



2025 USA DANCE NATIONALS GUIDELINES

This packet includes event information for the **2025 USA Dance Nationals** weekend in Anaheim, CA on **March 21 - 23, 2025**.

Solo Champion Prelims/Semi-Finals and Senior, Junior, Sophomore/Freshman Solo Divisions Prelims/Finals will begin the morning of **Friday, March 21st**.

Preliminary team divisions will take place on **Saturday, March 22nd**.

Finals for team divisions and Solo Champion will take place on **Sunday, March 23rd**.

You may wish to visit the *Disneyland*[®] Resort during competition weekend. The *Disneyland*[®] Resort includes the *Downtown Disney*[®] District, *Disneyland*[®] Park, and *Disney California Adventure*[®] Park. The *Downtown Disney*[®] District offers dining, entertainment, and shopping. A theme park admission ticket is not necessary to visit the *Downtown Disney*[®] District. A theme park ticket and a reservation is required to visit *Disneyland*[®] Park, and *Disney California Adventure*[®] Park.

If you have any questions regarding the 2025 USA Dance Nationals event please contact the USA office at 800-886-4872 or USACompetitions@varsity.com.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2025 USA Dance Nationals in Anaheim



2025 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 21

10:00 AM – 10:00PM

Anaheim Convention Center

Solo Champion Prelims and Semi-Finals
Senior, Junior and Sophomore/Freshman Solo Prelims and Finals
Awards and announcement of Finalists will be presented throughout the day.

SATURDAY, MARCH 22

8:00 AM – 11:00 PM

Anaheim Convention Center

All Team Division Prelims

SUNDAY, MARCH 23

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Anaheim Convention Center

Solo Champion Finals
All Team Division Finals

Divisions competing on Friday and Saturday for 2025 are different than 2024. The USA reserves the right to combine, split, delete, and/or add divisions for USA Dance Nationals and/or to adjust the percentage of teams advancing to Finals based on competition enrollment. The USA reserves the right to adjust days of performance and/or times of competition for all divisions based upon final competition enrollment.



GENERAL INFORMATION

USA CHEER - DANCE MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT

USA Cheer, the organization responsible for reviewing and updating cheerleading safety standards, has developed a comprehensive **Dance Membership Program**, which includes a background check, athlete protection training, acknowledgement of concussion training with return to participation guidance, and a member code of conduct. We realize this falls under the USA Cheer umbrella; however, we know how important and pertinent this information is for dance coaches. Because of this, we will work with USA Cheer for dance coaches to complete this course.

Varsity Spirit requires that all school dance coaches, choreographers and personnel wishing to access the warmup area, backstage, coaches' box or music table at our competitions have a USA Cheer Dance Coach, Cheer Coach, STUNT Coach or Professional Membership. **The USA Cheer General Membership does not provide access to the restricted areas. Please note that children under the age of 18 who are not competing are not allowed in the restricted areas.**

HOTEL INFORMATION

USA is happy to work with our housing partner, Team Travel Source, to provide hotel arrangements for your team. Although it is not a requirement to go through Team Travel Source to attend the event, we highly recommend this as they are experts in working with teams to meet your housing needs

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to book hotel rooms through Team Travel Source.

DISNEY TICKETS

Additional information will be sent separately to school registered for Dance Nationals once it is finalized.

EVENT ADMISSION – PARTICIPANTS AND COACHES

All participant wristbands will be included in the team's registration packet.

All coaches/directors attending the event must be on a team roster. Proof of the USA Cheer Coach, STUNT Coach, Dance Coach or Professional Membership is required to gain access into the event.

Complimentary director/coach wristbands per school will be given for director/coaches as follows:

01 – 20 Competitors Two (2) Director/Coaches wristbands
21 – 30 Competitors Three (3) Director/Coaches wristbands
31 – 40 Competitors Four (4) Director/Coaches wristbands
41 – 50 Competitors Five (5) Director/Coaches wristbands Over

50+ Competitors – one director/coach wristband for every 10 dancers

Up to two (2) additional coaches' wristbands per school may be purchased in advance through the team registration.

