

Please refer to TAPPS Constitution/By-Laws: Section 260 – Spirit Cheer Competition for a full list of information:

The TAPPS Cheer Competition shall be organized by Divisions, then sub-division by squad size.

- Division 1: 5A, 6A - Traditional Large Squad 17 or more members
- Division 2: 5A, 6A - Traditional Small Squad 16 or less members
- Division 3: 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A - Traditional Large Squad 13 or more members
- Division 4: 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A - Traditional Small Squad 12 or less members
- Division 5: 5A, 6A - Spirit Squad no limit of members
- Division 6: 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A - Spirit Squad no limit of members

TAPPS reserves the right to split, combine, and delete subdivisions as warrants and/or deemed appropriate.

TAPPS Cheer Competition shall be governed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Spirit rules of the current year.

Traditional Routine Requirements

1. All cheerleading skills including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, tosses, and jumps must follow the NFHS Safety Guidelines. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult coach. See specific skill restrictions for each category.
2. Each team will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed 2 minutes and 30 seconds (150 seconds).
3. Up to 1 minute and 45 seconds (105 seconds) of the routine may be performed to music. No voice-overs or words may be recorded to make the team's vocal projection sound louder.
4. Organized, formal entrances or exits that involve organized walk out lines, cheers or run-ons with jumps, tumbling or stunts are not permitted. Cheerleaders must enter the performance area in a timely fashion.
5. Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement or note of music by the team after they are officially announced and have taken the floor. This includes any formal, organized entrances mentioned in number 4. Cheerleaders must have at least one foot on the performing surface when the routine starts.
6. Cheer words should be practical, and the flow of words should be easy to understand by the crowd and judges

General Spirit Squad Routine Requirements

1. All cheerleading skills must follow TAPPS Spirit Rules and the NFHS Spirit Rules. All skills should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult coach.
2. Teams may not set up props in advance of any category.
3. Props may be set once your team has been announced to the floor before your music begins.
4. The maximum performance time must not exceed 3 minutes. Timing will not include the team spiriting or rallying, but will begin with the first group movement, voice, or note of music, whichever comes first.

5. Mascots must be appropriately attired so their mobility, vision, etc. are not impaired. Only cheerleaders may participate in stunts.

Spirit Squad Band Chant Requirements

1. Traditional school band chant(s).
2. Incorporation of props such as signs, poms, megaphones, flags, etc.
3. Recorded band music must be used.
4. Timing will begin with the first organized movement, voice or note of music, whichever comes first and end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
5. Camp material may be easily adapted to fit this category.

Specific Skill Requirements/Restrictions

- A. Tumbling and/or stunting of any kind is prohibited, including during entrances and exits.
- B. Dance skills (i.e. turns, leaps, kicks, etc.) are permitted.
- C. Jumps are permitted.

Spirit Squad Crowd Leading Requirements

1. No music may be used during the performance.
2. Each team's presentation must include at least two components required from the following: cheers, chants and/or traditional yells.
3. Teams should utilize all areas of their squad's crowd-leading strengths. The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is encouraged.
4. Emphasis on crowd involvement and practicality. All material should be suitable for a game or pep rally.

Specific Skill Requirements/Restrictions

- A. Tumbling of any kind is prohibited, including during entrances and exits.
- B. Jumps are permitted.
- C. Stunts are allowed, please refer to the Basic Stunting Progressions (NO inversions).

Spirit Squad Fight Song Requirements

1. Teams are encouraged to use their traditional team fight song (but will not be penalized for using another fight song or creating one that is competition appropriate).
2. Timing will begin with the first organized movement, voice or note of music, whichever comes first and end with the last beat of music or organized movement.
3. Props (poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners) are permitted in this category.
4. Emphasis will be placed on practicality. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally.

Specific Skill Requirements/Restrictions

- A. Tumbling and/or stunting of any kind is prohibited, including during entrances and exits.
- B. Dance skills (i.e. turns, leaps, kicks, etc.) are permitted.
- C. Jumps are permitted.

Auxiliary Equipment

- Appropriate equipment may be used including but not limited to
 - Poms
 - Signs
 - All NFHS rules to sign usage shall apply.
 - Shall not be thrown off the performance floor during competition.
 - Banners
 - Flags
 - Megaphones
- Point deductions shall be enforced for littering or damage of the performance area (no glitter or confetti).
- Mascot shall be counted as a member of the squad and listed on eligibility form and Cheer Roster.

