

2025-2026

AMERICHEER

FAMILY OF BRANDS

SCHOOL EVENT RULES, REGULATIONS, PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES,
SKILL RESTRICTIONS & POINT DEDUCTION VIOLATIONS

Applicable to:

Traditional Team Divisions

All Music Team Divisions

Game Day Hot Shots Team Divisions

Game Day Hot Shots Individual Divisions

Challenge Individual Divisions



AmeriCheer Family of Brands

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GENERAL EVENT INFORMATION

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands reserves the right to be the arbitrator and interpreter of all information covered in this document.

EXPECTATIONS

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands suggest all teams display an overall behavior conducive to serving as a public representative/ambassador to their school and with the appropriate attire suitable for everyone including family viewing (on or off the performance floor). Any observed deviation/violation from a team, coach and/or individual team member may result in a penalty and a point deduction may be assessed to the **team** in violation of inappropriate apparel and/or unsportsmanlike conduct.

SAFETY RULES AND GUIDELINES

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands will follow the **2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules Book** for all School divisions to include Traditional, All Music, Game Day Hot Shots, and Challenge routines. To obtain a copy of this book visit www.NFHS.org. Intermediate Team routines will have **additional specific skill limitations** listed later in this document **in addition** to the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules.

SCHOOL REPRESENTATION

In order to contribute to the image of today's cheerleading as a wholesome All-American activity, below are some general suggestions/guidelines to better prepare a team(s) for an excellent presentation when competing on/off the floor.

- **APPEARANCE**

All participants should present a well-rounded athletic, neat, clean, and unified team look that represents their school with pride and is appropriate for the role of a school ambassador and/or representative of their community.

- **HAIR**

For the safety of all participants, hair should be secured off/out of the face that considers all diversities and minimizes risk.

- **BOWS**

Bows are permitted but tails should not hang in/over participants' eyes to minimize risk.

- **UNIFORMS**

Uniform styles should be appropriate for all team members and reflect a tasteful and appropriate appearance that is age appropriate.

- **UNIFORM COVERAGE**

All uniforms must cover the midriff when standing at attention per the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules Book.

- **GLITTER**

The use of glitter is not permitted to be worn for the safety of all participants.

- **JEWELRY** Participants are **not** permitted to wear jewelry of **any** kind. This includes, but is not limited to earrings, belly rings, nose rings, watches, finger rings, bracelets, ankle bracelets, etc. This is a NFHS Safety Rule, and a violation/point deduction **will** be assessed **per occurrence**.

- **TATTOOS**

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands highly recommends that all participants cover any visible tattoos to enhance a unified team look. Exception: Stick-on face tattoos are permitted on participants' cheeks; however, they must be well secured during the performance.

- **MAKE-UP**

Participant's should look "Game Day Ready" and should reflect an appropriate unified team look. All make-up should be age appropriate and display a wholesome look that is not excessive and/or overdone but yet very visible from the performance floor. In order to better enhance a team's presentation/facials from a distance, the use of stage/theatre make-up is permitted as long as it is done so appropriately.

- **ROUTINE CHOREOGRAPHY**

All elements of choreography including music, cheer and dance moves, words (spoken/implied), sounds, signs, cheer/chant contents, etc., should be appropriate and suitable for family viewing. Additionally, school administration should have approval of all presented choreography.

Please call the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Corporate office for clarity or questions.

DEFINITION OF SCHOOL TEAMS

To be considered a school organization, one or all of the following must apply:

- * The school is governed by associated school's administration.
- * The team's main purpose is to cheer for associated school competitive athletic teams (i.e. football, basketball, soccer, etc.).
- * Team is created for competition purposes only and comprises only of members of associated school/district. All members must be recognized by the associated school's administration as a member of the participating school's student body.

ELIGIBILITY OF PARTICIPANTS

All teams must be comprised of participants that have not graduated. Divisions are determined by grade level at the time of the competitive event they are attending, regardless of the participant's current age.

To be fair to all, the AmeriCheer Family of Brands will strictly enforce its grade requirements for each division. The AmeriCheer Family of Brands reserves the right to access a penalty/disqualify/reclaim any/all awards for any team found in violation of the eligibility policy, whether before/during/after a competitive event.

