

AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL, INC.
OFFICIAL CHEER RULES AND REGULATIONS

2016 Edition
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American Youth Cheer® will strictly enforce the age and skill level restrictions contained in this rulebook, as well as all other rules and regulations. In addition to the general regulations found in the Official Cheer Rules and regulations, all American Youth Cheer teams will follow the current published United States All Star Federation Cheer Safety Rules.

Falsifying birth certificates or any other documents to make a participant eligible is grounds for permanent suspension of the adult(s) and or organization responsible for the act and all evidence will be turned over to the local authorities for any criminal prosecution that may be relevant.

All questions should be directed to AYC@americanyouthfootball.com.

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DEFINITION OF AN AMERICAN YOUTH CHEERLEADING TEAM

The American Youth Football (AYF) League has created a sister League uniquely for its cheerleaders. The name of this League is American Youth Cheer (AYC). Any cheerleading, dance, or step team who cheers for, or is affiliated with, an American Youth Football Team is automatically welcomed into this organization. Cheer, dance and step squads are required to be members of AYF/AYC. Sign up is at www.MyAYF.com.

AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL strongly encourages cheerleading for all teams. It also encourages competition between squads for League (local), regional, and national championships. AYF/AYC requires that each squad have a responsible adult in charge as outlined in Section 1: AYC Rules. In addition, the general football rules as stated in the Official Rules and Regulations which apply to players will also apply to the cheerleaders, with the exception of weight or weigh-ins and, the rules of contact, except where superseded by the Official Cheer Rules and Regulations. Governing of AYF/AYC Leagues occurs as stated in Section 3 & 4 of the Football Section.

AYC WILL OFFER A CO-ED Division. AYC permits up to the maximum of 2 male participants on a traditional cheer team. At 3 or more male participants, the team MUST be CO-Ed. 3 teams must commit per division in order to hold a National Championship for ANY Co-Ed Division. If 3 teams don't commit, any Co-Ed may attend Nationals and put on an Exhibition Routine.

Inspiration Division

AYC offers the "Inspiration Division." The Inspiration Division exists to include any child with a disability. Participation in a sport will not only improve their motor skills but also inspire them socially and emotionally. Please see AYC Inspiration Division Team Requirements or contact the National Cheer Commissioner at AYC@americanyouthfootball.com.

AMERICAN YOUTH CHEER – LEAGUE DESCRIPTION

American Youth Cheer, hereafter known as AYC, is an all-inclusive youth cheerleading, dance, and step League. As local Leagues enter a national program, AYC allows local autonomy except to the extent that basic safety rules must be followed. It is required that AYC Leagues follow, at minimum, the safety rules of United States All Star Federation, including prohibitions against the use of trampolines, springboards, and over two-high stunts and pyramids. Tryouts or combines used to eliminate participants based on skill level are not permitted. Local Leagues may incorporate additional restrictions or guidelines for use during season play and their local competitions. Teams electing to compete in AYC-sanctioned regional and national competitions are required to 1) primarily follow the AYC cheer, dance, or step rules; 2) where they are silent United States All Star Federation safety rules will be followed; 3) complete the necessary paperwork listed in the AYF documents. AYC requires that Leagues follow the AYC listed rules at local competitions for the sake of safety and consistency.

AYC is built on the premise that the same families who gather to watch the AYF/AYC football players compete on a weekly basis, will also gather to watch the AYC cheerleaders compete on a local, regional, and national level.

To youth cheerleaders, competition is their time to shine. While they greatly enjoy their primary role at each local football game, they equally enjoy the opportunity to perform on the competition floor. If the option of competition is missing from the cheerleading experience, the full benefit of the experience is lacking. AYC is committed to creating a positive competitive environment, where your cheerleaders can highlight and showcase their skills, while learning how to win with grace and lose with honor.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Associations must commit their teams to the Regional and National Championship track by September 15th of each year with the approved form to the appropriate Region Cheer and Dance Director. These Declarations are then due to the National AYC Cheer Commissioner by the RCDD by 10/1 of the current year. Failure to submit your intent to participate may jeopardize the association's participation in the current year's AYC National Championships.

Associations that commit to their Conferences to participate in the Regional and National Championship and then do not fulfill their obligation, may be subject to suspension from the following year's competition including but not limited to, Regional and National Championships. Teams finishing first, second or third at their Regional Championship or Conference Qualifier are expected to attend the National Cheerleading Championship.

All teams traveling to the AYF/AYC National Championships must book their stay through the AYF authorized booking agent and stay in AYF-approved accommodations. This insures that all of our members will receive the discounted accommodations we have secured and allow us to host the tournament in the chosen location.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGION, CONFERENCE, AND ASSOCIATION DIRECTOR

Region Cheer and Dance Director (RCDD)

Serves as a liaison to National AYC for the geographical territory. She/he is the contact person for disseminating information to the League/Conference level from National AYC, as well as assuring all paperwork for advancing teams is properly completed with all deadlines met; oversee the Regional Championships (if applicable); and serve as a delegate to any National Office meetings. Region duties are as detailed by the Region operating policies (see Section 3 Structure Rule Enforcement/Authority Football rules). It is highly recommended that each Regional Cheer and Dance Director have an Assistant RCDD to assist in duties and communication.

Regional Chairperson

Serves as a delegate of the regional committees. Coordinates and corresponds communication to regional committees and acts as a liaison to local League Conference/Coordinators, if the two are separate.

League/Conference Cheer and Dance Director

Is a liaison to the Region Cheer and Dance Director, and all association cheer and dance directors. Serves as a delegate to the regional meetings. Performs League/Conference duties as detailed by the League/Conference by-laws or constitution. Must be 21 years old by 7/31 of the current year.

Association Cheer and Dance Director

Is a liaison to the League/Conference Director, while serving as a delegate at the League/Conference meetings. Performs local duties as detailed by their local League by-laws. Must be 21 years old by 7/31 of the current year.

SECTION 1 – AYC RULES

RULE 1 – COACHES

All coaches through their appointment to coach are bound by the “Coaches Pledge,” “Coaches Code,” and “Standard of Conduct.” All coaches must be approved by and serve at the pleasure of the Local Association. Coaching assignments are for one season only and are automatically terminated at the close of each season. Coaches must re-apply for coaching positions annually. The Local Association determines the close of the season.

Each team must have either the Head Coach, an Assistant Coach or Licensed Trainer who is the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid or its equivalent, present at all practices. A copy of the certification card must be in the team book.

All AYC participating COACHES - HEAD AND ASSISTANT COACHES ROSTERED WITH A TEAM are required to complete the AYC Online ASEP Coaches Course (includes the \$2 million coverage) found at www.ayfcoaching.com. Any Coach who has previously completed the course MUST YEARLY complete the refresher course available at www.ayfcoaching.com. This course must be completed before the start of the season. (Available 7/1 of the current year) Certificates must be placed in the team book.

All Head and Assistant Coaches must complete a Concussion Course in order to be listed as a rostered coach. Courses can be a free course at <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/Training/> or the American Academy of Neurology at www.aan.com/concussion. As in all rules, Leagues/Conferences may have stricter rules regarding concussion education. Test results from completion of course must be placed in the team book.

This will be confirmed by an affidavit due at the Regional/National Championships for all qualifying teams.

Rostered Personnel

Below is the maximum staff allowed on an AYC Roster. Team Moms/Managers are not considered official, rostered staff for the purpose of staff access at the AYC National Championships.

- One (1) Head Coach
- Four (4) Assistant Coaches
- Four (4) Junior Demonstrators
- One (1) Licensed Trainer - (Qualifications vary by State - Please consult your state to find out what constitute a Licensed Trainer/Medical Examiner in your state) - State License is required for participation.

Only rostered Coaches, Demonstrators and Trainers will be able to accompany the team at events. All rostered personnel 18 and older must have a background check completed.

Head Coaches

Head coaches are in complete charge during practices, games, and championships. They are responsible for their own actions or inactions, their assistants’ actions or inactions and the actions of their players.

Cheerleading coaches are answerable to and under the supervision of administration of the local League or Association.

Age of Head Coaches

Must be at least 21 years of age by the start of the season. The coaching staff will be under his/her direction and supervision. (See Rule 3 Formation of Teams)

Age of Assistant Coaches

Must be at least 18 years of age by the start of the season and must have graduated from high school or hold a GED certificate. They must have a general knowledge of cheerleading and cheerleading safety rules.

Age of Junior Demonstrators

Are ages 14-18, however, if a junior demonstrator is attending high school, they may be 13 years old. Junior Demonstrators may only carry out the instructions of the Head or Assistant Coaches. AYC recommends all Junior Demonstrators work with teams a minimum of 2 years younger than his/her current age. Junior Demonstrators shall not conduct a practice. Demonstrators are participants; all required participant paperwork must be filled out, certified, and in the team book. Demonstrators are NEVER to carry out ANY disciplinary action towards any participant.

RULE 2 – SQUADS WITHOUT FOOTBALL

AYC recognizes cheer, dance or step squads without football.

In an effort to support Youth Cheerleading and help our organization grow, AYC is proud to continue to encourage Youth Cheerleading squads that are **not affiliated with AYF football teams** or recreation football programs to join AYC independently. These Cheer squads are required to join the Conference nearest to their designated territory. To register squads and become a member visit www.MyAYF.com. If you have any related questions, please email the National Cheer Commissioner at AYC@americanyouthfootball.com.

RULE 3 – FORMATION OF TEAMS

Tryouts are not permitted. The formation of teams is based on a first-come first-serve participation policy. AYC does allow registration/sign-up for “veteran (returning) players” prior to “open” registration/sign-up. Each child must be afforded the opportunity to cheer regardless of ability. Once a participant is registered, the local association may assess the appropriate team levels in which to place the participant with regard to the age requirements. Assessments cannot result in dismissal of any cheerleader for ability or any other reason other than those listed in Rule 7 Dropping a Cheerleader.

AYC requires that for the first 12 participants there must be one (1) head coach (adult volunteer who is at least 21 years of age) assigned to the team. A squad with more than 12 participants (including mascots), must have one (1) assistant coach (adult volunteer who is at least 18 years old). For any team with over 24 cheerleaders, there must be one (1) additional assistant coach (adult volunteer at least 18 years old). (i.e. maximum 12 participants, = one (1) head coach; 13 to 24 = one (1) head coach and one (1) assistant coach; 36 participants = one (1) head coach and two (2) assistant coaches.) Teams electing to compete in AYC Regional and National competitions are required to restrict teams to thirty-six (36) members. Mascots are not included in the total count of thirty-six (36).

RULE 4 – OUTSIDE COMPETITION

It is the First Priority of American Youth Cheer teams to support and participate in AYC Local, Regional, and National Championships. If a scheduled “Outside” competition conflicts with an AYC sanctioned event, you will be expected to participate in the AYC sanctioned event. The cheerleading coordinator, with the approval of the local League, shall be in charge of all outside competitions. All cheerleading teams report to the cheerleading coordinator for approval of any outside activities. Cheer teams may participate in outside competitions in the traditional cheer season in accordance with the traditional football season as stated in the AYF Playing Season/Practice which is the 4th Monday of July through the national tournament in December. Cheer teams may also participate in outside cheer competitions ALL Year Round, with AYC Sanctioned Competitions receiving First Priority. Cheer teams shall register in outside competitions in the age divisions comparable to AYC.

RULE 5 – AGES OF CHEERLEADERS

Minimum age of all cheerleaders is 5 years old by July 31st of current year. Maximum age is 18 years old by July 31st of current year. However, for Inspiration teams the maximum age is 21 years old by July 31st of the current year. 4 year olds are not allowed to participate in AYC as a mascot or participant. There are no waivers allowed for participants outside this range.

For determining the participant's age (Protected Age), the term "On or before" and the term "As of" is intended to have the same definition (Age Cut-Off Date):

An age cutoff date of (on or before as of 7/31) July 31 of the current season is as follows: 14 years old on July 31, turns 15 years old on August 1, the participant cheers as a 14 years old. (See the ages in AYC cheer, dance, and step divisions).

RULE 6 - ROSTERS

Associations must collect, complete, and inspect all AYF Required Participant paperwork for compliance by **August 31**. Rosters must be submitted in birth date order beginning with oldest to youngest participants. Conferences must certify their Associations have met this requirement and have a system in place for paperwork and roster certification. A Certified Roster means all of the participants listed on the roster have submitted the AYF Required Paperwork, all paperwork is authentic and compliant with AYF/AYC Rules and Regulations and the participant fits the criteria established for the specific team level and age division to which the Participant is certified. Cheerleaders added to rosters after **August 31** must be certified prior to participating in any game or competition. Any participant moved to another division must be age eligible according to the AYC age divisions. There must also be room on the roster, as no participant shall be cut or dropped just to make room. On **September 15**, the Cheer roster will be final for the remainder of the season. If a cheer squad should drop participants after **September 15**, but prior to the Region Cheer Competition with prior notification being made to the RCCD, the squad may move from the Large Division to the Small Division but **ONLY** if the participants quit or drop due to injury. If the roster drops participants below 19 after the Region Cheer Competition but before the AYC National Championships you cannot move from the Large to Small Division (NO Exceptions), because you have already qualified through the Region Competition. In summary, if you compete in the Large Division at the Region Competition, YOU WILL compete in the Large Division at the AYC Nationals, regardless of your squad size. All final rosters are required to be submitted to AYF on **October 1**. Conferences must receive all of their Association rosters and certify all of their player documentation by **September 15**.

Below is the required paperwork order for each "AYC Team Book". Please keep in mind, this is the book order for cheer, dance, and step only, as football has their own procedure. All AYC teams must follow this protocol.

- Team Roster
- Risk Management & Background Check Affidavit
- Head Coach's ASEP Certification Certificate - REQUIRED COURSE COMPLETION
- All staff Concussion Training Participation Certificate - REQUIRED COURSE COMPLETION
- One staff member's CPR/First Aid Certification Certificate - REQUIRED COURSE COMPLETION
- Scholastic Affidavit
- Proof of Insurance - ONLY REQUIRED IF YOU ARE NOT A SADLER CUSTOMER

Listed below is the order that all participant paperwork should be filed in the book. Any additional Association and League paperwork must be placed behind the below required League paperwork.

Participants should be filed in birthdate order OLDEST TO YOUNGEST. Junior Demonstrators will be placed at the end in alpha order.

