



2026 TSSAA
Dance Rules and
Regulations

CODE OF CONDUCT

TSSAA encourages and supports sportsmanship, integrity and fairness among participants and coaches in all facets of dance team including team/squad practice and performance.

To ensure the most positive experience for all attendees, TSSAA asks that the following Code of Conduct be adhered to during TSSAA Dance Championship:

1. Any questions or concerns that affect a team's performance or experience must be communicated by the coach to the Event Director. The appropriate Official will then be called to discuss the situation with the coach.
2. Participants, coaches, or spectators are prohibited from contacting the Judges during the competition.
3. Judges' rulings are final related to deductions, final team placements and legalities.
4. Any unruly, aggressive, or belligerent behavior by participants, coaches or spectators toward any other attendee or Event Staff will result in a deduction, potential team disqualification, removal from the event and/or barred participation from future TSSAA Cheer and Dance State Championships.
5. TSSAA and Varsity Spirit reserves the right to remove any persons from a competition for unsafe or unsportsmanlike conduct.

To review the entire policy please click here: [Varsity Spirit - Safety](#)

SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY

1. All members of the dance team must be current members of the official school spirit squads and must attend the school they are representing. All members of the team must support the school's athletic endeavors throughout the year (games, pep rallies, half-time shows, etc.)
 - a. Exception 1: Single-gender schools may use athletes from affiliated schools if they are official members of the squad. These teams must support the school(s) athletics/ endeavors throughout the year, and not solely combined for competition purposes.
2. Dance squads may only compete in two categories/divisions at the TSSAA Dance Championships.
3. Individuals are NOT permitted to compete on two **different** School Teams at the event.
4. The team should display an overall behavior conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school/organization.
5. All athletes and coaches must be registered and listed on the Event Roster to be submitted at check in for each event. Roster Forms can be found at [UDA Competition Required Forms](#) under Regional Competition Forms & FAQs.

EVENT GUIDELINES

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

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

To review additional information, click here: [Varsity Spirit - Event Guidelines](#)

EVENT POLICIES

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

To review the event policies, click here: [Varsity Spirit - Event Policies](#)

SCHOOL DIVISIONS

All Junior High Divisions – 9th Grade and Below

Junior High Divisions WILL be allowed 9th grade participants if (1) they attend a school that is under the administrative supervision of the same school board as the junior high school that they are representing AND (2) a minority of the team are 9th graders.

All Varsity Divisions – 8th Grade - 12th Grade

7th grade and below participants will NOT be allowed on a Varsity team. 8th grade participants will be allowed to participate on a Varsity team if the school they attend is under the direct administrative supervision of the same school board as the Varsity team they are representing.

****At the discretion of the TSSAA, divisions may be added, modified, divided, adjusted and/or combined.***

Please visit <https://tssaa.org/sports/dance> for a complete listing of divisions for the TSSAA Cheer and Dance State Championships.

- Middle School = 5-40 members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, Game Day)
- Small Varsity = 5-12 members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, Game Day)
- Large Varsity = 13-40 members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, Game Day)

TEAM PARTICIPANTS

See above for division breakdowns.

The minimum number of participants a team can have for competition is five (5) *. The maximum number of participants a team can have is forty (40). Teams competing with two routines must stay in the same division but can have different numbers in both routines. Teams will be able to trade out, remove, or add a designated number of dancers between their 2 categories, based on their division. See below for division breakdowns. Teams may continue to trade out dancers and maintain the same number of performers in both routines.

Substitutions may be made in case of injury or other serious circumstances.

Important Things to Note:

- The minimum requirement for TSSAA is 5.

Trade out Athletes:

1. Teams competing in multiple performance categories must stay in the same division size but can have different numbers in routines.
2. Teams will be able to trade out, remove, or add athletes between their categories, so long as they stay within the division size range.
3. Teams may also continue to trade out athletes and maintain the same number of performers in routines. Junior High teams may trade out, remove, or add athletes between their categories, but must also follow the Varsity division size rules.
4. Teams competing in Game Day will not be able to compete with less athletes than the performance category with the highest number of athletes.

