



WANT TO BE A CHEERLEADER

ALL STAR CHEERLEADING

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All star cheerleading is all about serious competition. It's unlike high school or college cheerleading because there are no games to cheer at, no spirit-raising, and most of the cheerleaders on each team will not even go to the same school. So for someone who is looking for competition only, all star cheerleading may be the answer. If you are interested in this field of cheerleading, know exactly what to expect with our guide to cheering for an all star team!

TRYOUTS

The tryout process for all star is different than most cheerleading programs. An all star tryout or what is sometimes called an evaluation, will usually last between April, May and June, which is the beginning of a new season. When trying out for an all star gym, you can expect to first be separated into age groups. You will practice with that age group, and by your skills, the program will determine which team you will be placed on based upon your skills and the needs of the team. Levels range from one to six, with one being the lowest skill level and six being the highest. For example, say a gym got 40 cheerleaders in the junior age group. Sometime between April and June, each cheerleader would be evaluated and placed on a level. If a cheerleader has a back handspring, they will probably be put on the level three team or below, if they have a full twist, they will probably be placed on the level five team.

Once the tryout process is over, that does not necessarily mean the team is set in stone. One of the best parts of all star cheerleading is that most gyms accept new members to teams all year long, so if you miss tryouts in the spring, you can still be placed on a team after being evaluated. When new people come in, coaches may switch people around to different squads, depending on skill levels. Although this is the process for most all star gyms, every gym is different, so the rules may change depending on the owners, coaches, and the size of the gym.

CAMP

Generally, all star teams will not attend a regular summer camp. Instead, they have a choreography camp that is held at their home gym. They will hire a choreographer to teach them routine material that they can use throughout the year at competition. Regular choreography camps last approximately three to four days and are held anywhere from the middle to the end of the summer season. At these summer camps, you and your team will focus on national or state routines and what your coaches want to add to them including dancing, tumbling, and stunting. If a team wants to focus on skills only, there are shorter camps that some gyms may sign up for that last one to two days. At these

camp, a choreographer comes in and gives you and your team lessons on different stunts and transitions. You will see that for all stars, the point of camp is to focus on their routine for the upcoming year, as competition is the main priority.



PRACTICES

Because competition is the main focus throughout the year, practice is one of the most important aspects of being an all star cheerleader. Most gyms will practice two consecutive hours on weekdays with an additional weekend practice that will last two hours as well. For smaller programs or younger teams, practice may not be as frequent, therefore, about five hours or more a week can be expected.

Once competition season emerges, you can expect practice to take up a great deal of time. Weeks before competition,

coaches will call mandatory extra practices that cheerleaders must show up, ready to work. There may also be extra tumbling practices for certain team members, even when the team is not practicing. The night before a competition, gyms will often have trial practices. This way, the squads are prepared with the routine fresh on their mind for the following day.

SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Whether you are at a competition, practicing at the gym, or out with friends, it is important that as an all star cheerleader you always present yourself in a respectable manner. As a part of an all star program, you are not only representing yourself, but you are representing a cheerleading program. Gym owners take their business very seriously, and they expect their cheerleaders to portray them well. So, if you are ever in uniform, in public with a team t-shirt on, or you are representing your team in any way, always honor yourself and your team.