All personnel wishing to have access to the warmup, backstage, or coaches' box will need to check in, provide a photo ID and show proof of a USA Cheer Coach, STUNT Coach, Dance Coach or Professional Membership at event registration. **The general membership from USA Cheer does not meet this requirement. Please note that children under the age of 18 who are not competing are not allowed in the restricted areas.**

EVENT ADMISSION – FAMILY AND GUESTS

No cash admission purchases will take place on-site during the event. Admission **must be** pre-purchased for spectators. The link to purchase Spectator tickets will be available on the USA website Dance Nationals page once we get closer to the event start date. Additional fees for online ticket purchases may apply. Please either print a copy of your confirmed admission purchase or have your smart phone available for scanning. We highly recommend pre-purchasing your admission to the event, as purchase on-site by cash is not available and electronic purchase the day of the event may not be available and/or may delay your entry.

PERFORMANCE ORDER/SCHEDULES

Typically, performance order is based on the registration date. The first registration entered will be the last to perform in that division and the last registration entered will be the first to perform in that division. Adjustments may be necessary due to division/team conflicts.

If the deposit is not received by the deadline, then performance order will be affected and determined by when the deposit/payment in full is received.

All teams will be given an assigned check-in and warm-up time prior to competition. Warm up areas will vary depending on the competition location.

The contact on the registration will be emailed a tentative line up with performance times at least 2 weeks prior to the competition. These times are subject to change. The final schedule will be available by checking

usa.varsity.com after 5:00 PM (PST) the Wednesday prior to the competition. As of this day, performance times usually remain the same regardless of scratches. It is the director/coach's responsibility to check the schedule for accuracy of divisions, team size, etc. prior to the day of competition.

MUSIC

Teams may use as many songs in the music portion of their routine as they like. Music rules are being followed at all USA and Varsity Brands events. Competition music must be properly licensed and a team must be able to provide proof of licensing at any event where the music is used. If a team cannot provide proof of licensing immediately upon request, the team may be disqualified from the event. For further details visit varsity.com/music-guidelines.

Music is defined as any recorded sound amplified through the competition sound system.

A sound system will be provided. Speed control is not available. Music checks on the main sound system are not permitted. A representative must be present at the sound system at the time of performance. Advisors/coaches are asked to hold onto their own music until the time of performance and to take music back following the performance.

All teams must provide their own MP3 device or smart phone for use on the event provided sound system. Music must be recorded at the correct tempo. Although it is not recommended due to interference that may be caused during a routine, a smart phone may be used for playing music. No cover may be on any MP3 player or smart phone so that a patch cord may be easily inserted into the device. Please ensure that jacks are clean and free of any debris which may impact connectivity. You must ensure that your device has a jack into which a patch cord may be inserted. Note that you will need to acquire an adapter in advance if your player does not have a headphone jack. One or several selections of music may be used, as long as they follow the music licensing rules.

SENIOR, JUNIOR AND SOPHOMORE/FRESHMAN SOLO DIVISIONS

There will be 4 solo divisions. Schools can enter 1 Solo Champion, 1 Senior dancer, 1 Junior dancer and up to 1 Sophomore and 1 Freshman dancer into the Sophomore/Freshman division. Participants can only compete in 1 solo division. Entrants must be registered students in the high school they are representing and official full-time members of their team at the time of competition. USA Dance Nationals Solo Champion rules also apply in this division. The Senior, Junior and Sophomore/Freshman divisions have a Finals competition that is completed on Friday. The winner of any of these 3 divisions may not compete in the same grade division the following season after being awarded the title but may compete in a higher grade level (if they are in that grade) or the USA Dance Nationals Solo Champion division.

Awards -- the grade level solo divisions will each receive a USA Dance Nationals trophy and a \$500 scholarship to the accredited college of his/her/their choice (upon proof of college registration – expiration date applies).