- Participant Tracker Card - front and back filled out
- Emergency Consent Form

- Medical Release Form
- Birth Certificate (original or certified copy)
- Image Release Waiver
- Waiver and Release of Liability Waiver
- Concussion Annual Statement and Acknowledgement Form

Conferences must maintain a copy of the final certified copy of all rosters in their possession. Conferences must then submit all rosters to AYF National via www.MyAYF.com and a copy to the designated Regional Committee member by **October 1**. All Conferences must submit rosters to the AYF National Office by entering them electronically to the www.MyAYF.com system by the deadline of **October 1**, of the current playing season. Failure to submit rosters may mean the loss of certain services provided by AYF, including post-season and championship eligibility. (See Football Section 12 - Participant Registration/Eligibility)

RULE 7 – DROPPING A CHEERLEADER

Dropping a cheerleader will be acceptable when:

- A participant is found to have signed up as a result of parent or guardian pressure, or, he/she tells team management he/she does not really want to play football/cheer
- A participant cannot furnish the required documents to be certified to a team roster, (e.g., Medical, Proof of Birth Date, etc.)
- A participant shows no interest in football/cheer, is disruptive to other participants and the instructions of the coaching staff, and becomes a discipline problem
- A participant does not show up for practices. Participants must have a valid excuse from the parent(s), guardian(s) or a physician
- A participant attempts to intimidate fellow participants by word and/or physical act
- A participant is an active member of an AYF/AYC organization and is **COMPETING** with another organization before their AYC competition season has ended. A participant is allowed to try out and practice for a school team as long as it does not interfere with the AYC team.

Coaches are not allowed to do the following to force a cheerleader to drop:

- Excessive team or individual conditioning drills
- Disciplinary actions or assigning individual players' laps
- Intentionally placing player in intimidating situations for the purpose of encouraging weaker player to quit

Coaches found to be using these or any other tactic to drop weaker players will be immediately dismissed for the remainder of the season and may be permanently suspended.

RULE 8 – PRACTICE LIMITATIONS

Practice Length

Pre-season practices can be on a daily basis until Labor Day, but must not exceed 10 hours per week, and two and a half (2.5) hours in duration per day. A mandatory 10-minute break (“Mandatory Break”) after each hour of practice is required. Mandatory Breaks do not count against the hours per week or the maximum hours per day.

After Labor Day, all practices may not exceed a maximum of eight (8) hours per week, with a maximum of two and a half (2.5) hours per day. Mandatory Breaks are still required.

All players, regardless of when they join the team, must have at least one week of conditioning (at least 10 hours) before they are allowed to engage in regular practice sessions. This requirement must be met even if a cheerleader joins the team after the start of the regular season schedule. Conditioning is defined as basic warm-up exercises; conditioning for jumps &

tumbling (not tumbling), arm motion drills; and basic stunting at prep level; learning of cheers or chants.

Choreography Practice Hours

In addition to the normal practice hours, an additional ten (10) hours of practice throughout the traditional season may be used for choreography sessions. It is recommended that the 10 hours be spread over 2-4 additional practice days.

Practice Staff Requirements

At least one coach (18 or older) must be present during every practice. There shall be at least one rostered person holding a Red Cross Card, or of similar equivalency, present at all practices.

RULE 9 – WARM UP AND COOL DOWN PERIODS

Practice shall include a 15-minute warm up and a 15-minute cool down to minimize risk to your team.

RULE 10 – TRADITIONAL AND SPRING CHEER SEASON

The traditional AYC season coincides with the football AYF season which is the 4th Monday of July through the National Championship in December.

Cheerleaders are encouraged to attend camps/clinics in the non-traditional season as described in RULE 11 - CAMPS & CLINICS.

Teams shall be allowed to compete in outside AYC competitions, subject to their local League approval, in the traditional and spring season as indicated in Rule 4 - Outside Competitions.

The Spring Cheer season is from January 1st through June 30th.

Spring teams should collect the same paperwork as traditional teams, follow the same practice limitations and age requirements, submit a roster to your league coordinator, and carry the proper insurance.

If a competitive team is registered with AYC, it is expected for the team to support AYC and participate in Local and Region competitions if they are competing in any outside competitions.

RULE 11 – CAMPS & CLINICS

Cheer teams are strongly encouraged, in part or full squad, to attend either a camp or clinic during the season and off-season. These camps or clinics should be designed as instructional for youth/recreation Leagues and should not be made mandatory by any coach, League, or personnel associated within an AYF/AYC program. The focus of such camps should be on safety and proper execution of cheerleading skills to the team's age level.

AYC provides instructional Coaches clinics and hands-on Coaches training clinics. We highly recommend all coaches in AYC attend training clinics. AYC provides staff to facilitate and train you in your area. We can assist your association or League in hosting a camp/clinic. For more information please contact your Region Cheer and Dance Director or the AYC National Cheer Commissioner at AYC@americanyouthfootball.com

It is necessary to secure the proper insurance for any camps or clinics.

RULE 12 - MASCOTS

Mascots are at the discretion of any individual League. The following are guidelines for Leagues that offer Mascots:

- A Mascot must be at least 5 years old.
- A participant can be a Mascot if they are not old enough to be included in any other

offered age division.

- A Mascot shall register as any other applicant and is required to fill out registration paperwork.
- Mascots should not perform any stunts or be in the area of stunt groups performing in a halftime routine due to safety concerns caused by the difference in age, maturity and skill level between the mascot and rostered participants.

RULE 13 – INSURANCE

All teams/squads must furnish proof of General Liability and Accident Insurance. The required coverage can be seen at MyAYF.com. Additionally, American Youth Football must be named as an additional insured. All members, not covered under the AYF/AYC endorsed insurance policy are required to deliver to AYF/AYC a certificate of insurance prior to conducting any games or practices. For more information on the AYF/AYC endorsed insurance plan, visit www.MyAYF.com. A Cheer Team without football must have additional insurance.

SECTION 2: AYC COMPETITIONS REGIONAL/NATIONAL

AYC COMPETITIONS - CHEER

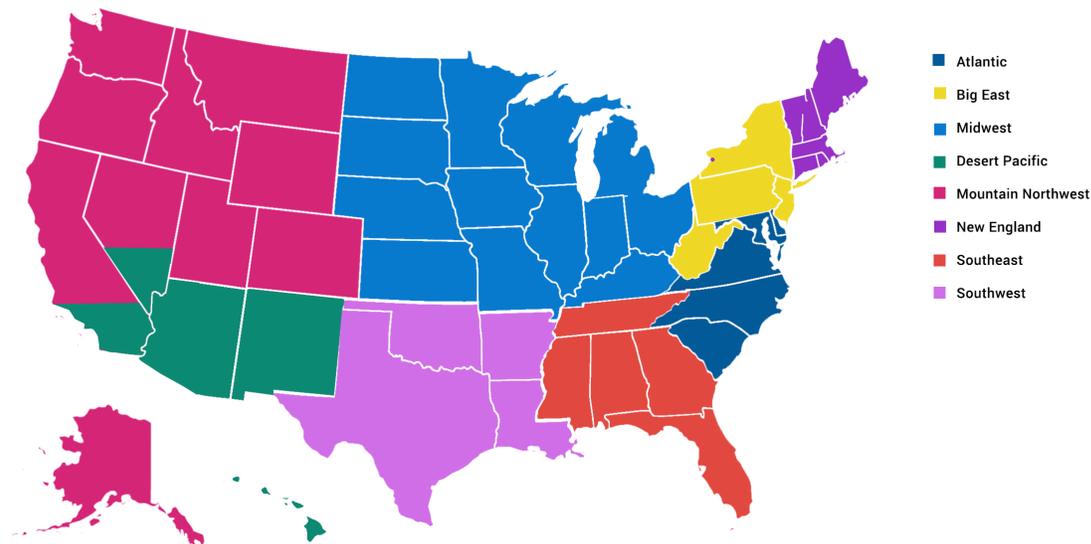
When cheer, dance, and step teams from various regions across the nation come to compete; there must be a standardized set of rules under which all must comply. The following pages will list the age divisions, skill divisions, and safety guidelines that will be used in AYC Regional and National Cheerleading Competitions. AYC requires that Local League competitions follow ages listed in the Cheer, Dance, and Step Matrix for consistency and safety.

AYC teams from various regions use a variety of terms to identify the same age division. As an example: Junior Midget, Junior Varsity, and Junior Prep can all be used to identify the same age group depending on what part of the nation is represented. For this reason, AYC is unable to define age divisions using these terms. Each area must register their teams using the National Age Divisions found in this rulebook if they intend to advance to National Championships. They also must follow all age requirements as determined in Age Divisions.

The age of a team member on **July 31** of the current calendar year becomes the age used through AYC Cheer, Dance and Step Nationals in December (see **Rule 5 - Ages of Cheerleaders**).

AYC Regions for Regional Competition are defined here. As regional location and registration information becomes available (October) it will be posted at www.MyAYF.com.

AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL, INC. has established three (3) separate skill levels for all AYC cheerleading teams. The AYC cheer skill levels have been created to provide safety and convenience for Leagues whose cheer teams may perform at a different skill level than others. All AYC cheer teams shall make a determination of which one (1) of the three (3) listed skill level grids outlined in this section they will follow. Coaches must consider the AYC Skill Rubric located at www.MyAYF.com, when choosing the level in which their team will compete. Coaches must also refer to the AYC General Cheer Safety Rules for further rule specifications and routine guidelines, which apply to all levels. The AYC cheer rules established in this section shall supersede any of the current safety rules of United States All Star Federation Safety Guidelines.



AYC NATIONAL QUALIFICATION

In order to qualify for the AYC National Championships, competition teams must be affiliated with AYF/AYC and have entered final rosters by **October 1**. Teams **MUST** participate in their League cheer competition and Region Cheer Championship to qualify for Nationals. AYC National qualifies teams who place first, second and third in a Regional AYC Competition. If an AYF/AYC Competition is not offered at the Regional level, ranking of first, second and third place finish must be accomplished at your local AYF/AYC Conference Competition. Final placement and advancement to AYC National Championships will be at the discretion of the Regional Cheer, Dance, and Step Director with Approval from the AYC National Cheer Commissioner. AYC reserves the right to grant a team qualification to the National Championship should an extraordinary circumstance arise which prevents the team from attending a qualifying event. For any questions regarding qualification for League, Region and National competitions, please contact the National Cheer Commission at AYC@americanyouthfootball.com.

Electing to participate in National Championships does obligate participants to follow a list of specific guidelines for their protection as well as AYF/AYC, note that this list is available at www.MyAYF.com

AYC CHEER DIVISIONS

DIVISIONS 2016	AGES	SKILL LEVELS
Division 8	5, 6, 7, 8	White & Red Levels ONLY
Division 10	7, 8, 9, 10	White, Red, & Blue
Division 12	9, 10, 11, 12	White, Red, & Blue
Division 14	11, 12, 13, 14	White, Red, & Blue
Division 18 (ALL MUSIC)	14, 15, 16, 17, 18	White, Red, & Blue
Inspiration Division	5 Thru 21	White Level ONLY
<p>Note: Divisions 8 thru 14 have a 4 year age span, Division 18 has a 5 year age span. Division 18 is all music at all skill levels. Division 18 teams are not required to cheer at weekly games. All Blue level teams are all music at all divisions.</p>		

Inspiration Division

The AYC Inspiration Division enables youth with either cognitive or physical disabilities to participate in football and cheer. The Inspiration Division is further explained in the Official AYF/AYC INSPIRATION RULE Book at www.MyAYF.com.

Competing Up - Cheer

In order to allow all interested athletes to participate, athletes may compete in an older age division with the following restrictions:

Athletes may compete in an older age division ("compete up") ONLY if it is **NOT** possible to create a team in the division that corresponds to their age level. Athletes may **NOT** compete in a younger age division without approval from AYC.

AYC provides an "Age Waiver Request Form" that an association may use for an age waiver. The form is located on www.MyAYF.com. This Form **MUST** be signed and approved by the Region Cheer and Dance Director and then submitted to National Cheer Commissioner.

SIZE AND SKILL LEVEL DIVISION GUIDELINES

Splitting Divisions into Small and Large

At the National Championship, divisions will be further divided into small and large when there are at least two teams that will ultimately compete in each division. In the event that there is only one team in a division for large or small, an open division Championship will be named as well as their respective division championship.

- Small Cheer Team: 5-18 members, male and/or female
- Large Cheer Teams: 19-36 members, male and/or female

AYC does offer a Co-Ed Cheer Division. Teams with three (3) or more male participants will be placed into this division for Regional and National Competition. AYC does not set a limit of male participants that can be placed on a cheer, dance, or step team.

Teams will be required to comply with all AYC Cheer, Dance and Step Rules. When they are silent, they will defer to the current year **United States All Star Federation Safety Rules**, as well as the AYC skill restrictions that correspond to the Level Division they choose. Any team who violates a safety guideline or performs a skill not permitted in their level division will be subject to a penalty.

COMPONENTS OF AN AYC COMPETITION ROUTINE

Up to a 2 ½ (2:30) minute routine. A competitive AYC routine consists of:

- Up to two (2:00) minutes of music (Blue level and all Division 18 skill levels may have 2:30 of music)
- A cheer portion in the routine (not required for Blue level or Division 18 teams)

A competitive cheer routine will be judged by the following. Please see all official score sheets on www.myAYF.com. Failure to include required components in your routine will result in a zero (0) score in that category on your score sheet.

- Cheer Fundamentals
 - Crowd Appeal - crowd leading, spirit, execution, prop incorporation (crowd leading and prop incorporation are not required for Blue level or Division 18)
 - Motion Technique - variety, placement, sharpness
 - Voice - volume, pace, inflection (not required for Blue level or Division 18)
- Basic Fundamentals
 - Partner Stunts - synchronization, technique, variety
 - Pyramids - synchronization, technique, variety
 - Tumbling - synchronization, technique, variety
 - Tosses (red and blue levels only)
 - Jumps - synchronization, height, form
 - Dance - visuals/levels, variety/originality, flow of routine/use of music
- Overall Appeal
 - Formations/Transitions - flow, spacing, use of floor
 - Choreography of Routine - creativity, music incorporation, overall appeal
 - Performance - perfection of routine, enthusiasm, appropriateness

CHEER PROGRESSION THROUGH THE DIVISION OF WHITE/ RED, /BLUE

There are three skill divisions in AYC, White, Red and Blue Division. The divisions are for our athletes as they begin learning the basic safety and technical skills associated in cheerleading and then continue to follow a safe skill progression. The goal of cheer progression is to learn a skill, succeed at the skill, in hopes to begin learning the next logical skill that follows. One must master the basic skills then work toward next challenging skill.

