bases during a pyramid transition, the top person must be braced by two top persons at prep level or below with hand-arm connection only and constant contact between the top person and the bracers must be maintained throughout the transition.
3. Twisting pyramid transitions are limited to a ½ twist.
4. Pyramid inversions are not allowed.

DISMOUNTS:

“Dismount” is defined as the movement of a top person from a stunt and/or pyramid to a cradle position or to the performing surface.

Basic straight cradles, ¼ turn dismounts, *and the three* specified inversion dismounts (above in stunts) are allowed. *Straight pop downs/bump downs are allowed from prep level. Straight pop downs/bump downs from extended pyramids are allowed if the top person remains connected to the bracers until the top person is at prep level or lower.* All other dismounts are prohibited.

TOSSES:

The only body position allowed is a straight ride.

SHOW CHEER – NOVICE NON-TUMBLING Division Limitations

Non-Tumbling Novice teams will follow the 2023-24 USA Novice Division Limitations for Stunts, Pyramids, Dismounts, and Tosses. The following tumbling skill restrictions apply to the Non-Tumbling division.

STANDING/RUNNING TUMBLING:

This division prohibits all standing and/or running tumbling. This includes forward and backward rolls, cartwheels, round offs, handsprings, tucks (flips), etc. Skills connected and/or within stunts are allowed.

Example: Braced forward ¾ suspended roll dismount is allowed.

SHOW CHEER AND/OR GROUP STUNT -- INTERMEDIATE Division Limitations

TUMBLING:

Standing Tumbling: “Standing tumbling” is defined as any tumbling skill not originating from a cartwheel or round-off.

Limited in difficulty to standing back handspring series and/or jump/handspring(s) combinations.

Flips are not allowed. For example, a standing back tuck or standing back handspring back tuck is not allowed. Punch front is not allowed.

Running Tumbling: “Running tumbling” is defined as tumbling that involves a forward step or a hurdle used to gain momentum as an entry to a tumbling skill.

Limited in difficulty to tucks. Tucks (flips) can ONLY be performed in a tuck position and ONLY from a cartwheel, round off, or back handspring(s). Punch fronts are not allowed.

No twisting is allowed while airborne. (Exception: Aerial cartwheels are allowed).

The following types of advanced running tumbling skills are prohibited: X-outs, layouts, full twists, etc.

No tumbling is allowed after a tuck (flip) or aerial skill.

STUNTS:

1. Extended single leg stunts are allowed.
2. Only a ½ twist is allowed to any extended single leg stunt.
3. All other twisting transitions may not exceed 1 twist.
4. Stunt release moves must start at or below prep level and must be caught at prep level or below. Release moves may not pass above the base’s/bases’ extended arm level.

PYRAMIDS:

1. All pyramid twisting transitions must follow all dismount and stunt twisting transition rules.
2. Pyramid inversions: A braced forward, or backward **flip** is allowed; however, two bracers with hand to hand/arm connection with the top person is required, no twisting is allowed, and the flip must end in a cradle. All other braced flip rules in the “2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book” must be followed.
3. *A pyramid braced backward **roll** is allowed if the top person is inverted (shoulders below waist) before the bases release the top person.*
4. Extended single leg stunts may not be braced by other extended single leg stunts.

DISMOUNTS:

“Dismount” is defined as the movement of a top person from a stunt and/or pyramid to a cradle position or to the performing surface.

1. Single leg extended stunts (liberty, heelstretch, arabesque, scorpion, etc.) are only allowed up to ¼ twist.
2. Up to 1¼ twist is allowed from a single leg prep level stunt and/or from a platform position.
3. Up to 1¼ twists are allowed from any two leg stunts.

TOSSES:

Limited to one trick only during a toss (i.e., one toe touch). Examples of skills not allowed: A kick followed by a twist, or a ball to an X. Twisting toss is limited to one twist.

SHOW CHEER AND/OR GROUP STUNT -- **ADVANCED** Division Limitations

Advanced teams will follow the “2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book” with no additional skill restrictions for the division.

SHOW CHEER – **ADVANCED NON-TUMBLING** Division Limitations

Non-Tumbling Advanced teams will follow the “2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book” with additional tumbling skill restrictions for the division.

STANDING/RUNNING TUMBLING:


This division prohibits all standing and/or running tumbling. This includes forward and backward rolls, cartwheels, round offs, handsprings, tucks (flips), etc. Skills connected and/or within stunts are allowed.

Example: Braced forward $\frac{3}{4}$ suspended roll dismount is allowed.

To obtain a copy of the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book, visit www.nfhs.org and click on the “Spirit” activity under the drop-down menu “Activities & Sports”.

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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

**SHOW CHEER
MUSIC SECTION**

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____


Composition/Choreography	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative, Intricate, Visual Ideas • Pace/Flow • Formations • Transitions • Use of Floor 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
Technique/Execution			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharpness/Precision • Uniformity • Spacing • Timing/Synchronization 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
Dance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity/Visual Effects • Variety • Footwork/Floor Work • Formations • Transitions • Technique/Perfection • Timing/Synchronization 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
Showmanship			
(ENTIRE ROUTINE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy/Genuine Enthusiasm • Eye Contact • Confidence • Ability to Recover 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
School/Organization Representation			
(ENTIRE ROUTINE) Image, Performance Integrity, Sportsmanship, Appropriateness	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
TOTAL SCORE	25.0		

SHOW CHEER - MUSIC SECTION
 Judge: _____



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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

**SHOW CHEER
CHEER SECTION**

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____


Practicality	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crowd Involvement • Crowd Effective Material • Easy to Follow & Participate • Pace/Rhythm 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
Crowd Appeal/Showmanship			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability & Energy to Lead Crowd • Natural/Confident Eye Contact • Volume • Use of Voice 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
Incorporation of Skills			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper Use of Skills to Lead Crowd • Effectiveness of Skills • Visual Appeal • Formations • Transitions 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
Use of Props			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Use of Signs, Flags, Banners, Poms, Megaphones, or Other 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
Technique/Execution			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion Sharpness/Precision • Uniformity • Spacing • Timing/Synchronization 	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
TOTAL SCORE	25.0		

SHOW CHEER - CHEER SECTION
 Judge: _____



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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

**SHOW CHEER
BUILDING**

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____


Building - Stunts	Max Value	Score	Comments:
DIFFICULTY	10.0	(7.0-10.0)	
TECHNIQUE & EXECUTION	5.0	(3.5-5.0)	
Building - Pyramids			
DIFFICULTY	5.0	(2.0-5.0)	
TECHNIQUE & EXECUTION	5.0	(3.5-5.0)	
Building - Stunts & Pyramids			
CREATIVITY	5.0	(4.0-5.0)	
Stunt Drivers <input type="checkbox"/> Degree of Difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> % of Team Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Connection of Skills/Variety <input type="checkbox"/> Pace/Speed of Skills Pyramid Drivers <input type="checkbox"/> Degree of Difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> % of Team Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Connection of Skills/Variety <input type="checkbox"/> Pace/Speed of Skills			
TOTAL SCORE	30.0		

SHOW CHEER - BUILDING
 Judge: _____



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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

**SHOW CHEER
TUMBLING & JUMPS**

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____


Standing/Running Tumbling	Max Value	Score	Comments:
DIFFICULTY	5.0	(2.0-5.0)	
TECHNIQUE & EXECUTION	5.0	(3.5-5.0)	
Jumps			
DIFFICULTY	5.0	(2.0-5.0)	
TECHNIQUE & EXECUTION	5.0	(3.5-5.0)	
Tumbling Drivers <input type="checkbox"/> Degree of Difficulty <input type="checkbox"/> % of Team Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Combination of Skills/Variety <input type="checkbox"/> Pace/Speed of Skills			
TOTAL SCORE	20.0		

SHOW CHEER - TUMBLING & JUMPS
 Judge: _____



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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**


MASCOT

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Routine Composition	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme/Story • Use of Props • Comedically • Use of Mascot Character • Crowd Involvement 	25.0		<div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">MASCOT</div>
Choreography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originality • Creativity • Continuity/Flow • Beginning/Ending • Music/Interpretation 	25.0		
Technique/Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exaggeration • Characterization • Pantomime • Staging/Use of Props • Teamwork • Timing/Rhythm 	30.0		
Showmanship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiles/Projection • Energy/Enthusiasm • Eye Contact/Confidence • Recoveries 	10.0		
Overall Impression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judge's impression of entire performance encompassing all score sheet categories. This may also include elements such as: Appearance, Appropriateness and Crowd Appeal. 	10.0		
TOTAL SCORE	100.0		Judge: _____ <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 5px;">  </div>

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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

GROUP STUNT

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Difficulty	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of Difficulty • Skill Transition/Continuity • Connection of Skills/Variety • Pace and Speed of Skills 	40		<div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">GROUP STUNT</div>
Technique/Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing/Synchronization • Cradles, Dismounts, Transitions • Successful Execution of Routine • Overall Stunt Technique 	40		
Showmanship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smiles/Projection • Energy/Genuine Enthusiasm • Eye Contact/Confidence • Recoveries 	10		
Overall Impression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judge's impression of entire performance encompassing all score sheet categories. This may also include elements such as: Appearance, Appropriateness, and Crowd Appeal. 	10		
TOTAL SCORE	100		

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USA 2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS SHOW CHEER

STUNTS SCORING RANGES

If "most" of team do not perform a synchronized skill, score drops into the range directly below. Refer to Stunt Quantity Chart for clarification of "most." **Synchronized** – exact same skill(s) at the exact same time. *Note: required dismount only implemented here, not in pyramid sections.

NOVICE	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	NON-TUMBLING
7.0–8.0	7.0–8.0	7.0–8.0	7.0–8.0
Extension preps	Extension OR one leg stunt variations at prep level	Extensions AND one leg stunt variations at prep level AND *Required dismount: straight ride cradle	Extensions AND one leg stunt variations at prep level AND *Required dismount: straight ride cradle
8.0–9.0	8.0–9.0	8.0–9.0	8.0–9.0
Extensions OR one leg stunt variations at prep level	Extensions AND one leg stunt variations at prep level AND *Required dismount: straight ride cradle	Extended one leg stunt AND *Required dismount: single twist dismount (to cradle, prone, load, or ground), from two leg extended stand OR single twist dismount (to cradle, prone, load, or ground) from one leg stunt at prep level	Extended one leg stunt AND *Required dismount: single twist dismount (to cradle, prone, load, or ground), from two leg extended stand OR single twist dismount (to cradle, prone, load, or ground) from one leg stunt at prep level
9.0–10.0	9.0–10.0	9.0–10.0	9.0–10.0
Extensions AND one leg stunt variations at prep level AND *Required dismount: straight ride cradle	Extended one leg stunt AND *Required dismount: single twist dismount (to cradle, prone, load, or ground), from two leg extended stand OR single twist dismount (to cradle, prone, load, or ground) from one leg stunt at prep level	Elite Skill* AND *Required dismount: single twist dismount (to cradle, prone, load, or ground) from one leg extended stunt	Elite Skill* AND *Required dismount: single twist dismount (to cradle, prone, load, or ground) from one leg extended stunt

TECHNIQUE/EXECUTION RANGES

3.5–4.0
Less than 50% of skills were executed with excellent precision and form
4.0–4.5
50% of skills were executed with excellent precision and form
4.5–5.0
75% or more of skills were executed with excellent precision and form

DRIVERS

Degree of Difficulty

Percentage of Team Participation

Connection of Skills/Variety

Pace and Speed of Skills

ELITE SKILLS*

Site stunt skill examples:

- Full up to extended position
- Release move to an extended position
- Inversion to release move to an extended position
- Tick tock variations (high to high)
- Toss to extended stunts
- Extended stunt sequence performed by a single base, unassisted

*Add'l elite skills & progressions can be found at <https://www.varsity.com/usa/school/competitions/> Under "rules and scoring"

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USA 2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS SHOW CHEER

PYRAMIDS SCORING RANGES

USA CHEER Pyramid Definition: "connected partner stunts" (Example: paper dolls).
 Basic pyramid – includes limited complex transitions, structures, entrance and/or dismount variety.
 Maxed-out pyramid – could include multiple complex transitions, several structures, and a variety of entries and/or dismounts, etc. *Note: required stunt dismount NOT implemented here, only in stunt section.