USA DANCE NATIONALS SOLO CHAMPION

The USA Dance Nationals Solo Champion is an individual competition for high school students. **No more than one participant per school may enter.** An entrant must be a registered student in the high school he/she/they represent and an official full-time member of his/her/their team at the time of competition. The Solo Champion winner may not compete in either solo division (USA Dance Nationals Solo Champion or grade level solo division) the following season after winning the title.

Awards – the USA Dance Nationals Solo Champion will receive the following awards: a USA Dance Nationals trophy, the opportunity to appear at the 2026 USA Dance Nationals (travel and lodging paid depending upon champion’s location at the time of 2026 Dance Nationals) and a \$750 scholarship to the accredited college of his/her/their choice (upon proof of registration – expiration date applies). The five finalists each will receive a trophy. The ten semifinalists each will receive a USA medallion.

Preliminaries and Semifinals – Contestants will be randomly divided into two groups (A and B). Ten semifinalists will be selected (five from group A and five from group B). The ten semifinalists will repeat their performance after the preliminary competition on Friday and then the top five finalists will be announced.

Finals – All five finalists will be introduced at the end of Friday’s preliminary competition. The five finalists will perform their solos on Sunday throughout the team Finals competition. One contestant will be awarded the prestigious title of “USA Dance Nationals Solo Champion 2025.”

Rules – All contestants must perform a solo dance routine up to 2 minutes in length: entrance up to 15 seconds and exit up to 15 seconds. Handheld props are allowed but should not be used for more than half of the routine. Timing will begin at the first note of music or movement. There are no routine style requirements or restrictions. Preliminaries and finals will take place on at least a 30’ x 30’ parquet/marley or similar type dance floor. All contestants will be judged by professional judges and will receive score sheets and comments from at least one audio judge.

DIVISIONS

Prior qualification through a USA Regional competition or other sanctioned event/process is required in order to attend Dance Nationals in any division (excluding solos and Jr. High teams). The Regional/Classic must be run by the United Spirit Association Dance program. No other competition scores will count towards qualifying. If you do not have a USA Dance Regional or Classic in your area, you must attend a virtual regional. Register early! **Teams do not need to wait to qualify for Nationals before registering.**

Bids to Nationals are awarded to teams receiving 80% of total possible points for all Championship divisions and 75% of total possible points for all other team divisions, regardless of any penalties received.

Qualification by virtual competition is available if there is not a USA Regional within two (2) hours typical driving time of a team’s school.

Schools will be limited to entering **five (5) divisions** at USA Dance Nationals as part of their per participant registration. Teams may elect to enter a 6th or 7th division. The 6th or 7th divisions will cost an additional \$207.00 team fee per division. This does not include individual soloists. Multiple teams from a school will be allowed (e.g. Drill Team vs. Dance Team or Varsity vs. JV, etc.) with no individual(s) competing on both teams.

DANCE FLOOR

All team performances (other than all x-small and small divisions) will take place on a basketball court/parquet/marley or similar type dance floor measuring at least 50’ (front to back) by 80’ (side to side). Competition in all x-small and small divisions (Intermediate and Championship) will take place on a parquet/marley or similar type dance floor measuring at least 39’ x 60.’ Floor size is subject to change.

AWARDS

Intermediate and Championships Divisions – top teams from each division will be designated as Finalists and will compete during the Saturday program for final placement. The number of teams selected will be determined by the size of the division. Prelims scores do not affect Final scores.

Three (3) teams, regardless of division, will be awarded the *Judges Award of Excellence*. In addition, a special award for **Choreography** will be given. Trophies will be presented for these awards. Judges Award of Excellence winners will receive a scholarship prize payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp.

Grand Champion Award – the USA recognizes schools that compete in a variety of styles by offering the Grand Championship Award. A school must compete in **four different style categories in the “Championship” divisions** at USA Dance Nationals to be eligible for this award. At least one routine must be in the following categories; Kick, Prop, Novelty/Musical Theater, Character Dance, Hip Hop and/or Dance/Pom divisions. For example, (1) Dance (2) Hip Hop (3) Military and (4) Novelty. Divisions separated by size within the same style category **do not** count as two separate categories (i.e. if a team competes in Championship Small Dance and Championship Medium Dance, only the highest scoring of those routines will count toward the Grand Champion Award). *Scores are tallied based on the results of the Prelims competition*. A trophy and a banner will be presented for this award. In addition, a scholarship prize payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp will be awarded to the Grand Champion.