Safety Spotters

- TAPPS does not provide spotters
- Up to five (5) additional people may be used for safety spotters.
- Student safety spotters must be included on the Eligibility form and listed on the Cheer Roster as a Spotter ONLY. Adult safety spotters must be SCOPE certified and approved by the school.
- Safety Spotters shall dress in black shirts with no emblems and do not have to have the identical uniform.
- Safety Spotters may not perform jumps or tumbling, use any equipment including but not limited to signs, props, poms, and megaphone.

Performance

Each squad will perform twice.

- Round One
 - o 40% of Overall Score
 - o Performance order random
- Round Two
 - o 60% of Overall Score
 - o Performance order is the same as round one.

Routine (Music) Time Limits and Competition Area

- Traditional Squad Time Limits
 - o 1 min 30 sec minimum for routine
 - o 2 min 30 sec maximum for routine

- o 1 min 45 sec maximum for music
- Spirit Squad Division Time Limits
 - o 1 min 30 sec minimum for routine
 - o 3 min 00 sec maximum for routine (Each section can be a maximum of 1 minute)
 - o 2 min 00 sec maximum for music (Band Chant 1 min max & Fight Song 1 min max)

Time will begin with the first note of music, skill or organized movement.

Time shall end at a freeze, end of music or if exit is part of routine, when the last squad member exits the performance mat.

- Music
 - o Must be provided by the school.
 - o Schools must provide personnel to begin and end music. TAPPS personnel will not be responsible for playing music for the competition.
 - o Music should be on a digital music player/iPod.
 - o CD Players will not be available.
 - o TAPPS will provide an auxiliary cord.
 - o Depending on the type of phone or digital music player/iPod, please make sure you have all necessary adapters to plug into the auxiliary cord.
 - Be sure to follow these steps below prior to your performance:
 1. Set up a playlist for each routine
 2. Turn OFF any equalizer, sound check and/or volume limit
 3. Turn your volume up to 100%
 4. Turn off all notifications
 5. If using a phone or other wi-fi capable device, make sure it is in airplane mode to avoid incoming calls or alerts during performance
- Competition Area
 - o 42'x54' mat (non-spring)
 - o Out of bounds is considered 2 feet or any part of the seat or torso out of the performance surface.

Judging

- Judges shall be qualified to judge the competition as determined by TAPPS.
- A judging panel shall be used in the Cheer Competition.

Judging panel shall consist of:

- a. Three (3) Category judges
- a. One (1) Safety Judge
- b. One (1) Deduction Judge

Scoring

Scoring shall be consistent with the current NFHS Rules book and TAPPS Scoring Categories.

- Each Round Score determined by:
 - the average of the three judges scores with
 - point deductions subtracted from the average score as determined by the Deduction Judge and Safety Judge.
 - Whether or not a deduction or safety violation is caught in Round 1, if a deduction or safety violation occurs in Round 2 it still applies and will be accessed at a Round 1 value.
 - Ties for individual round will not be broken.
- Overall Scoring shall be determined by:
 - Round One 40% performance score
 - Round Two 60% performance score
- Overall Score Ties shall be broken by:
 1. Highest Crowd Involvement score of Round Two
 2. Least Deductions of Round Two
 3. Highest Overall Execution Score of Round Two

Score sheets, judges ranges, and deduction rubrics will be available to coaches prior to the competition date.

Interruption of Performance

Injury

The Safety Judge, coach, athlete or competition official reserves the right to stop a routine due to an obvious injury. In the event that an injury causes the team's routine to be interrupted during Round One, the team will have at least 30 minutes to regroup before performing their routine again from the beginning. Judging will resume from the point at which the injury/interruption occurred as determined by the judges. The routine must be performed from the point that the routine was stopped as determined by the judges. All point deductions accumulated to that point will carry over. If a team prefers not to re-work the routine then, at the coach's discretion, they will take the score they have received up to that point. If a skill has not been performed a "0" will be given in the category. In the event that an injury causes the team's routine to be interrupted during Round Two, TAPPS will determine if there is sufficient time and feasibility for the team to complete their performance. If not, scores will be based on the performance prior to the injury.

Unforeseen Circumstances

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition, venue (power outage, fire alarm, etc) or weather rather than the team, the coach of the team affected should STOP the routine from the music stand.

- a. Examples: Equipment Issue- Music volume is all the way down and athletes cannot hear the beginning of the routine, etc. Venue Emergency- power outage, fire alarm, etc.
- b. If the coach chooses not to stop the routine, the team may not have the option to perform again.

Fault of Team

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.