NOVICE, INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED & NON-TUMBLING
3.0
Basic pyramid
3.0–4.0
Maxed-out pyramid
4.0–5.0
Basic AND maxed-out pyramid

TECHNIQUE/EXECUTION RANGES

3.5–4.0
Less than 50% of skills were executed with excellent precision and form
4.0–4.5
50% of skills were executed with excellent precision and form
4.5–5.0
75% or more of skills were executed with excellent precision and form

DRIVERS

Degree of Difficulty

Percentage of Team Participation

Connection of Skills/Variety

Pace and Speed of Skills

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USA 2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS SHOW CHEER

TUMBLING SCORING RANGES

If 50%, or "half" of team, does not perform synchronized skill, score drops into box directly below. Synchronized – exact same skill(s) at the exact same time. Example: Synchronized = 50% of team does a back handspring at the exact same time. Not synchronized = 25% of team does a back handspring, other 25% does a back handspring into a back tuck. *Note: Tumbling passes must land on both feet to get credit for ranges. Example: Back handsprings which land in prone position would not count. *Note: To get into a range, tumbling is not cumulative. *Note: Both standing and running tumbling skills will be considered.

NOVICE & NOVICE NON-BUILDING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED & ADVANCED NON-BUILDING
2.0–3.0	2.0–3.0	2.0–3.0
Forward roll Cartwheel	Cartwheel Round off Front/Back walkover	Cartwheel/Round off Front/Back walkover Standing back handspring Round off back handspring
3.0–4.0	3.0–4.0	3.0–4.0
Round off Front/Back walkover	Standing back handspring Round off back handspring	Round off BH(s) back tuck(s) Round off tuck(s) Standing BH series Jump(s)/BH(s) combinations
4.0–5.0	4.0–5.0	4.0–5.0
Standing back handspring Round off back handspring	Round off BH(s) back tuck(s) Round off tuck(s) Standing BH series Jump(s)/BH(s) combinations	Layouts Standing back tuck Standing BH(s) back tuck Standing BH(s) to tuck/layout/full Round off to layout/full Round off BH(s) to layout/full Jump(s)/tuck or tuck combinations

TECHNIQUE/EXECUTION RANGES

3.5–4.0
Less than 50% of skills were executed with excellent precision and form
4.0–4.5
50% of skills were executed with excellent precision and form
4.5–5.0
75% or more of skills were executed with excellent precision and form

DRIVERS

Degree of Difficulty

Percentage of Team Participation

Combination of Skills/Variety

Pace and Speed of Skills

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USA 2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS SHOW CHEER

JUMPS SCORING RANGES

If 75% or "most" of the team do not perform a synchronized skill, score drops into the range directly below. Jump Combination – Jumps connected with continuous movement, using either a whip or prep approach (NO PAUSE BETWEEN JUMPS). Synchronized Jumps – exact same skill(s) at the exact same time. Roll off in jumps is not considered synchronized.

NOVICE, INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED, NON-BUILDING & NON-TUMBLING
2.0
Jumps performed do not meet the 3.0 requirement
3.0
Synchronized single jump
4.0
Synchronized double jump combination with no variety
5.0
Synchronized double jump combination with variety OR Synchronized double jump combination with no variety +1 additional synchronized jump

TECHNIQUE/EXECUTION RANGES

3.5–4.0
Less than 50% of skills were executed with excellent precision and form
4.0–4.5
50% of skills were executed with excellent precision and form
4.5–5.0
75% or more of skills were executed with excellent precision and form

DRIVERS

Degree of Difficulty

Percentage of Team Participation

Combination of Skills/Variety

Pace and Speed of Skills



STUNT QUANTITY CHART

# OF ATHLETES	STUNT GROUPS NEEDED
8	1
9	1
10	1
11	1
12	2
13	2
14	2
15	2
16	3
17	3
18	3
19	3
20	4
21	4
22	4
23	4
24	5
25	5
26	5
27	5
28	6
29	6
30	6
31	6
32	7
33	7
34	7
35	7
36	7
37	7
38	7
Revised 06/14/21	



TUMBLING QUANTITY CHART

TUMBLING/JUMPS		
School-based		
Number of Athletes	Tumbling	Jumps
8	4	6
9	5	7
10	5	8
11	6	8
12	6	9
13	7	10
14	7	11
15	8	11
16	8	12
17	9	13
18	9	14
19	10	14
20	10	15
21	11	16
22	11	17
23	12	17
24	12	18
25	13	19
26	13	20
27	14	20
28	14	21
29	15	22
30	15	23
31	16	23
32	16	24
33	17	25
34	17	26
35	18	26
36	18	27

2023-24 DEDUCTION SCORING GUIDELINES

SHOW CHEER DIVISIONS ONLY

(Does not include Group Stunt, Crowdleader™ Teams, or Game Day divisions)

ATHLETE FALL (AF) – (0.5) point deduction

Drops to the performance surface during individual tumbling and/or jump skills will result in a 0.5 deduction for each occurrence.

Examples:

- Hands or knees down on tumbling or jump skills
- Landing on head, shoulders, back, seat, thighs during individual skills

BUILDING BOBBLES (BB) – (0.5) point deduction

Bobbles during stunts, pyramids, and tosses will result in a 0.5 deduction for each occurrence.

Examples:

- Stunts and pyramids that almost drop/fall, but are saved
- Top person becomes weight bearing on a spotter
- Incomplete twisting cradle to side or prone
- Mistakes made during cradle or dismount. Top person has hand(s) or both feet on the floor
- Severe balance checks
- Severe timing issues

BUILDING FALLS (BF) – (1.0) point deduction

Mistakes during stunts, pyramids, and tosses will result in a 1.0 deduction for each occurrence.

Examples:

- Drops from individual stunt to a cradle, load-in, prone, flatback, etc.
- Drops from individual stunt to pop down, or lowering top person to the performance surface
- Base or spotter drops to performance surface during building skill
- Toss that does not land in a cradle (lands inverted, backward, etc.)

MAJOR BUILDING FALLS (MBF) – (1.5) point deduction

Drops to the performance surface from a stunt, pyramid or toss by the top person and/or bases/spotters will result in a 1.5 deduction for each occurrence.

Examples:

- Top person lands on the performance surface from a stunt, pyramid, or toss
- Multiple bases and/or spotters drop to the performance surface
- Top person lands on a base and/or spotter who drops to the performance surface

MAXIMUM (MAX) – (2.0) point deduction

Collapses during pyramid skills where fall(s) continue to affect other portions of the pyramid will result in a 2.0 deduction.

Example:

- Multiple pyramid falls that affect other portions of the pyramid
- Separated pyramids will be treated separately
- If a pyramid regains stability, additional deductions can be given

2023-24 LEGALITY SCORING GUIDELINES
SHOW CHEER, GROUP STUNT AND CHEER GAME DAY DIVISIONS

SAFETY VIOLATION – (2.0) per occurrence

Given when a skill is performed, or other violation occurs, that is not allowed by the NFHS Spirit Rules

DIVISION LIMITATION VIOLATION – (2.0) per occurrence

Given when a skill is beyond those allowed in the USA Division Limitations

GAME DAY FORMAT VIOLATION – (2.0) per occurrence

Given when skills or elements do not meet the additional skill restrictions for a Game Day routine. Examples include:

- Exceeding 3 consecutive 8-counts of skill incorporation in the Fight Song routine
- Stunting or tumbling in the Band Chant division
- Stunting beyond the restrictions listed for the Game Day routine

TUMBLING/STUNTING OFF THE MAT – (3.0) (Nationals only)

TIME LIMIT VIOLATION FOR TOTAL ROUTINE LENGTH – (1- 5 seconds over time limit = 1.0 point. 6 or more seconds over time limit = 2.0 points.)

TIME LIMIT VIOLATION FOR SHOW CHEER TOTAL MUSIC LENGTH – (1- 5 seconds over time limit = 1.0 point. 6 or more seconds over time limit = 2.0 points.)

BOWS – (.25)

Bows should not be excessive in size and shouldn't be a distraction to the performance. Bows should be worn in a manner to minimize risk for the participants, should be adequately secured on the back of the head with the tails facing down, and should not fall over the forehead.

COSTUMING/FOOTWEAR/PROPS – (3.0) penalty for each violation of guidelines listed in the General Information

UNNECESSARY CHANGE IN PERFORMANCE ORDER – (3.0) determined by competition officials/directors

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

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT – (1.0)

When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes, and/or parents/spectators, they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so may result in a 1.0 deduction and removal of coach from event. Severity of infraction may lead to team disqualification. Penalty determined by competition officials/directors.

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

Rev. 05/18/23

2023-24 SONG/POM, SONG/JAZZ & PEP/SHORT FLAG SAFETY RULES

High School Teams

NOTE: Routines in these divisions must also follow the rules listed in “2023-24 High School Spirit (or Junior Spirit) General Information” and the “2023-24 High School Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag Division Limitations”.

Please refer to the Glossary of Terms for rules and skills terminology.

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. For Song/Pom and Pep Flag divisions, a school uniform that is worn for game/sideline cheering or performing must be worn (i.e., skirt and top). Costuming is not allowed. If an accessory or article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered "costuming". (Exception: Costuming is allowed in the Jazz Category – Please refer to the USA Spirit Competitions General Information).
2. When standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff (front of the body). If a violation occurs, a 3-point deduction will be incurred (Please refer to USA Spirit General Information).
3. All participants must wear soft-soled, non-marking shoes on both feet while competing. Shoes must have a solid sole and cover the toe and heel. (Exception: Half sole shoes/dance paws/turners are acceptable in the Song/Pom and Song/Jazz categories. Performers who wear half sole shoes/dance paws/turners while performing do so at their own risk. Shoes that cover the toe and heel are required at all other times when not directly performing). Penalty of marking the floor is disqualification. The performing school will be

responsible for any charges that may occur as a result of damage to any floor. (Please refer to "Penalties" in the USA Spirit General Information).