Dance Sweepstakes Award – this prestigious award will go to the highest overall scoring performance out of the Championship X-Small, Small, Medium, and Large Dance divisions combined. This award will be presented during the final awards ceremony on Sunday. The Sweepstakes Award winner will receive a trophy and a scholarship *payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp!*

Military Sweepstakes Award – this prestigious award will go to the highest overall scoring performance out of the Championship Small and Large Military divisions combined. This award will be presented during the final awards ceremony on Sunday. The Sweepstakes Award winner will receive a trophy and a scholarship *payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp!*

Lyrical Sweepstakes Award – this prestigious award will go to the highest overall scoring performance out of the Championship Small, Medium, and Large Lyrical divisions combined. This award will be presented during the final awards ceremony on Sunday. The Sweepstakes Award winner will receive a trophy and a scholarship *payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp!*

Hip Hop Sweepstakes Award – this prestigious award will go to the highest overall scoring performance out of the Championship Small, Medium, and Large Hip Hop divisions combined. This award will be presented during the final awards ceremony on Sunday. The Sweepstakes Award winner will receive a trophy and a scholarship *payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp!*

Dance/Pom Sweepstakes Award – this prestigious award will go to the highest overall scoring performance out of the Championship Small and Large Dance/Pom divisions combined. This award will be presented during the final awards ceremony on Sunday. The Sweepstakes Award winner will receive a trophy and a scholarship *payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp!*

Contemporary Sweepstakes Award – this prestigious award will go to the highest overall scoring performance

out of the Championship X-Small, Small, Medium, and Large Contemporary divisions combined. This award will be presented during the final awards ceremony on Sunday. The Sweepstakes Award winner will receive a trophy and a scholarship *payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp!*

Jazz Sweepstakes Award – this prestigious award will go to the highest overall scoring performance out of the Championship X-Small, Small, Medium, and Large Jazz divisions combined. This award will be presented during the final awards ceremony on Sunday. The Sweepstakes Award winner will receive a trophy and a scholarship *payable towards a 2025 USA Summer Camp!*

For the 2025 USA Dance Nationals competition, trophies will be presented to 50% of the teams competing in each division. For teams placing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, individual medallions will be given to each participant. First place teams will also receive a USA Dance Nationals banner and each individual team participant will receive a Champion gift. **Should the same individual be on a first-place team more than one time, only one (1) Champion gift will be awarded.**

ROSTER

Roster of all competing participants, alternates, and coaches must be submitted for the USA Dance Nationals on or before **February 24, 2025**.

RELEASE FORMS

The 2025 USA Dance Nationals Digital Release forms need to be submitted on or before **February 28, 2025**. **All participants and any adult with a USA Cheer Coach/Dance/Professional Membership must submit a 2025 USA Dance Nationals Digital waiver.**

REGISTRATION PACKETS

Registration packets will be available for pick-up by the authorized team representative only starting on **Thursday, March 20, 2025, at 9:00 AM**. Packets will not be mailed in advance. Individuals are not allowed to pick up portions of the registration packet. This ensures that all contents are received and accounted for by the school representative.



2025 USA DANCE NATIONAL PRICING/DEADLINES

ENTRANCE FEES

Competitor Entrance Fee **\$163.00 per person**
All competitors/alternates must purchase a competitor's entrance fee

Extra Coaches Admission **\$57.00 per person**
Up to two (2) additional coaches wristbands per team may be purchased in advance through the team registration.

Additional Coach wristbands will need to be added manually by the USA Office.

