This document outlines the rules and scoring that are present for each division. These rules, divisions and categories help to create a safe, consistent and fair platform for cheer and dance athletes at DSCA approved competitions and events.

Cheer and Dance Divisions

Recreational	***School***	***All-Stars***	***Collegiate***
See next page For Divisions	**Elementary** **1st-5th grades** **Small Middle/ Junior High** ▪ **15 members or less** ▪ **6th– 8th grades** **Large Middle/ Junior High** ▪ **16-25 members** ▪ **6th – 8th grades** **Freshman** ▪ **9th grade only** **Small Junior Varsity** ▪ **15 members or less** ▪ **8th – 12th grades**** **note: Majority + 1 must be 8th-11th**** **Large Junior Varsity** ▪ **16-25 members** ▪ **8th –12th grades**** **note: Majority + 1 must be 8th-11th**** **Small Varsity** **15 members or less** **8th – 12th grades**** **Large Varsity** ▪ **16-25 members** ▪ **8th – 12th grades**** **Co-ed Varsity** ▪ **25 members or less** ▪ **8th – 12th grades**** ▪ **2 or more males** ▪ **# Males not more than 50% of team**	**See USASF.NET for divisions or Varsity.com**	**All-Girl** ▪ **20 or less members and one (1) mascot** **Co-ed** ▪ **2 or more males**

***Note: If there is only one team from a school, that team will be required to compete in the Varsity division and meet the Varsity Division grade restrictions unless they are a bona fide JV team that cheers for primarily JV events.**

****Note: Any High School team that contains 8th grade participants must provide written documentation prior to the commencement of the competition season via the athletic director from a certified district e-mail affirming the participant is a member of the sideline team and attends school on the same campus under the same administration as the team they represent. Any teams found out of compliance with these requirements face 2 year suspension from competitive DSCA events.**

Recreational Cheer and Dance Rules & Regulations

DSCA recognizes that Rec cheerleading does not have an official governing body to refer to, and that Rec cheer teams may have different guidelines to follow within their individual organizations. Please refer to the Varsity.com for rules and guidelines for level appropriate skills for each level. Divisions will be grouped together based on age and skill level and will follow The Open Series Championship rules for age divisions (linked HERE). The Affiliated/Non-Affiliated designation will not factor into DSCA division splits.

Timing & Penalties:

- Routines must be no more than two and one half minutes. Rec teams may use music for all or part of the two and one half minutes. The timing shall begin at the first word, motion, or note of music.

Elementary, Middle, Junior High and High School Cheer/Dance Rules and Regulations

The 2025-2026 Spirit Rules published by USA Cheer will be followed.

- Elementary, Middle and Junior High Schools will follow USA Cheer guidelines.
- High Schools will follow USA Cheer guidelines.
- Failure to follow those rules will result in safety violations and possible disqualification.

Timing & Penalties:

- Traditional Routines must be no more than two and one half minutes. Game Day routines must be no more than three minutes. Traditional Routines must include one (1) cheer or sideline chant. Music is permitted no longer than one minute and forty-five seconds. The timing shall begin at the first word, motion, or note of music. Game Day routines will follow the game day format outlined below under the section 'The Game Day Championship'.

All-Star Cheer & Dance Competitive Rules and Regulations

All-Star Cheer & Dance Divisions:

- Every All-Star Cheer & Dance team will follow the **USASF** guidelines regarding divisions and level. Details may be found at www.usasf.net.
- USASF rules, levels and divisions may change each year so please visit the website for divisions, levels and instructions on how to combine divisions.
- Failure to follow those rules will result in safety violations and possible disqualification.

Timing & Penalties:

- Routines must be no more than two and one half minutes. All-Star squads may use music for all or part of the two and one half minutes. The timing shall begin at the first word, motion, or note of music.

Collegiate Rules and Regulations

Collegiate Divisions:

All Collegiate levels must follow UCA Collegiate rules, and will use the DSCA School Score Sheets.
See website UCA website for the collegiate rules- www.varsity.com.

Timing & Penalties:

- Routines must be no more than two- and one-half minutes. Routines must include one (1) cheer or sideline chant. Music is permitted no longer than one minute and forty-five seconds. The timing shall begin at the first word, motion, or note of music.