4. Wearing "hard" jewelry is illegal, except when such items are securely affixed to a uniform or the hair and will not interfere with the safe execution of a dance/pom/twirling move
5. Exceptions:
 - a) Jewelry that is a part of a costume will be allowed in the Jazz Category.
 - b) Earrings that are a part of the uniform will be allowed in the Song/Pom Category.
6. Support braces, etc., which are hard and unyielding or have rough edges or surfaces must be appropriately covered.
7. Props are not allowed. A prop is any physical object used to enhance the overall effect and or theme of the routine. (Exception: pom or pep/short flag)
8. Hands Free Poms: The use of hands-free poms will be allowed. Hands-free Poms are specifically made so that performers do not have to hold the poms but rather the poms are affixed to the performers hand. "Proper use" means bars cannot be in palm of the hand and only an elastic band can be between the supporting hand and performance surface making it possible to safely execute skills. A hair tie, rubber band, or tying pom strings/pieces together will not be counted as a hands-free pom.

Executed By Individuals - Inverted Skills & Tumbling

Please note that any or all inverted skills and tumbling are not required in any category. If choreographed into routine, please be sure to follow the guidelines below.

1. Inverted Skills: Non airborne skills are allowed (Example: Headstand).
2. Skills with hip over head rotation:
 - a) With hand support are not allowed while holding poms or props in supporting hand(s). (Exception: Forward rolls, backward rolls and the proper use of hands-free poms) See "Hands Free Poms" competition routine guidelines #7.
 - b) Non airborne skills are allowed and are limited to 3 connected skills. Example: 3 consecutive cartwheels are allowed; 4 consecutive cartwheels are not allowed.
 - c) Airborne skills with hand support may not be airborne in approach but may be airborne in descent if the approach is non-airborne (Clarification: A round off is allowed – hands touch the ground before the foot leaves the ground).
 - d) Airborne skills without hand support are not allowed.
 - a) **Aerial cartwheels/Side somis are only permitted in the Advanced Division.**
 - b) **NEW LANGUAGE: Simultaneously hip over head rotation are not permitted in any division level.**
 - c) **Clarification: Front ariels are not permitted in any division level.**
 - i) If a team chooses to use non-hands free poms for aerial cartwheels they **must be moved to one hand**. If a dancer fails to move both poms to one hand or touches down with the hand that holds both poms during the skill, a penalty will be assessed.
3. Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
4. Dropping (from being completely airborne) to the knee, thigh, back, shoulder, seat, front or head 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.
6. Airborne skills without hip over head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position with backward momentum landing onto the neck, shoulders and hands.
 - a) Any kip up motion must initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground. (Note: This rule refers specifically and only to the “kip up”/”rubber band” skill.)
 - b) Kip ups are not allowed while holding poms or props. The proper use of hands-free poms for kip ups is allowed.

Executed By Groups or Pairs - Lifts and Partnering

Please note that any or all lifts and partnering are not required in any category. If choreographed into routine, please be sure to follow the guidelines below.

1. Lifting with poms or pep/short flags is allowed.
2. The Executing Dancer must maintain contact with a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the performance surface at all times. (Exception: Kick Line Leaps).
3. When a skill is above hip level, at least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with the Executing Dancer until the Executing dancer returns to the performance surface.
4. Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided:
 - a) Contact between the Executing Dancer and at least one Supporting Dancer(s) must be maintained until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
5. Elevators, thigh stands, shoulder sits, and chair sits are allowed. Extensions, pyramids, and basket tosses are not allowed.
6. A Vertical Inversion is allowed provided:
 - a) Contact between the Executing Dancer and at least one Supporting Dancer(s) must be maintained until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
 - b) When the height of the Executing Dancer’s shoulders exceeds shoulder-level there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear the weight of the Executing Dancer.
(Clarification: When there are 3 Supporting Dancers an additional spot is not required).

Groups & Pairs - Dismounts to The Performance Surface (Clarification: May Be Assisted but Not Required)

Please note that any or all dismounts to the performance surface are not required in any category. If choreographed into routine, please be sure to follow the guidelines below.

1. Dismounts are allowed provided:
 - a) At the highest point of the dismount, the Executing Dancer’s hips may not elevate above head level and the Executing Dancer must land on their foot/feet.
 - b) The Executing Dancer’s hips may not cross the vertical axis while airborne and inverted.
(Clarification: while free of contact from both the performance surface and other performers.)
 - c) The Executing Dancer is not supine or inverted when released.
2. Toe pitches are not allowed.

Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep Flag questions can be sent to USADanceRules@varsity.com.

2023-24 SONG/POM, SONG/JAZZ & PEP/SHORT FLAG DIVISION LIMITATIONS

High School Teams

In addition to the rules covered in the “2023-24 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules” the following dance technical restrictions also apply to teams entering Song/Pom Novice and Song/Pom Intermediate division.

For Song/Pom - The division limitations cover dance technical skills. For tumbling skills (executed by individuals) and skills done by groups and pairs (i.e., lifts and partnering) please see the Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.

Please refer to the Glossary of Terms for rules and skills terminology.

Song/Pom - Novice Division

Teams competing in Song/Pom Novice, must follow the below technical skill limitations:

1. Turns are limited to: Chainé turns, single pique (one rotation) and single pirouette turn (one rotation).
 - a) Single pirouette turns may be executed in passé, coupe, pencil and attitude positions.
 - b) A single pirouette, plié, into another single pirouette turn is permitted but the plié must be clear, or it may be considered a pirouette with more than 1 rotation.
 - c) Turn sequences such as consecutive fouette turns and/or a la second turns are not permitted.
 - d) Axels are not permitted.
2. Leaps are limited to a basic split leap with a step or chassé as the prep. The basic split leap is also referred to as a forward/front leap, jete or saut de chat. A basic stag leap with a step or chassé as the prep is also permitted. Leaps must follow the below limitations:
 - a) The preparation for the leap must be a step or chassé. (Clarification: A chainé turn directly into the leap is not permitted).
 - b) The leap is executed in the same direction as the prep/approach. (Clarification: no changing direction of the body)
 - c) The legs may be straight or in attitude position.
3. Jumps (except a turning C jump), Leg hold (with no rotations), kicks, kicklines and illusions are permitted.
4. The following skills are not permitted: Multiple turns (with the exception of the permitted turns), second leap (leaps in 2nd position), surprise leap, calypso leap, reverse leap, tour jete, turning C jump, switch/scissor leaps, leg hold turns and axels.

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

Song/Pom - Intermediate Division

1. Technical Skill/Element Restrictions:
 - A. Turning Skills:

- a. Single and double pirouette turns may be executed in passé, coupe, pencil and attitude positions.
 - b. **A single or double pirouette, plie, into a single turn is permitted** but the plie must be clear, or it may be considered a pirouette with more than 2 rotations.
- B. Turn sequences:
- a. You are permitted to do a **maximum of two separate turn sequences in your routine**, which can be performed by one or more team members. Turn sequences may not be performed consecutively.
 - b. Pirouettes that are performed separately from fouette turns and second turns are not considered turn sequences.
 - c. Traveling turns (i.e., chaine turns, pique turns) are not considered turn sequences.
 - d. Turn sequences are limited to fouette turns, A la Seconde turns and pirouettes only. No other skills besides these turns are permitted within a turn sequence. No other skills can be connected and/or executed immediately out of the last turn before ending the turn sequence.
 - i. Single and double pirouette turns within the sequence may be in passé, coupe, pencil, and attitude positions. Clarification: Touching/holding the working leg during the turn sequence is not permitted.
 - ii. Spot direction must remain consistent throughout the entire turn sequence.
 - iii. Fouette turns, second turns may be performed only as a part of a turn sequence.
 - iv. **Floats are not permitted**
 - v. **Changing spot/direction is not permitted**
 - e. Each turn sequence is limited to one 8-count of turning (not counting the prep or ending/completion of the turn sequence).
 - i. When a turn sequence starts with a fouette turn or second turn, the 8-count will begin when the working leg opens to second position. When a turn sequence begins with a pirouette turn, the eight count begins immediately.
 - ii. The completion of the turn sequence must occur after one 8-count (or in other words, "count 9.") For example – A turn sequence begins with a second turn and the working leg opens to 2nd position on count "1" the landing/completion of the sequence must finish on the following count "1".
 - iii. Dancer(s) must come to a complete stop with the body in an upright position (chest up) with both feet on the performance surface for at least one count before executing another skill/move. Clarification: The stop/completion of the turn sequence cannot be a prep into another technical skill.
- C. Leaps/Jumps:
- a. Switch leaps/Scissor leaps are not permitted.
 - b. **Leaps/jumps that release the head toward the back must be performed stationary and cannot be connected to any other skill or technical element.**
 - c. **Preparations for traveling leaps and/or jumps are limited to a step or chasse. A chaine turn used as a preparation directly into a leap and/or jump is not permitted.**

- d. **Dancer(s) must come to a complete stop with both feet on the performance surface for at least one count before executing another skill or technical element. The landing must not be a preparation for another skill or technical element.**

In addition to the skills permitted at the Novice level, the following skills will be permitted or not permitted at the Intermediate level.

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

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

Song/Pom - Advanced Division

There are no technical skill limitations for this division except for those noted in the “2023-24 USA Song/Pom/Song-Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.”

Song/Pom - Freshman Division

There are no technical skill limitations for this division except for those noted in the “2023-24 USA Song/Pom/Song-Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.”

Songleader/Jazz Division

There are no technical skill limitations for this division except for those noted in the “2023-24 USA Song/Pom/Song-Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules.”

Pep Flag 2-Flag Division

There are no technical skill limitations for this divisions except for those noted in the “2023-24 USA Song/Pom and Pep/Short Flag General Safety Rules.”

If you have questions, please email USADanceRules@varsity.com.

2023-24 SONG/POM, SONG/JAZZ & PEP/SHORT FLAG GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Note: This document provides terminology reference for the Song/Pom, Song/Jazz & Pep Flag Rule documents listed below:

- 2023-24 Spirit General Information for School Teams
- 2023-24 High School Song/Pom, Song/Jazz & Pep Flag Division Limitations
- 2023-24 Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules

Rules Terminology

Airborne (Executed by Individuals, Groups or Pairs): A state in which the dancer is free of contact from a person and the performing surface.

Airborne Hip Over Head Rotation (Executed by Individuals): A tumbling skill in which the hips continuously rotate over the head and there is a moment of no contact with the performance surface (Example: Round Off or a Back Handspring).

Axis Rotation: An action in which a dancer rotates around his/her vertical or horizontal center.

Connected/Consecutive Skills: An action in which the dancer executes skills without a step, pause or break in between. (Example: Double Pirouette or Double Toe Touch)

Contact (Executed by Groups or Pairs): When two (or more) people physically touch each other. Touching hair and clothing does not qualify as contact.

