



2026 - 2027 AmeriDance and Eastern Dance

General Rules and Guidelines



2026-2027 AmeriDance and Eastern Dance Soloist, Ensemble, Duet/Trio and Dance Team General Rules & Guidelines

FUNDAMENTAL INFORMATION

All text in red indicates a change and/or new information from the previous season.

General Rules

1. All teams (4 or more members & open teams 6 or more members) must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified coach/instructor.
2. Coaches must consider the dancer and team skill level with regard to skills incorporated and proper progression.
3. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the event. The director/coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents, and any other person affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly.
4. All programs should have, and review, an emergency action plan in the event of an injury.
5. Each team will have a minimum of 1 minute and 45 seconds (1:45) to a **maximum of 2 minutes (2:00)** to demonstrate their style and expertise. (Exception: Solo/Duet/Trio/Ensemble/Prop/Production – Please see Routine Guidelines for more information.) Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement or note of the music. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement or note of the music, whichever happens last. (Exception: Teams competing in the Novice Tier have no time minimum and a maximum of 1 minute and 30 seconds (1:30).)
6. Substitutions may be made in the event of any injury or other serious circumstance. Substitutes must also abide by the age, gender and grade restrictions in all division in which they compete.
7. Use of fire, noxious gases, live animals, weapons and other potentially hazardous elements are strictly prohibited. (including but not limited to guns, knives, swords, nun chucks, etc.). Violation of this rule may result in disqualification. Please submit questionable items and how it is used/choreographed into routines for prior approval. (Clarification: See Service Animal exception in Dance Abilities Rules)
8. Teams may not compromise the integrity of the performance surface (Examples: residues from sprays, powders, oils, etc.). Teams are responsible for clearing the performance surface from debris (Examples: poms, props, petals, etc.)
9. Legality officials shall document and report any imminent safety concerns to the Director of Rules and Safety.
10. A participant wearing a hard cast (i.e. fiberglass or plaster) or a walking boot may not be involved in choreography that may cause harm/injury to others.
11. Questions or concerns in regards to your scores must be in a written format and emailed to tsmith@ameridanceinc.com within the Monday following the competition. Your questions or concerns will be addressed by the Wednesday after.



Choreography, Music and Costuming

12. Routine choreography, music, costuming (including make up) should be appropriate and acceptable for family viewing. Vulgar or suggestive material is not permitted. This may include music, movement and/or choreography that is profane, inflammatory, offensive, sexual in content, and/or relays lewd gestures. Inappropriate choreography, costuming and/or music may also affect the panel judges' overall impression and/or score of the routine. Music labeled "explicit" is not allowed. Music labeled "radio" or "clean" is permissible as long as it is suitable for family audiences. All organizations must also follow the Family of Brands Music Policy.
13. Footwear is recommended but not required. Wearing footwear with heels, socks and/or footed tights only is prohibited. (*Exception: socks are allowed on a carpeted performance surface*) (*Clarification: Socks designed for dance that provide shock absorption, arch support, ankle stability, traction are allowed.*)
14. Jewelry as a part of a costume is allowed. (*Clarification: safety of the dancer should be considered.*)
15. Tights are strongly recommended when costuming provides limited coverage, specifically above mid-thigh (i.e. leotards, shorts, briefs, etc.) in consideration of athlete safety.
16. Dancers registered as male must cover their torsos. Shirtless, unbuttoned shirts with nothing underneath, and mesh-only coverage will not be allowed.

Props

17. Wearable and/or handheld items are allowed in all categories and may be removed and discarded from the body. They may not be used to elevate dancer(s) from the performance surface. Props cannot be used to intentionally obscure/cover skills that need to be viewable by a legality official (i.e. fabric used to cover lift.) (*Clarification: safety of the dancer should be considered.*)
18. Standing props are not allowed (Examples: chairs, stools, benches, ladders, boxes, stairs, etc.) (*Exception Categories: include Prop/Production and Open, please see categories on guidelines when it comes to props.*)

AmeriDance and Eastern Dance Category Type Definitions

1. **All Star/Studio-**competition based organizations, which may or may not be owned and operated by an individual(s). Please Note: All, All Star dance teams may be registered as a member through USASF, as all AmeriDance and Eastern Dance competitions are USASF sanctioned events. For any questions please visit [USASF's Membership Page](#) to find your USASF representative. **If you are a Studio/Independent All Star based team, please select the independent options/divisions when registering as you will be separated from the USASF All Stars.**
2. **Recreational League-** To be considered a recreational league organization, one or all of the following must apply:
 - a. Governed by a Recreation Council or Board.
 - b. Are affiliated with a YMCA, a Boys and Girls Club or your County's Recreation and Parks.
 - c. Community Youth Organization
 - d. Pop Warner Association
 - e. Dance for their associated recreation's sports club (i.e. football, basketball, soccer, etc.). A team must be able to prove their relationship and affiliation with their said organization if requested.



3. **School-** To be considered a school organization, one or all of the following must apply:
 - a. Governed by their associated school's administration.
 - b. The team's main purpose is to dance for their associated school's sports clubs (i.e. football, basketball, soccer, etc.).