COMPETITION FLOOR AREA/OUT-OF-BOUNDS

Each AmeriCheer Family of Brands event will provide a performance floor measuring 42' by 54'. Please see event information on our website for actual floor specific details relating to the performance floor. Also, this will be denoted in the event confirmation packet. To be considered an out-of-bounds violation, a participant must make contact with **both** feet off the boundary line. The boundary line is defined as the 42' by 54' competition mat, NOT the white tape/line/safety border. Stepping on or just past the white line/border is **not** considered out-of-bounds.

ROUTINE COMPOSITION

All routines should be comprised of all elements/categories indicated on each specific score sheet. See all division score sheets for reference on our website at www.americheerfamilyofbrands.com

PROPS

The use of props (see NFHS prop definition in NFHS Safety Rules book) include poms/signs/megs/flags/rally towels. Props may not be forcibly/aggressively tossed off the performance floor when discarding such and must not present a danger to any participants in the audience including judges. Additionally, no objects may be thrown into the audience before/during/after a performance.

WEARING MASKS

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands does not condone the use of participants wearing health masks during a performance; however, if worn, the masks must be secured at all times to the participants' face and may **not** be removed during the performance.

RUNNING THE MUSIC

One representative may run the music, press play and **must** remain at the sound table/station throughout the entire performance. Please bring/supply three high quality copies of the music. Always have several back-ups. Review the content of the music for any inappropriate language/sounds (spoken/implied) and for quality. Also, music time should be recorded **3 to 4** (three to four) seconds **under** the maximum time allotted due to variations in music system speeds.

MUSIC COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands will adhere to all copyright laws and guidelines related to the music industry. By signing the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Code of Ethics, the organization will be acknowledging that the organization is following all copyright laws and guidelines related to the music industry. By acknowledging the compliance, an organization may or may not be asked to provide documented proof. If such documented proof cannot be supplied upon request, the organization may receive a warning and/or a penalty deduction for non-compliance. *Should you have questions or need more information about this policy, please call the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Corporate office.*

MUSIC COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES

All questions regarding the validity of whether another performing team's music is compliant, must be directed to a competition official **immediately** following the team in question's performance. The AmeriCheer Family of Brands official will in turn provide an official Grievance form to be completed and submitted while **at** the competition. The team in question will have **24 to 48** (twenty-four to forty-eight) hours to provide proof of compliance. If the team in question's music is/was not compliant, the team will forfeit all awards and/or placements for that event. The AmeriCheer Family of Brands will not accept any inquiries about the validity of a competing team's music **after** an event.

INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE – EQUIPMENT

If a routine is interrupted due to failure of competition equipment, the team will be permitted to perform again, going later in the division, if at all possible. If the interruption is due to failure of the team's equipment or supplies (i.e. scratched MP3/MP4, CD, etc.) the team will have two options: The team may perform again, using their own player or the back-up copy of their music; however, the routine scoring will begin at the point where the interruption occurred, or the team may use the original performance.

INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE – INJURY/ILLNESS

If a participant is visibly injured/ill and/or demonstrates that he/she cannot continue executing the routine and/or it appears the injured person becomes a safety hazard to oneself or his/her teammates, the routine must/will be stopped. The only person(s) permitted to stop the routine are competition officials, the coach/advisor of the performing team and an injured/ill participant. The team will be permitted to perform later in the division if at all possible. Routine scoring will begin **at the point** where the injury/illness occurred. Under no circumstances will the injured/ill participant be permitted to compete at a later time without the **official medical authorization**. The AmeriCheer Family of Brands reserves the right to stop any performance due to injury/illness.

COACHES BOX/AREA

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands may provide a coach's box/area for all/any coaches to stand during their team's performance. In the event one is not provided, coaches may utilize a specific designated area. This will be noted in the confirmation materials and/or at the event. Under no circumstances may a coach(s) stand in front of the judges and/or obstruct the judges' view. The AmeriCheer Family of Brands reserves the right to assess a violation/point deduction if a team's coach(s) is found in violation of this rule. Additionally, no coach/spectator may enter the competition floor at the conclusion of a team's performance. Doing so may result in a violation/point deduction.

PERFORMANCE ORDER CHANGES AT THE EVENT

In fairness to all participants and in the spirit of sportsmanship, the AmeriCheer Family of Brands asks that all attending teams remain cognizant of the number of performance order changes that are requested from each organization at the event. We realize sometimes things do happen that require such and we will do our best to accommodate everyone; however, please try to refrain from requesting an excessive number of changes because these changes also affect the other attending teams and/or their performance times.