Costuming: An accessory or an article of clothing that adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine.

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.

Drop: An action in which an airborne dancer lands on a body part other than his/her hand(s) or feet without first bearing weight on the hands/feet.

Elevate/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 Groups or Pairs who use(s) support from another dancer(s).

Head Level: A designated and averaged height: the crown of the head of a standing dancer while standing upright with straight legs. (Clarification: this is an approximate height to measure space, and is not changed by bending, inverting, etc.)

Hip Level: A designated and averaged height; the height of a standing dancer's 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 characterized by continuous movement where a dancer's hips rotate over the head in a tumbling skill (Example: Back Walkover or Cartwheel).

Hip Over Head Rotation (Executed by Groups or Pairs): An action characterized by continuous movement where the Executing Dancer's hips rotate over their own head in a lift or partnering skill.

Inversion/Inverted: A position in which the dancer's waist, hips and feet are higher than his/her head and shoulders.

Inverted Skills (Executed by individuals): A skill in which a dancer's waist and hips and feet are higher than his/her head and shoulders and there is a stop, stall, or change in momentum.

Lift (executed by Groups or Pairs): 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 an Executing Dancer(s) and a Supporting Dancer(s).

Partnering (Executed by Pairs): A skill in which two dancers use support from one another. Partnering can involve both Supporting and Executing skills.

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, creating a 90 degree angle between the head and floor.

Prop: Any physical object used to enhance the overall effect and/or theme of your routine.

Prone: A position in which the front of the dancer's body is facing the ground and the back of the dancer's body is facing up.

Release (executed by Groups or Pairs): An action that results in a moment of time when the Executing Dancer is free of contact from the performance floor and the Supporting Dancer(s) with whom there was prior contact.

Shoulder Inversion (executed by individuals): A skill that begins with backward airborne momentum and lands on the hands /shoulders /upper back area on the performance surface and the dancer's waist and hips and feet are higher than his/her head and shoulders.

Shoulder Level: A designated and averaged 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.)

Supporting Leg: The leg of a dancer that supports the weight of the body, during a skill.

Supporting Dancer: A dancer who performs a skill as a part of a group or pair who supports or maintains contact with an Executing Dancer.

Supine: A position in which the back of the dancer's body is facing the ground, and the front of the dancer's body is facing up.

Tumbling: A collection of skills that emphasize acrobatic or gymnastic ability, are 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 Axis (executed by Groups or Pairs): a designated line in space that goes straight up and down and has no slope.

Vertical Inversion (executed by Groups or Pairs): A skill in which the Executing Dancer's waist, hips and feet are higher than his/her own head and shoulders and bears direct weight on the Supporting Dancer(s) by a stop, stall or change in momentum.

Working Leg: The leg of a dancer that is responsible for momentum and/or position, during a skill.

Skills Terminology

A la Secondé Leap (Second Leap): A leap in which the legs open to second position in turnout, so that the dancer's heels are visible.

A la Secondé Turn (Second Turn): Pirouette a la secondé is a classical ballet term meaning a "spin with leg to the side" or "spin with leg in second position." A dancer performing a pirouette a la secondé will be turning on their supporting leg with their other leg to the side and straight with a pointed foot.

Aerial Cartwheel: (airborne hip over head rotation skill without hand support) A skill which emulates a cartwheel executed without placing hands on the ground.

Attitude: A position where the working leg is lifted in the air to the front (devant), side (a la secondé) or to the back (derrière). The leg in the air is bent and is most often turned out so that the knee is higher than the foot.

Axel: (airborne skill with axis rotation) A turn in which the working leg makes a circle in the air to passé as the supporting leg lifts off the ground enabling the dancer to perform a rotation in the air and then lands on the original supporting leg.

Back Walkover: (non-airborne hip over head rotation skill with hand support) A skill in which the dancer moves backward into an arched position, with the hands making contact with the ground first, then rotates the hips over the head and lands on one foot/leg at a time.

Backward Roll: (non-airborne hip over head rotation skill with hand support) A skill in which the dancer rotates backward, rotating the hips over the head while curving the spine (a tucked position) to create a motion similar to a ball “rolling” across the floor.

C Jump: A jump in which a dancer uses a deep plie, the legs pull behind the body and are bent, the head is released, and arms are pulled back. The body forms the shape of a “C”.

Calypso: (airborne skill) 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: (non-airborne hip over head rotation skill with hand support) A 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.

Chassé: A connecting step in which one foot remains in advance of the other; meaning to chase.

Chaines/Chaine Turn: Chaînés or “chaîné turns” is when a dancer is performing a series of turns on both feet, picking up each foot back and forth in order to keep moving in a line or circle.

Coupé: A position in which one foot is held lifted and close to the ankle. Also known as Coup de Pied: quickly takes the place of the other; meaning to cut or cutting.

Developpé: An action in which the working leg moves through passé (bends) before extending into position; meaning to develop.

Dive Roll: (airborne hip over head rotation skill with hand support) A forward roll where the dancer’s feet leave the ground before the dancer’s hands reach the ground.

Elevator: When the top person is being held at shoulder level by the base(s). Also known as Extension Prep, Prep or Half.

Extension: A fully extended stunt above head level where the Executing Dancer stands with both legs locked out (shoulder-width apart) and one foot in each hand of the base (partner stunt) or each foot is held by a different base (group stunt).

Forward Roll: (non-airborne hip over head rotation skill with hand support) A skill in which the dancer rotates forward, rotating the hips over the head while curving the spine (a tucked position) to create a motion similar to a ball “rolling” across the floor.

Fouetté: 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 à la seconde).

Fouetté à 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 hip over head rotation skill with hand support) A skill where the dancer moves forward with the hands making contact with the ground first, then rotates the hips over the head passing through an arched position and lands on one foot/leg at a time.

Glissade: A connecting step that transfers weight from one foot to the other; meaning to glide.

Handstand: (a non-airborne inverted skill with hand support) A non-airborne, nonrotating, skill where the dancer supports him/herself vertically on his/her hands in an inverted position and the arms are extended straight by the head and ears.

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 inverted skill with hand support) A non-airborne, nonrotating, skill where the dancer supports him/herself vertically on his/her head in an inverted position with hands in contact with the floor to support the body.

Illusion: (a stationary turn) A skill where a dancer steps onto a standing leg, releasing the upper body all the way forward, lifting the working leg as close to 90 degrees as possible while rotating on the standing foot.

Jeté: 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 jetté can be executed in various directions, sizes and positions.

Jump: Movement taking off and landing on same foot or both feet.

Kick: Throwing the working leg in the air in a controlled manner, while the supporting leg and body stay properly aligned in the position of choice. Jazz equivalent of a grand battement in ballet.

Kip Up: (non-airborne in approach, airborne in decent, inverted skill) 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: (airborne skill) A skill in which the dancer pushes from a plié (bend) off of one foot, becomes airborne, and lands on one foot.

Leg hold/Leg Hold Turn: A skill in which a dancer extends one leg upward showing flexibility. When executing this skill, the dancer grabs the leg and/or foot of the leg that is extended. To make the skill more advanced, rotations can be incorporated making it a leg hold turn.

Passé: 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: A position of the working leg during a pirouette turn in which the leg is forward, turned out and pointed to the floor. The foot is a couple inches off the floor.

Pique/Pique Turn: "Pricked" a step in which a dancer transfers weight onto the pointe or demi pointe of the supporting leg. The working leg is in passé position and turned out. This action can be immediately followed by a turning motion, known as a pique turn.

Pirouette: (axis rotation) A skill in which the dancer bends (plié) with one foot in front of the other (fourth position) and rises (relevé) to one supporting leg making a complete rotation of the body; meaning to whirl. A pirouette can be executed in a variety of positions.

Plié: A preparatory and landing skill in which the dancer bends, softens his/her knees; meaning to bend.

Relevé: An executing skill in which the dancer lifts up to the ball of his/her feet; meaning to rise.

Reverse Leap: A leap in which a dancer begins facing back and travels toward the back (with steps or a chasse), then rotates the shoulders and hips to the front/direction the dancer came from and hits the split leap position facing the front/the direction the dancer came from.

Round Off (Executed by Individuals): (airborne hip over head rotation skill with hand support) An airborne hip over head rotation skill that takes off on one foot and lands on two feet simultaneously. (Clarification: the skill becomes airborne after the hips have rotated over the head).

Scissor Leap/Switch Leap: A leap in which the legs exchange positions (by swinging past each other while in the air), showing a split with both legs in one jump.

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: 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).

Stag: A grand jete in which the front and back leg bend as the body travels through the air. It can also be performed with the back leg extended.

Surprise Leap: A leap in which a dancer begins facing back and travels to the side (with steps or chasse) and then rotates the shoulders and hips to the front while also bringing the leg through passé and hits the split leap position facing front.

Thigh Stand: Stunt in which the top person stands on two bases' lunged thighs.

Toe Pitch (executed by Groups or Pairs): A skill in which the Executing Dancer(s) starts in an upright position with one foot in the hand(s) of a Supporting Dancer(s) and is propelled upward. (Clarification: this is not the definition of a toe pitch back tuck).

Toe Touch: (airborne skill) A jump in which the dancer lifts the legs through a straddle position. Hips externally rotate to turn out the legs and the chest is upright. Arms are typically held in a T position.

Tour Jete: (airborne skill with axis rotation) A skill in which the dancer takes off from one leg, executes a half turn and lands on the other leg.

Turning C Jump: A jump in which a dancer uses a chaine turn to prep into a C jump and the jump is performed while turning.

Pep Flag Terminology

Dropped Flag: A flag that is un-intentionally released onto the performance surface. (Clarification: Any part of the flag shaft that touches the floor un-intentionally is a dropped flag. For example: If just the ball of the flag shaft or just the tip of the flag shaft touches the floor for any amount of time; it is considered a dropped flag.

Flag Shaft: The pole of a pep/short flag including the end components (ball and tip).

Single-Arm Twirls (Can Be Executed with Either Arm)

Baby: This twirl starts the same as the Big Scoop and is the counterpart to the scarecrow, but it goes in the opposite direction.

Big Scoop: The Big Scoop starts with the arm starting at the side, shoots out away from the body, travels up starting at feet, continues up torso, across the face and falls behind the head with your arm ending in a 90° angle.

Chop: The flag is traveling on the horizontal plane, parallel to the floor. It continues over your head and back around.

Crank: A Crank is a wrist twirl, where your wrist executes a “cranking” motion either in front of the face like the beginning of a Drop or behind the head like the ending motion of a Little Scoop. The shaft of the flag rolls between your thumb and pointer finger in order to execute this twirl.

Drop: The Drop can be executed as its own twirl or as a continuation of the Swipe. It is essentially the same twirl as the Swipe, traveling in the same direction, except that your arm is constantly at a 90° angle. This causes your flag to only travel down the face fall behind the head and ends away from the head.

