

Illinois Drill Team Association

Competition Categories

(revised for 2025-2026 season)

1:45 - 3:00 Minute Categories

Pom

- A. Pom difficulty and design are the focus throughout the entire routine creating a visually engaging and colorful performance.
- B. Pom visuals are created through the use of multiple planes of the body incorporating a variety of movement techniques.
- C. If dance skills (turns, leaps, jumps, etc.) are included in the choreography, emphasis should be placed on the visual aspects created through colorful pom work.
- D. During transitions, pom visuals are present along with a variety of lower body movements.
- E. Equipment is limited to poms.

Open Pom

- A. A simultaneous blend of sharp, precise, controlled pom work with lower body dance sequencing that creates visuals is the focus of the routine.
- B. Pom work:
 - a. If two colors of poms are used, thoughtful design is utilized to create depth and visual interest.
 - b. If one color of pom is used, pom work is designed to create strong visual effects.
- C. A variety of dance sequencing and pom visuals are used throughout the choreography, including transitions.
- D. Equipment is limited to a maximum of two (2) poms per performer.

Jazz

- A. The focus of the routine is on movement quality with a consistent jazz style that includes full-body stylization and strong, sharp, and intricate choreography.
- B. Clear and complex rhythms are utilized within the music.
- C. A strong energy is present in the communication and performance quality.
- D. A consistent style is used throughout the routine, including transitions.
- E. No equipment may be used.

Lyrical

- A. The focus of the routine is the emphasis of fluid movements with a strong ballet influence.
- B. An emotional perspective is consistently conveyed throughout the routine through body movements and facial expressions.
- C. The routine tells a story from the opening through the dance phrases and transitions to the conclusion, incorporating numerous linking moments throughout.
- D. Consistent performance quality and aligned, intentional movement throughout the routine strengthen the emotional connection with the audience and enhance the visual storytelling.
- E. No equipment may be used.

Hip Hop

- A. The focus of the routine is on dynamic, full-body athletic movements like hard hits (popping), holds (locking), smooth grooves, and acrobatic power moves (breaking).
- B. Performers create complex rhythms, beats, and patterns with their bodies, forming visual images that directly complement and enhance the music.
- C. A strong performance constantly engages both the upper and lower body simultaneously, utilizing a variety of transitions that avoid repetition.
- D. Hip-hop dancers combine showmanship with dynamic musicality, using high energy communication and precise movements to interpret beats, from hard-hitting to slow, creating a memorable visual experience for the audience.
- E. No equipment may be used.

Kick

- A. Overall emphasis throughout the routine is on high-kicks, including transitions.
- B. A kick is defined as one foot remaining on the floor while the other foot lifts with force off the ground.
- C. Visuals are created through varied leg lines formed by different kicks, preparations, landings, and connections.
- D. The routine demonstrates a fluid use of kick sequences, rather than presenting them in segmented or block-style sections.
- E. No equipment may be used.

Precision Flag (formerly Tall Flag)

- A. Emphasis throughout the routine is on clear visuals created by the tall flag silks.
 - a. Junior High - 3 foot minimum pole
 - b. High School - 5 foot minimum pole
- B. Choreography utilizes a more upbeat tempo; styles could include influences from but are not limited to jazz and hip hop.
- C. A variety of lower body movements should be incorporated, with efforts made to simultaneously blend upper and lower body movements, emphasizing the visual impact created by the tall flag silks.
- D. During transitions, silk visuals are present along with a variety of lower body movements.
- E. Multiple tall flags may be used. No additional equipment is allowed.

Lyrical Flag

- A. Emphasis throughout the routine is on clear visuals created by the tall flag silks.
 - a. Junior High - 3 foot minimum pole
 - b. High School - 5 foot minimum pole
- B. Choreography utilizes a slower tempo with more fluid movements.
- C. An emotional point of view is present throughout the routine.
- D. A variety of lower body movements should be incorporated, with efforts made to simultaneously blend upper and lower body movements, emphasizing the visual impact created by the tall flag silks.
- E. During transitions, silk visuals are present along with a variety of lower body movements.
- F. Multiple tall flags may be used. No additional equipment is allowed.

IHSA

- A. Varsity teams may choose to enter two (2) routines of any style in this category. Teams will receive written feedback from IHSA Officials utilizing the IHSA scoresheet and rubric.
- B. This category will not be included in the IDTA State Finals.

3:00 - 5:00 Minute Categories

Production

- A. The focus of the routine is to tell a story or convey a theme through character development using dance, props, backdrops, and additional stage pieces.
- B. A variety of complex and creative dance elements should be incorporated with a simultaneous blend of upper and lower body movements, emphasizing the visual impact created by prop manipulation.
- C. Transitions are seamless, contribute to the story/theme development, incorporate a variety of movements and showcase effective use of props and/or set pieces.
- D. Costumes should be fitting to the theme or storyline. *A costume that replicates trademark logos of any size is permitted.*
- E. Set-up time is a five (5) minute limit.

Winter Guard

- A. The focus of the routine is the use of at least three (3) pieces of color guard equipment (tall flags, short flags, swing flags, chain flags, rifles, sabers, ribbons, hoops, etc).
- B. A variety of lower body movements should be incorporated, with efforts made to simultaneously blend upper and lower body movements, emphasizing the visual impact created by the equipment.
- C. During transitions, visuals created through the equipment are present along with a variety of lower body movements.
- D. Props, backdrops, and floor coverings may be used, but are not required.
- E. Set-up time is a five (5) minute limit.

1:30 - 2:00 Minute Categories - Soloists

IDTA Soloist Guidelines

- All soloists must be members of an IDTA-affiliated team.
- Only senior varsity members are eligible to compete as soloists.
- Soloists may participate in up to two (2) regional contests.
- Each team may enter a maximum of two (2) soloists per regional contest.
- Each regional contest will be limited to fifteen (15) dance solos and fifteen (15) flag solos.
- All solo routines must adhere to the same guidelines required for team performances.
- Soloists earning a score of 80% or higher will qualify for the IDTA Solo Preliminaries, with the opportunity to advance to the Final Round and compete for the title of IDTA Dance Solo Grand Champion or IDTA Flag Solo Grand Champion. These events will be held in conjunction with the IDTA State Finals.

Fees:

- Entry fee for regional contests is \$50.00 (paid to the Contest Host).
- Entry fee for the IDTA Solo Grand Champions is \$100.00 (paid to IDTA).

Solo Dance

- A. Style should be one of four categories: jazz, lyrical, contemporary, or hip-hop.
- B. Emphasis is on captivating the audience with a unique blend of technical mastery, emotional expression, and compelling storytelling.
- C. Props may also be used.

Solo Flag

- A. Any style of flags may be used.
- B. A variety of lower body movements should be incorporated, with efforts made to simultaneously blend upper and lower body movements, emphasizing the visual impact created by the equipment.
- C. Additional color guard equipment (tall flags, short flags, swing flags, chain flags, rifles, sabers, ribbons, hoops, etc) may also be used.
- D. Props may also be used.