ADDITIONAL DIVISIONS

Solo Champion **\$107.00 per person**
Additional competition fee for anyone participating in Solo Champion division
(maximum of one (1) per school)

Senior, Junior or Sophomore/Freshman Solo Divisions **\$94.00 per person**
Additional competition fee for anyone participating in a grade level solo division
(maximum 1 Senior dancer, 1 Junior dancer and up to 1 Sophomore and 1 Freshman dancer)

6th and 7th Divisions Entry **\$207.00 per team/per division**

DEADLINES

- **December 31, 2024** – All Dance Nationals registrations must be entered online.
- **February 6, 2025** – to secure performance order, \$100 per dancer registration deposit or payment in full must be received in the USA Office.
- **February 13, 2025** – Original Dance Nationals Roster is due in the USA Office.
- **February 21, 2025** – Deadline for division and roster changes. No refunds for participant/team cancellations after this date and full competition fees will still be due. **There are no division or roster changes after February 21, 2025.** Deadline is subject to change.
- **February 28, 2025** - The 2025 USA Dance Nationals Digital Waiver must be submitted on or before this date.
- **March 6, 2025** – Final balance due



2025 DANCE NATIONALS' RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. **GENERAL RULES**

The competition will follow the same general information and safety rules as set forth in the 2024 - 25 Dance Regional Competition "General Guidelines" link. (Available on-line at usa.varsity.com). Each team is responsible for reading and understanding the guidelines set forth in the 2024 - 25 Competitions "General Guidelines" and "Safety Updates" literature. **All penalties/safety infractions found in routines at Nationals will be upheld, regardless of whether the penalty was assessed or found at the Regional level.** Entrants may submit a "Safety Guideline Video" by February 17, 2025 for review of safety legalities in their routine(s) prior to Nationals. The USA will respond officially to the team's inquiry and file the response for review (if necessary) at USA Dance Nationals

The competition will consist of the categories/divisions listed in the 2024 - 25 Dance Regional Competition "General Guidelines" link posted at usa.varsity.com.

Categories/divisions may be subdivided or combined at the discretion of the competition director/officials if the total number of teams in a division warrant this. **The USA reserves the right to adjust days of performance for all divisions based upon final competition enrollment.**

Schools may enter a maximum of **SEVEN** categories (excluding solo divisions); however, no individual may participate on two teams in the same division. (Example: An individual cannot perform in two routines competing in the Small Dance division).

There is no limit to the number of individuals permitted on a team in the largest division of any category, if the routine can be performed safely within the given floor size constraints.

Performer Eligibility

Entrants in all divisions must be registered students in the school they are representing and official members of the team at the time of competition.

Routine Violations

All teams must compete in the same qualifying categories in which they qualified for USA Dance Nationals through a USA Regional Competition (Small Dance, Medium Military, etc.).

Time Limitations

Timing of a routine will begin on the first note of music or movement made, whichever comes first. Set-up timing will stop when the routine begins. Penalties for exceeding the entrance or exit time and/or the routine time limit will be deducted from the final averaged score. Please refer to the 2024 - 25 Dance Competitions "Safety Updates" for time limits in each category. (Available on-line at usa.varsity.com.) **We recommend that you "time" your performance several times prior to the competition and give yourself at least five seconds of "cushion" to allow for speed variations in sound equipment.**

Teams and individuals are encouraged to move on and off the floor as quickly as possible. Set-ups and break-downs will be timed in all categories.