Little Scoop: The Little Scoop can be executed as its own twirl or as a continuation of the Big Scoop. It is essentially the same twirl as the Big Scoop, traveling in the same direction, except that your arm is constantly at a 90° angle. This causes your flag to only travel up the face and falling behind the head. The Little Scoop’s movement is executed with the wrist.

Scarecrow: The Scarecrow starts the same as the Swipe. The difference is that you use your wrist and pointer finger to cause your flag to twirl behind your lower back and legs. To execute the second part of the twirl, think of your pointer finger is drawing a small circle and your palm is facing the back.

Swipe: The Swipe is the counterpart for the Big Scoop. Arm starts at the side but shoots out across the body instead of away. The flag continues with flag crossing in front of legs and out away from the body. It falls behind the head with your arm ending in a 90° angle, but the flag end away from the head, instead of behind as in the Big Scoop.

Two-Arm Twirls

Big Twirl: A Big Twirl is when both arms execute a Big Scoop at the same time.


Chasers: Chasers are when one flag follows the other flag and wrists travel in an infinite sign. The flags can either travel toward you or away from you.

Parallel Twirl: A Parallel Twirl is when one arm executes a Big Scoop and the other executes a Swipe. This causes the flags to travel parallel to each other. Parallel Twirls can also be executed when both hands execute a Crank, one flag in front of the face and one flag behind the head.

Snap: A Snap is when both arms execute a Swipe at the same time. This causes the two flags to rub against each other, causing a “snapping” sound. It can also be executed without making a sound.

Windmill: A Windmill is a variant of Chasers but happens above your head. One arm executes a Drop while the other that follows it executes a Little Scoop. When executing a Windmill, arms are extended past 90° to allow wrists to stay close together above your head.

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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

SONG/POM


Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Choreography	Max Value	Score	Comments:
USE OF POM/CREATIVITY • Pom Motions/Movement/Variety • Visual Effects • Musical Interpretation ROUTINE STAGING • Transitions/Continuity • Formations/Use of Floor TECHNICAL SKILLS/SPECIALTIES • Turns • Kicks • Leaps/Jumps • Use of Team	15		
	15		
	10		
Execution	Max Value	Score	
POM TECHNIQUE • Control/Placement • Sharpness/Precision UNIFORMITY • Synchronization • Timing/Rhythm/Pace • Spacing TECHNICAL SKILLS/SPECIALTIES • Turns • Kicks • Leaps/Jumps • Overall Technique	15		
	15		
	10		
Performance	Max Value	Score	
SHOWMANSHIP • Smiles/Projection • Energy/Enthusiasm • Eye Contact/Confidence • Recoveries OVERALL IMPRESSION Judge's impression of the entire performance encompassing all scoresheet categories. This may also include elements such as: Appearance, Appropriateness and Crowd Appeal.	10		
	10		
TOTAL SCORE	100		Song/Pom

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Judge: _____


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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

SONG/JAZZ


Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Choreography	Max Value	Score	Comments:
JAZZ STYLE/CREATIVITY • Dance Movement/Variety • Visual Effects • Musical Interpretation ROUTINE STAGING • Transitions/Continuity • Formations/Use of Floor TECHNICAL SKILLS/SPECIALTIES • Turns • Kicks • Leaps/Jumps • Use of Team	15		
	15		
	10		
Execution	Max Value	Score	
MOVEMENT TECHNIQUE • Control/Placement • Sharpness/Precision UNIFORMITY • Synchronization • Timing/Rhythm/Pace • Spacing TECHNICAL SKILLS/SPECIALTIES • Turns • Kicks • Leaps/Jumps • Overall Technique	15		
	15		
	10		
Performance	Max Value	Score	
SHOWMANSHIP • Carriage/Projection • Energy/Expression/Emotion • Eye Contact/Confidence • Recoveries OVERALL IMPRESSION Judge's impression of the entire performance encompassing all scoresheet categories. This may also include elements such as: Appearance, Appropriateness and Crowd Appeal.	10		
	10		
TOTAL SCORE	100		SONG/JAZZ

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Judge: _____


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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

PEP FLAG

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Choreography	Max Value	Score	Comments:
USE OF FLAGS/MOTIONS/CREATIVITY • Twirls/Movement/Variety • Footwork • Visual Effects • Musical Interpretation ROUTINE STAGING • Transitions/Continuity • Formations/Use of Floor TECHNICAL SKILLS/SPECIALTIES • Twirls/Tricks • Tosses/Exchanges • Specialty Skills • Use of Team	15		
	10		
	15		
Execution	Max Value	Score	
TWIRLING/MOTION TECHNIQUE • Control/Placement • Sharpness/Precision • Footwork UNIFORMITY • Synchronization • Timing/Rhythm/Pace • Spacing TECHNICAL SKILLS/SPECIALTIES • Twirls/Tricks • Tosses/Exchanges • Specialty Skills	15		
	10		
	15		
Performance	Max Value	Score	
SHOWMANSHIP • Smiles/Projection • Energy/Enthusiasm • Eye Contact/Confidence • Recoveries OVERALL IMPRESSION Judge's impression of the entire performance encompassing all scoresheet categories. This may also include elements such as: Appearance, Appropriateness and Crowd Appeal.	10		
	10		
TOTAL SCORE	100		PEP FLAG

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Judge: _____


2023-24 LEGALITY SCORING GUIDELINES

SONG/POM, SONG/JAZZ, PEP FLAG, MASCOT AND SONG/POM GAME DAY DIVISIONS

SAFETY VIOLATION/ DIVISION LIMITATION VIOLATION – (2.0) per occurrence

Given when a skill is performed beyond division limitations, or other violation occurs, that is not allowed by 2023-2024 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz, Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules, or violation of Mascot or Game Day guidelines.

MASCOT PROP 1 MINUTE SET UP/BREAK DOWN TIMING – (1.0) for every 1-5 seconds over time limit. (1-5 = 1 point; 6-10 = 2 points; etc.)

PEP/SHORT FLAG 30 SECOND ENTRANCE/EXIT TIMING – (1.0) for every 1-5 seconds over time limit. (1-5 = 1 point; 6-10 = 2 points; etc.)

TIME LIMIT VIOLATION FOR TOTAL ROUTINE LENGTH – (1- 5 seconds over time limit = 1.0 point. 6 or more seconds over time limit = 2.0 points.)

SONG/POM – POM USE RESTRICTION (Poms must be used for at least 80% of the routine)– (1.0) for every 5 seconds under pom usage. (1-5 = 1 point; 6-10 = 2 points; etc.)

PEP/SHORT FLAG USE RESTRICTION (Flags must be used for at least 80% of the routine)– (1.0) for every 5 seconds under flag usage. (1-5 = 1 point; 6-10 = 2 points; etc.)

PEP/SHORT FLAG DROPPED – (.50)

BOWS – (.25)

Bows should not be excessive in size and shouldn't be a distraction to the performance. Bows should be worn in a manner to minimize risk for the participants, should be adequately secured on the back of the head with the tails facing down, and should not fall over the forehead.

COSTUMING/FOOTWEAR/PROPS/FLAG SHAFT TIPS – (3.0) penalty for each violation of guidelines listed in the General Information

UNNECESSARY CHANGE IN PERFORMANCE ORDER – (3.0) determined by competition officials/directors

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

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT – (1.0)

When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes, and/or parents/spectators, they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so may result in a 1.0 deduction and removal of coach from event. Severity of infraction may lead to team disqualification. Penalty determined by competition officials/directors.

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

Rev. 06/15/23

CHEER GAME DAY RULES & GUIDELINES

GENERAL RULES

All permitted cheerleading specialty skills, including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps for the Game Day Divisions must follow the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. Please see additional specific skill restrictions below for each category. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult advisor/director/coach.

A. Categories/Divisions

There are three stand-alone categories and one combined category. Qualification to attend Spirit Nationals is required to compete in any of the Game Day categories below.

Stand-Alone Categories

- Band Chant
- Situational Sideline/Cheer
- Fight Song

These are the divisions offered for each stand-alone category above. There is no co-ed split of divisions for the stand-alone Game Day divisions.

- High School – 5+ Members
- Combined Category (Band Chant, Situational Sideline/Cheer, Fight Song)
- Crowleader™ Team – 5+ Members

See 2023-24 High School Spirit Divisions for split requirements.

B. School/Organization Representation – Refer to same section(s) above.

Uniforms – Refer to same section above.

Uniform Distractions – Refer to same section above.

Shoes – Refer to same section above.

Make-Up – Refer to same section above.

Hair – Refer to same section above.

C. Appropriateness of Choreography, Music, Words and Outfitting – Refer to same section above.

D. Competition Area – Unique to Game Day

- Participants may enter from outside the competition area for their performance.
- All permitted skills (stunts, pyramids, tumbling etc.) must be performed on the competition mat.
- Competitions comply with the NFHS & USA Cheer surface ruling that school-based programs may not compete on a spring floor. Approximate floor size will be a traditional mat of 54' (feet) wide by 42' (feet) deep – 9 strips.
- Tossing, throwing or other projecting of any type of object outside the competition floor and/or into the crowd is not allowed.
- Poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners may be placed outside the competition area by a team member.

E. Music – Refer to same section above.

Music Rules/Restrictions – Refer to same section above.

Challenge Process – Refer to same section above.

Virtual Competition Music Rules – Refer to same section above.

F. Time Limitations/Entrance/Exit – Unique to Game Day

- Stand-alone divisions - Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- Combined division - Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 4 minutes.
- Teams may not set up props in advance of any stand-alone category.
- Set-ups for props, signs, megaphones, etc. will be timed in the Crowdleader™ category.
- See specific category for details on the start and stop of each type of routine.
- All team breaks, rituals and traditions need to take place prior to the team being called to the performance floor
- Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures. Example: chest bumps, hugs, hand-shakes, etc.
- All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation may receive a "sportsmanship" penalty.
- There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

G. Video Media Policy – Refer to same section above.

H. Logo Usage – Refer to same section above.

BAND CHANT CATEGORY


ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- Band Chant must be made up of at least 50% cheerleaders. Non-cheer teams may participate (i.e., song/pom or dance) but may not comprise more than 50% of the total team numbers.
- A team may begin on or off the performance floor for the start of their music. Once the team name is called and the music begins, timing of the overall routine starts.
- Timing will end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
- The Band Chant must be one traditionally played by a school sideline/jazz band. Crowd interaction and involvement, including yell-backs, spell-outs, school colors are encouraged.
- Camp material may easily be adapted to fit this category. For example, any band chant learned at a 2023 Varsity Brands camp could be used for this routine. Examples might include “Rock ‘N Roll Part II, “Land of A Thousand Dances,” etc.
- Sideline/traditional school uniforms are required.
- The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is permitted and encouraged.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the score sheet:
 - Crowd leading ability, including crowd encouragement, ease of crowd to participate, etc.
 - Material appropriate for a sideline situation during a time-out, quarter break, between downs, etc.
 - Creativity and musicality, variety and the execution of transitions and formations.
 - Placement, synchronization, and strength of motions/movement.
 - Visual effect and spacing.
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 - Thematic routines and/or specialized costuming is not encouraged.
- Emphasis should be placed on crowd interaction/involvement and entertaining the crowd. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally/assembly.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – BAND CHANT CATEGORY

- Tumbling and/or stunting of any kind is prohibited, including during entrances and exits.
- Turns, leaps, kicks and/or jumps are permitted.