Skill Progression Chart

AYC RECOMMENDED SKILL PROGRESSIONS	SKILL DIVISION	AYC RECOMMENDED SKILL PROGRESSIONS	SKILL DIVISION
TUMBLING SKILL		STUNTING SKILL	
Forward/Backward Roll	White	Step up Drills	White
Handstand	White	L-Stand	White
Cartwheel	White	Double Base Thigh Stand	White
Round-off	White	Shoulder Sit	White
Front/Back Walkover	White	Straddle Sit at prep	White
Back Extension Roll	White	Walk-up Shoulder Stand from Lunge	White
Front/ Back Handspring (BHS)	Red	Pick-up Shoulder Stand	White
Front/ BHS Series	Red	Single Base Thigh Stand - 1 leg Variations	White
Round-off, BHS	Red	2 Leg Prep Level	White
Round-off, BHS Series	Red	1/4 Twist Load In	White
Toe Touch, BHS	Red	Press Extension from Prep	Red
Round-off, Back Tuck	Blue	Straight up Extension	Red
Round-off, BHS, Back Tuck	Blue	Step-up Liberty Variations Prep Level	Red
Punch Front	Blue	1/2 Twist Load In	Red
Standing Tuck	Blue	360* Load In Sponge to sponge	Red
Standing BHS, Back Tuck	Blue	Show n' Go 2 Leg	Red
Toe Touch, Back Tuck	Blue	Inverted Skills from the performing surface	Red
Round-off, BHS, Layout	Blue	Inverted stunts, downward inversions, pancake	Blue
Round-off, BHS, Full	Blue	1 Leg Show n' Go	Blue
TOSSES		Extended 1 Leg Variations	Blue
Barrel Roll	Red	1 ½ Twist Load in to Prep	Blue
Sponge/Basket Toss 1 skill	Red D10 & up	1 Twist load in to Extension	Blue
Basket Toss - Kick single	Blue	Express Up	Blue
Helicopter - 180 degrees	Blue	Tick-Tock	Blue
		DISMOUNTS	
		Step Off Drill & Bear Hug	White
		Cradle Drills & Cradle from 2 Leg Prep	White
		¼ Twist Cradle	White
		Inverted Skills from Cradle	Red
		Cradle from 2 Leg Extension	Red
		Cradle from 1 Leg Prep	Red
		Forward Suspended Roll	Red
		Full Twist Cradle from Prep/Extension	Red
		Full Twist Cradle from 1 Leg Prep	Red
		Full Twist Cradle from One Leg Extension	Blue
		Double Twist from 2 Leg	Blue
		Cradle to Prone	Blue

White/Novice Skills - Division 8, 10, 12, 14, And 18

Standing/ Running Tumbling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All basic skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed. <i>Examples: forward rolls, backward rolls, handstands, front/back walkovers, cartwheels, Round-offs.</i> Connection of more than one of the above skills is allowed. <i>Examples: cartwheel/back walkover.</i> At least one hand must remain in contact with the floor during skill execution. Front and back handsprings, flips, and aerials are prohibited. Forward and/or backward rolls are permitted with poms or sign providing you do not roll on prop. One-handed cartwheel with pom is allowed providing you hold the pom in the hand the does not come in contact with the performing surface.
Partner Stunts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A spotter is required for each top person at prep level and above. Single leg stunts are only allowed at waist level. <i>Exception 1: prep level single leg stunts are allowed if the top person is braced by someone standing on the performance surface, the bracer must be a separate person other than the base(s) or spotter. The braced connection must be hand/arm to hand/arm and must be made prior to initiating the single leg prep level stunt. Exception 2: A walk up shoulder stand is legal if both hands of the top person are in contact with both hands of the base until both feet of the top person are placed on the shoulders of the base.</i> Two leg prep level stunts and below are allowed. Stunts above prep level are not allowed. Twisting mounts and transitions are allowed up to ¼ twisting rotation by the top person in relation to the performing surface. <i>Clarification: a twist performed with an additional turn by the bases performed in the same skill set, would be illegal if the resulting cumulative rotation of the top person exceeds ¼ rotations. The safety judge will use the hips of the top person to determine the amount of total rotation a top person performs in a skill set. Once a stunt is hit (i.e. prep) and the athletes show a definite and clear stop with a stationary top person, then they may continue to walk the stunt in additional rotation.</i> All inversions and swing up stunts are prohibited. <u>Division 8 restrictions, no Superman stunts/vertical to horizontal face up or face down.</u>
Tosses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All tosses are prohibited. This includes sponge, also known as load in or squish tosses.
Pyramids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. Two leg extended stunts must be braced by a top person at prep level or below with hand-arm connection only. The connection must be made at or below prep level. Prep level top person must have both feet in bases' hands. Exception: shoulder sit, flat back, straddle lift or shoulder stands top person do not need both feet in hands. Prep level single leg stunts must be braced by at least one person at prep level or below with hand-arm connection only. The connection must be made prior to initiating the single leg prep level stunt. Bracers must have both feet in hands. Exception: shoulder sit, flat back, straddle lift or shoulder stand. No extended single leg stunts, no extended single base stunts. Hanging pyramids are prohibited.
Dismounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straight cradles from prep level may not exceed more than one quarter (1/4) twisting rotation. Other positions during cradles are prohibited (i.e. toe touch, pike, tuck, etc.) No dismounts are allowed from extended stunts in pyramids. An extended stunt must be brought down to prep level or below before it can be dismounted. Cradles may not land in prone position (on stomach). Flyer/top person cannot hold signs while cradling. Cradle dismount to different bases is prohibited. Any inverted dismount, including double-based suspended rolls are prohibited.
Release Moves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No release moves are allowed other than those listed in the dismount section.

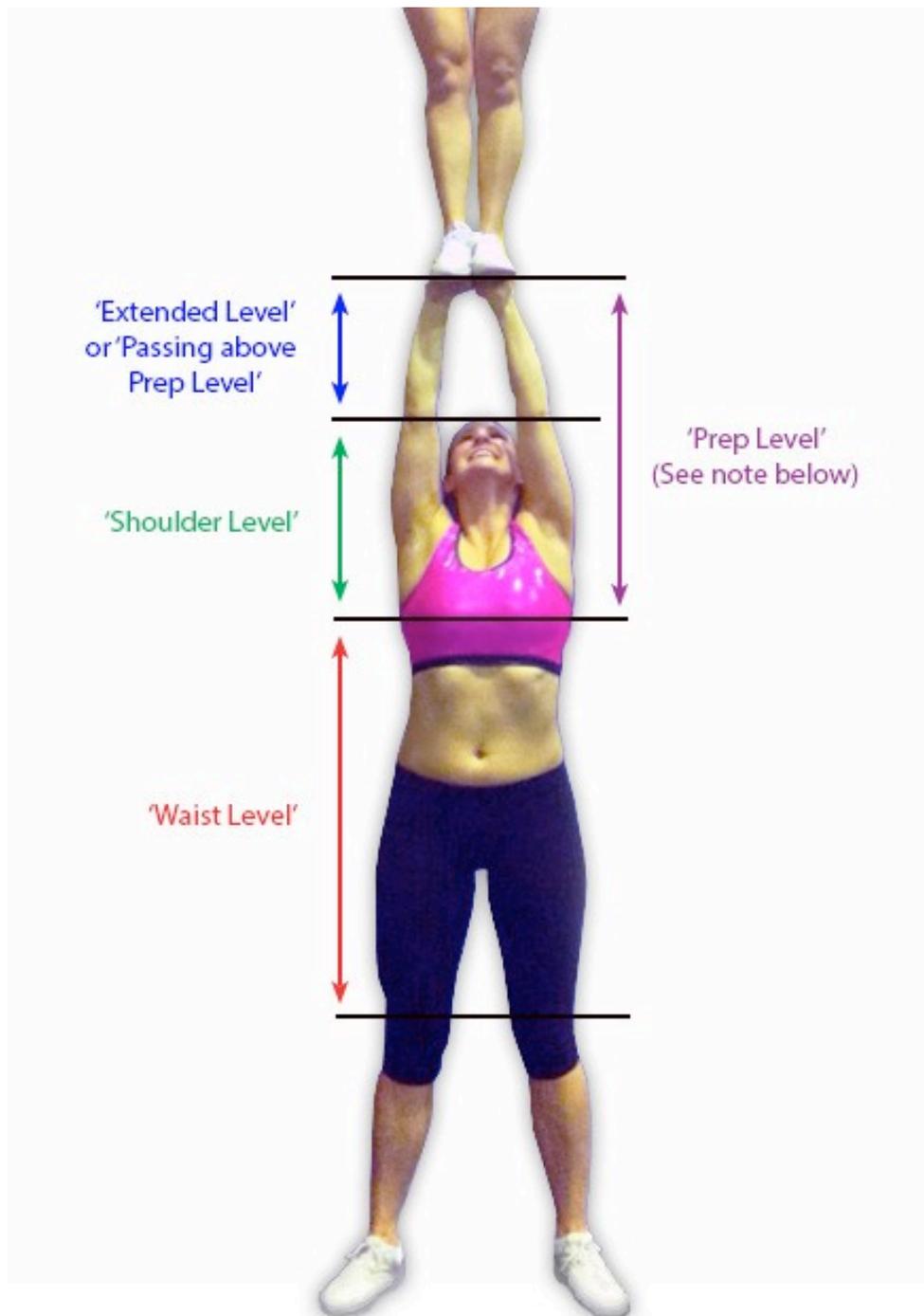
Red/Intermediate Skills - Division 8, 10, 12, 14, And 18

<p>Standing/ Running Tumbling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed. <i>Examples: forward rolls, backward rolls, handstands, front/back walkovers, cartwheels, Round-offs, front/back handsprings are allowed.</i> Connection of more than one of the above skills is allowed. <i>Examples: cartwheel/back walkover or standing back handspring series.</i> At least one hand must remain in contact with the floor during skill execution; both hands must remain in contact with the floor when performing front or back handsprings. Jumps connected to a back handspring are allowed. Series tumbling is allowed. Flips/Tucks and aerials are prohibited.
<p>Partner Stunts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two leg extended stunts are allowed. Single leg prep level stunts are allowed. Single leg extended stunts are prohibited, including a single leg show n' go that goes above prep level. Twisting during the load-in is limited to one half (1/2) twist. <i>A twist performed with an additional turn by the bases performed in the same skill set, would be illegal if the resulting cumulative rotation of the top person exceeds ½ rotations. The safety judge will use the hips of the top person to determine the amount of total rotation a top person performs in a skill set. Once a stunt is hit (i.e. prep) and the athletes show a definite and clear stop with a stationary top person, they may continue to walk the stunt in additional rotation.</i> 360 sponge to sponge is allowed. Inversions from the performing surface are allowed providing there is no release, inversions from a cradle or prone position are allowed. <i>Example: forward roll, front/back walkover out of cradle/prone position.</i> Swing up stunts from the performance surface or thigh level stunts to prep is allowed. Inversions in partner stunts and downward inversions (with the exception of the double based forward/backward suspended roll) are prohibited, Pancake/fold over/waterfall, inversions are prohibited. Division 8 restrictions, no Superman stunts/vertical to horizontal face up or face down, no swing up stunts. No single base or assisted single base extended stunts.
<p>Tosses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No tosses are permitted in Division 8. Sponge tosses and basket tosses are allowed with one skill in division 10, 12, 14, and 18. <i>Examples: toe touch, pike, tuck, pretty girl, twist. An arch is not considered a body position therefore can be combined with one of the skills listed.</i> No quick tosses.
<p>Pyramids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. Single leg extended stunts are permitted as long as the top person is braced by at least one top person at prep level or below with hand-arm connection only. Braced connection must be made before extending above prep level and remain until no longer in a single leg extended stunt or the initiation of the cradle. Prep level top person must have both feet in bases' hands. Exception: shoulder sit, flat back, straddle lift or shoulder stand. In pyramid transitions, the flyer/top person must maintain contact with at least one base/back spotter/post at all times. Hanging pyramids are prohibited.
<p>Dismounts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cradles from prep and extended 2 leg stunts, must not exceed more than one and one quarter (1 1/4) twisting rotation. Twisting dismount from a single leg extended stunt in a pyramid is prohibited. Cradle from single leg prep level stunts, must not exceed 1 twisting rotation. Other positions during cradles are allowed (i.e. toe touch, pike, tuck, etc.) Flyer/top person cannot hold signs while cradling. Double based forward or backward suspended rolls to the same or other bases, caught in a cradle or brought to the performing surface are allowed. Cradles may not land in a prone position (on stomach).
<p>Release Moves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No release moves are allowed other than those listed in the dismounts and tosses sections. One base/spotter/post must maintain contact with the flyer/top person at all times. <i>Exception: a single full twisting barrel/log roll is allowed if it starts and ends in a cradle position, half twisting barrel/log roll may start in prone and end in a face up cradle.</i>

Blue/Advanced Skills - Division 10, 12, 14, AND 18

<p>Standing/ Running Tumbling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed. <i>Examples: forward rolls, backward rolls, handstands, front/back walkovers, cartwheels, Round-offs, front/back handsprings are allowed.</i> Connection of more than one of the above skills is allowed. <i>Examples: cartwheel/back walkover, standing back handspring series, or cartwheel tuck.</i> Flips/Tucks are allowed but may not exceed 1 flipping rotation or 1 twisting rotation. Flips/Tucks may be performed in layout, x-out, pike, etc. Jumps connected to a back tuck are allowed. Aerial cartwheels and running front tucks are allowed Tumbling after a flip is prohibited. Except a forward or backward roll out of a flip for safety reasons. At least one step into the next tumbling skill must be included to separate the two passes. A step out from a roll would not separate two passes. Example: a punch front, forward roll step-out would require an additional step or hurdle prior to the start of another pass. Forward $\frac{3}{4}$ flips to the seat and toe pitch flips are prohibited.
<p>Partner Stunts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single leg extended stunts are allowed. Twisting during the load-in is limited to one and one quarter ($1\frac{1}{4}$) twist load in to prep, and one (1) full twist to extension. Swing up stunts are allowed. All inverted skills are allowed.
<p>Tosses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basket, sponge, and quick tosses are allowed. Tosses may not exceed one and one quarter ($1\frac{1}{4}$) twisting rotations. Helicopter tosses are allowed (180 degrees). Flipping front or back and traveling tosses are prohibited.
<p>Pyramids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. Flyer may flip $1\frac{1}{4}$ rotations or $\frac{1}{2}$ twist in a pyramid as long as the flyer is braced on 2 separate sides by 2 separate bracers, with hand to hand/arm connection. Flip may land in a loading position, stunt, or cradle, or assist the flyer/top person to the performing surface. Non inverted transitional pyramids may involve changing bases. Hanging pyramids are prohibited.
<p>Dismounts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cradle from all single leg stunts are limited to one and one quarter ($1\frac{1}{4}$) twist. Cradles from all two leg stunts are limited to two and one quarter ($2\frac{1}{4}$) twist. Prone cradles are allowed. Flips are prohibited. Except a double based suspended roll.
<p>Release Moves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Release moves are allowed but must not exceed more than eighteen inches above extended arm level. <i>Examples: Tick Tock, switch tock, express up.</i>

STUNT LEVEL ILLUSTRATION



NOTE: Holding a stunt above the head may also be considered Prep Level (not Shoulder Level) if the top person is being held in a non-upright vertical position such as an extended flat back or extended prone (face down) position or in a seated position such as an extended "V" sit.