Music Guidelines

- a) I have read and understand the USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative and all sound recordings used in our team's music shall only be used with written license from the owners(s) of the sound recordings.
- b) For the most up to date music information, visit varsity.com/music-guidelines. If you have any questions, email musicinfo@varsity.com. Please periodically check the provider list for updates and changes.
- c) Teams must be able to provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, during registration at the event they are attending.
- d) If your team is featured in a TV and/or virtual broadcast and uses an original composition created for your performance, your routine music will be used in the show if you also secured synchronization rights. Teams must be able to provide written documentation that synchronization rights were properly secured during registration at the event for the original routine music to be included in the show.
- e) When recording your music for the event, coaches or music editors should edit their song in a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) and make sure that the volume of the song is at 0. Things to note: Most DAW's have a default that sets a track at -6 when a track is added. Check to see if there is a normalization process after you render or save your work.
- f) If you would like to perform your school's original fight song, you may bring a recording of your marching band playing the song. You will need to get the school's permission to use the song and recording. A letter granting permission for the cheer or dance team to use the fight song on school letterhead is enough. It should be signed by your program's administrative supervisor. Go to varsity.com/music for more details.
- g) If a team does not have required paperwork, they will be given the option to count the routine verbally or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts (provided by Varsity Spirit).
- h) If a team does not have the required paperwork and chooses not to count the routine or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts, the team will be disqualified from the competition and not allowed to perform or compete.
- i) If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.
- j) A challenge can only be made by the official coach of a team competing at the event at which the challenge is being made.
- k) Challenge Process
 - i) All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the event director.
 - ii) There will be \$100 fee to request a music challenge and must be in the form of a check made out to St Jude Children's Research Hospital.
 - iii) Fees collected will be voided if challenge is correct.
 - iv) If the team challenged can provide documentation during the event and can be verified, the fees will be donated to St. Jude.
 - v) If the team challenged can provide documentation that requires further review, a decision will be finalized within 48 hours of the event.

- vii) Each team is required to have a responsible adult that knows the routine and music as a representative remain at the music station (no alternates or team members allowed). This representative is responsible for starting the music and stopping the music at the routine's end, or in case of technical malfunction or injury. Should an adult choose not to stay at the music station for the duration of the routine, and a malfunction occurs, the team may or may not be permitted to perform the routine again. Please hold on to your music until the time of your performance. If using an MP3, smart phone, etc. please ensure that there is no case on the device which will obstruct the jack from plugging into the sound system. Please ensure that jacks are clean and free of any debris which may impact connectivity. Note that you may need to acquire an adapter in advance if your player does not have a head phone jack. If you are using a smart phone, please ensure that no interruptions (i.e. phone call, alarm, etc.) occur during your performance. Place the smart phone in "airplane mode," ensure that the volume is turned up and the phone is fully charged. Interference caused by a smart phone that results in routine delay may receive an overtime or delay of contest penalty.

Video Media Policy

No commercial recording (audio or visual) or commercial live streaming is allowed in the event venue or other event-related venues (including, but not limited to, hotels and restaurants) or on the grounds of any such venues (collectively, "Event Locations"). In the event a team authorizes the commercial recording or streaming in any Event Location, the team will be automatically disqualified. In addition, the personal, non-commercial use of live streaming apps (such as Periscope, Facebook Live, etc.) to capture all or any part of a performance during the event is not permitted. By attending/purchasing admission to the event, each attendee grants permission to Varsity Spirit, LLC and its affiliates, designees, agents, licensees, and invitees to use the image, likeness, actions and statements of the attendee in any live or recorded audio, video, film, or photographic display or other transmission, exhibition, publication, or reproduction made of, or at, the event in any medium, whether now known or hereafter created, or context for any purpose, including commercial or promotional purposes, without further authorization or compensation. Any team traveling with a video crew may be disqualified.

Logo Usage

Teams will not be allowed to use any Varsity Spirit Brand logo, the USA Logo, or the Dance Nationals logo including banners, rings, bows, t-shirts, etc. without prior approval from the USA office. However, the use of the USA letters (not unique to the USA logo) will be allowed.

Performance Area

All team competitions (other than all x-small and small divisions) will take place on a basketball court/parquet/marley or similar type dance floor measuring at least 50' (front to back) and 94' (side to side). Competition in all x-small and small divisions (Open and Championship) will take place on a parquet/marley or similar type dance floor measuring at least 39' x 60.' Floor size is subject to change.

II. INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

Unforeseen Circumstances

- a) If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected should **STOP** the routine.
- b) The team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials.

Fault of Team

- a) In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
- b) The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.