REPORTING TO WARM-UP ON-TIME/LATE

In order to respect every team's warm-up time, the AmeriCheer Family of Brands highly recommends all participating teams report to the designated warm-up area for their official check-in a few minutes **early** of their official warm-up time. The official warm-up time will be indicated on the event performance order, and it is highly recommended that every team report a minimum of **3 to 5** (three to five) minutes **before** their official warm-up time. The AmeriCheer Family of Brands reserves the right to assess a penalty/point deduction for excessive lateness to the scheduled warm-up report time.

SPOTTER POLICIES/PROCEDURES

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands will **not** provide spotters at **any** competitive events; however, competing programs **may** provide their own spotters provided the following guidelines are met:

- Program spotters must be at least **18** (eighteen) years of age and be very familiar with all aspects of the routine.
- Program spotters must present themselves in a professional manner to include but not limited to appropriateness of dress, acting in a manner that does not distract from the performance and distinguishing themselves as a **separate** group from the performers i.e., by not wearing any apparel that is similar to the performer's uniforms.
- Program spotters must be readily available to **only** spot building sections.
- Program spotters may **not** verbally/manually coach performing competitors in any way.
- Program spotters shall stay at the **back** of the performance floor/mat when not spotting the building skills of their program's routines and not block the pathways of any performing competitors.
- Any violation may result in a violation/point deduction per occurrence.

PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

All questions relating to any procedures of the competition are to be handled by **one** coach and are to be directed at the competition director/official **only**. All questions must be made **prior** to the team competing.

INQUIRY PROCEDURES

In the event an organization may have an inquiry or grievance regarding something at the event, the **head coach** must obtain and complete an AmeriCheer Family of Brands Inquiry/Grievance form from an AmeriCheer Family of Brands official **at** the event. No forms will be accepted **after** an event. The AmeriCheer Family of Brands will have **48 to 72** (forty-eight to seventy-two) hours to address any inquiry/grievance. Note: AmeriCheer Family of Brands will not discuss another team's/organization's business with the organization of the team filing the inquiry/grievance.

SKILL LEGALITY VERIFICATION PROCEDURES

It is very important to be knowledgeable and current on all safety rules, guidelines, skill legalities, etc. Therefore, should a coach be in question regarding the legality of any skills, please follow the following steps to ensure a timely and accurate response:

- The skill(s) **must** be recorded at practice. We will no longer accept videos from a prior performance and/or competition.
- The skill(s) in question **must** be videoed from **3** (three) angles to be **front, side and back**. We will **not** accept videos from less than **3** (three) angles.
- All skills submitted may not exceed **10** (ten) seconds each.
- The submission will **only** be accepted via email to info@americheer.com and **must** include **team name, head coach name, coach email, coach cell, division entered, and name and date** of attending event.
- The video(s) **must** be sent to a **NON-EXPIRING LINK**. Please make sure the video is "Unlisted" and not set to "Private".
- In the subject line, include the following to read **LEGALITY VERIFICATION for ABC HIGH SCHOOL**.
- Remember that all videos **must** be sent directly through email and **cannot** be sent or include a link to Instagram, Facebook, Tic-Tok, etc. Also, all inquiries **must** be received in the AmeriCheer Family of Brands office no less than **3** (three) weeks prior to the event. Videos received within **3** (three) weeks will **not** be reviewed.
- An official will contact you at the contact information you provided and will become the property of the AmeriCheer Family of Brands.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The AmeriCheer Family of Brands will **not** provide any legalities/interpretations without the above procedures being followed. This includes no phone, email, social media verifications.