SECTION 3: AYC GENERAL CHEER RULES & GUIDELINES

Please refer to the United States All Star Federation current year's Cheer Safety Rules and glossary for complete set of safety rules found at www.usasfrules.com.

Please note AYC is following United States All Star Federation Safety Rules and glossary but NOT United States All Star Federation level rules. Please refer to AYC white, red, and blue level rules.

AYC GENERAL CHEER GLOSSARY

STUNTS/TUMBLE

Forward/backward Roll - A non-airborne tumbling skill where one rotates forward through an inverted position by lifting the hips over the head and shoulders while curving the spine to create a motion similar to a ball "rolling" across the floor.

Stunt/Partner Stunt/Lift - Any skill in which a top person is supported above the performance surface by one or more persons. A stunt is determined to be "one leg" or "two leg" by the number of feet that the top person has being supported by a base(s).

Prep - A multi base, two leg stunt in which the top person is being held at shoulder level by bases in an upright position.

Prep Level - The lowest connection between the base(s) and the top person is at shoulder level (i.e. prep, shoulder level hitch). A stunt may also be considered at Prep-Level if the connection between the base(s) and the top person is an extended level provided that the top person is not in an upright position. i.e. flatback, straddle lifts, chair, t-lift.

Pyramid - 2 or more connected stunts.

Tumbling - Any hip over head skill that is not supported by a base that begins and ends on the performing surface.

Waist Level - A stunt in which the lowest connection between the base(s) and the top person is above ground level and below prep level, as determined by the height/positioning of the base. Examples of stunts that are also considered waist level: All 4s position based stunt, a nugget-based stunt. A chair and a shoulder sit are considered prep level stunts, not waist level.

STUNTING PERSONNEL

Base - A person who is in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface who provides support for another person. The person(s) that holds, lifts, or tosses a top person into a stunt.

Bracer - A person in direct contact with a top person that helps to provide stability to the top person. This person is separate from a base or spotter.

New Base(s) - Base(s) previously not in direct contact with the top person of a stunt.

Original Base(s) - Base(s) which are in contact with the top person during the initiation of the skill/stunt.

Spotter - A person whose primary responsibility is to prevent injuries by protecting the head and shoulders area of a top person during the performance of a stunt, pyramid, or toss. All "Spotters" must be your own team's members and be trained in proper spotting techniques.

The Spotter:

- Must be standing to the side or the back of the stunt, pyramid or toss
- Must be in direct contact with the performing surface
- Must be attentive to the stunt being performed
- Must be able to touch the base of the stunt in which they are spotting, but does not have to be in direct physical contact with the stunt
- Cannot stand so that their torso is under a stunt
- May grab the wrist(s) of the base(s), other parts of the base(s) arms, the top person(s) legs/ankles, or does not have to touch the stunt at all
- May not have both hands under the sole of the top person's foot/feet or under the hands of the bases

- May not be considered both a base and the required spotter at the same time.
Example: in a two leg stunt, the base of one of the legs is not allowed to also be considered the required spotter (regardless of the grip)

If the spotter's hand is under the top person's foot, it must be their front hand. Their (the spotter's) back hand **MUST** be placed at the back of the ankle/leg of the top person or on the back side of the back wrist of the base.

Top Person - The athlete(s) being supported above the performance surface in a stunt, pyramid, or toss.

BODY POSITIONS

Cradle Position - Base(s) supporting a top person by placing arms wrapped under the back and under the legs of the top person. The top person must land in a "V"/pike/hollow body position (face up, legs straight and together) below prep level.

Handstand - A straight body inverted position where the arms of the athlete are extended straight by the head and ears.

Inverted - when the athlete's shoulders are below her/his waist and at least one foot is above her/his head.

Layout - An airborne tumbling skill which involves a hip over head rotation in a stretched, hollow body position.

Load-In - A stunting position in which the top person has at least one foot in the base(s) hands. The base(s) hands are at waist level.

Nugget - A body position in which an athlete is in a tucked position on their hands and knees on the performing surface. When an athlete in a nugget position is supporting a top person, they are considered a base of a waist level stunt.

Pike - Body bent forward at the hips and legs straight and together.

Prone Position - A face down, flat body position.

Tuck Position - A position in which the body is bent at the waist/hips with the knees drawn into the torso.

Upright - A body position of a top person in which the athlete is in a standing position on at least one foot while being supported by a base(s).

V-sit - A top person's body position when sitting in a stunt with straight legs parallel to the performing surface in a "V" position.

DISMOUNTS

Cradle - A dismount in which the top person is caught in a cradle position.

Dismount - The ending movement from a stunt or pyramid to a cradle or the performing surface. Movements are only considered "Dismounts" if released to a cradle or released and assisted to the performing surface. Movement from a cradle to the ground is not considered a "Dismount". When/if performing a skill from the cradle to the ground the skill will follow stunt rules (twisting, transition, etc.)

DROPS

Drop - Dropping to the knee, thigh, seat, front, back, or split position onto the performing surface from an airborne position or inverted position without first bearing most of the weight on the hands/feet which breaks the impact of the drop.

Tension Roll - A pyramid/stunt in which the base(s) and top(s) lean forward in unison until the top person(s) leaves the base(s) without assistance. Traditionally the top person(s) and/or bases(s) perform a forward roll after becoming free from contact from each other.

EXTENDED

Extended Arm Level - The highest point of a base's arm(s) (not spotter's arms) when standing

upright with the arm(s) fully extended over the head. Extended arms do not necessarily define and “extended stunt”. See “Extended Stunt” for further clarification.

Extended Position - A top person, in an upright position, supported by a base(s) with the base(s) arms fully extended. Extended arms do not necessarily define an “extended stunt”. See “Extended Stunt” for further clarification.

Extended Stunt - When the entire body of the top person is extended in an upright position over the base(s). Examples of “Extended Stunts”: Extension, extended Liberty, Extended Cupie. Examples of stunts that are **not** considered “Extended Stunts: Chairs, torches, flat backs, arm-n-arms, and straddle lifts. (These are stunts where the base(s) arms(s) are extended overhead, but are NOT considered “Extended Stunts” since the height of the body of the top person is similar to the shoulder/prep level stunt.)

SUSPENDED STUNTS

Suspended Roll - A stunt skill that involves hip-over- head rotation from the top person while connected with hand/wrist to hand/wrist of the base(s) that are on the performing surface. The base(s) will have their arms extended during the rotation of the skill. The rotation of the top person is limited to either forward or backward.

NONRELEASE, SPECIALIZED STUNTS*

Assisted Inverted Floor Skills - An inverted participant on the performing surface is partially supported by non-inverted participant(s) who is/are also on the performing surface.

Chorus-Line Flip - A stunt in which a participant on the performing surface performs a backward flip while being supported by the connected arms of other participants.

Cupie/Awesome - A stunt in which both feet of a top person are in one hand of a base.

Flatback - A stunt in which the top person is lying horizontal, face-up, and is usually supported by two or more bases.

Hanging Pyramid - A pyramid in which one or more persons are suspended off the performing surface by one or more top person. A “hanging Pyramid” would be considered a 2 ½ high pyramid due to the weight of the top person being borne at the second level.

Leapfrog - A stunt in which the top person is transitioned from one set of bases to another, or back to the original bases, by passing over the torso and through the extended arms of the base. The top person remains upright and stays in continuous contact with the base while transitioning.

Liberty - A one-leg stunt that may include variations such as a hitch, a torch, a heel stretch, an arabesque, a scorpion, etc.

**NOTE: Stunts in this section may also be known by other names. This section does not attempt to list every stunt mentioned in the United States All Star Federation Safety Rules.*

RELEASE SKILLS/STUNTS

Basket Toss - A toss involving 2 or 3 bases and a spotter. 2 of the bases use their hands to interlock wrist.

Elevator/Sponge Toss - A person loads into a prep/elevator loading position and is tossed by multiple bases.

Helicopter - A stunt where a top person in a horizontal position is tossed to rotate around a vertical axis (like helicopter blades) before being caught by original bases.

Log Roll - A release move in which the top person’s body rotates at least 360 degrees while remaining parallel to the performing surface. An “Assisted Log Roll” would be the same skill, with the assistance from an additional base that maintains contact throughout the transition.

Release Move - When the top person becomes free of contact with all people on the performing surface.

Toss - An airborne stunt where base(s) execute a throwing motion initiated from waist level to

increase the height of the top person. The top person becomes free from all contact of bases, bracers and/or other top persons. The top person is free from the performing surface when toss is initiated (Example: basket toss or sponge toss). Note: Toss to hands, toss to extended stunts and toss chair are NOT included in the category. (See release moves)

AYC CHEER SAFETY RULES AND PENALTIES

All teams must follow AYC Cheer Safety Rules, AYC Skill Level Division Rules, the current year's United States All Star Federation Safety Rules, and United States All Star Federation Glossary. The AYC guidelines and safety rules supersede any conflicting rules. Please email the AYC Technical Committee for clarifications or questions regarding United States All Star Federation & AYC rules at AYCTech@americanyouthfootball.com.

Deductions will be taken from your total score for each infraction of the AYC cheer safety rules and penalties, United States All Star Federation Safety Rules and United States All Star Federation Glossary and/or the AYC Skill Level Division Rules. Penalty amounts are listed in parentheses.

Issued once means only one penalty for that violation will be assessed throughout the entire routine.

Per Occurrence means that every time a violation is performed a penalty will be assessed throughout the entire routine.

Per Sequence means that if multiple stunt groups or individuals make a violation in one sequence, a deduction will be made for the entire sequence rather than each individual or group.

Props

- Banners, flags, megaphones, poms, and signs are the only props allowed. Any other props used or brought to the performing surface will result in a deduction. (.5 pts issued once)
- When discarding props that are made of solid material or have sharp edges/corners, team members must gently toss or place the props so that they are under control. (1.0 pts per occurrence)
- The placement of props should be a safe distance away from skills being performed to eliminate safety hazards. A penalty will be assessed if an athlete steps, kicks, moves with feet, or tumbles on the prop. (1.0 pts per occurrence)
- Hiding or hidden type of props under the uniform are prohibited. (.5 pts issued once)
- Items that may damage the surface are prohibited. Including but not limited to, loose glitter, light up signs with bulbs and batteries. (.5 pts issued once)
- Straight and twisting cradles are permitted with poms. All other props are prohibited during cradles. (1.0 pts per sequence)
- The use of props is prohibited during tumbling. Exception a forward/backward roll may be performed with a sign or poms in hands, or holding pom(s) in the free hand in a one handed cartwheel. (1.0 pts per sequence)
- When setting up props at least a portion of the prop **MUST** be on/touching the performance surface or a boundary violation will occur. (.5 pts per prop)
- Only athletes may set up the props, coaches may not assist with prop placement prior to a team's performance. (.5 pts per prop)

Jewelry

- No jewelry may be worn except religious or medical medals that must be taped to the participant's body without a chain. (1.0 pts per occurrence)

- Jewelry includes but not limited to plastic and rope bracelets/anklets, hair elastics worn on the participant's wrist. (1.0 pts per occurrence)
- Piercings must be removed. Covering with Band-Aids does not meet requirements for safe participation. (1.0 pts per occurrence)

Hair/Bows/Ribbons/Pins/Hair Pieces/Nails

- Hair must not interfere with participant's ability to stunt safely. Hair must be secured away from the face as to not obstruct vision. (1.0 pts issued once)
- All hair pieces/bows must be securely fastened as to not fall out onto the performing surface. (.5 pts issued once) (1.0 pts if stepped on, issued once)
- Length of ribbons must not impair vision. (1.0 pts issued once)
- Bobby pins and hair pins are PROHIBITED. (1.0 pts issued once) Gymnastic type clips are recommended to secure hair.
- Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept at an appropriate length (short, near the end of the fingers) to minimize risk for the participants. (1.0 pts issued once)

Glitter/Makeup/Stickers

- Glitter/Makeup/Stickers that does not readily adhere to the hair, face, body, uniform or costume is illegal. (1.0 pts issued once per category)
- Glitter may be used on signs, props, or backdrops only if laminated or sealed. (1.0 pts issued once)
- AYC does NOT prohibit the use of nail polish, make-up, or facial stickers.

Uniforms

- Uniforms must fit properly, covering the midriff and athlete's bottom when standing at attention. (1.0 pts issued once)
- Safety pins may not be used on uniforms as they present a safety hazard. (1.0 pts issued once)
- Knee socks, leggings, stockings or tights during stunting are prohibited for flyers. Ankles and calves must be exposed on flyer. (1.0 pts per sequence)
- No tear away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed. (1.0 pts issued once)
- Midriffs and/or sheer/nude color uniforms are prohibited. (1.0 pts issued once)
- Cheer shoes must be secure. (1.0 pts issued once)

Casts/Braces/Glasses/Medical Equipment/Religious Observances

- Participants may participate in limited capacity while wearing plaster casts or a walking boot. Participants wearing casts/boot may not stunt, or tumble during the performance. Jumping with a cast is permitted with the exception of the cast being on a foot or leg. (1.0 pts issued once)
- Supports, braces, soft cast, etc. that are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require additional padding.
- Supports, braces that have been altered from the manufacturer's original design/production must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than one-half-inch thick if the participant is involved in partner stunts, pyramids, or tosses. (1.0 pts issued once)

- Glasses may be worn, but must be secure. If they fall off, they must be quickly retrieved, a sport strap for all participants wearing eyeglasses is highly recommended. If glasses are not retrieved a penalty will be issued. (.5 pts issued once)
- Any participant requiring a medical device shall be allowed to participate as long as medical documentation allowing participation is available.
- Any participant requiring modification to any safety rule based on their religious practice will require written approval from the AYC Technical Committee. (AYCTech@americanyouthfootball.com).