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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**


GAME DAY – BAND CHANT
EXECUTION

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Motion Strength/Placement	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharpness, strength of motion. Proper control & placement of motions. 	10.0		
Synchronization			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing of movement throughout routine. 	10.0		
Spacing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spacing of squad members in relation to each other. 	10.0		
TOTAL SCORE 30.0			Judge: _____ <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>

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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**


GAME DAY – BAND CHANT
ROUTINE
STRUCTURE / CHOREOGRAPHY

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Game Day Material	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper & practical use of material relevant to game day environment. 	10.0		
Crowd Communication Skills			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of crowd encouragement and ability to cue crowd. 	10.0		
Visuals/Variety			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of variety of movements to complement the music, visual effects (level changes, ripples/roll-offs) and creative movement within groups and levels. 	10.0		
Crowd Leading Tools			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective use of props (signs, megaphones, poms and/or flags) and encouragement to lead the crowd. 	10.0		
Formations/Transitions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crowd coverage. Creative, visual & effective formations & ways to move from one formation to another. 	10.0		
TOTAL SCORE 50.0			Judge: _____ <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>

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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

GAME DAY – BAND CHANT
SHOWMANSHIP

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Crowd Appeal	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voice, energy, showmanship, facial expression, eye contact & overall connection to the crowd. 	10.0		
Overall Impression			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judge's impression of entire performance encompassing all score sheet categories. This includes audience appropriateness. 	10.0		
TOTAL SCORE 20.0			Judge: _____ <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>

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FIGHT SONG CATEGORY


ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- Teams are encouraged to use their traditional school fight song. Should your school fight song exceed 1 minute, and no reasonable way to edit the routine is possible, please contact the USA office for approval.
- Timing will begin with the first organized movement, voice or note music, whichever comes first. Timing will end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
- Props (poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners) are permitted in this category and encouraged.
- Fight song incorporation is limited to three (3) consecutive 8-counts of stunts and/or tumbling. If the fight song repeats, the incorporation will only be allowed if it is repeated exactly the same both times. Counting will begin with the first initiation of a skill and continue until either the incorporation is complete or the end of the 3rd 8-count.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the score sheet:
 - Crowd oriented material, fit to music, using effective spacing and formations, and incorporating visual effects.
 - Placement, synchronization, and strength of motions.
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 - Emphasis should be placed on practicality and crowd involvement. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – FIGHT SONG CATEGORY

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No stunt/pyramid inversions are allowed.
- No twisting dismounts are allowed.
- Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches.
- A kick/jump will not be considered a skill and can be performed at any time during the routine.
- No running tumbling is allowed.
- Standing tumbling skills are limited to single skills.


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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**


GAME DAY – FIGHT SONG
EXECUTION

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Motion Strength/Placement	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharpness, strength of motion. Proper control & placement of motions. 	10.0		<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">GAME DAY – FIGHT SONG EXECUTION</div> Judge: _____ <div style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small; margin-top: 5px;">  </div>
Synchronization			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing of movement throughout routine. 	10.0		
Spacing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spacing of squad members in relation to each other. 	10.0		
Execution of Routine Elements			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technique, form, stability, timing, precision, uniformity (i.e. building/tumbling/jumps/kicks/turns, etc...). 	10.0		
TOTAL SCORE	40.0		

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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**


GAME DAY – FIGHT SONG
ROUTINE
STRUCTURE / CHOREOGRAPHY

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Game Day Material	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper & practical use of material, and props, if applicable, relevant to game day environment. 	10.0		<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">GAME DAY – FIGHT SONG ROUTINE STRUCTURE / CHOREOGRAPHY</div> Judge: _____ <div style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small; margin-top: 5px;">  </div>
Overall Impression of Routine Elements			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements incorporated to enhance the squad's ability to properly lead the crowd (i.e. building/tumbling/jumps/kicks/turns, etc...). 	10.0		
Visuals/Variety			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of variety of movements to complement the music, visual effects (level changes, ripples/roll-offs) and creative movement within groups. 	10.0		
Formations/Transitions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crowd coverage. Creative, visual & effective formations & ways to move from one formation to another. 	10.0		
TOTAL SCORE	40.0		

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**2023-2024 SPIRIT
COMPETITIONS**

GAME DAY – FIGHT SONG
SHOWMANSHIP

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Crowd Appeal	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voice, energy, showmanship, facial expression, eye contact & overall connection to the crowd. 	10.0		<div style="text-align: right; font-size: small; margin-bottom: 5px;">GAME DAY – FIGHT SONG SHOWMANSHIP</div> Judge: _____ <div style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small; margin-top: 5px;">  </div>
Overall Impression			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judge's impression of entire performance encompassing all score sheet categories. This includes audience appropriateness. 	10.0		
TOTAL SCORE	20.0		

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SITUATIONAL SIDELINE/CHEER CATEGORY (2 elements to this routine)


ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will respond to a game time sideline situation (presented by the announcer), followed by a second element of an additional crowd-oriented cheer/chant/traditional yell/drum cadence, etc. not to exceed 1 minute in total routine length for the two elements that are required.
- Situational Sideline/Cheer will begin with the presentation of a game time sideline situation.
- Timing starts once the game situation has been presented and ends at the conclusion of the second element of the routine – the crowd-oriented Cheer section of the routine (this is the overall end of the routine).
- The team may start their routine on or off the mat for the reading of their game time sideline situation. Once the situation is read, timing begins.
- No music may be used during the performance. Live drummer(s), other band members and/or drum track is allowed. All specialty skills (i.e., jumps, stunts and/or tumbling) must be performed within a safe distance of all drummers and/or other band members. Drummer(s) and/or any other band members cannot be involved in any type of specialty skill and must be positioned off the cheerleading mat.
- Each team's Cheer presentation (the second element of the overall routine) must include at least one component required from the following: cheers, chants, traditional yells, and/or drum cadences. This is a separate crowd-oriented cheer that is not directly related to the situational cheer, but rather is an add-on following the situational cheer.
- Teams should utilize all areas of their squad's crowd leading strengths. The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is required.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the score sheet:
 - Crowd communication, including crowd effective material, spacing and formations, voice and pace, crowd leading skills and use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners.
 - Placement, synchronization and strength of motions.
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
- Emphasis should be placed on crowd involvement and practicality. All material should be suitable for a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – SITUATIONAL SIDELINE/CHEER CATEGORY

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No stunt/pyramid inversions are allowed.
- No twisting dismounts are allowed.
- Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and/or liberty hitches.
- No running tumbling is allowed.
- Standing tumbling skills are limited to single skills.


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2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS


GAME DAY
SITUATIONAL SIDELINE / CHEER
EXECUTION

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Motion Strength/Placement	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharpness, strength of motion. Proper control & placement of motions. 	10.0		
<p>Voice & Pace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loud, natural voices with appropriate inflection & easy to follow. Moderate, controlled pace. 	10.0		
<p>Execution of Routine Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technique, form, stability, timing, precision, uniformity (i.e. building/tumbling/jumps/kicks/turns, etc...). 	10.0		
<p>GAME DAY - SITUATIONAL SIDELINE / CHEER EXECUTION</p>			
TOTAL SCORE		30.0	<p>Judge: _____</p> 

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2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS


GAME DAY
SITUATIONAL SIDELINE / CHEER
CROWD LEADING / CHOREOGRAPHY

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Game Day Material	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper & practical use of material relevant to game day environment. 	10.0		
<p>Crowd Communication Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurate situation response, clear set-up, use of crowd encouragement and ability to cue crowd. 	10.0		
<p>Crowd Leading Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective use of props (signs, megaphones, poms and/or flags) and encouragement to lead the crowd. 	10.0		
<p>Overall Impression of Routine Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements incorporated to enhance the squad's ability to properly lead the crowd (i.e. building/tumbling/jumps/kicks/turns, etc...). 	10.0		
<p>Formations/Transitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crowd coverage. Creative, visual & effective formations & ways to move from one formation to another. 	10.0		
<p>GAME DAY - SITUATIONAL SIDELINE / CHEER CROWD LEADING / CHOREOGRAPHY</p>			
TOTAL SCORE		50.0	<p>Judge: _____</p> 

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2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS

GAME DAY
SITUATIONAL SIDELINE / CHEER
SHOWMANSHIP

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Crowd Appeal	Max Value	Score	Comments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy, showmanship, facial expression, eye contact & overall connection to the crowd. 	10.0		
<p>Overall Impression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judge's impression of entire performance encompassing all score sheet categories. This includes audience appropriateness. 	10.0		
<p>GAME DAY - SITUATIONAL SIDELINE / CHEER SHOWMANSHIP</p>			
TOTAL SCORE		20.0	<p>Judge: _____</p> 

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CROWDLEADER™ TEAMS

A Crowdleader™ Team may consist of a combination of separate groups (cheer, song/pom, pep flags, mascot, dance team, band), working together, or a single team that does both cheer and pom. At least 50% of the total number of participants on the team must be comprised of cheerleaders and the cheerleaders must follow the rules set forth in the Cheer Game Day Rules & Guidelines as it pertains to division requirements, routine elements, restrictions, etc. Band members are welcome to be in this division; however, the number of band participants does not count in the total number of participants in the Crowdleader™ Team routine.

Teams will be required to quantify the number of different programs that make up their routine (i.e., 25 cheer, 10 song/pom, 4 pep flag, 1 mascot).

You will perform in this order: 1) a **Band Chant**, followed by 2) **Situational Sideline** response with a game-action cheer/sideline cheer, followed by 3) a crowd-oriented **Cheer** and ending with 4) a **Fight Song Routine**. These elements are directly from the Cheer Game Day Divisions (see 2023-24 Cheer Game Day Rules & Guidelines for specific definitions, restrictions, etc.).

Scoring for the 4 elements above will be conducted on the Crowdleader™ Team scoresheets which are derived from the Game Day scoresheets for **1) Band Chant, 2/3) Situational Sideline/Cheer and 4) Fight Song** with a total of 100 points possible. These score sheets may be found by visiting usa.varsity.com under Competitions / Divisions, Rules & Scoring

All Crowdleader™ Team routines are required to be comprised of at least 50% cheerleaders. Schools are encouraged to include other sideline spirit groups (i.e., dance team, song/pom, mascot, pep/short flag, etc.); however, the routine(s) must be comprised of at least 50% cheerleaders and will be judged as one unified routine. Other performance-based and/or spirit groups may not enter the division without their cheerleaders.