TRADITIONAL – TEAM ROUTINES

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL GUIDELINES

- All School Traditional Team routines will follow the following requirements and guidelines for all, Junior High/Middle School, Freshmen/Junior Varsity, Varsity, Intermediate Varsity divisions.
- All Non-Building divisions do not permit any stunts, (group/partner/coed), pyramids and tosses. If a participant is ever lifted/elevated off the performance floor, it will be considered a building skill and therefore illegal. This includes assisted tumbling, nuggets (stepping on another participant's back while the base is down on all fours), etc.
- All Non-Tumbling divisions will not permit any tumbling **except** for into/from load-ins to any stunts and pyramids (if in applicable division). Tumbling is defined as any skill with feet over the head rotation.
- Each team will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed **2:30** in total length.
- Up to **1:45** of the routine may be performed to music. Music **may** be divided into more than one segment.
- All organized/choreographed entrances **or** exits that display any type of organized words/cheers/movements/jumps/tumbling/kicks and/or stunts are **not** permitted. Also, all team breaks, rituals, and traditions may only take place **prior** to entering the competition floor.
- Participants may only “spirit/rally”, and/or punch/wave when entering/exiting the floor but may not do so excessively.
- Participants should **quickly** enter the floor and immediately go to their routine opening spot/position as soon as the team is announced to the competition floor.
- Timing of the routine will begin with the first organized word, movement or note of music – whichever comes first.
- Participants must have at least 1(one) foot on the performance floor when the routine begins.
- All routines will be scored according to the criteria listed on the corresponding division score sheets and rubrics.
- Only 1 (one) mascot is permitted to participate in the routine and will **not** count as a team member.
- Mascots are **not** permitted to participate in any stunting/building or tumbling skills of any type.
- Mascots may use legal props. See NFHS definition of a prop for clarity.
- Mascots may **not** throw any items into the audience before/during/after a performance.
- Mascots must remain on the performance floor during a performance and may **not** leave/enter the floor during a performance nor may they **remove/add** any part of the costume before entering/exiting the floor.
- Mascots **must** stay in full costume during the time the mascot is in front of the competition audience.
- Permitted props for team participants are signs, poms, megas, flags, rally towels, etc. See NFHS definition of what is considered a prop.
- Team members may not excessively/aggressively toss/flip/pitch/discard any props with force. If done, a violation may be assessed.
- Coaches and/or spectators may not enter the competition floor/mat at the conclusion of their team's performance in order to congratulate any team members. Doing so may result in a

violation. They may quickly and carefully meet team members off the mat and at the back corner of the competition floor or at the back if they choose.

NOTE: All **JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL TRADITIONAL TEAM ROUTINE DIVISIONS** will have specific skill restrictions (see below) in addition to what is defined in the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. For questions, please call the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Corporate office.

TOSSES:

- Tosses to cradles are **not** permitted. See legal tosses for Middle School cheerleading teams in the NFHS Spirit Rules Book for clarity.

NOTE: All **INTERMEDIATE VARSITY TRADITIONAL TEAM ROUTINES DIVISIONS** will have specific skill restrictions (see later in this document) in addition to what is defined in the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. For questions, please call the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Corporate office.

ALL MUSIC – TEAM ROUTINES

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL GUIDELINES

- All School All Music routines will follow the following requirements and guidelines.
- All Non-Building divisions do not permit any stunts, (group/partner/coed), pyramids, and tosses. If a participant is ever lifted/elevated off the performance floor, it would be considered a building skill and therefore illegal. This includes assisted tumbling, nuggets (stepping on another participant's back while the base is down on all fours), etc.
- All Non-Tumbling divisions will not permit any tumbling **except** for into/from load-ins to any stunts and pyramids (if in applicable division). Tumbling is defined as any skill with feet over the head rotation.
- All cheerleading skills including tumbling, stunts, pyramids and tosses must follow the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Safety Rules and Guidelines in **addition to** specific skill limitations (see Intermediate Skill Limitations later in this document), if competing in an Intermediate All-Music division.
- Each team will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed **2:30** in total length.
- The entire routine **must** be performed with **all** music.
- A cheer/chant may be performed; however, if performed the music may **not** stop during the cheer/chant portion but rather the music **may** decrease in volume during this time.
- If the volume of the music is decreased during the cheer/chant section, the music **must** be clearly heard over the words, otherwise a penalty may be assessed.
- No voice-overs or words may be recorded to enhance the team's volume or to sound louder.
- All organized/choreographed entrances **or** exits that display any type of organized words/cheers/movements/jumps/tumbling/kicks and/or stunts are **not** permitted. Also, all team breaks, rituals, and traditions may only take place **prior** to entering the competition floor.
- Individual participants may only "spirit/rally", and/or punch/wave when entering/exiting the floor but may not do so excessively.
- Participants should **quickly** enter the floor and immediately go to their routine opening spot/position as soon as the team is announced to the competition floor.

- Timing of the routine will begin with the first organized word, movement or note of music – whichever comes first.
- Participants must have at least 1 (one) foot on the performance floor when the routine begins.
- All routines will be scored on the criteria listed on the corresponding division score sheet and rubric.
- Mascots are **not** permitted to participate in any All-Music division.
- Props are permitted in any All-Music division.
- Coaches and/or spectators may not enter the competition floor/mat at the conclusion of their team's performance in order to congratulate any team members. Doing so may result in a violation. They may quickly and carefully meet team members off the mat and at the back corner of the competition floor or at the back if they choose.