Spotting

- All participants assigned as spotters in a stunt that require a spotter (prep, extensions, release moves, dismounts, and tosses) must remain in the ready position during the entire stunt. Ready position means eyes are focused on the flyer/top at all times. (1.0 pts per sequence) A quick glance to check other stunts and/or personnel is permitted.
- A Spotter may not hold objects in their hand(s) while spotting a stunt. (1.0 per sequence)
- All participants assigned as bases for prep level or higher skills are required to keep eyes on their flyer, a glance when transitioning and pyramid building is allowed but the remainder of the time, bases need to be focused on their stunt group and not looking around. (1.0 pts per sequence)

Choreography, Timing, and Music

- Formal entrances (i.e. crowd response chants, choreographed marching, cheers, tumbling or stunts) to the competition floor are prohibited. Entrances to the competition floor should be brief with the sole purpose of walking, running, etc. to position. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set for their routine. (.5 pts issued once)
- Timing begins with the first organized word, movement, or note of music following the team's announcement "you may begin", "it's your time to shine", "your music is on", etc. Timing will end with the last organized word, note of music, or movement by the team. Please note, stunt groups may get into position, but flyers must keep one foot on the floor at all times. Once both feet are loaded into a stunt, timing will begin. (Overtime penalty could be assessed).
- All choreography, material, music should be age-appropriate and suitable for family viewing. Any team using inappropriate choreography or music will receive a 2.5 penalty issued once.
- Teams using excessively vulgar or suggestive movements, words, or music are subject to a 5.0 point deduction and/or disqualification
- **Music Guidelines:**
 - There cannot be a "bleep" over an inappropriate lyric. (1.0 penalty per occurrence)
 - Lyrics cannot lead up to an inappropriate word which then has a voiceover on the inappropriate word or cuts off right at the inappropriate word. (1.0 penalty per occurrence)
 - Music legalities cannot be based on "meaning of the song", although specific lyrics should be appropriate for family listening. i.e. avoid lyrics in regards to drugs, sex, drinking, etc.
 - A deduction of .5 will be taken from your total score if your routine and/or music goes from 6 - 10 seconds over time limit.
 - A deduction of 1.0 will be taken from your total score if your routine and/or music goes from 11 or more seconds over time limit.

- When there is a music malfunction during a performance that is not the result of the coach or team representative error, the team may be offered the option to perform again.

Out of Level Penalties

- 2.5 points will be deducted from your total score for each out of level skill performed (white, red, or blue). (2.5 pts per sequence) Example a white team does (3) extended stunts, a total of 2.5 points would be deducted, not 2.5 per stunt.
- 1.0 points will be deducted from your total score for each out of level **performance error**. Example of a performance error, a red team executes a pyramid with an extended lib and the bracer in a prep loses contact on the way up, because her stunt group brings her down, is too far away to reach, timing issues, etc.

Boundary Penalty

- .5 points will be deducted if any team member steps or touches out of bounds with an entire foot, entire hand, or other body part. Athletes may not use the non-performing surface for transitions. The entire routine including transitions must remain on the performing surface. Stepping on or touching the edge of the mat does not constitute a violation. (.5 pts per occurrence)
- An athlete may pick up a prop that is partially out of bounds; however, an athlete may not step off the performance area to retrieve a prop outside of the performance area. (.5 pts per occurrence)
- Carefully discarding props off the performing surface is acceptable; however, if they are used again a boundary violation will be assessed. (.5 pts per occurrence)

Unsportsmanlike behavior

A team whose administrators, coaches, participants, and/or spectators are displaying unsatisfactory sportsmanlike conduct before or during an event may be subject to a 5 point deduction.

In Case of a Tie

All ties will be broken at Regional/National competitions by using the Basic Fundamental scores on the score sheets. Those categories include: Stunts, Pyramids, Tumbling, Jumps, and Dance. If it is necessary to break a second tie, the scores under Overall Performance will be calculated along with the Fundamental score categories.

Routine Interruption Due to Injury

In case of an injury, the competition officials, event medical personnel, a coach of the performing team, or one of the judges can stop the performance. It is up to the competition officials' if the team will perform again.

Any injury where there is blood present must be stopped and the injured athlete must not return until the bleeding has stopped, the wound is covered, and uniform appropriately cleaned or changed.

Injured Participant Returning to Competition

An injured participant must not return to the performance until the competition official receives clearance from all of the representatives listed below.

- Event Medical personnel attending to the athlete
- Parent/Guardian (if present)
- Head Coach of competing team

In the event of a suspected head injury, the participant cannot return to perform without clearance from a licensed medical professional that has training related to head injuries.

REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION

Teams with illegal competitor(s) will be disqualified. Reasons for disqualification include but are not limited to overage competitor(s), competitor(s) not listed on official AYF/AYC League roster, and/or illegal competitor(s) listed on AYF/AYC official League roster. If a team is found with unregistered competitors, the team will be disqualified. Teams registering and performing in incorrect divisions and/or categories will be disqualified. See the Youth Cheer Divisions General Routine Guidelines for further details.

GENERAL SAFETY RULES AND ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

- All athletes must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/coach.
- Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement.
- All teams, gyms, coaches and directors must have an Emergency Response Plan in the event of an injury.
- Athletes and coaches may not be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, performance enhancing substances or over-the-counter medications that would hinder the ability to supervise or execute a routine safely, while participating in a practice or performance.
- Athletes must practice and perform on an appropriate surface. Technical skills (stunts, pyramids, tosses or tumbling) may not be performed on concrete, asphalt, wet or uneven surfaces or surfaces with obstructions.
- Soft-soled shoes must be worn while competing. No dance shoes/boots, and/or gymnastics slippers (or similar) allowed. Shoes must have a solid sole.
- Jewelry of any kind, including but not limited to, ear, nose, tongue, belly button and facial rings, clear plastic jewelry, bracelets, necklaces and pins on uniforms is not allowed. Jewelry must be removed and may not be taped over. Exception: medical ID tags/bracelets. Clarification: Rhinestones are legal when adhered to the uniform and illegal when adhered to the skin.
- Any height increasing apparatus used to propel an athlete is not allowed. Exception: spring floor.
- Flags, banners, signs, pom poms, megaphones and pieces of cloth are the only props allowed. Props with poles or similar support apparatus may not be used in conjunction with any kind of stunt or tumbling. All props must be safely discarded out of harm's way (Example: throwing a hard sign across the mat from a stunt would be illegal). Any uniform piece purposefully removed from the body and used for visual effect will be considered a prop once it is removed from the body.
- Supports, braces and soft casts which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require any additional padding. Supports/braces and soft casts that have been altered from the manufacturer's original design/production must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than one-half inch thick if the participant is involved in stunts, pyramids or tosses. A participant wearing a plaster cast or a walking boot must not be involved in stunts, pyramids, tumbling or tosses.
- On the level grid, all skills allowed at a particular level encompass all skills allowed in the preceding level.
- Required spotters for all skills must be your own team's members, and be trained in proper spotting techniques.
- Drops including but not limited to knee, seat, front, back and split drops from a jump, stunt, or inverted position are not allowed unless the majority of the weight is first borne on the hands or feet, which breaks the impact of the drop. Shushinovas are allowed.

Clarification: Drops that include any weight bearing contact with the hands and feet are not in clear violation of this rule.

- Athletes must have at least one foot, hand or body part (other than hair) on the performing surface when the routine begins. Exception: Athletes may have their feet in the hands of base(s) if the base(s) hands are resting on the performing surface.
- The competitors who begin a routine must remain the same throughout the course of a routine. A performer is not permitted to be “replaced” by another performer during a routine.
- An athlete must not have gum, candy, cough drops or other such edible or non-edible items, which may cause choking, in her/his mouth during practice and/or performance.

General Tumbling Rules

Intentional violation of any of these rules will result in a 2.5 deduction per sequence. Violations that are a result of a performance error will result in a 1.0 deduction. See page 25 Out of Level Penalties for clarification.

- All tumbling must originate from and land on the performing surface. *Clarification: A tumbler may rebound from her feet into a stunt transition. If the rebound from the tumbling pass involves hip-over-head rotation, then the tumbler/top person must be caught and stopped in a non-inverted position before continuing into the hip-over-head transition or stunt.*
- Tumbling over, under, or through a stunt, individual, or prop is not allowed. *Clarification: An individual may jump (rebound) over another individual.*
- Tumbling while holding or in contact with a prop is not allowed. *Exception: rolls are permitted with pom or sign providing you do not roll on prop.*
- Dive rolls are not allowed for white level.

General Stunting Rules

Intentional violation of any of these rules will result in a 2.5 deduction per sequence. Violations that are a result of a performance error will result in a 1.0 deduction. See page 25 Out of Level Penalties for clarification.

- All partner stunts and pyramids are limited to 2 levels high, meaning the top person receives primary support from one or more bases who are in direct weight bearing contact with the performing surface.
- A Spotter is required for each top person at prep level for white teams and above prep level for red and blue teams.
- A Spotter is required for single base shoulder level stunts where the feet of the top person are in the hands of the base.
- An extended triple based straddle lift requires either a spotter in the back of the stunt or a bracer in the front of the stunt.
- No stunt, pyramid, or individual may move over or under another stunt, pyramid, or individual except when helping to build, stabilize or dismount that stunt or pyramid.
- A Base must not hold objects in a hand that is supporting a top person.
- Base(s) of extended stunts must have both feet in direct weight bearing contact with the performing surface.
- A top person must receive primary support from a base. Bracer or back spotter must not provide primary support for the top person.

- In braced partner stunts and pyramids, at least one bracer must be at shoulder height or below.
Exceptions:
The following stunts may brace any extended stunts, except during release transitions.
 - Chair
 - Multi-base flatback
 - Multi-base straddle lift
 - Extensions may brace only other extensions, except during a totem pole or release transition
- Extended single leg stunts may not brace or be braced by any other extended stunts.

General Stunting Release Rules

Intentional violation of any of these rules will result in a 2.5 deduction per sequence. Violations that are a result of a performance error will result in a 1.0 deduction. See page 25 Out of Level Penalties for clarification.

- During release transitions, at least one base or spotter must remain in contact with the top person. Exception:
 - Helicopters are allowed up to a 180 degree rotation and zero twisting, must be caught by 3 catchers, one of which is positioned at head and shoulder area of the top.
 - Multi-based log roll, the top person may begin in a face-up or face-down position.
 - Free standing tick-tock that begins at shoulder level is permitted.
- Release moves must not exceed more than 18 inches above the extended arm level.
Examples; Tick tock, switch tock, express up.
- Release moves may not land in an inverted position.
- Release moves from inverted to non-inverted may not twist.
- Release moves from inverted to non-inverted positions landing at prep level or higher must have a spot.
- Release moves must return to original bases.
- Swinging stunt is legal providing the following conditions are met:
 - Downward movement begins from below shoulder height
 - The top person is face up
 - The top person begins on the performance or in a stunt that is below shoulder level

General Dismount Rules

Intentional violation of any of these rules will result in a 2.5 deduction per sequence. Violations that are a result of a performance error will result in a 1.0 deduction. See page 25 Out of Level Penalties for clarification.

- Dismounts may not intentionally travel. Exception: bases may take $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to catch a cradle.
- Dismounts to the performing surface from shoulder height or above require assistance from a base or spotter. Straight drops or small hop offs with no additional skills from waist level or below are the only dismounts allowed to the performing surface without assistance.
- Cradles from single based stunts must have a spotter with at least one hand-arm supporting the waist to shoulder region to protect the head and shoulder area through the cradle.

- Cradles from multi-based stunts must have two catchers and a spotter with at least one hand-arm supporting the waist to shoulder region to protect the head and shoulder area through the cradle.

General Sponge/Basket Toss Rules

Intentional violation of any of these rules will result in a 2.5 deduction per sequence. Violations that are a result of a performance error will result in a 1.0 deduction. See page 25 Out of Level Penalties for clarification.

- Tosses are allowed up to a total of 4 tossing bases. One base must be behind the top person during the toss and may assist the top person into the toss.
- Tosses must be performed with all bases having their feet on the performing surface and must land in a cradle position. Top person must be caught in a cradle position by at least 3 original bases one of which is positioned at the head and shoulder area of the top person. Bases must remain stationary during the toss. Exception: a ¼ turn is allowed by bases to catch a twisting rotation
- Top person may not hold objects in their hands.
- Flipping and traveling tosses are not allowed.

General Pyramid Rules

Intentional violation of any of these rules will result in a 2.5 deduction per sequence. Violations that are a result of a performance error will result in a 1.0 deduction. See page 25 Out of Level Penalties for clarification.

- Pyramids are allowed up to 2 high.
- Top person must receive primary support from a base.
Exception for blue skill level:
 - During pyramid transition, a top person may pass above 2 persons high while in direct physical contact with at least one person at prep level or below. Contact must be maintained with the same bracer(s) throughout entire transition. *Clarification: Contact must be made with a base on the performing surface BEFORE contact with the bracer(s) is lost.*
 - In Pyramid transition, a top person may travel over another top person while connected to that top person at prep level or below.
 - Primary weight may not be borne at second level. *Clarification: The transition must be continuous.*
 - Non-inverted transitional pyramids may involve changing bases.
 - The top person must maintain physical contact with a person at prep level or below. *Clarification: Contact must be made with a base on the performing surface BEFORE contact with the bracer(s) is lost.*
 - The top person must be caught by at least 2 catchers (minimum of one catcher and one spotter). Both catchers must be stationary and may not be involved with any other skill or choreography when the transition is initiated. (The dip to throw the top person is considered the initiation of the skill.)
 - Non-inverted pyramid release moves must be caught by at least 2 catchers (minimum of one catcher and one spotter).
 - Both catchers must be stationary.
 - Both catchers must maintain visual contact with the top person throughout the entire transition.
 - Release moves may not be braced/connected to top persons above prep level.
 - Release moves involving inversions must be caught by the original bases.
- Extended single leg stunts may not brace or be braced by any other single leg extended stunts.