Competition Area/Flooring

Most competition areas for dance teams, soloists and duets/trios will be on a gymnasium floor for most Dance Classics and a foam mat on a gym floor for Spirit Series Events **unless rolled up when enough competition to space out**. For Championships and Nationals, refer to competition specifics for floor surfaces. Dance surface for InterNationals will be a non-spring marley floor 54' x 42'. EDA nationals will be a non-spring marley floor/stage or gym floor.

Music

One representative may run the music and must remain at the sound table throughout the entire performance. Please bring your phone or ipod connected device along with your own adapter. You should always bring several backups! CD's may not be accepted at several locations. Review the content of the music for any inappropriate language or sounds. Music of poor quality may detract from your performance and could affect scoring. It is suggested that music time be recorded three to four seconds under the maximum time allotted due to variations in music system speed. It is recommended to record on different brands of CDs and/or use multiple systems to test music prior to an event. AmeriDance/Eastern is not responsible for music that does not read or has poor quality.

Family of Brands Music Policy

Recently, USA Cheer has released their Music Copyrights Educational Initiative, our Family of Brands as members of the cheer and dance industry, have committed to sharing the information and adhering to these guidelines at all of our cheer and dance camps and competitions. Please take a moment to read our Music Policy as it pertains to all events and also to click on the links provided to learn more about copyright laws as they pertain to music. For More Information Visit usacheer.net.

AmeriCheer, AmeriDance & Eastern Cheer and Dance will be adhering to all copyright laws and guidelines related to the music industry. By signing the Family of Brands Code of Ethics, you will be acknowledging (along with other items) that your organization is in compliance with all copyright laws and guidelines related to the music industry. By acknowledging your compliance, you may or may not be asked to provide documented proof. If such documented proof cannot be supplied upon request, your organization may receive a penalty warning and/or a penalty deduction of 25 points based upon unsportsman like conduct. Should you have questions about this policy or for more information please call our offices.

Dance Deductions

1. Time of Routine: A 1-5 point deduction will be assessed for not meeting the over/under music guidelines. Music times are final and cannot be disputed after the competition.
2. Other Rule Infractions: A 2.5 deduction will be assessed for each of the following infractions:
 - a. Tumbling Violation
 - b. Dance Lift Violation
 - c. Violating any other rule, requirement and/or restriction set forth prior to the event
3. Visit the **Information-Rules & Regulations Tab** on Americheerfamilyofbrands.com to view the Official Dance Deduction Judge Sheet.



Interruption of Performance

If interruption occurs during routine performance due to competition equipment, facilities, etc. participants will be permitted to restart the routine from the beginning or at the point of interruption. If an interruption occurs during a routine performance due to your equipment (phone, CD, etc.), participants may either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition. If an injury occurs during a routine performance, a team may either continue or withdraw from the competition. The competition official will determine where the routine continuation will take place in the performance order in either scenario. Competition officials reserve the right to stop a performance due to injury, exit due to injury or bodily fluids. In any case of the routine being restarted, new scores will be assessed and previous scores will be eliminated.

Age Divisions and Participant Eligibility

Any team or participant proven to be in violation of the age/grade requirements for any AmeriDance/Eastern competition may/will result in disqualification from the competition. Please refer to your category type's Divisions & Safety Rules to learn more about specific age divisions and participant eligibility.

ROUTINE GUIDELINES

1. **SOLOIST total routine time – Max. 2:00 performance time/ Min. 1:00 performance time**

ENSEMBLE total routine time - Max. 2:00 performance time/ Min. 1:00 performance time

The Ensemble division is for duets and trios combined. 2-3 Dancers are required for this division.

TEAM total routine time- Max. 2:00 performance time/ Min. 1:45 performance time

Each Dance Team must have a minimum of four (4) participants or (6) participants for Open Divisions to compete in the Dance Team division, or they will be moved to the Duet/Trio/Ensemble division.

PROP/PRODUCTION category – Max. 5:00 performance time/ Min. 1:45 performance time

GAMEDAY DANCE - With all three elements combined, the Game Day performance cannot exceed a 3:00 time limit.

2. Timing of each routine will begin with the first choreographed movement or beat of music and end with the last choreographed movement or beat of music, whichever comes last.
3. Backdrops are permitted in all categories. The backdrop may not be manipulated during the routine. The backdrop is not permitted to be taller than 8' high. It must fit through a gymnasium door without the center pole being removed.



SOLOIST, DUET/TRIO & ENSEMBLE COMPETITION DIVISIONS

DIVISION	AGE
Tiny	6 Years & Younger
Mini	9 Years & Younger
Youth	12 Years & Younger
Junior	15 Years & Younger
Senior	18 Years & Younger
Open	13 Years & Older

Ensembles at competitions may have 2-3 participants.

AMERIDANCE AND EASTERN DANCE TEAM DIVISIONS AND SAFETY RULES

- All Star/Studio-** Please refer to [AmeriDance and Eastern Dance All Star Team Divisions & Categories](#). For Safety Rules, please login to your USASF account.
- School/Recreational League-** Please refer to [AmeriDance and Eastern Dance School/Rec Team Divisions, Categories & Safety Rules](#).