Examples:

1. A Small Varsity team is competing Jazz and Pom. They have 9 dancers in Jazz. For Pom, they added 3 dancers; therefore,

they are dancing 12 dancers in Pom.

2. A Large Varsity team is competing in Pom, Hip Hop, and Game Day. They have 15 dancers in Pom and added one dancer for 16 total dancers in Hip Hop. For Game Day, they added 4 dancers; therefore, they are dancing 20 in Game Day.

3. A Junior High Team is competing in Hip Hop and Jazz. They have 18 dancers in Hip Hop. For Jazz, they traded out 4 dancers and added 2 dancers; therefore, they are dancing 20 in Jazz.

DANCE GUIDELINES

TEAM PARTICIPANTS

1. TSSAA strongly recommends that you have alternates (not a member of another competing team at the same event), who are prepared to substitute in the event of injury, probation, etc. No dancer may represent more than one team, even in the event of injury or emergency.
2. Teams competing at any State Association event, in partnership with Varsity Spirit, must follow their state guidelines and regulations for number of performances, divisions entered, etc.
3. *Only TSSAA member schools may compete at TSSAA Competition.*
4. *Dance teams may only compete in TWO categories/division (Example: Pom & Game Day) at the TSSAA Competition.*
5. *Individuals are NOT permitted to compete in two (2) School teams. Dance teams may participate in Spirit Program in addition to their 2 dance routines.*
6. *FOUR registered coaches can enter the team entrance and stay with them throughout warmup and performance.*
7. *Alternates must be dressed in matching school cheer uniform or team warm-up. Alternates dressed in street clothes or dress other than cheer uniform/team warmup will need to purchase a spectator ticket and enter as spectator.*
8. *TSSAA strongly recommends that you have an alternate (not a member of another competing squad at the same event), who is prepared to substitute in the event of injury, probation, etc. No cheerleader/dancer may represent more than one Team, even in the event of injury or emergency. Once a team checks into the event, the team will not be allowed to change divisions.*
9. *The TSSAA reserves the right to add, modify, and/or combine divisions based on actual registration.*
10. Divisions with less than 3 teams competing for 3 consecutive years will be combined or eliminated the following year.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout and post event. This includes but is not limited to social media posts and comments. The coach of each team is responsible for seeing team members, coaches, parents, and any other person affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly.
2. All programs should have, and review, an emergency action plan in the event of an injury.
3. Coaches must recognize the entire team's ability level and limit the team's activities accordingly.
4. No technical skills should be performed when a coach is not present or providing direct supervision.
5. All practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for the activities of dance, and away from noise and distractions.
6. Warm-up and stretching should precede and conclude all practice sessions, pep rallies, games, competitions, performances, and other physical activities.
7. The performance surface should be taken into consideration before engaging in any technical aspect of dance. The performance area should be reasonably free of obstructions. Dancers should not perform technical skills on:
 - a. Concrete, asphalt, or any other hard or uncovered surface
 - b. Wet surfaces
 - c. Uneven surfaces
 - d. Surfaces with obstructions
8. The dance team coach or other knowledgeable designated representative should attend all practices, functions, and

games.

COMPETITION ROUTINE GUIDELINES

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

CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUMING

1. All facets of a performance/routine, including costuming, choreography and music selection, should be appropriate and suitable for family viewing and listening. Examples of inappropriate choreography may include, but are not limited to, vulgar or suggestive movement appearing offensive or sexual in content, displaying acts of violence, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures. Music containing words unsuitable for family listening is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, swearwords and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words may still constitute 'inappropriate.' Music, costuming, or movement in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be assumed by the coach to be inappropriate and removed as to not put their team in an unfortunate situation. Costuming must be well secured and appropriate for a family friendly environment.
2. Shoes, on both feet, are recommended but not required while on the performance surface. Please note that dancers should choose to wear shoes, anything with wheels is not allowed (example: roller skate, roller blades, heelys, etc.). Wearing socks, and or footed tights only is not allowed. (Clarification: Socks designed for dance that provide shock absorption, arch support, ankle stability, traction are allowed.)
3. Teams competing at the National Dance Team Championship and/or any competition at Walt Disney World may NOT use Disney costumes that resemble a Disney character or movie. Any use of Disney music requires prior approval and must be sent to musicinfo@varsity.com at least one month prior to your first competition. Any use of Disney theme and costuming requires prior approval and must be sent to udarules@varsity.com at least one month prior to your first competition.
4. When all dancers are standing at attention, all costumes/uniforms must cover the midriff area completely. The midriff includes the entire midriff section from the bottom of the **sternum/diaphragm** down, front of the body only. Nude body liners are acceptable. This rule applies to all Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, Game Day.
5. Tights are HIGHLY recommended to be worn for all athletes with costumes but not required.
6. Costuming must be well secured and appropriate for a family friendly environment.
7. Jewelry as part of the costume is allowed. Safety of the dancers should be considered.

