



NYS Competitive Handbook

- I. **Season** - Teams may compete in Competitive divisions within the Winter Cheerleading Season, only.
- II. **State Championship** -
 - A. Scheduled for the Saturday of Week 16 of the Winter Season.
 - B. The championship format will be a preliminary round for each class, then a final round for the top 5 teams.
- III. **Team Size** - The following minimum and maximum requirements are only in effect for competing in the NYS PHSAA State Championships:
 - A. **Class A & B**: A minimum of 3 stunt groups (12 athletes) and a maximum of 24 athletes.
 - B. **Class C & D**: A minimum of 2 stunt groups (8 athletes) and maximum of 20 athletes.
 - C. **COED**: A minimum of 2 stunt groups (8 athletes) and a maximum of 24 athletes.
- IV. **Judges Panel** - Must request 4 Panel and 1 Safety for any event that is counting toward the teams minimal required competitions.
- V. **Uniforms** - Any cheerleading uniform may be used.
- VI. **Coaching Requirements** -
 - A. [USA Cheer Safety & Risk Management Course](#) (Every 4 Years)
 - B. [High School NFHS Rules Courses for Coaches](#) (Comprehensive Course the first year, then the Comprehensive Course OR Changes Only Course, annually)
 - C. Encouraged: RefReps NYS Cheerleading Training Course (Annually)
 - D. Note: These are in addition to the required courses for all coaches
- VII. **Injury/Illness During A Performance** -
 - A. The only person(s) that may stop a routine for injury are: competition director/organizer, competition officials, the coach of the team performing. This is a shared responsibility of all parties involved to recognize an injury has occurred.
 - B. When a performance has been stopped due to injury/illness, the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. The spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of the competition director/organizer. The team must perform the routine again in its entirety (all skills performed) but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.
 - C. The injured athlete that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
 - 1. The affected athlete(s) receives clearance from the Medical Personnel/Athletic Trainer.
 - 2. An athlete who has a suspected concussion should be removed from the activity immediately and should not be allowed to return to participation the same day of the incident and without being cleared by a medical professional in accordance with NYS PHSAA concussion protocol.
- VIII. **NYS Deductions and Violations** -
 - A. Rules - All NFHS Spirit Rules must be followed



- B. See [NYS Defined Deductions](#) for Complete List of Deductions
- C. Competitive Timing Deduction: 2:30 Maximum/30 Second Cheer Minimum -
Timing will begin with the first movement, voice or note of the music, whichever comes first. Teams may start in a load position or choreographed position before timing begins. The timing will end when the music ends or the team is done chanting. If teams end in stunts, the timing stops but can still receive applicable deductions. Judges will not issue a deduction until 2:34 for the full routine and less than 29 seconds for the cheer.
 - 1. Cheer Minimum (-5.0)
 - 2. Overall Routine 4 - 5 seconds over (-1.0)
 - 3. Overall Routine 6 seconds or more over (-2.0)
- IX. **Competitive Routines** - NYS Competitive routines, teams will be evaluated on a crowd leading or performance cheer, building skills, tumbling skills, jumps, dance, and routine composition, creativity, & performance. Safety and proper progression is emphasized above the difficulty of skills. Therefore, athletes should not perform skills without mastering proper lower level progressions of any given skill.
 - A. Total Time is limited to 2 minutes and 30 second
 - B. Teams are required to incorporate a minimum of 30 seconds of cheer, anywhere within the routine. No music can be played during the cheer portion of the routine.
 - C. NYS Game Day Score Sheets:
 - 1. [Competitive Score Sheets](#) (Proposed for 2025)
 - 2. [Competitive Safety Deductions & Violations Score Sheet](#)
 - D. Teams may choose to perform a crowd leading cheer or a performance cheer. Skills are required within the cheer. If no skills are incorporated, all scores associated with skills will receive a zero. Props are not required within the cheer, but are necessary for an effective crowd leading cheer and may enhance a performance cheer, if used effectively.
 - E. The incorporation of skills (Stunts/Pyramids, Tumbling, & Jumps) are required within the music portion of the competitive routine. Any skill category not performed will receive a zero for all associated scoring elements and may affect the routine composition score(s).
 - F. Minimally, teams are required to perform two connected, full team jumps, with variety.
 - 1. Each of the two selected jumps must be the same jump performed by the entire team. Any athlete not performing the same jump as the rest of the team will decrease the total number of points possible for the jump execution score.
 - 2. Teams that do not perform two different connected jumps will receive a zero. *Note: Left/Right Hurdlers are considered the same jump and therefore can be performed at the same time for one of the two connected jumps.*
 - G. Dance is required within the routine but does not have a minimum number of 8 counts and does not have a required number of participants.