NOTE: All **INTERMEDIATE ALL-MUSIC TEAM ROUTINE DIVISIONS** will have specific skill restrictions (see below) in addition to what is defined in the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. For questions, please call the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Corporate office.

INTERMEDIATE TRADITIONAL AND INTERMEDIATE ALL MUSIC – ROUTINE SKILL RESTRICTIONS

STANDING TUMBLING:

- Single and series front and back handsprings are permitted.
- Jump handspring(s) combinations are permitted.
- Flips are not permitted.

RUNNING TUMBLING:

- Back flips performed in tuck position are permitted.
- Back Flips may only be performed from a cartwheel, round-off or round-off back handspring(s).
- No other skills are permitted prior to the cartwheel, round-off, round-off back handspring(s).
- Aerial cartwheels are permitted.
- No tumbling is permitted after a back flip or aerial cartwheel. There must be a definitive/clear/stop/pause in the moment prior to the next tumbling skill.
- Front flips are not permitted.

RELEASE STUNTS:

- Release moves must be initiated from prep level or below.
- Releases are permitted up to prep level.
- Release moves are permitted up to ¼ twist.

TWISTING STUNTS:

- Up to ½ twist is permitted to/from an extended position.
- Up to 1 twist is permitted to/from prep level and below.

INVERSION STUNTS:

- Inversions are permitted from ground level to non-inversion stunts.
Note: Back handspring entries are not permitted.
Note: Inverted stunts above ground level are not permitted.
- Released ground level inversions are only permitted up to prep level.
- Released ground level inversions are permitted up to ¼ twist.
Note: Downward inversions are permitted from a horizontal/cradle position below prep level.

PYRAMIDS:

- All pyramid skills must follow Intermediate Stunt Restrictions unless connected to at least 1 bracer at prep with only hand/arm connection from the initiation of the skill and must remain connected throughout the transition.
- Non-inverted braced release moves are only permitted up to ½ twist.
- All pyramid release moves from inverted to non-inverted must be inverted at the bottom of the dip and may not twist.
- Any extended single leg stunts may not be braced by any other extended single leg stunts.
- All braced flips are not permitted.

DISMOUNTS AND TOSSES:

- Only straight pop downs, basic straight cradles, and ¼ twisting dismounts are permitted from any single leg stunt.
- Up to 1 ¼ twists are permitted from 2 leg stunts.
- Elevator or basket tosses are not permitted.

GAME DAY HOT SHOTS – TEAM ROUTINES

APPLICABLE TO BUILDING & NON-BUILDING DIVISIONS

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL GUIDELINES

- All routines must follow the **2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Safety Rules and Guidelines** in addition to specific Game Day Hot Shots Team division skill limitations (see Game Day Hot Shots Team Skill Limitations later in this document).
- **Each Game Day Hot Shots Team Routine consists of the following 3 (three) categories AND are to be performed in this order:**

1. Band Cheer

2. Crowd Leading (Chant and Cheer)

3. School Fight Song

***Band Cheer – See criteria on Game Day Hot Shots Team score sheet.**

This category should focus on crowd appeal and practicality which are applicable to game situations/environment. Performances should focus on engaging the crowd and incorporate visual appeal such as prop incorporation, sharp, well-executed motions, ripples, levels, peel-offs, etc. all of which are pleasing to the eye and performed with precision, showmanship, and energy.

***Crowd Leading Chant & Cheer – See criteria on Game Day Hot Shots Team score sheet.**

This category should be crowd oriented, and all material should be applicable for leading a crowd in a game situation/environment. Words to the material should be simple, easy to follow, and encourage maximum crowd participation. All skills should be Game Day appropriate, synchronized, well executed, and crowd effective. Props should be incorporated to enhance the crowd-leading environment.

***Fight Song – See criteria on Game Day Hot Shots Team score sheet.**

Teams should use their official fight song if possible. Emphasis should be on execution, showmanship, energy, visual appeal, skill incorporation and crowd engagement, etc.