****DSCA** ***host sponsors reserve the right to add/combine divisions in order to create a fair yet competitive competition.***

Game Day Division

Game Day Divisions:
****No team size limit for all Divisions**

High School Division:
Varsity
Junior Varsity
Freshman

Middle School/ Jr. High Division:
Middle School/Jr High

Elementary Division:
Elementary

Participation Requirements:

- All members of the cheerleading squad must be current members of the official school spirit squad and must attend the school they are representing. These must be individuals who cheered on the sidelines for games during the appropriate season. If you are a recreation team wishing to compete in Game Day, you must cheer for a sport in your league.
- MASCOTS are limited to the same props as cheerleaders (poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners) and are **NOT** allowed to stunt.
- Routines must be appropriate for family viewing. Any vulgar and/or suggestive movements or words will result in a score deduction.
- The team and each participating member/coach should constantly display good sportsmanship throughout the entire performance in regards to respect for themselves, other teams and the viewing audience of all ages. Teams should refrain from any taunting or suggestive expressions or gestures as well as discrimination of any nature.
- We recommend that the team and each of its members display an overall appearance conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school in regards to grooming, traditional and appropriate attire, conservative make-up, uniformity, etc.

Competition Area:

- Participants may stand or enter outside the competition area.
- All permitted skills (stunts, pyramids, tumbling etc.) must be performed on the competition mat.
- Competitions comply with the USA Cheer surface ruling that school-based programs may not compete on a spring floor.
- Approximate floor size will be a traditional mat of 54 feet wide by 42 feet deep (9 strips).
- Objects cannot be thrown outside the competition floor.
- After the use of poms, Signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners they may be placed or dropped outside the competition area by a team member to prevent any safety violations.

Time Limitations:

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 3 minutes combined for all 4 elements
- Time will start from first choreographed movement including skills
- Teams **may not** set up props in advance of any category.
- All introductions (chants, spell-outs, etc.) are considered part of the routine and are timed as part of the performance.
- There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

Routine and Judging Requirements:

- Each team's routine will include a band chant, situational sideline, crowd leading cheer and fight song.
- Teams should utilize all areas of their squad's crowd-leading strengths. The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is encouraged.
- The DSCA Safety Score sheet will be used to assess any safety violations/concerns during each team's performance.

Judging will be based on the following criteria:

- Band Chant
    - The team should demonstrate spirit and enthusiasm while entering the performance floor and before the music begins.
    - A cue will **NOT** be given to start the Band Chant.
    - Once the music begins, the teams cannot incorporate any skills other than jumps and kicks.
    - Teams should utilize spirit raising props and focus on creative movements including but not limited to level changes/ripples, execution of the material and encouraging the crowd to participate.
- Situational Sideline
    - Will follow the Band Chant.
    - The announcer will provide a cue for offense ("It's 1st and 10 for the home team") or defense ("Our team needs to make a stop here to steal the win").
    - Teams should wait until the announcer finishes the cue to show the proper response to the game day situation.
    - It is a requirement to incorporate skills into the sideline (stunts and/or tumbling).
    - Teams should focus on crowd effectiveness, motion technique and skills relevant to a game day environment.
- Crowd Leading
    - Will follow the situational sideline. Teams must return to the performance surface and show a clear separation between elements.
    - Teams can show spirited interaction as a clear transition into the Crowd Leading material but are not allowed to stunt.
    - Crowd Leading can include a cheer reflective of a timeout, general sideline/spell-out or other cheer material with minimal words, inciting a response and encouraging a crowd to yell along.
    - Teams should incorporate spirit props and practical skills (stunts and/or tumbling)
- Fight Song
    - Should reflect your school's traditional Fight Song.
    - Fight Song is limited to three (3) consecutive 8-counts of stunts and/or tumbling. Counts will begin with the initiation of a skill and continue until either the incorporation is complete or the 3rd 8-count. (If the Fight Song repeats, the incorporation will only be permitted both times if the skills are repeated exactly the same.
    - Teams should incorporate crowd effective skills (stunts and/or tumbling) and can include spirit raising props to enhance the overall effect.
    - If a team does not have an official Fight Song, it is recommended to use a second selection of band chant music. Music guidelines are available at varisty.com/music.

<u>Specific Skill Restrictions:</u>

- No tosses (basket, sponge or elevator)
- No inversions and/or twisting released dismounts are permitted.
- Single leg stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches.
- No running tumbling is allowed. Standing tumbling is limited to one tumbling skill, which can include back handsprings or back tucks. Rippled single back handsprings are permitted. Jump tumble (single skills) is also permitted.
- During the Band Chant, only kicks and jumps are permitted