ROUTINE PROCEDURE

The Crowdleader™ Team routine weaves together the three separate stand-alone categories offered as part of USA Game Day Competition divisions. A Crowdleader™ Team does not have to compete in one or more of the USA Game Day categories, but all elements from those categories make up the overall Crowdleader™ Team routine. The elements are performed in the same order for each routine in the Crowdleader™ Team category. Props may be set-up prior to a Crowdleader™ Team taking the floor. You will be limited to 30 seconds to set-up your props and props must be removed immediately at the conclusion of your routine.

1. The routine starts with a Band Chant (see description/requirements below). A team may begin on or off the performance floor for the start of their music. Once the team name is called and the music begins, timing of the overall routine starts. The Band Chant will be performed on carpet bond foam mats for this division.
2. At the conclusion of the Band Chant portion of the routine, a team will be presented a randomly selected game situation (from one of the 10 listed at <https://www.varsity.com/usa/school/competitions/rulesandscoring/>). Once the situation is presented, the team will continue their Crowdleader™ Team routine with a Situational Sideline (see description/requirements below), followed by a second element of a crowd-oriented Cheer. You should select and perform an appropriate game-action/sideline cheer for the situation read. You may huddle or

use another method of communication to make your decision in how to respond to the situation; however, the overall Crowdleader™ Team routine timing continues. No music may be used during the Situational Sideline and/or crowd-oriented Cheer portion of the performance, with the exception of live drummer(s), other band members and/or drum track which is allowed during these sections.

3. Following and/or during the crowd-oriented Cheer portion begin the transition to your Fight Song.
4. After your transition, your music will begin for your Fight Song portion of the Crowdleader™ Team routine. Teams are encouraged to use their school's traditional fight song. If the school does not have a fight song, a fight song from another school may be used. In either case, only fight song music may be used.
5. Limited stunts and/or tumbling are allowed in the Situational Sideline/Cheer and/or Fight Song (see each element's description/limitations below) but they should enhance, not distract from, your crowd involvement. Remember that this is a crowd LEADER competition, and we are looking for performances and transitions that would be effective at a game. Practicality will be considered in this division.
6. Game day appropriate props are permitted and encouraged. (i.e., signs, megaphones, flags, banners). See score sheets for where use of these items is rewarded.
7. Overall Crowdleader™ Team division timing begins as soon as the Band Chant music starts and will end at the conclusion of the Fight Song. Organized entrances prior to the Band Chant are not permitted.
8. Auxiliary groups (i.e., drummers, band members, etc.) may perform with the spirit squad. These "auxiliary groups" must remain on the gym floor and are not permitted on the carpet bonded performance mat.
9. If other sideline spirit groups are part of a cheer game day routine, that group must abide by any specific Game Day rules related to them (i.e., song/pom members must follow the specific song/pom Game Day rules/specialty skill restrictions during the routine).
10. Tossing, throwing or other projecting of any type of object outside the competition floor and/or into the crowd is not allowed.
11. No use of water, glitter or other substances that would be harmful to the floor and/or to another competitor.

CHEER SAFETY RULES

Tumbling and/or stunting of any kind is prohibited during the Band Chant section of the routine, including during entrance/exit. Turns, leaps, kicks and/or jumps are permitted during the Band Chant section. For the Situational Sideline/Crowd Leading Cheer and Fight Song sections of the routine, the following restrictions apply:

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No stunt/pyramid inversions are allowed.
- No twisting dismounts are allowed.
- Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and/or liberty hitches.
- No running tumbling is allowed.

Standing tumbling skills are limited to single skills.

There are additional restrictions to choreographing skills in the Fight Song section – see below.

As with all categories, cheerleaders in the Crowdleader™ Teams division must follow rules in the 2023-24 NFHS Spirit Rules Book in addition to restrictions listed for each element as part of the 2023-24 Cheer Game Day Rules & Guidelines and the 2023-24 High School Spirit Competitions General Information. This includes restrictions on technical skills, choreography, etc.

Song/pom, dance or pep flag team members that are part of the Crowdleader™ Teams division with their cheerleaders must follow the 2023-24 USA Song/Pom/Pep Flag Safety Rules in addition to restrictions listed for each element of Band Chant and Fight Song as part of the 2023-24 Song/Pom Game Day Rules & Guidelines and the 2023-24 High School Spirit Competitions General Information.

Mascots that are part of the Crowdleader™ Team division with their cheerleaders are not permitted to be involved in stunts/pyramids and must follow the 2023-24 Cheer Game Day Rules & Guidelines and the 2023-24 High School Spirit Competitions General Information.

CROWLEADER™ TEAM ROUTINE ELEMENTS DESCRIPTION/REQUIREMENTS (performed in this order – 1) Band Chant, 2) Situational Sideline/Cheer & 3) Fight Song])

BAND CHANT SECTION

- A team may begin on or off the performance floor for the start of their music. Once the team name is called and the music begins, timing of the overall routine starts.
- The Band Chant must be one traditionally played by a sideline/jazz band. Crowd interaction and involvement, including yell-backs, spell-outs, school colors are encouraged.
- Camp material may easily be adapted to fit this category. For example, any band chant learned at a 2023 Varsity Brands camp could be used for this section of the routine. Examples might include “Rock ‘N Roll Part II, “Land of A Thousand Dances,” etc.
- Sideline/traditional school uniforms are required.
- The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is permitted and encouraged.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the scoresheet:
 - Crowd leading ability, including crowd encouragement, ease of crowd to participate, etc.
 - Material appropriate for a sideline situation during a time-out, quarter break, between downs, etc.
 - Creativity and musicality, variety and the execution of transitions and formations.
 - Placement, synchronization and strength of motions/movement.
 - Visual effect and spacing.
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 - Thematic routines and/or specialized costuming is not encouraged.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – BAND CHANT SECTION

Tumbling and/or stunting of any kind is prohibited, including during entrances and exits.
Turns, leaps, kicks and/or jumps are permitted.

SITUATIONAL SIDELINE/CHEER SECTION

- Each team will respond to a game situation (presented by the announcer), followed by a second element of an additional crowd-oriented cheer/chant/traditional yell/drum cadence, etc.
- No music may be used during this section of the routine. Live drummer, other band members and/or drum track is allowed. All specialty skills (i.e., jumps, stunts and/or tumbling) must be performed within a safe distance of all drummers and/or band members. Drummers and/or any other band members cannot be involved in any type of specialty skill and must be positioned off the cheerleading mat.
- Each team's crowd-oriented cheer presentation (the second element of the overall routine) must include at least one component required from the following: cheers, chants, traditional yells, and/or drum cadences. This is a separate crowd-oriented cheer that is not directly related to the situational cheer, but rather is an add-on following the situational cheer.
- Teams should utilize all areas of their squad's crowd leading strengths. The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is required.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the score sheet:
 - Crowd communication, including crowd effective material, spacing and formations, voice and pace, crowd leading skills and use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners.
 - Placement, synchronization and strength of motions.
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 - Emphasis on crowd involvement and practicality. All material should be suitable for a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – SITUATIONAL SIDELINE/CHEER SECTION

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No stunt/pyramid inversions are allowed.
- No twisting dismounts are allowed.
- Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and/or liberty hitches.
- No running tumbling is allowed.
- Standing tumbling skills are limited to single skills.

FIGHT SONG SECTION

- Teams are encouraged to use their traditional school fight song.
- Props (poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners) are permitted in this section and encouraged.
- Fight song incorporation is limited to three (3) consecutive 8-counts of stunts and/or tumbling. If the fight song repeats, the incorporation will only be allowed both times if it is repeated exactly the same both times. Counting will begin with the first initiation of a skill and continue until either the incorporation is complete or the end of the 3rd 8-count.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the scoresheet:
 - Crowd oriented material, fit to music, using effective spacing and formations, and incorporating visual effects.
 - Placement, synchronization, and strength of motions.
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 - Emphasis will be placed on practicality. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – FIGHT SONG CATEGORY

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No stunt/pyramid inversions are allowed.
- No twisting dismounts are allowed.
- Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches.
- A kick/jump will not be considered a skill and can be performed at any time during the routine.
- No running tumbling is allowed.
- Standing tumbling skills are limited to single skills.

TOTAL CROWDLEADER™ TEAM ROUTINE TIME LIMIT

4 minutes maximum (start of the Band Chant section through end of Fight Song section). Props may be set-up prior to a Crowdleader™ Team taking the floor. You will be limited to 30 seconds to set-up your props and props must be removed immediately at the conclusion of your routine. (See “Time” section penalty)

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2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS

Crowdleader™ Teams
Execution

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Band Chant	Max Value	Score	Comments:
Motion Strength/Placement • Sharpness, strength of motion. Proper control & placement of motions.	10		
Synchronization • Timing of movement throughout routine.	10		
Spacing • Spacing of squad members in relation to each other.	10		
Situational Sideline/Cheer	Max Value	Score	
Motion Strength/Placement • Sharpness, strength of motion. Proper control & placement of motions.	10		
Voice & Pace • Loud, natural voices with appropriate inflection & easy to follow. Moderate, controlled pace.	10		
Skill Execution • Technique, form, stability, timing, precision, uniformity (i.e. building/tumbling/jumps)	10		
Fight Song	Max Value	Score	
Motion Strength/Placement • Sharpness, strength of motion. Proper control & placement of motions.	10		
Synchronization • Timing of movement throughout routine.	10		
Spacing • Spacing of squad members in relation to each other.	10		
Skill Execution • Technique, form, stability, timing, precision, uniformity (i.e. building/tumbling/jumps)	10		
TOTAL SCORE	100		

EXECUTION

Judge: _____

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2023-2024 - Version 5.15.23

2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS

Crowdleader™ Teams
Routine Structure/Crowd Leading/Choreography

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Band Chant	Max Value	Score	Comments:
Game Day Material • Proper & practical use of material relevant to game day environment.	10		
Crowd Communication Skills • Use of crowd encouragement and ability to cue crowd.	10		
Visuals/Variety • Use of variety of movements to complement the music, visual effects and creative movement within groups and levels.	10		
Crowd Leading Tools • Effective use of props (signs, megaphones, pomms and/or flags) and encouragement to lead the crowd.	10		
Formations/Transitions • Crowd coverage. Creative, visual & effective formations & ways to move from one formation to another.	10		
Situational Sideline/Cheer	Max Value	Score	
Game Day Material • Proper & practical use of material relevant to game day environment.	10		
Crowd Communication Skills • Accurate situation response, clear set-up, use of crowd encouragement ability to cue crowd.	10		
Crowd Leading Tools • Effective use of props (signs, megaphones, pomms and/or flags) and encouragement to lead the crowd.	10		
Incorporation of Skills • Skills incorporated to enhance the squad's ability to properly lead the crowd.	10		
Formations/Transitions • Crowd coverage. Creative, visual & effective formations & ways to move from one formation to another.	10		
Fight Song	Max Value	Score	
Game Day Material • Proper & practical use of material and props, if applicable, relevant to game day environment.	10		
Incorporation of Skills • Skills incorporated to enhance the squad's ability to properly lead the crowd.	10		
Visuals/Variety • Use of variety of movements to complement the music, visual effects and creative movement within groups.	10		
Formations/Transitions • Crowd coverage. Creative, visual & effective formations & ways to move from one formation to another.	10		
TOTAL SCORE	140		

ROUTINE STRUCTURE/CROWD LEADING/CHOREOGRAPHY

Judge: _____

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2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS

Crowdleader™ Teams
Showmanship

Team Name: _____ **Division:** _____ **# On Team** _____

Band Chant	Max Value	Score	Comments:	
Crowd Appeal • Voice, energy, showmanship, facial expression, eye contact & overall connection to the crowd.	10			
Overall Impression • Judge's impression of entire performance encompassing all score sheet categories. This includes audience appropriateness.	10			
Situational Sideline/Cheer	Max Value	Score		
Crowd Appeal • Energy, showmanship, facial expression, eye contact & overall connection to the crowd.	10			
Overall Impression • Judge's impression of entire performance encompassing all score sheet categories. This includes audience appropriateness.	10			
Fight Song	Max Value	Score		
Crowd Appeal • Voice, energy, showmanship, facial expression, eye contact & overall connection to the crowd.	10			
Overall Impression • Judge's impression of entire performance encompassing all score sheet categories. This includes audience appropriateness.	10			
TOTAL SCORE	60			

SHOWMANSHIP

Judge: _____

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SONG/POM GAME DAY RULES & GUIDELINES

GENERAL RULES

Please see specific skill restrictions below for each category. These restrictions must be followed whether a song/pom competitor is in a Song/Pom Game Day category or a combined routine under one of the Cheer Game Day categories. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult advisor/director/coach.