PROPS

1. Props are NOT allowed.
2. **Wearable items used to enhance the routine are allowed but must remain connected to the garment/costume throughout the entire performance. If taken off and danced with, it becomes a prop. Wearable items cannot be**

taken off and discarded.

3. Signs and/or rally towels being used in a Game Day routine ONLY, will not count as props.
4. Prop approvals or prop questions can be submitted to UDArules@varsity.com and must be received at least 2 weeks prior to your event.

HANDS FREE POMS

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

ENTRANCES AND EXITS

1. Formal entrances which involve choreography, technical skills, and all traditions/chants are not permitted. Dancers should enter the performance area in a timely fashion. **Exception: Dance Game Day. See clarification under Dance Game Day Time Limitations below on page 11.**
2. Teams have 30 seconds from the team's introduction to start the routine and **30 seconds after routine completion to exit the stage.** If a team exceeds this time limit, a penalty of a .25-point deduction for 1-5 seconds or a .5-point deduction for 6 or more seconds will be assessed. This 30 second time limit is not included in your two (2) minute max routine time limit.
3. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a 1.0 deduction. Excessive celebration includes, but is not limited to, alternates/coaches entering the competition floor, head/hair swinging, inappropriate gestures, and/or other similar moves.

ROUTINE TIME LIMITATIONS

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

PERFORMANCE ROUTINE TIME

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

DANCE GAME DAY TIME

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

GAME DAY ROUTINE FORMAT

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

Dance Game Day will take place in the following order:

1. Fight Song

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

2. Spirit Raising

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

3. Performance Routine

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

GENERAL NOTES AND GAME DAY PROPS

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

Mascots Performing in Dance Game Day

1. Teams may add up to 2 (two) mascots in their Game Day and/or Spirit Program routines.

2. The mascot(s) must meet all the eligibility requirements as the athletes.
3. The mascot(s) must be a student of the school.
4. The mascot(s) will not count toward the number of participants allowed but may impact the overall impression score.
5. The mascot(s) may only perform one role throughout the entirety of the routine.
6. The mascot(s) must remain in costume. Mascots in costume will not be allowed outside of the competition venues.
7. The mascot(s) must enter the floor with the team and remain on the floor for the entire routine.
8. The mascot(s) is not allowed to be involved in any lifts or skills with hip overhead rotation and should position themselves away from any skills being performed.
 - a. Prep level or higher stunts, multi base stunts, shoulder sits, aerials, back handsprings, front handsprings, headsprings, etc. are not allowed.

Mascot Game Day Props:

1. The mascot(s) will only be allowed to use traditional sideline props, such as signs and/or poms and/or rally towels.
2. No other props are allowed, and all prop rules as outlined on page 10 will apply.
3. Uniform/costume pieces must be worn from the beginning of the routine. Items/articles of clothing brought on to the stage but not worn will be considered a prop.
4. If any part of your mascot uniform/costume is taken off, it must be immediately put down.

SPirit PROGRAM GAME DAY

Spirit Program Game Day division specific guidelines can be found here - [Spirit Program Game Day - Guidelines](#)

DEDUCTIONS

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

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

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

LEGALITY REVIEW

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

If you have any questions concerning the legality of a trick or move, please email the video to udarules@varsity.com.