General Inversion Rules

Intentional violation of any of these rules will result in a 2.5 deduction per sequence. Violations that are a result of a performance error will result in a 1.0 deduction. See page 25 Out of Level Penalties for clarification.

Inversions are partner stunts or pyramids in which the top person has her or his shoulders below the waist and at least one foot is above her/his head. In addition to the following rules, all person involved in an inversion must follow all rules from Partner Stunts and Pyramids.

- Suspended rolls are allowed providing:
 - Two people on the performing surface control the top person with continuous hand to hand/arm contact to a stunt, two-person cradle, loading position or the performance surface.
 - A single base or post controls the top person with continuous hands-to-hands contact to a stunt, two person cradle, loading position or the performing surface.
 - If caught in a cradle, load, or stunt, the new catchers are in place and are not involved with any other skill when the suspended roll is initiated.
 - The feet/ankle of the top person are released.
- Braced inversions in a pyramid that do not flip or roll are allowed provided the following conditions are met:
 - The top person does not begin in an extended inverted position.
 - Braced inversions that release must have a skill before and after that is legal, including the required spotters.
 - The top person must be in hand/arm to hand/arm contact with at least one bracer during the entire transition
 - The top person and each bracer must have a separate spotter. Exception: bracers in shoulder sits and thigh stands do not require a spotter.
 - The top person may not be supporting his or her weight on any other body part of the person(s) assisting (i.e. shoulders of the bracer).
 - The released top person and bases make no more than a $\frac{1}{4}$ turn around the bracer in a continuous movement in which the top person remains above the original base(s) the top person must be continuous in motion and cannot be supported so that they pause during the transition.
 - The top person must be caught by original bases.
- Braced flips or rolls in a pyramid are allowed provided all the following conditions are met:
 - The top person begins in a multi-base loading position, stunt, cradle, or on the performing surface.
 - The top person does not begin in an extended inverted position.
 - The top person maintains continuous hand-to-hand/arm contact with a bracer on each side.
 - The bracers are in double base preps with spotters.
 - The top person is between or in front of the bracers.
 - At least three catchers who were the original bases/spotters catch the top person in a loading position, stunt, or cradle, or assist the top person to the performing surface. If a flip ends in a cradle, the bracers may release the top person once she/he begins to descend and is no longer inverted.
 - The top person ends in a non-inverted position.
 - The top person does not perform more than one and one quarter ($1\frac{1}{4}$) flipping rotations and no more than one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) twist.
 - The bases/catchers remain stationary except as necessary for safety adjustments.
- In all other Inversions:
 - An inverted person is allowed to pass through an extended position, but must not pause or stop while extended.
 - In inversions where the base of supports begins and remains below prep level:
 - At least one base or spotter must be in a position to protect the head/neck of the top person.
 - The base or spotter must maintain contact with the top person's upper body (waist and above, including arms/hands) until the top person is no longer inverted or his/her hands are

on the performing surface. The contact must be sufficient to stabilize/control the top person's position.

Exception: A top person in an inverted position on the performing surface may be released to a loading position below shoulder height.

- In inversions where the base of support begins at or passes through prep level:
 - At least two people on the performing surface must be in a position to protect the head/neck of the top person.
 - The bases/spotters must maintain contact with the top person's upper body (waist and above, including arms/hands) until the top person is no longer inverted or his/her hands are on the performing surface. The contact must be sufficient to stabilize/control the top person's position. *Exception: in a foldover stunt, the top person may initiate the inversion without upper body contact.*
 - The top person must not go directly to an inverted position on the performing surface from a prep or higher.
- Dismounts from inverted stunts to a cradle or an upright position on the performing surface are allowed providing the top person begins in a static or pump and go position (i.e. handstand) and does not perform any skills (e.g., toe touches, twist, etc.). Dismounts to the performing surface from shoulder height or above must have assisted landings. The assistance must be sufficient to slow the momentum of the top person.

SECTION 4: AYC CONFERENCE DIVISION 14 ELITE CHEER

AYC CONFERENCE DIVISION 14 ELITE CHEER

DIVISION	AGES	SKILL LEVELS
14 Elite	11, 12, 13, 14	Red or Blue

CONFERENCE DIVISION 14 ELITE TEAM GUIDELINES

The Conference Elite team is a competitive division at the AYC National Championship. Each AYC National Conference has the opportunity to create a Red and or Blue Conference Elite team for the purpose of competing at the National AYC Championship. Teams are encouraged

to *perform* at local and regional competitions if they are ready, however, a team cannot be formed unless they are committed to attend the AYC National Championship.

- Conference Elite teams are considered a division 14 Elite team with no more than 18 athletes per team.
- Each Conference can have 2 Elite teams, one red team and one blue team.
- Division 14 Elite is made up of cheer athletes that are on the current year's cheer roster and are 11 - 14 years old, on a division 12, 14, or 18 team. Athletes can be from white, red, or blue level teams at their local association.
- Athletes may compete at the AYC National Championship for their Local Association and their Conference Elite team, cross competing is allowed. However, athletes may not compete on both a red and a blue Conference Elite team.
- Each Conference must submit all required paperwork to their Regional Cheer and Dance Director no later than September 15. Regional Cheer and Dance Directors must confirm approved team participation no later than Friday September 18th. Commitment means that each participant's parent/guardian has committed and understands the financial, practice and travel obligations. You must have a committed team of players and coaching staff prior to making your commitment to the national office.
- There must be at least two teams in division 14 Elite red/blue to hold a National Championship. A determination will be made if there are enough teams on September 18th.
- Conference Division 14 Elite teams will be required to pay the tournament registration fee upon commitment and acceptance into the AYC National Championship. This fee is non-refundable and therefore forfeited should a team back out of the championship. In addition, any Conference that commits to sending a team to the AYC National Championship and does not send a team, will be suspended from participation for 1 year.

Competition Attire

Attire will be a performance tank or t-shirt, shorts with briefs underneath.

Coaching Selection

- Conferences will develop their own system for nominating and selecting coaches and participants, utilizing the minimum guidelines set forth below.
- Coach nominees must be currently rostered in that Conference and have a positive history with the organization.
- Nominees must be coaches who have demonstrated not only the competence one would expect from a cheer coach, but one who demonstrates the understanding that “**It’s for the Kids**” and demonstrate the highest moral integrity and character.
- The Conference cheer director should be in charge of coach selection, with the assistance of other Conference board members and/or Elite team coaching staff.

Participant Selection

The Conference cheer director shall have final approval of all participants of the team to ensure minimum participation requirements are met.

- At least three different associations within the Conference must be represented. No single association can dominate in participation. Conferences needing exception to this rule should contact their Regional Cheer and Dance Director for approval.
- Only participants who, by the September 15 deadline, were certified, listed on the final roster and are actively participating with their team during the regular season are eligible.
- The participant selection process should include a scholastic component.

- It is recommended that selection and formation of the team be done between week 4 and week six of the traditional season.

Conference Requirements

The Conferences' cheer director must certify that each player selected is properly listed on the final roster and certified, and submit all of required documentation to their respective Regional Cheer and Dance Director by the September 15 deadline.

- The Conferences must ensure that each participant is actively participating with their team for the entire season.
- The Conference is to complete a roster for the Conference division 14 Elite team via the documentation provided by the national office.
- The Conference is required to guard that the practice rules are adhered to. They are as follows:
 - Practice may not start sooner than the first Saturday following September 15th
 - One 8 hour choreography session is permitted.
 - One practice per week prior to your regional championship (or November 20th in the event you don't have a regional championship), not exceeding more than 3 hours in duration, mandatory break rules apply.
 - After your regional event no more than 6 hours practice per week, no more than 4 hours in duration. Mandatory break rules apply.

SECTION 5: DANCE & STEP DIVISION – REGIONALS & NATIONALS

AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL, INC. has established two divisions of competitive dance, Open and Step. Each division will have their own set of specific rules. The AYF/AYC dance rules incorporate the current rules of United States All Star Federation for dance.

Dance will compete in the Open style division.

- **Open Style:** A routine in this category may incorporate any one style or combination of styles of jazz, pom, or hip hop.
- **Jazz:** A jazz routine incorporates stylized dance movements/combinations, formation changes, group work, leaps and turns. Emphasis is placed on proper technical execution, extension, control, body placement, and team uniformity.
- **Pom:** Important characteristics of a pom routine include strong pom technique. Clean, precise, and sharp motions, synchronization and visual effect, and may incorporate tricks (i.e. leaps/turns, pom passes, jump sequences, kick lines, etc.) Visual effect includes level changes, group work, formation changes, the use of different color poms, etc.
- **Hip Hop:** Routines can incorporate street style movements with an emphasis on execution, style, creativity, body isolations and control, rhythm, uniformity and musical interpretation.

Step will compete in a “Step Battle”. AYC may combine divisions for battle format to ensure competition in each division.

- Step is a form of percussive dance in which the participant’s entire body is used to produce complex rhythms and sounds through a mixture of sophisticated, synchronized chanting and rhythmic beats from participant hands, feet and mouth. Today, youth across America have embraced this art form, which provides groups with a sense of unity, teamwork, discipline, self-esteem and responsibility. AYC supports this philosophy and is excited to offer this dance category.

DANCE AND STEP DIVISIONS

DIVISIONS	AGES
Division 8	5, 6, 7, 8
Division 10	7, 8, 9, 10
Division 12	9, 10, 11, 12
Division 14	11, 12, 13, 14
Division 18	14, 15, 16, 17, 18
Note: Divisions 8 thru 14 now have a 4 year age span, Division 18 has a 5 year age span.	

Dance & Step team 5 - 36 members

Competing Up - Dance & Step

In order to allow all interested athletes to participate, athletes may compete in an older age division with the following restrictions:

Athletes may compete in an older age division ("compete up") ONLY if it is **NOT** possible to create a team in the division that corresponds to their age level.

Athletes may **NOT** compete in a younger age division without approval from AYC.

There is an "Age Waiver Request Form" that an association may use for an age waiver. The form is located on www.MyAYF.com.

DANCE & STEP GENERAL SAFETY RULES

- All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified coach/instructor.
- Coaches/instructors must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the dancer and team skill level with regard to proper performance placement.
- All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the event. The director/ coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents, and any other person affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly.
- All programs should have, and review, an Emergency Action Plan in the event of an injury.
- Each team will have a maximum of 2 minutes and 30 seconds (2:30) for dance and 3 minutes (3:00) for step to demonstrate their style and expertise. Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement or note of the music. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement or note of the music, whichever happens last.
- Routines usually display a theme, with accompanying attire (costumes) and integration of themed music. For safety, all dance routines will be performed on dance floor surface or cheer mat only. Concrete surfaces are not permitted.
- Footwear is required for both dance and step. Soft-soled dance shoes (jazz boots, dance sandals, jazz shoes) are acceptable when competing. Footed tights, bare feet and socks only are prohibited. Feet and toes must be covered. (Exception: lyrical turner shoes are permitted for dance and hard sole boots permitted for step only).
- Jewelry as a part of a costume is allowed. Approved jewelry includes legal post stud earrings and hair accessories. Jewelry such as hoop earrings, bracelets, necklaces, rings, belly, tongue, and nose rings etc. are prohibited. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces may be worn, but should be secured to the body with tape.

DANCE & STEP CHOREOGRAPHY, MUSIC, and COSTUMING

Violation of any of these rules will result in a 1.0 deduction.

- Suggestive, offensive, or vulgar choreography, costuming, and/or music are inappropriate for family audiences and therefore lack audience appeal.
- Routine choreography should be appropriate and entertaining for all audience members. Vulgar or suggestive material is defined as any movement or choreography

implying something improper or indecent, appearing offensive or sexual in content, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures or implications. Inappropriate choreography, costuming and/or music may also affect the judges' overall impression and/or score of the routine.

- All choreography should be age appropriate.
- All costuming and makeup should be age appropriate and acceptable for family viewing. Midriffs and/or sheer/nude color costumes are prohibited.
- No tear away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed. Accessories such as capes, robes, jackets, hats may be removed as part of a choreographed section of the routine.
- Costumes and related accessories or props should be properly secured during the performance. Any items that accidentally falls off during the performance will result in a .5 deduction per infraction per person.
- Formal entrances onto the competition floor are prohibited. Entrances to the competition floor should be brief with the sole purpose of walking, running, etc. to position. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set up for their routine.

DANCE AND STEP PROPS

Violation of any of these rules will result in a 1.0 deduction

- All Props brought to the performance floor must be used during the choreographed performance for both Dance & Step. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited. Hiding props is prohibited.
- Standing props that bear the weight of the dancer(s) are not allowed. (*Examples: chairs, stools, benches, ladders, boxes, stairs, etc.*)

HIP HOP (Division Progression noted below)

Violation of any of these rules will result in a 1.0 deduction.

EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS (Tumbling & Aerial Street Style Skills)	
<i>Tumbling as a dance skill is allowed, but not required in all divisions with the following limitations:</i>	
Hip Hop: D8, D10	Hip Hop: D12, D14, D18
<p>1 <u>Inverted Skills:</u> a. Non <u>airborne</u> skills are allowed (Example: Headstand) b. Airborne skills with or without hand support that land in a <u>perpendicular inversion</u> may not have backward momentum in the approach</p>	<p><u>Inverted Skills:</u> a. Non <u>airborne</u> skills are allowed b. Airborne skills with hand support that land in a <u>perpendicular inversion</u> are allowed</p>
<p>2 <u>Tumbling skills with hip over head rotation:</u> a. Non airborne skills are allowed b. Mini and Tiny ONLY: Airborne skills with hand support are allowed provided all of the following: i. It is not airborne in approach but may be airborne in the descent (<i>Clarification: in the approach the hands must touch the ground before the feet leave the ground.</i>) (<i>Exception: Dive Rolls</i>) ii. Is limited to two <u>consecutive</u> hip over head rotation skills. * <i>Youth follows the Junior, Senior, Open criteria for Individuals Rule 2.b c.</i> Airborne skills without hand support are not allowed. (<i>Exception: Aerial cartwheel that is not <u>connected</u> to any other skill with hip over head rotation</i>)</p>	<p><u>Tumbling skills with hip over head rotation:</u> a. Non airborne skills are allowed b. * Airborne skills with hand support i. Are allowed (<i>Example: Back Handspring</i>) ii. Are limited to two consecutive hip over head rotation skills (<i>Clarification: both skills must have hand support</i>) c. Airborne skills without hand support are allowed provided all of the following: i. Involves no more than one twisting transition ii. May not connect to another skill that is airborne with hip over head rotation with or without hand support d. Headsprings are not permitted.</p>
<p>3 Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.</p>	<p>Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.</p>
<p>4 <u>Drops</u> to the knee, thigh, back, shoulder, seat, front or head onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.</p>	<p>Only <u>drops</u> to the shoulder, back or seat are permitted provided the height of the airborne dancer does not exceed <u>hip level</u>. (<i>Clarification: drops directly to the knee, thigh, front or head are not allowed</i>)</p>
<p>5 Landing in a push up position onto the performance surface from a jump in which the legs are in front of the body and swing behind are not allowed.</p>	<p>Landing in a push up position may involve any jump.</p>
<p>6 Hip over head rotation skills with hand support are not allowed while holding <u>props</u> in supporting hand(s). (<i>Exception: forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed</i>).</p>	<p>Hip over head rotation skills with hand support are not allowed while holding <u>props</u> in supporting hand(s). (<i>Exception: forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed</i>).</p>

HIP HOP Continued

EXECUTED BY GROUPS OR PAIRS - Lifts and Partnering are allowed, but not required in all divisions with the following limitations:

	Hip Hop: D8, D10	Hip Hop: D12, D14, D18
1	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> must maintain contact with a <u>Supporting Dancer</u> who is in direct contact with the performance surface.	A <u>Supporting Dancer</u> does not have to maintain contact with the performance surface provided the height of the skill does not exceed shoulder level.
2	At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain <u>contact</u> with the Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill above <u>shoulder level</u> .	A single Supporting Dancer may release contact at any level with a single <u>Executing Dancer</u> provided (<i>Clarification: Executing Dancer may only be released by one Supporting Dancer</i>): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Executing Dancer does not pass through an <u>inverted</u> position after the release The Executing Dancer is either caught or supported to the performance surface by one or more Supporting Dancers The Executing Dancer is not caught in a <u>prone</u> position
3	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position. The Executing Dancer is limited to no more than one continuous hip over head rotation. 	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
4	A <u>Vertical Inversion</u> is allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Supporting Dancer(s) maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position. When the height of the Executing Dancer's shoulders exceed shoulder level there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear the weight of the Executing Dancer. 	A <u>Vertical Inversion</u> is allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Supporting Dancer(s) maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position. When the height of the Executing Dancer's shoulders exceed shoulder level there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear the weight of the Executing Dancer.
Unassisted dismounts to the performance surface		
5	An Executing Dancer may jump, <u>leap</u> , step or push off a Supporting Dancer(s) provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The highest point of the released skill does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above shoulder level. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the <u>prone</u> or inverted position after the release. 	An Executing Dancer may jump, <u>leap</u> , step, push off a Supporting Dancer(s) provided all of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> At least one part of the Executing Dancer's body is at or below <u>shoulder level</u> at the highest point of the released skill. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the prone or inverted position after the release.
6	A Supporting Dancer(s) may <u>toss</u> an Executing Dancer provided: (Clarification: May be assisted to performance surface, but not required): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The highest point of the toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above shoulder level. The Executing Dancer is not <u>supine</u> or inverted when released. The Executing Dancer does not pass through a prone or <u>inverted</u> position after release. 	A Supporting Dancer(s) may <u>toss</u> an Executing Dancer provided (Clarification: May be assisted to performance surface, but not required): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> At least one part of the Executing Dancer's body is at or below shoulder level at the highest point of the released skill. The Executing Dancer may be <u>supine</u> or inverted when released but s/he must land on their foot/feet. The Executing Dancer may not pass through an inverted position after release.

JAZZ (Division Progression noted below)

Violation of any of these rules will result in a 1.0 deduction.

EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS (Tumbling & Aerial Skills)	
<i>Tumbling as a dance skill is allowed, but not required in all divisions with the following limitations:</i>	
Jazz: D8, D10	Jazz: D12, D14, D18
1 <u>Hip over head rotation</u> skills with hand support are not allowed while holding <u>props</u> in supporting hand(s). (<i>Exception: forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed</i>).	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> skills with hand support are not allowed while holding <u>props</u> in supporting hand(s). (<i>Exception: forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed</i>).
2 <u>Airborne inverted</u> and <u>Airborne hip over head rotation</u> skills with or without hand support are not allowed (<i>Exception: <u>Aerial Cartwheels</u> are allowed provided they are not <u>connected</u> to any other skill with hip over head rotation</i>)	<u>Airborne hip over head rotation</u> skills without hand support are not allowed. (<i>Exception: <u>Front Aerials</u> and <u>Aerial Cartwheels</u> are allowed</i>)
3 Simultaneous <u>tumbling</u> over or under another dancer that includes hip over head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.	Simultaneous <u>tumbling</u> over or under another dancer that includes hip over head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
4 <u>Drops</u> to the knee, thigh, back, shoulder, seat, front or head onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.	<u>Drops</u> to the knee, thigh, back, shoulder, seat, front or head onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.
5 Landing in a push up position onto the performance surface from a jump in which the legs are in front of the body and swing behind are not allowed.	Landing in a push up position may involve any jump.

EXECUTED BY GROUPS OR PAIRS - Lifts and Partnering are allowed, but not required in all divisions with the following limitations:

	Jazz: D8, D10	Jazz: D12, D14, D18
1	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> must receive support from a <u>Supporting Dancer</u> who is in direct contact with the performance surface. (<i>Exception: kick line leaps</i>)	A <u>Supporting Dancer</u> does not have to maintain contact with the performance surface provided the height of the skill does not exceed <u>shoulder level</u> .
2	At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with the Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill above <u>shoulder level</u> .	A single Supporting Dancer may release contact at any level with a single <u>Executing Dancer</u> provided all of the following (<i>Clarification: Executing Dancer may only be released by one Supporting Dancer</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Executing Dancer does not pass through an <u>inverted</u> position after the release b. The Executing Dancer is either caught or supported to the performance surface in by one or more Supporting Dancers c. The Executing Dancer is not caught in a <u>prone</u> position
3	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position. b. The Executing Dancer is limited to one continuous hip over head rotation. 	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
4	A <u>Vertical Inversion</u> is allowed provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Supporting Dancer(s) maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position. b. When the height of the Executing Dancer's shoulders exceed shoulder level there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear the weight of the Executing Dancer. 	A <u>Vertical Inversion</u> is allowed provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Supporting Dancer(s) maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position. b. When the height of the Executing Dancer's shoulders exceed shoulder level there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear the weight of the Executing Dancer.
Unassisted dismounts to the performance surface		
5	An Executing Dancer may jump, <u>leap</u> , step or push off a Supporting Dancer(s) if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The highest point of the released skill does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above shoulder level. b. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the <u>prone</u> or <u>inverted</u> position after the release. 	An Executing Dancer may jump, <u>leap</u> , step, push off a Supporting Dancer(s) provided all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. At least one part of the Executing Dancer's body is at or below shoulder level at the highest point of the released skill. b. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the <u>prone</u> or inverted position after the release.
6	A Supporting Dancer(s) may <u>toss</u> an Executing Dancer provided (Clarification: May be assisted to performance surface, but not required): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The highest point of the toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above shoulder level. b. The Executing Dancer is not <u>supine</u> or inverted when released. c. The Executing Dancer does not pass through a prone or inverted position after release. 	A Supporting Dancer(s) may <u>toss</u> an Executing Dancer provided (Clarification: May be assisted to performance surface, but not required): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. At least one part of the Executing Dancer's body is at or below shoulder level at the highest point of the released skill. b. The Executing Dancer may be <u>supine</u> or inverted when released but s/he must land on their foot/feet. c. The Executing Dancer may not pass through an inverted position after release.

POM (Division Progression noted below)

Violation of any of these rules will result in a 1.0 deduction.

EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS (Tumbling & Aerial Skills) (Poms are not required.)

Tumbling as a dance skill is allowed, but not required in all divisions with the following limitations:

	Pom: D8, D10	Pom: D12, D14, D18
1	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> skills with hand support are not allowed while holding <u>poms</u> in supporting hand(s). (<i>Exception: forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed</i>).	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> skills with hand support are not allowed while holding <u>poms</u> in supporting hand(s). (<i>Exception: forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed</i>).
2	<u>Airborne inverted</u> and <u>Airborne hip over head rotation</u> skills with or without hand support are not allowed (<i>Exception: Aerial Cartwheels are allowed provided they are not connected to any other skill with hip over head rotation</i>)	<u>Airborne hip over head rotation</u> skills without hand support are not allowed. (<i>Exception: Front Aerials and Aerial Cartwheels are allowed</i>)
3	Simultaneous <u>tumbling</u> over or under another dancer that includes hip over head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.	Simultaneous <u>tumbling</u> over or under another dancer that includes hip over head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
4	<u>Drops</u> to the knee, thigh, back, shoulder, seat, front or head onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.	<u>Drops</u> to the knee, thigh, back, shoulder, seat, front or head onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) foot/feet.
5	Landing in a push up position onto the performance surface from an airborne skill is not allowed.	Landing in a push up position onto the performance surface from an airborne skill is not allowed.

EXECUTED BY GROUPS OR PAIRS -Lifts and Partnering are allowed, but not required in all divisions with the following limitations:

	Pom: D8, D10	Pom: D12, D14, D18
1	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> must receive support from a <u>Supporting Dancer</u> who is in direct <u>contact</u> with the performance surface. (<i>Exception: kick line leaps</i>)	A <u>Supporting Dancer</u> does not have to maintain <u>contact</u> with the performance surface provided the height of the skill does not exceed shoulder level.
2	At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with the Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill above <u>shoulder level</u> .	A single Supporting Dancer may release contact at any level with a single <u>Executing Dancer</u> provided all of the following (<i>Clarification: Executing Dancer may only be released by one Supporting Dancer</i>): a. The Executing Dancer does not pass through an <u>inverted</u> position after the release b. The Executing Dancer is either caught or supported to the performance surface in by one or more Supporting Dancers c. The Executing Dancer is not caught in a <u>prone</u> position d. No supporting dancer may hold poms during the release or catch/assistance upon return to the performance surface.
3	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided: a. A Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position. b. The Executing Dancer is limited to one continuous [hip over head] rotation.	<u>Hip over head rotation</u> of the Executing Dancer(s) is allowed provided: a. A Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
4	A <u>Vertical Inversion</u> is allowed provided: a. The Supporting Dancer(s) maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position. b. When the height of the Executing Dancer's shoulders exceed shoulder level there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear the weight of the Executing Dancer.	A <u>Vertical Inversion</u> is allowed provided: a. The Supporting Dancer(s) maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position. b. When the height of the Executing Dancer's shoulders exceed shoulder level there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear the weight of the Executing Dancer.

Unassisted dismounts to the performance surface		
5	An Executing Dancer may jump, <u>leap</u> , step or push off a Supporting Dancer(s) provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The highest point of the released skill does not <u>elevate</u> the Executing Dancer's hips above shoulder level. b. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the <u>prone</u> or <u>inverted</u> position after the release. 	An Executing Dancer may jump, <u>leap</u> , step or push off a Supporting Dancer(s) provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The highest point of the released skill does not <u>elevate</u> the Executing Dancer's hips above shoulder level. b. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the prone or <u>inverted</u> position after the release.
6	A Supporting Dancer(s) may <u>toss</u> an Executing Dancer provided (Clarification: May be assisted to performance surface, but not required): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The highest point of the toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above shoulder level. b. The Executing Dancer is not <u>supine</u> or inverted when released. c. The Executing Dancer does not pass through a prone or inverted position after release. 	A Supporting Dancer(s) may <u>toss</u> an Executing Dancer provided (Clarification: May be assisted to performance surface, but not required): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The highest point of the toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above shoulder level. b. The Executing Dancer is not <u>supine</u> or inverted when released. c. The Executing Dancer may not pass through a prone or inverted position after release.

AYC DANCE ROUTINE GLOSSARY

Airborne (executed by Individuals, Groups or Pairs): A state or skill in which the dancer is free of contact from a person and/or the performing surface.

Airborne Hip Over Head Rotation (executed by Individuals): An action where hips rotate over the head in a tumbling skill and there is no contact with the performance surface
Example: Round Off or a Back Handspring).

Aerial Cartwheel: An airborne tumbling skill which emulates a cartwheel executed without placing hands on the ground.

Axis Rotation: An action in which a dancer rotates around his/her vertical or horizontal center.

Axel: A turn in which the working leg makes a circle in the air to passé as the supporting leg lifts off the ground with the dancer performing a rotation in the air and then landing the original supporting leg.

Back Walkover: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer reaches backward with an arched torso through an inverted position, hands make contact with the ground, then the hips rotate over the head and the torso follows bringing the dancer to an upright position, landing one foot/leg at a time.

Break Dance: This is a very athletic style of skills, combining forms and maneuvers from activities such as gymnastics*, hip hop, and martial arts.

C- Jump: A jump in which the dancer creates an arch in the back allowing the knees to bend and the feet reach behind the body.

Calypso [ka-lip-SO]: A turning leap in which the working leg extends making a circle in the air as the supporting leg lifts off the ground enabling the dancer to perform a rotation in the air, then the supporting (back) leg reaches behind the body, often in an attitude, and then lands on the original working leg.

Cartwheel: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer supports the weight of the body with the arm(s) while rotating sideways through an inverted position landing on one foot at

a time.

Category: Denoting the style of a performance piece or competition routine. (*Example: Jazz, Pom or Hip Hop and Prep*)

Chassé [sha-SAY]: A connecting step in which one foot remains in advance of the other; meaning to chase.

Connected/Consecutive Skills: An action in which the dancer performs skills continuously, without a step, pause or break in between. (*Example: Double Pirouette or Double Toe Touch*)

Contact (executed by Groups or Pairs): The state or condition of physical touching. Touching of the hair or clothing is not considered contact

Développé [develop-AY]: An action in which the working leg moves through passé (bends) before extending into position; meaning to develop.