- **No Stunts/tumbling are permitted during transitions from one category to the other.** This should be a time to exhibit team energy and display the ability to engage the crowd **by spiriting/rallying with a lot of individual and team spirit.** Jumps and kicks **are** permitted during transitioning.
- All Non-Building divisions do **not** permit any stunts/building skills whatsoever. If a participant is ever lifted/elevated off the performance floor, it will be considered a building skill and therefore illegal.
- All organized/choreographed entrances **or** exits that display any type of organized words/cheers/movements/jumps/tumbling/kicks and/or stunts are **not** permitted. Also, all team breaks, rituals, and traditions may only take place **prior** to entering the competition floor.
- Team members may **only** “spirit/rally”, and/or punch/wave when entering/exiting the floor but may not do so excessively.
- Participants should **quickly** enter the floor and immediately go to their routine opening spot/position as soon as the team is announced to the competition floor.
- Each team will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed **3:00 in total** length.
- Timing of the routine will begin with the **first** organized word, movement or note of music – whichever comes first.
- Only 1 (one) mascot is permitted to participate in the routine and will **not** count as a team member.
- Mascots are **not** permitted to participate in any stunting/building or tumbling skills of any type.
- Mascots **may** use legal props. See NFHS definition of prop.
- Mascots may **not** throw any items into the audience before/during/after a performance.
- Mascots **must** remain on the performance floor during a performance and may **not** leave/enter the floor during a performance nor may they **remove/add** any part of the costume before entering/exiting the floor.
- Mascots **must** stay in full costume during the entire time the mascot is in front of the competition audience.
- Permitted props for team participants are signs, poms, megs, flags, rally towels, etc. See NFHS definition of what is considered a prop.
- Team members may **not** excessively/aggressively toss/flip/pitch/discard any props with force.
- Coaches and/or spectators may **not** enter the competition floor/mat at the conclusion of their team’s performance in order to congratulate any team members. Doing so may result in a

violation. They may quickly and carefully meet team members off the mat and at the back corner of the competition floor if they choose.

NOTE: ALL **GAME DAY HOT SHOTS TEAM DIVISIONS** will have specific skill restrictions (see below) in addition to what is defined in the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. For questions, please call the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Corporate office.

GAME DAY HOT SHOTS – TEAM SKILL RESTRICTIONS

- Basket and waist tosses are **not** permitted. Examples of permitted toss skills are quick toss stunts, toss coed stunts, and toss toe touches.
- Inversion stunts of any type are **not** permitted.
- Twisting released dismounts are **not** permitted.
- Single leg extended stunts are **limited** to liberties and liberty hitches only.
- Running tumbling of any type is **not** permitted.
- Standing tumbling is limited to a single standing tumbling skill with the highest skill level/most difficult skill level permitted being a back tuck. Exception: Other examples of standing tumbling skills permitted include, forward roll, cartwheel, front walkover, standing back handspring, standing aerial, and standing back tuck.
- A jump back handspring and a jump back tuck is the only two permitted skills connected to a single jump.

GAME DAY HOT SHOTS – INDIVIDUAL ROUTINES

*APPLICABLE TO **TUMBLING AND NON-TUMBLING** DIVISIONS*

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL GUIDELINES

All Game Day Hot Shots Individual routines must follow the **2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Safety Rules and Guidelines** in **addition to** specific Game Day Hot Shots Individual division skill limitations (see Game Day Hot Shots Individual Skill Limitations later in this document).

- **Each Game Day Hot Shots Individual routine consists of the following 4 (four) categories AND are to be performed in this order:**
 - 1. Spirited Entrance**
 - 2. Band Cheer**
 - 3. Crowd Leading (Chant/Cheer)**
 - 4. School Fight Song**

***Spirited Entrance** - See criteria on Game Day Team Hot Shots score sheet.

For Tumbling Division – Spirited Entrance should consist of a running tumbling pass that is clean, well-executed, and displays energy and enthusiasm. The pass may be executed from **side to side** or **back to front** or **angle to angle**. The pass may **not** change directions.

For Non-Tumbling Division – Spirited entrance should consist of a spirited and high energy entrance onto the floor with jumps, kicks and creativity highly encouraged. No tumbling permitted.

***Band Cheer** – See criteria on Game Day Team Hot Shots score sheet.

This category should focus on crowd appeal and practicality which are applicable to game situations/environment. Performances should focus on engaging the crowd and incorporate visual appeal, sharp, well-executed motions which are pleasing to the eye and executed with precision, showmanship, great voice projection, and energy. **Legal skills and legal props may be incorporated.**

***Crowd Leading Chant/Cheer** – See criteria on Game Day Team Hot Shots score sheet.

This category should be crowd oriented, and all material should be applicable for leading a crowd in a game situation/environment. Words to the material should be simple, easy to follow, and encourage the maximum crowd participation. **All skills should be legal and Game Day appropriate, synchronized, well executed, and crowd effective. Props are highly encouraged to be incorporated to enhance the crowd-leading ability.**