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

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

ROUTINE SAFETY RULES

TUMBLING AND SKILLS (EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS)

1. Hip over-head rotation skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms in the supporting hand. (Exception: Forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed).
 - a. The proper use of hands-free poms for hip over head skills is allowed. *Please reference the Hands-Free Poms section for more details*
2. Tumbling skills with hip over head rotation:
 - a. Airborne skills with hand support may not be airborne in approach but may be airborne in descent. (Exception: Dive Rolls are not allowed).
 - i. Standing back handsprings are allowed but cannot be connected to any other hip over head tumbling skill.
 - b. Airborne skills with or without hand support that land in a perpendicular inversion may not have backward momentum in the approach.
 - c. Non airborne tumbling skills with hip over head rotation are limited to 3 connected skills. (Example: 3 consecutive headsprings are allowed; 4 are not allowed).
3. Hip over head airborne skills without hand support are not allowed. (Exception: Aerials and/or side somis not connected to any other hip over head rotation skill are allowed.)
 - a. Recommendation: If using non-hands free poms in an aerial and/or side somi, dancers should place both poms in non-dominant hand. If a dancer bears weight on the performance surface with a hand that is holding a pom during the skill, the dancer would be in violation of rule 1 and a deduction will be assessed.
 - b. Aerials/Front Aerials that include a twisting motion or blind landing are allowed.
 - c. Aerial "snap downs" or aerials to a seated position are allowed.
4. Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
5. Choreographed drops to the knee, thigh, back, front, head, shoulder, or seat onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.
6. Landing in a push-up position onto the performance surface is allowed from a standing or kneeling position or from a jump with forward momentum. All variations of a shushanova are not allowed. (Exception: Standing Back Handsprings can have alternate landings, including a push up position.)
7. Airborne skills without hip over head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position backwards onto the neck, head, back, shoulder, and/or hands.
 - a. Any kip up motion must initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground. (NOTE: This rule refers specifically and only to the "rubber band"/"bronco" kip up skill, as well as any skill jumping backwards into a headstand/handstand stall.)

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

ALLOWED:

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

NOT ALLOWED:

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

DANCE LIFTS AND PARTNERING (Executed in pairs or groups)

1. The Executing Dancer must receive support from a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the performance surface through the entire skill. (Exception: Kick Line Leaps).
2. At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill.
 - a. Lifting with poms is allowed.
 - b. Extensions, pyramids, and basket tosses are NOT allowed.
3. Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) may occur if a Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
4. Vertical Inversions are allowed if:
 - a. The Supporting Dancer(s) maintain contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position.
 - b. When the height of the Executing Dancers shoulders exceeds shoulder level of the Supporting dancer, there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear weight.
 - i. (Exception: When there are 3 or more Supporting Dancers, an additional spot is not required.)

RELEASE MOVES/UNASSISTED DISMOUNTS TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE

1. An Executing Dancer may jump, leap, step, or push off a Supporting Dancer if:
 - a. The highest point of the release does not elevate the Executing Dancer's feet above head level of the Supporting Dancer.
 - i. Exception: toe touches off a dancers back/leapfrog jumps will be allowed
 - b. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the prone or inverted position after the release.
 - c. Toe pitch back tucks are not allowed.
2. A Supporting Dancer may release/toss an Executing Dancer if:
 - a. The highest point of the release/toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above head level of the Supporting Dancer.
 - b. The Executing Dancer is not supine or inverted when released.

- c. The Executing Dancer does not pass through a prone or inverted position after release.
- d. Toe Pitch back tucks are not allowed.

PENALTIES

A deduction will be given for EACH safety/general competition rule violation. The point value of this deduction will be as follows:

- 0.25 points – exceeding the allotted 30 seconds to begin a performance once announced to the floor by 1-5 seconds
- 0.5 points - performance error- any skill or trick executed incorrectly that then makes it an illegal skill/trick (example: touching down on an aerial cartwheel with non- hands-free poms in hand), exceeding the allotted 30 seconds to begin a performance once announced to the floor by more than 6 seconds
- 1 point - General rules violations including (but not limited to) timing infractions of 1-5 seconds over time, not enough kicks, costume/shoe rules, prop rules, excessive celebration following the team's performance, etc.
- 1 point- All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a 1.0 deduction. Excessive celebration includes, but is not limited to, alternates/coaches entering the competition floor, head/hair swinging, inappropriate gestures, and/or other similar moves.
- 1.5 points - Timing infractions of 6 or more seconds over time, routine safety rule violations