Injury

- a) The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are a) competition officials, b) the director/coach from the team performing or c) an injured individual.
- b) The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform later. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed later, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.
- c) The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
 - i) The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) AND THEN the head coach/director of the competing team.
 - ii) If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
 - iii) Any athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms consistent with concussion should be removed from the activity at that time and should not be allowed to return to activity that day. The athlete should not return to activity on a subsequent day until evaluated by and receives written clearance for such participation from a qualified physician (**MD or DO specifically trained in concussion management**).

Uniform Distractions

- a) The Legality Official, Head Judge or any other competition official reserves the right to stop a routine, assess a deduction, and/or disqualify a team for a uniform distraction (e.g. garment not being securely fastened/attached, straps break, pants split, etc.).
- b) Each performer is required to take the necessary steps to avoid inappropriate exposure prior to the performance.
- c) If a judge stops the routine the penalty will vary from 3 three points to possible disqualification of the routine.

III. APPROPRIATENESS OF CHOREOGRAPHY, MUSIC, OUTFITTING

All facets of a performance or routine, including choreography, music selection and outfitting, should be suitable for family viewing and listening. Uniforms for all team types should be appropriate for the age of the participants performing the routine.

In general, performances from school-based teams, including but not limited to the actual routine, signs, cheers, chants and hand signals/gestures, should adhere to outfitting, performance and music guidelines and criteria in place and approved by the administration or institution to which the school team belongs.

Deductions will be given for vulgar or suggestive choreography, which includes, but is not limited to, movements such as hip thrusting and inappropriate touching, gestures, hand/arm movements and signals, slapping, positioning of body parts and positioning to one another. Deductions will be given for music or words unsuitable for family listening, which includes, but is not limited, to swearwords and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, direct reference to activities which are illegal for minors (ex: alcohol/drugs), mention of specific parts of the body torso, and/or violent acts or behavior.

Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words constitutes "inappropriate", and deductions will be made accordingly. Any uniform or music in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be submitted to the USA for approval prior to the performance taking place.

IV. PRELIMINARY COMPETITIONS

There will be a preliminary competition held in the following categories/divisions: Championship Dance, Championship Jazz, Championship Military, Championship Lyrical, Championship Prop, Championship Novelty, Championship Dance/Pom, Championship All Male, Championship Character Dance, Championship Kick, Championship Hip Hop and Solos (Super Dancer and USA Dance Nationals Solo Champion). The judges and tournament officials have full authority to make final determination of the number of teams selected for the Finals in each category/division (the number will be no less than 20% of the total teams that performed in the division for preliminaries, excluding solos) and/or if a category/division not listed above will proceed to Finals. Should a routine advance from Prelims to Finals at a given event, the overall routine composition and music used (if any) for the routine must be the same in Finals as was performed in Prelims. Adjustments to skills may be made for strategic purposes; however, the spirit of this rule precludes a team/individual from performing an entirely new routine in their Finals performance. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

V. HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the officer, coach or the director of the team and will be directed only to the Competition/Venue Director or their designee. **The competition judges should not be approached at any time.** Such questions must be made prior to the team's competition performance. Any questions concerning the performance of the team must be made to the Competition/Venue Director immediately after the performance. **Should a director or coach wish to lodge a formal complaint against another team in the competition for any violation of "Policies & Procedures" or competition rules, this complaint must be submitted in writing, signed, dated and presented to the Competition/Venue Director prior to any awards ceremony for which the team in question may be eligible to receive an award. It is to the discretion of the Competition/Venue Director whether investigation into the complaint will be completed prior to or after the awards ceremony.**

VI. SPORTSMANSHIP

All participants and spectators affiliated with them agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying positive sportsmanship throughout the competition. The director, coach and/or officer of the team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents and any other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Un-sportsmanlike conduct will include, but is not limited to, approaching other teams, competition judges and/or any competition personnel with inappropriate comments, outbursts or gestures; confrontation with members of another team and/or between spectators of teams. Cases of un-sportsmanlike conduct at any time during the Nationals event are grounds to receive a penalty, up to disqualification, and the USA also has the right to deny entrance to or to remove an individual from the competition site. Additionally, disbarment from future USA events may occur. Payment for any damage caused by participants, parents, family and/or friends to hotel and/or convention center property will be the sole responsibility of the individual(s) and/or the school involved. School administration may be notified of any damages that occur.