A. Categories/Divisions

There is an all-in-one category. Qualification to attend Spirit Nationals is required to compete in Game Day. All-In-One Performance (performed in this order -- Fight Song/Spirit Raising/Performance Routine)

Division Offered:

- High School – 5-23 Members

B. School/Organization Representation

All members of the performing squad must be current members of the official school song/pom team. These must be individuals who performed for games during the appropriate season. (Exception: this will not preclude participation from sister schools for same-gender schools as long as they are official members of the squad.) All Song/Pom Game Day routines are required to be comprised entirely of members of the school's song/pom team. Other performance-based and/or spirit groups may not enter the song/pom only divisions.

The team and each participating member/coach should constantly display good sportsmanship throughout the entire performance regarding respect for themselves, other teams and the viewing audience. Teams should refrain from any taunting, bragging, or suggestive expressions or gestures as well as discrimination of any nature. We recommend that the team and each of its members display an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school in regard to grooming, traditional and appropriate attire, make-up, uniformity, etc.

Uniforms – Refer to same section above.

Uniform Distractions – Refer to same section above.

Make-Up – Refer to same section above.

Hair – Refer to same section above.

Shoes

All participants must wear soft-soled shoes on both feet while competing. Shoes must have a solid sole and cover the toe and heel. This is a safety rule and if a violation occurs, a 3-point deduction will be incurred.

C. Appropriateness of Choreography, Music, Words and Outfitting – Refer to same section above.

D. Competition Area – Unique to Game Day

- Participants may enter from outside the competition area for their performance.
- Tossing, throwing or other projecting of any type of object outside the competition floor and/or into the crowd is not allowed.
- Teams may use poms, but they are not required in the Performance Routine category. Poms are required for all female team members for the Fight Song and Spirit Raising categories.
- No other props or signs are allowed

E. Music – Refer to same section above.

Music Rules and Regulations – Refer to same section above.

Challenge Process – Refer to same section above.

Virtual Competition Music Rules – Refer to same section above.

F. Time Limitations/Entrance/Exit – Unique to Game Day

- All In One division - Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 3 minutes.
- Teams may not set up poms in advance of any category.
- See specific category for details on the start and stop of each type of routine.
- All team breaks, rituals and traditions need to take place prior to the team being called to the performance floor
- Teams should take the floor immediately with spirit and enthusiasm, but without excessive gestures. Example: chest bumps, hugs, hand-shakes, etc.
- All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation may receive a "sportsmanship" penalty.
- There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

G. Video Media Policy – Refer to same section above.

H. Logo Usage – Refer to same section above.

GAME DAY “ALL-IN-ONE” PERFORMANCE

ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

- This category combines all 3 divisions described below into one performance.
- Teams will perform the following routines in the below order to fulfill the “All-In-One” category:
 - Fight Song
 - Spirit Raising
 - Performance Routine
- Time limitations: 1:00 minute for each routine. Timing will begin with the first organized movement, voice or note of music, whichever comes first. Timing will end with the last beat of music or organized movement. Timing will be recorded for each routine.
- A team may begin on or off the performance floor for the start of the **Fight Song**. They must remain on the performance floor for the start of **Spirit Raising** and **Performance Routine**.
- Each routine will have a beginning and an end. Teams are encouraged to show spirit to the crowd between each routine.
- The use of poms is required for all female members during the Fight Song and Spirit Raising. For the Performance Routine, the use of poms is permitted, but not required. The use of signs, flags, banners or other spirit related props are permitted but not required.
- If an accessory (i.e. hair bows) or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered “costuming.” Costuming is not allowed.
- For each routine, see category description below for routine/judging requirements and specialty skill restrictions

For specific Song/Pom Game Day questions, please email USADanceRules@varsity.com.

FIGHT SONG SECTION

ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- Teams are encouraged to use their traditional school fight song. Should your school fight song exceed 1 minute, and no reasonable way to edit the routine is possible, please contact the USA office for approval.
- A team may begin on or off the performance floor for the start of their music. Once the team name is called and the music begins, timing of the overall routine starts.
- Timing will end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
- The use of poms is required for all female members.
- The use of signs, flags, banners or other spirit related props are permitted but not required.
- Choreography should represent a traditional Fight Song that your team performs at games or community events.
- Costuming is not permitted.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the scoresheet:
 - Game Day oriented material
 - Crowd communication skills
 - Incorporation of game day/sideline appropriate skills
 - Formations/transitions
 - Motion strength and placement
 - Spacing
 - Execution of skills
 - Crowd appeal and overall impression

Emphasis should be placed on practicality and crowd involvement. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – FIGHT SONG CATEGORY

- Teams will follow the same Safety Rules as all other USA Song/Pom Song/Jazz Divisions.

SPIRIT RAISING SECTION

ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- A team must start on the performance floor for the start of their music.
- Timing will end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
- The use of poms is required for all female members. The use of signs, flags, banners or other spirit related props are permitted but not required.
- The performance should have an emphasis on crowd appeal, encourage crowd interaction and involvement (i.e., yell backs, spell outs, school colors, etc.), and display excitement and genuine school spirit.
- The performance should consist of one or more of the following types of material:
 - Band Chant
 - Drum Cadence
 - Sideline Routine
 - Stand Routine
- Camp material may easily be adapted to fit this category. For example, any band chant learned at a 2023 Varsity Brands camp could be used for this routine. Examples might include “Party in the USA”, “Rock ‘N Roll Part II”, “Land of A Thousand Dances,” etc.
- If an accessory (i.e. hair bows) or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered “costuming.” Costuming is not permitted.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the scoresheet:
 - Game Day oriented material
 - Crowd communication skills
 - Incorporation of game day/sideline appropriate skills
 - Formations/transitions
 - Motion strength and placement
 - Spacing
 - Execution of skills
 - Crowd appeal and overall impression

These routines are intended for quick, spur-of-the-moment game day situations. There may or may not be a repeated sequence of choreography. Emphasis should be placed on crowd interaction/involvement and entertaining the crowd. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally/assembly.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – SPIRIT RAISING CATEGORY

- Teams will follow the same Safety Rules as all other USA Song/Pom Song/Jazz Divisions.

PERFORMANCE ROUTINE SECTION

ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute.
- A team must start on the performance floor for the start of their music.
- Timing will end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
- The use of poms is permitted, but not required. The use of signs, flags, banners or other spirit related props are permitted but not required.
- If an accessory (i.e. hair bows) or an article of clothing adds to the overall effect and/or theme of the routine, it will be considered “costuming.” Costuming is not allowed.
- The Performance Routine must be in the style of pom, jazz, hip hop, kick or combination of any of these styles.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria, as well as elements noted on the scoresheet:
 - Game Day oriented material
 - Incorporation of game day/sideline appropriate skills
 - Formations/transitions
 - Motion strength and placement
 - Spacing
 - Execution of skills
 - Crowd appeal and overall impression

Emphasis should be placed on crowd entertainment.

SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS – PERFORMANCE ROUTINE CATEGORY

- Teams will follow the same Safety Rules as all other USA Song/Pom Song/Jazz Divisions.



2023-2024 SPIRIT COMPETITIONS

Song/Pom Game Day Scoresheet
All-In-One Performance

Team Name: _____ Division: _____ # On Team: _____

Fight Song	Max Value	Score	Comments:
Game Day Material	5		
Visuals/Formations/Transitions	5		
Motion/Skill Execution	5		
Synchronization/Spacing	5		
Spirit Raising (Band Chant)			
Game Day Material	5		
Visuals/Formations/Transitions	5		
Motion/Skill Execution	5		
Synchronization/Spacing	5		
Performance Routine			
Game Day Material	5		
Visuals/Formations/Transitions	5		
Motion/Skill Execution	5		
Synchronization/Spacing	5		
Showmanship			
Crowd Appeal	20		
Overall Impression	20		
TOTAL SCORE	100		

ALL-IN-ONE PERFORMANCE

Judge: _____



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SONG/POM GAME DAY ALL-IN-ONE PERFORMANCE

All 3 Game Day routines will be performed for this division and in the following order:
Fight Song, Spirit Raising and Performance Routine. Each routine will be judged on the below criteria.

CHOREOGRAPHY (30 points possible for all 3 routines)

GAME DAY MATERIAL (15 points possible per routine)

- Routine skills and movement are relevant to the game day environment.
- Encourages crowd interaction and involvement (this is not required for the performance routine).

VISUALS/FORMATIONS/TRANSITIONS (15 points possible per routine)

- Variety of movement and visual effects that complement the music.
- Visual and effective formations and transitions.

EXECUTION (30 points possible for all 3 routines)

MOTION/SKILL EXECUTION (15 points possible per routine)

- Proper control, placement and sharpness of motions.
- Proper technique and uniformity of skills.

SYNCHRONIZATION/SPACING (15 points possible per routine)

- Timing of movement throughout the routine.
- Spacing of team members in relation to each other.

SHOWMANSHIP (40 points possible for all 3 routines)

CROWD APPEAL (20 points possible)

Energy, showmanship, facial expression, eye contact and overall connection to the crowd.

OVERALL IMPRESSION (20 points possible)

Judge's Impression of the entire performance encompassing all scoresheet categories. This may include elements such as: Appearance and Appropriateness.

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE (100 points for all 3 routines)

POINT SCALES

5 Point Scale:

Superior	5
Above Average	4
Average	2 - 3
Below Average	0 - 1

20 Point Scale:

Superior	18-20
Above Average	15-17
Average	12-14
Below Average	0 - 11