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

SPORTSMANSHIP

1. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine.
2. The advisor and coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents and other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.
3. When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes and parents/spectators, they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so may result in a 1.0 deduction, removal of coach or disqualification.
4. If face coverings are required: athletes and coaches who do not comply with the face covering requirement may be assessed an unsportsmanlike deduction of 1 point.

SCORES AND RANKINGS

1. Individual score sheets are for each judge's exclusive use. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches or captains at the competition's end. Judges' decisions are final.
2. Any deductions or violations will be taken off the final score final, and TSSAA will not change or overturn a judges' decision.
3. TSSAA TIE BREAK POLICY - All ties in each division or group will remain. In a first-place tie, the team with the lessor deductions will be awarded first. If the deductions remain equal, the tie will not be broken and both teams will be awarded first place.

VIOLATIONS

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

AWARDS AND PRIZES:

First and Second Place trophies will be given in each division.

FINALITY OF DECISIONS

By participating in this competition, each team agrees that the decisions by the judges will be final, and TSSAA will not change or overturn a judges' decision. Each team acknowledges the need for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition and so waives any legal, equitable, administrative, or procedural review of such decisions.

DISQUALIFICATION

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of these "Rules and Regulations" will be subject to disqualification from the competition, will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition.

HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

1. RULES & PROCEDURES - Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the advisor / coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director. Such questions should be asked prior to the team's competition performance.
2. PERFORMANCE - Any questions concerning the team's performance should be directed to the Competition Director immediately after the team's performance.
3. Questions regarding another team and/or their performance will not be allowed.
4. Deduction sheets will be available shortly following each team's performance. Questions regarding deductions can be made by the Schools Official Advisor/Coach of the team only and must be done within 10 minutes of the team's deduction sheet being released to team or prior to final awards-whichever happens first. Challenges will NOT be accepted after teams 10-minute timeframe and/or after competition results have been announced.

INTERPRETATIONS AND / OR RULINGS

Any interpretation of these Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will make a judgment to ensure that the competition proceeds in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition. The Rules Committee will consist of the Competition Director, Head Judge, and a designated competition official

VIDEO MEDIA POLICY

No commercial recording (audio or visual) or commercial live streaming is allowed in the event venue or other event-related venues (including, but not limited to, hotels and restaurants) or on the grounds of any such venues (collectively, "Event Locations"). In the event a team authorizes the commercial recording or streaming in any Event Location, the team will be automatically disqualified. In addition, the personal, noncommercial 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 TSSAA, 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.

OFFICIAL PARTNER

Varsity Spirit is the official spirit partner of TSSAA Cheer/Dance. No other cheer/dance instructional organization, choreographer may present, solicit business, recruit, or distribute merchandise during the TSSAA State Cheer & Dance Championship. Exception: If the Vendor has expressed in an advanced Statement of Work and received written consent from TSSAA and Varsity Spirit.

TSSAA and VARSITY COMPETITION RULES

While the final details and schedule of any competition could require up to the day adjustments, and all guidelines are subject to change based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"), federal, state and local guidance, please be assured that Varsity Spirit is committed to delivering the same quality of competition experience for which we are known. We appreciate your understanding of the flexibility this will require. By accepting the Terms and Conditions as the authorized person from my program I agree and acknowledge to abide by the TSSAA and Varsity Competition Rules.

RULES AND REGULATIONS AGREEMENT

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

- (i) I am the sponsor/director of the team
- (ii) I have read and understand the foregoing
- (iii) I will be solely responsible for communicating the foregoing to all coaches/directors/choreographers in my program that will coaching and directing teams at the TSSAA Competition
- (iv) I will ensure that my teams will comply with all rules and regulations at all times
- (v) My team will support the results of the TSSAA competition, as I am a role model for my programs.

UDA GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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

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

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

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

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

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