

GENERAL RULES

A.	All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/advisor/coach.
B.	Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement.
C.	All directors, advisors and coaches should have an emergency response plan in the event of an injury.

CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUMING

1.	Suggestive, offensive, or vulgar choreography, costuming, makeup and/or music are inappropriate for family audiences and therefore lack audience appeal.
2.	Routine choreography should be appropriate and entertaining for all audience members. Vulgar or suggestive material is defined as any movement or choreography implying something improper or indecent, appearing offensive or sexual in content, and/or relaying lewd, violent, aggressive or profane gestures or implications.
3.	Routine choreography and music, for all genres, should convey a dynamic, positive, and upbeat style that is motivating to audiences and fans – reflective of the origin and purpose of our sport. Performances more melancholic in nature, for the purpose of high energy competition, should be avoided.
4.	Routine choreography should isolate and effectively demonstrate genre appropriate skills and movement. Excessive or overuse of hip-over-head rotation and inverted skills (e.g., cartwheels, partner cartwheels, round-offs, side and front aerials, chest rolls, walkovers, etc.) within a routine should be avoided.
5.	Teams may not damage and/or use any substances that would negatively change the quality of the performance surface. <i>Examples: Residue from sprays, powders, oils, etc.</i>
6.	Use of fire, noxious gases, live animals, and other potentially hazardous elements are strictly prohibited. <i>Exemption for Special Olympics, Special Abilities and Adaptive Abilities Division Athletes: The use of Service Animals is allowed.</i>
7.	Inappropriate choreography, costuming and/or music may also affect the judges' overall impression and/or score of the routine.
8.	All costuming, makeup and choreography should be age appropriate and acceptable for family audiences.
9.	All costuming should be secure and offer full coverage of body parts – appropriate for family viewing. Costume malfunctions resulting in team members being exposed may be grounds for disqualification.
10.	Tights should be worn under briefs, hot pants or excessively short shorts.
11.	For performances on ICU approved competition surfaces (e.g., Marley surface or a wooden parquet floor), footwear is recommended; however, partial sole shoes or performing barefoot is acceptable. Performing in socks, footed tights, high heels, roller skates, roller blades or any other footwear that is inappropriate for the sport is strictly prohibited. For all other performance surfaces, footwear is required to ensure the safety of the athlete. If in doubt, please consult the ICU Rules Committee or email pc.rules@cheerunion.org for approval.
12.	Jewelry as a part of the costume is allowed.
13.	All male performers' costumes must include a shirt that is fastened; however, it can be sleeveless.
14.	No cheers or chants are allowed.

PROPS

1.	A prop is defined as anything that is used in the routine choreography that is not/was not originally part of the costume. <i>Clarification 1: For Pom Categories, Poms are considered part of the uniform.</i> <i>Clarification 2: For Adaptive Abilities, Special Olympics and Special Abilities Divisions, all mobility equipment, prosthesis, and braces are considered part of the athlete unless they are removed, in which case they are considered legal props, until replaced or returned to the athlete.</i>
2.	Handheld props and free “standing props” in all categories are not allowed. Use of parts of the uniform/clothing (e.g., used for choreography purposes. Examples such as necklace, jacket, hat, etc.) are NOT allowed. In addition, pieces of clothing/costume may not be used to facilitate choreography/movement or to create visual pictures or shapes in staging. All clothing and pieces of clothing must be worn at all times and may not be removed, used to facilitate choreography or discarded during the performance.
3.	Within the Pom Category, it is compulsory to use poms throughout the entire routine. If there are male performers in this category, they are not required to use poms.
4.	No large free “standing props” will be allowed in any category, such as chairs, stools, benches, boxes, stairs, steps, ladders, bars, sheets, etc. Any item that bears the weight of the participant is considered a “standing prop”.

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

POM	<i>Incorporates the use of proper Pom motion technique that is sharp, clean, and precise while allowing for the use of concepts from Jazz, Hip Hop and High Kick. An emphasis is placed on group execution including synchronization, uniformity and spacing. The choreography of a dynamic and effective routine focuses on musicality, staging of visual effects through fluid and creative transitions, levels, and groups, along with complexity of movement and skills. Poms are required to be used throughout the routine. The uniform/costuming should reflect the category style. See score sheet for more information.</i>
HIP HOP	<i>Incorporates authentic street style influenced movement that has evolved from Hip Hop culture. Routines should exhibit originality, creativity and movement techniques with engagement, high energy and genuine connection to the music. An emphasis is placed on group execution, including synchronization, uniformity, and spacing. Choreography should highlight genuine groove, authentic rhythm, vibe and style, intricate musicality, visual staging, complexity of movement and athleticism. Costuming should reflect Hip Hop culture in a way that supports both authenticity and performance. See score sheet for more information.</i>
JAZZ	<i>Incorporates traditional or stylized dynamic movements with strength, continuity, presence, and proper technical execution. An emphasis is placed on group execution including synchronization, uniformity, and spacing. The choreography of a dynamic and effective routine utilizes musicality, staging, complexity of movement and skills. The overall impression of the routine should be lively, energetic, and motivating, with the understanding that the dynamics of movement may change to utilize musicality. The uniform/costuming should reflect the category style. See score sheet for more information.</i>
HIGH KICK (KICK)	<i>Incorporates the use of proper high kick technique that includes flexibility, endurance, stamina, upper and lower body strength, placement, and control, while allowing for the use of creative concepts such as staging and skills. High Kicks are required to be used throughout the routine in a purposeful manner and should be the emphasis of routine content. The choreography of a dynamic and effective high kick routine focuses on musicality, staging of visual effects through intervals in kick lines, fluid and creative transitions, levels and groups, along with complexity of movement and athleticism. An emphasis is placed on group execution including synchronization, uniformity, and spacing. The uniform/costuming should reflect the category style. See score sheet for more information.</i>



For additional information and event-specific guidelines pertaining to time limits, age grid, & related information:

For Additional Information: <https://cheerunion.org/education-schedule/rules-agegrid/>

For Event-Specific: <https://cheerunion.org/championships/schedule/>

Email: info@cheerunion.org