VII. SCORES AND RANKINGS

Individual judges' score sheets are for the exclusive use of each judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores prior to the results of each division being announced. Score sheets will be available at the conclusion of the competitions each day. No scores or rankings will be given over the phone. Recaps will be ready for pick-up and included in scoresheet packets at Nationals.

Scoring officials will only discuss my routines and/or scores/deductions. Coaches/directors may not challenge scores/deductions of other teams.

VIII. APPEARANCES, ENDORSEMENTS AND PUBLICITY

All teams winning titles, awards or prizes agree to have all appearances, endorsements and publicity approved through the USA office.

Teams will not be permitted to use the USA and/or Varsity logos, without the express written permission of the United Spirit Association. This includes usage on items such as banners, rings, t-shirts, bows, etc.

IX. INTERPRETATIONS AND RULINGS

Any interpretation of any aspect of these Policies & Procedures or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Competition Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will render a judgement in an effort to ensure that the competition proceeds in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition. The Rules Committee will consist of but is not limited to the Event Director(s), the USA Dance Program Director and the Director of Special Events.

X. FINALTY OF DECISIONS

By participating in this competition, each team agrees that decisions by the judges will be final and will not be subject for review. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable administrative or procedural review of such decisions.

Any school/team and/or individual that does not adhere to the terms and procedures in the "Policies & Procedures" may receive a penalty, up to disqualification from the competition, and automatically forfeit the right to any awards presented by the competition. In addition, the school/team and/or individual may also forfeit the opportunity to participate in any competition produced by the United Spirit Association the following season or subsequent seasons. Any fees (team and/or spectator based) associated with participation in the event will be forfeited in the event of disqualification. The USA reserves the right to deny registration to any team.



SAFETY GUIDELINE VIDEO SUBMISSION

We want you to have a penalty free performance!

Prior to USA Dance Nationals, registered teams have the option to submit videos to the USA for a comprehensive review of whether the Safety Rules have been met prior to USA Dance Nationals. **It is preferable that you send a video showing each individual skill that you would like evaluated, rather than the entire routine.** *These submissions are solely for safety rule evaluations (i.e. skills in routines that include partnering/lifts, and/or tumbling skills, etc.).* The video is not for determining qualifications for USA Dance Nationals, for assessing placement in the correct division, nor for appropriateness assessment. Please do not submit a video if your routine does not have partnering/lifts, and/or tumbling skills involved. Each team is responsible for reading and abiding by the comprehensive Safety Guidelines in the 2023 - 24 Dance Competitions brochures.

Unfortunately, penalties are not always caught during a live performance. **In light of this, because a penalty was not assessed during a previous event does not necessarily mean your routine is penalty free.** The only way to ensure a penalty free routine at USA Dance Nationals is through the safety guideline video submission process.

“Safety Rules Video” submissions are due in the USA office no later than **February 17, 2025**. The USA will respond officially in writing to each team’s video inquiry and we will file all videos and official responses for reference at USA Dance Nationals. All submissions must be electronic, and in the file format of either Quicktime for MAC (.mov) or MPEG-4 Format (.mp4). No other file formats will be accepted. **Please ensure that you note for which division each lift, or skill is associated.** A written request to review the video for safety rules legality must be included.

All video submissions must be emailed to USADanceRules@varsity.com.

Submission of a routine does not guarantee that it can be reviewed.

Note that submission of a routine and/or its elements does not preclude a team from being assessed a penalty while at a specific USA competition, as performances from the video submission may differ from those executed on the competition floor.

USA will contact you by **March 3, 2025** to inform you of the results of your “safety rules video” review. If you do not hear from us by **March 3, 2025**, please call the USA office to ensure that your submission was received.

If you make changes in your routine after the video has been approved, you must send a second video following the same procedure in order to ensure that your final routine is penalty free. Please call the USA office at 800-886-4USA before sending the second video. For specific safety questions please email USADanceRules@varsity.com.