Dive Roll: An airborne tumbling skill in which the dancer does a forward roll where the hands and feet are off of the performing surface simultaneously.

Drop: An action in which an airborne dancer lands on a body part other than his/her hand(s) or feet without first bearing weight on the hands/feet.

Elevated: An action in which a dancer is moved to a higher position or place from a lower one.

Executing Dancer: A dancer who performs a skill as a part of “Groups or Pairs” who use(s) support from another dancer(s).

Flying squirrel: A jump in which the dancer executes with forward momentum with the dancers arms extended in front, legs behind, creating an “X” position in the air.

Fouetté [foo-eh-TAY]: A turning skill, usually done in a series, in which the working leg makes a circle in the air and then into passé as the dancer turns bending (plié) and rising (relevé) at each revolution; meaning to whip. Fouetté turns can also be done to the side or in second position (fouetté à la seconde).

Fouetté à la Seconde: A turning step done in a series in which the working leg makes a circle in the air and extends at a 90° angle from the supporting leg remaining parallel to the ground as the dancer turns with a plié and relevé at each revolution.

Front Walkover: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer rotates forward with a hollow torso through an inverted position and arches up bringing the legs and hips over the head to a non-inverted position legs landing one foot/leg at a time.

Glissade [glee-SOD]: A connecting step that transfers weight from one foot to the other; meaning to glide.

Handstand: A non-airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill where the dancer supports his/herself vertically on his/her hands in an inverted position and the arms are extended straight by the head and ears.

Hand to Hand Vertical Inversion: A lift in which the lifted dancer is perpendicular to the ground with the hips directly over his/her shoulders and maintaining contact with only his/her hands in the lifting dancer(s) hands. (All Star teams-Hand to hand vertical inversions are not permitted above shoulder level [of the Lifting/Supporting Dancers when standing

upright].

Head Level: A designated height: the crown of the head of a standing dancer while standing upright with straight legs. (*Clarification: this is an approximate height to measure space, and is not changed by bending, inverting, etc.*)

Head Spin: A trick typically performed in hip hop, in which the dancer spins on his/her head and uses his/her hands to aid in speed. The legs can be held in a variety of positions.

Head Spring (front/back) (illegal for AYC): A trick typically performed in hip hop, in which the dancer approaches the head spring much like a hand spring, and can be executed either to the front or to the back. Beginning in a standing or squatting position, the hands are placed on the floor with the head between the hands, and the legs come over/whip through the body similar to a kip up and the dancer lands on two feet.

Headstand: A non-airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill, where the dancer supports his/herself vertically on his/her head in an inverted position and the hands are on the floor supporting the body.

Hip Level: A designated height; the height of a standing dancer's hips while standing upright with straight legs. (*Clarification: this is an approximate height to measure space, and is not changed by bending, inverting, etc.*)

Hip Over Head Rotation (executed by Individuals): An action characterized by continuous movement where a dancer's hips rotate over his/her own head in a tumbling skill (*Example: Back Walkover or Cartwheel*).

Hip Over Head Rotation (executed by Groups or Pairs): An action characterized by continuous movement where the executing dancer's hips rotate over his/her own head in a lift or partnering skill.

Inversion/Inverted: A position in which the dancer's waist and hips and feet are higher than his/her head and shoulders.

Inverted Skills (executed by individuals): A skill in which the dancer's waist and hips and feet are higher than his/her head and shoulders and is characterized by a stop, stall, or pause.

Jetté/Jeté [juh-TAY]: A skill in which the dancer takes off from one foot by brushing the feet into the ground and swiftly 'whipping' them into the position and then landing on one foot. A jetté can be executed in various directions, sizes and positions.

Kip Up: An airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill, typically performed in hip hop, where the dancer brings the body to an upright position by bending the knees, thrusting the legs into the chest rolling back slightly onto the shoulders, and then kicks up. The force of the kick causes the dancer to lift and land with both feet planted on the performance surface.

Leap: A skill in which the dancer pushes off the ground, from a plié (bend), off of one leg becoming airborne and landing on the opposite leg. (also known as grand jetté)

Passé [pa-SAY]: A position or movement in which the working leg bends connecting the pointed foot to or near the knee of the supporting leg; meaning to pass. Passé can be executed with the hips parallel or turned out.

Partnering (executed by pairs): A skill in which two dancers use support from one another. Partnering can involve both Supporting and Executing skills.

Pirouette [peer-o-WET]: A skill in which the dancer bends (plié) with one foot in front of

the other (fourth position) and rises (relevé) to one leg (supporting leg) making a complete rotation of the body; meaning to whirl. The working leg can be held in a variety of positions.

Plié [plee-AY]: A preparatory and landing skill in which the dancer bends, softens his/her knees; meaning to bend.

Prop: An object that can be manipulated. (*Clarification: A glove is a part of the costume and not considered a prop.*)

Prone: A position in which the front of the dancer's body is facing the ground, and the back of the dancer's body is facing up.

Relevé [rell-eh-VAY]: An executing skill in which the dancer lifts up to the ball of his/her feet; meaning to rise.

Shoulder Roll (forward/back): A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer rolls with the back of the shoulder and maintains contact with the floor and the head is tilted to the side to avoid contact with the floor.

Shoulder Level: A designated height; the height of a standing dancers' shoulders while standing upright with straight legs. (*Clarification: this is an approximate height to measure space, and is not changed by bending, inverting, etc.*)

Shushunova [Shush-A-nova]: A jump variation in which the dancer lifts extended legs to a toe touch or pike position and then circles them behind the body dropping the chest and landing in a prone support (push up position).

Stall: A non-airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill typically performed in hip hop where the dancer halts/stops body mid motion, on one or both hands for support. Also known as a "freeze".

Stationary Turn: A pirouette in which the supporting leg remains in a fixed position on the performance surface. (*Clarification: Chainé and Piqué turns are not considered stationary turns.*)

Street: This urban style of dance is often improvisational or raw and social in nature. This style of dance can also encourage interaction between performers such as battling and/or partner work.

Supporting Leg: The leg of a dancer that supports the weight of the body, during a skill.

Supporting Dancer: A dancer who performs a skill as a part of "Group or Pairs" who supports or maintains contact with an Executing Dancer.

Supine: A position in which the back of the dancer's body is facing the ground, and the front of the dancer's body is facing up.

Toe Pitch (executed by Groups or Pairs): A skill in which the Executing Dancer(s) starts in an upright position with their foot in the hands of the Supporting Dancer(s) and is propelled upward.

Toe Touch: A jump in which the dancer lifts the legs through a straddle rotating the hips so that the legs are rotating up toward the (upright) chest.

Tour Jetté/Jeté: A skill in which the dancer takes off from one leg, executes a half turn and lands on the other leg.

Tumbling: A collection of skills that emphasize acrobatic or gymnastic ability, are executed by an individual dancer without contact, assistance or support of another dancer(s) and begin and end on the performance surface. (*Clarification: tumbling skills do not have to include hip over head rotation*)

Unassisted Dismount (executed in Groups or Pairs): An action in which the Executing Dancer becomes free of contact from Supporting Dancer(s) and is unassisted to the performance surface.

Vertical Inversion (executed by Groups or Pairs): A **skill** in which the Executing Dancer's waist and hips and feet are higher than his/her own head and shoulders and bears direct weight on the Supporting Dancer by a stop, stall or change in momentum.

Windmill: A non-airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill in which a dancer begins on the back, spins from his/her upper back to the chest while twirling his/her legs around his/her body in a V-shape. The leg motion gives the majority of the power, allowing the body to "flip" from a position on the back to a position with the chest to the ground.

Working Leg: The leg of a dancer that is responsible for momentum and/or position during a skill.

DEDUCTIONS, MUSIC AND TIMING FOR DANCE AND STEP

Deductions will be taken from your total score for each infraction of the AYC General Safety Rules, United States All Star Federation dance guidelines and Step Rubric.

Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.

- 1.0 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used, including international versions. Instrumental music cannot be used as a replacement.

Music guidelines:

- There cannot be a "bleep" over an inappropriate lyric. (1.0 pts penalty)
- Lyrics cannot lead up to an inappropriate word which then has a voiceover on the inappropriate word or cuts off right at the inappropriate word. (1.0 pts penalty)
- Music legalities cannot be based on "meaning of the song", although specific lyrics should be appropriate for family listening. i.e. avoid lyrics in regards to drugs, sex, drinking, etc.
- Music is required for dance teams throughout the performance. If music is interrupted due to technical failure, performers will continue to be judged on dance skills outlined in the routine specifics.
- A deduction of .5 will be taken from your total score if your routine goes from 6 -10 seconds over time limits.
- A deduction of 1.0 will be taken from your total score if your routine goes 11 or more seconds over time limits.

IN CASE OF A TIE

All ties will be broken at Region/National competitions by using dance synchronization & Rhythm scores, plus strength of movement scores. If necessary, a second tiebreaker will consist of routine staging/formations/transitions. Synchronization/precision scores will break

ties in Step. If necessary, a second tiebreaker will consist of Synchronization/precision plus team appearance/attire scores.

SECTION 6 – LEGALITY QUESTIONS for CHEER, DANCE, and STEP

Coaches and Coordinators are responsible to comprehend and comply with all AYC Age Division Requirements, AYC General Safety Rules, United States All Star Federation Safety Rules for Cheer, Routine Guidelines pertaining to the competing division. Questions concerning any AYC Safety Rule should follow the process below:

All legality questions must be addressed in writing. By reason of terminology and misunderstandings, answers will NOT be provided by phone. The AYC Technical Committee will address all questions in writing. All questions should be emailed to: ayctech@americanyouthfootball.com. Questions must be submitted 14 days prior to any AYC competition to ensure a timely reply. Questions submitted 13 days or less prior any AYC competition are NOT guaranteed an answer prior to the event.

When you e-mail your questions make sure to include:

- 1) Your name
- 2) Your team name and region
- 3) Your division
- 4) Your category

(A written answer will be provided)

VIDEO APPROVAL REQUEST

If you have a legality question in regards to a portion of your routine and you wish to send a video to our Technical Committee for approval, please email the Video Request Form on www.MyAYF.com along with a video for approval to ayctech@americanyouthfootball.com. Videos must be submitted 14 days prior to any AYC competition to ensure a timely reply. Questions submitted 13 days or less prior any AYC competition are NOT guaranteed an answer prior to the event.

SECTION 7 - AYC ALL STAR GAME

PARTICIPANT AND COACH ELIGIBILITY

The Annual AYF National All-Star Game was established to allow the older participants, those leaving youth football/cheer, the opportunity to travel and experience participation with kids from other teams they may have competed against over the years of their involvement. It will allow better understanding and friendships to develop and require coaches from different organizations the opportunity to work together to further the objective of providing and giving back to the youth of their communities. It should be understood that while the participation is a competition for the football players it is the exposure and experience being offered to the kids that is the most important feature of this effort. Winning is the result of the contest the reward is the wisdom one will gain from this opportunity.

- The Annual AYF National All-Star Cheer teams will be made up of the 8th grade athletes from all regions.

- A maximum of 6 - 8 cheerleaders can be nominated from each region. Nomination does not guarantee the cheerleader will be selected. The National staff will make the selection.
- Nomination will include a scholastic component, as academic achievement must be a factor when nominating a cheerleader for the All Star squad. Also included is a community service factor and history of participation in AYC.
- Only players who were certified and submit final rosters by the Sept 15 deadline as well as actively participated with their team during the entire regular season are eligible for the All Star squad.
- AYC All Star Manager and AYC All Star Head Coach will be appointed by the National Cheer Commissioner.
- The AYC All-Star team announcement will be made in the beginning of November of each year.

SECTION 8 - AYC SERVICES AND RESOURCES OFFERED

AYC SCORE SHEETS

Please find all updated AYC approved score sheets for Skill Execution/Deduction Sheets, Cheer, Dance, and Step Score Sheets at www.MyAYF.com.

RESOURCES

AYC has created and updated many useful manuals and resources for coaches, teams, associations, leagues and region leaders that can be found at www.MyAYF.com.

- JUDGES MANUAL
- COMPONENTS OF AN AYC ROUTINE
- SCORING GRID
- SKILL COMPARISON GUIDE
- CHEER, DANCE AND STEP SCORE SHEETS AND DEDUCTION SHEETS
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CHEER UNIFORMS

AYC now offers its members the best prices to outfit cheer teams. Visit www.MyAYF.com for more information on how to contact a representative in your area and obtain exclusive AYC pricing.

AYC TRAINING

ayfcoaching.com: AYF has created the best Coaches Training/Certification program available. Not only will coaches get the training they need, they also receive \$2 million in personal liability protection. Coaches who complete the course will also be listed in a National Coaches Database. Learn more at www.ayfcoaching.com.

AYC COMPETITION TOOLS

Regional Competitions: For information on participating in Regional Competitions, check for

information and forms on the www.MyAYF.com control panel and keep updated via www.AYFChampionships.com.

AYC National Competition: A National AYC Cheerleading competition will be held on an annual basis. Invitations will be given to teams that qualify from their regional competitions. There will be a competitor and spectator cost associated with the competition. The cost will vary each year, based on venue and production expenses. This high-energy competition will offer a fitting end to each season. We highly encourage any team who qualifies, to begin fundraising early to ensure every eligible cheerleader have the opportunity of experiencing this excellent event.

CONTACTING AYC

All AYC members have the ability to communicate directly with the AYC National Staff. The AYC National Staff will not tolerate disciplinary actions being taken against members or parents who choose to contact the National Office directly. Contact information can be found online at www.AmericanYouthFootball.com.

A complementary monthly electronic newsletter will be sent to each AYC member wishing to receive one. The Huddle will contain information on AYC programs and details of upcoming events.

AYC National Headquarters will gladly answer any questions. You may contact AYC via email at: AYC@americanyouthfootball.com.



PROUD PARTNER OF AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEER

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BEST WAYS TO WORK WITH ACADEMY® SPORTS + OUTDOORS:

- Host a registration table at the store¹
- Hold coaches meeting at the store where space is available
- Invite your local store to your Jamborees or Tournaments
- Have an American Youth Football & Cheer Day/Night at your local Academy® Sports + Outdoors store, including an exclusive offer²

¹Please note this is only for in-person American Youth Football and Cheer League sign-ups and not for promotion of your league or any other league programming. Leaving unattended league materials at the store is not permitted.
²A minimum of 30 days advance notice required to schedule.



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