***Fight Song** – See criteria on Game Day Team Hot Shots score sheet.

Performers must use official fight song music. Emphasis should be on execution, showmanship, energy, visual appeal, crowd engagement, and overall presentation. **All skills (if incorporated) should be legal and Game Day appropriate, well executed, and crowd effective.**

- **NOTE: No Tumbling (both Tumbling and Non-Tumbling Divisions) is permitted during transitions from one category to the other.** This should be a time to exhibit energy and display the ability to engage the crowd **by spiriting/rallying with a lot of individual spirit.**
- All Non-Tumbling divisions do **not** permit any tumbling of any type, including rolls.
- Each Individual will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed **3:00 in total** length.
- Timing of the routine will begin with the first word or movement – whichever comes first.
- Mascots are not permitted in this division.
- Permitted props for participants are signs, poms, megaphones, flags, rally towels, etc. See NFHS definition of what is considered a prop.
- Performers may **not** excessively/aggressively toss/flip/pitch/discard any props with force.
- Coaches and/or spectators may **not** enter the competition floor/mat at the conclusion of the performance in order to congratulate performers. Doing so may result in a violation. They may quickly and carefully meet their performer off the mat and at the back corner of the competition floor if they choose.

NOTE: All **GAME DAY HOT SHOTS INDIVIDUAL DIVISIONS** will have specific skill restrictions (see below) in addition to what is defined in the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. For questions, please call the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Corporate office.

GAME DAY HOT SHOTS – INDIVIDUAL SKILL RESTRICTIONS

- Running tumbling of any type is **not** permitted **throughout** the routine. Exception: Spirited Entrance as described above in the Tumbling division only.
- Standing tumbling is limited to a single standing tumbling skill, in the Tumbling division with the highest skill level/most difficult skill level permitted being a back tuck throughout the routine. Exception: Other examples of standing tumbling skills permitted include, forward roll, cartwheel, front walkover, standing back handspring, standing aerial, and standing back tuck.
- A jump back handspring and a jump back tuck is the only two permitted skills connected to a single jump.
- All permitted Standing Tumbling skills may be repeated throughout the routine.

SCHOOL EVENT RULES, REGULATIONS, PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES VIOLATION – PENALTY POINT VALUES

The AmeriCheer Family of Brands reserves the right to assess warnings in place of point deductions for violations if the Penalty/Deductions judge feels such is warranted.

- **PERFORMER ELIGIBILITY VIOLATION** -5.0
- **OUT-OF-DIVISION VIOLATION**.....-5.0
- **INACCURATE PARTICIPANT NUMBERS VIOLATION**-5.0
- **SCHOOL REPRESENTATION VIOLATION** (See next line)
 - IMAGE/BEHAVIOR-5.0
 - UNIFORM MIDRIFF COVERAGE.....-2.0
 - INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC..... -2.0
 - JEWELRY.....-1.0
 - INAPPROPRIATE CHOREOGRAPHY VIOLATION.....-2.0
- **WARM-UP REPORT TIME VIOLATION**..... -1.0
- **PERFORMANCE ORDER VIOLATION**..... -1.0
- **FLOOR ENTRANCE/EXIT VIOLATION**.....-1.0
- **NFHS SAFETY RULE VIOLATION**..... -2.0
- **GENERAL SAFETY RULE VIOLATION**..... -2.0
- **SKILL RESTRICTION VIOLATION**..... -3.0
- **MASCOT GUIDELINES VIOLATION**..... -2.0
- **BOUNDARY VIOLATION**.....-2.0
- **SPOTTER VIOLATION**.....-2.0
- **PROP VIOLATION**.....-2.0
- **TOTAL ROUTINE TIME VIOLATION**.....1.0
 - per **every** second over.... after 3 second grace period
- **TOTAL MUSIC SEGMENT(S) TIME VIOLATION**..... -1.0
 - per **every** second over.... after 3 second grace period
- **GAME DAY ROUTINE FORMAT VIOLATION**..... -3.0
- **COACHES/SPECTATORS RUNNING ON COMPETITION FLOOR AFTER PERFORMANCE VIOLATION**... -2.0
- **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT VIOLATION**..... -5.0
- **OTHER/MISC. VIOLATION**..... -1.0 to-5.0

ROUTINE – PERFORMANCE DEDUCTIONS

ATHLETE FALL .15

DROPS TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE DURING TUMBLING AND/OR JUMP SKILLS

INCLUDES:

- Hands down during tumbling or jump skills.
- Knee or knees down during tumbling or jump skills.
- Tumbling transitions in/out of a building skill.

DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- An athlete that drops while walking during transition.
-

MAJOR ATHLETE FALL .25

MULTIPLE BODY PARTS DROP TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE DURING TUMBLING AND/OR JUMP SKILLS

INCLUDES:

- Multiple body parts in tumbling or jumps i.e. hands & knees, seat & hands, etc.

DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- An athlete that trips while walking during a transition.
-

BUILDING BOBBLE .25

BUILDING SKILLS THAT ALMOST DROP, BUT ARE SAVED

INCLUDES:

- Base or spotter drops to the performance surface during a building skill.
- Top person leans or bears weight on a base/spotter and is pushed back up into the stunt/skill.
- Lowering a stunt to prep from extended position to prep level (not a timing issue).
- Single based/Coed Style (unassisted or assisted) stunts that drop to a load in position.
- Pyramid skills that would fall without the bracer or bracer's support.
- Both feet of the top person come in contact with the performance surface during a cradle/prone (excluding one foot).
- Hand(s) of the top person come in contact with the performance surface during a cradle/prone.
- Drops to the performance surface from a nugget, thigh stand, and/or waist level style stunt on to their feet (not a timing issue).

DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- An omitted skill
- Drop in body position by the top person.

- Excessive movement by the bases
 - Balance check by the top person
-

BUILDING FALL .75

DROPS FROM A BUILDING SKILL OR TRANSITION

INCLUDES:

- Drops to a cradle position/load in/prone position.
- Coed Style (unassisted or assisted) stunts that drop to a cradle and/or prone.
- Coed Style (unassisted or assisted) stunts that drop to the performance surface (not a load in position) with assistance from bases and/or spotter.
- Top person is set out of a building skill, transitions, and drops to the performance surface,

DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Single based/Coed style (unassisted or assisted) stunts that drop to a load in position.
-

MAJOR BUILDING FALL 1.25

DROPS TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE FROM A BUILDING SKILL BY THE TOP PERSON AND/OR BASE(S) SPOTTER(S)

INCLUDES:

- Multiple bases and/or spotters drop to the performance surface.
- Top person lands on base and/or spotter who drops to the performance surface.
- Single Based/Coed Style (unassisted or assisted) stunts where the top person lands on performance surface without assistance from bases and/or spotter.

DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Top person comes in contact with the performance surface during a transitional-stunt and/or pyramid that is continuous without interruption/stopping.
 - Top person is set out of a building skill, transitions, and drops to the performance surface (this includes tripping while walking).
-

INDIVIDUAL – CHALLENGE DIVISION

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS/CRITERIA & GENERAL – GUIDELINES

JUMP-OFF – CHALLENGE:

- All competitors must be in uniform and must represent a school/organization and look performance ready.

- When the competitor's name is called, the competitor will step forward and perform his/her jump(s).
Note: Any approach of choice may be used.
- Next, the competitor will perform on cue a single **toe-touch jump** one competitor at a time.
- Next, the competitor will perform on cue their best ***advanced connected double jump of choice** one competitor at a time. Note: Both connected jumps may **not** be the same jump. They must demonstrate variety, and any approach may be used.
- Not adhering to Performance Rules and Guidelines will forfeit the right to earn awards in this division.

**Advanced Jumps include Toe-Touch, Herkie, Side Hurdler, Front Hurdler, Pike, and Double Nine*

STANDING TUMBLE-OFF – CHALLENGE:

- All athletes must be in uniform and must represent a school/organization and look competition ready.
- When the athlete's name is called, the athlete will step forward on the mat and perform his/her **best standing tumbling move from the side**. Note: Standing tumbling moves may include connected skills but may **not** change directions during the execution of such.
- Not adhering to any Performance Rules and Guidelines will forfeit the right to earn awards in this division.

RUNNING TUMBLE-OFF – CHALLENGE:

- All athletes must be in uniform and must represent a school/organization and look competition ready.
- When the athlete's name is called, the athlete will step forward on the mat and perform his/her **best running tumbling move from either side-to-side or corner-to-corner**. Note: Running tumbling moves may include connected skills but may **not** change directions during the execution of such).
- Not adhering to any Performance Rules and Guidelines will forfeit the right to earn awards in this division.

Please call the AmeriCheer Family of Brands Corporate office with any questions regarding the Challenge divisions.