Interpretations/Rulings

TAPPS has the authority to decide on any issue, protest, penalty or rule that is unclear or not specifically addressed in the TAPPS Constitution/By-Laws: Section 260 – Spirit Cheer Competition or NFHS Spirit Rules. TAPPS will render a judgment to ensure that the competition is conducted in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition and the spirit of TAPPS.

Music

In the event a technical error causes a team's music to be interrupted, the coach will have the opportunity to stop the performance. Generally, the team will perform immediately unless TAPPS determines for safety reasons they should be moved later in the performance order. It is recommended that coaches have a backup music player with them at the music table. Judging and timing will resume from the point at which the malfunction occurred as determined by the judges.

Deductions and Violations

Point Deduction System

*Applies to Traditional Division only. Teams competing in the Spirit Squad Division will not be issued Point Deductions.

All deductions may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

Athlete Fall .25

Drops to the performance surface DURING tumbling and/or jump skills

Includes

- Hand, hands, or head down during tumbling or jump skill
- Knee or knees down during tumbling or jump skill
- Tumbling into/out of a stunt

Would Not Include

- An athlete that trips while walking during a transition

Building Bobble .25

Stunt/Pyramid skills that almost fall or drop but are saved

Includes

- Top person becomes incorrectly weight bearing on a spot/base of a stunt but is returned to stunt • Lowering of a stunt to prep from extended position (not a timing issue)
- Weight incorrectly distributed onto the bracer during a pyramid (would fall if bracer was not in contact)
- Both feet/hands coming in contact with performance surface during a cradle/prone
- Incomplete Twisting dismount landing in prone (stomach)

Would Not Include

- An omitted skill
- Drop in a body position by the top person
- Excessive movement by the bases • Minor balance checks by the top person
- A single hand/foot in contact with performance surface during a cradle/prone
- Coed style skill that never results in contact beyond a toss grip (omitted coed style skill)

Building Fall .75

Drops from a building skill or transition during a stunt or pyramid

Includes

- Drops to a cradle position
- Drops to a prone position
- Drops to a load position
- Drops that include a controlled lowering below prep level that is not an obvious timing issue
- Base or spotter drops to performance surface during building skill anytime during a stunt, transition or dismount
- Coed Style skills that result in contact with

Would Not Include

- Lowering of a stunt from extended position to a prep level position
- Stunts that almost fall but are saved and return to a stunting position
- All other items listed in the building bobble or major building fall sections

Major Building Fall 1.25

Drops to the performance surface from a stunt, pyramid or toss by the top person AND a base or spotter OR more than 1 base and/or spotter or uncontrolled lowering or drops to a compromising position not listed under building fall

Includes

- Multiple bases and/or spotters drop to the performance surface

- Top person lands on performance surface (bases are unable to prevent the top from falling to the ground)
- Top person makes contact with a base or spotter who drops to the performance surface
- Other compromising drops not defined by a building fall
- Tosses that land in Prone (Stomach) Upright (on feet) or inverted (head down) position

Would Not Include

- Top person comes in contact with the performance surface during a transition but without interrupting or stopping the skill.

Maximum 1.75

When multiple deductions should be assessed during a stunt or toss (by a single group) or during a pyramid skill, then the sum of those deductions will not be greater than 1.75.

During pyramids where a fall continues to affect other portions of the pyramid, the deduction will not exceed 1.75.

Two separated pyramids will result in separate deductions.

The MAX deduction for a pyramid will not exceed 3.5.

Safety Violations

1. Building skills or Tosses not allowed per NFHS Spirit Rules will be issued a 1.0 deduction.
2. Tumbling skills not allowed per NFHS Spirit Rules or that are in violation of any other General Safety Guidelines will be issued a .5 deduction.
3. This will also include errors/violations that may result because of a fall such as a bracer in a pyramid. .5 deduction

Props Violation .5

Props violations fall under the general safety violation and will be deducted 1 time per routine if the violation is for the same bullet listed below.

Multiple bullets would result in multiple violations.

Props are allowed to be placed off the performance surface by someone who remains inside the performance surface.

- A hard prop with yielding edges released from a top person to the ground
- A prop is thrown by a person on the ground with intent to travel
- Tumbling not allowed by NFHS with props in hands

Boundary Violations

The performance surface is defined as the 42' x 54' competition floor. The competition boundary is defined as the performance surface.

A .25 deduction will be assessed per occurrence for an athlete that makes contact with both feet outside the competition boundary.

Division Violations

If a team performs with an in-eligible member, each in-eligible member will result in the team receiving a 1.0 deduction off their final score for each illegal participant (maximum penalty is 10.0).

Time Limit Violations

Teams that exceed division time limits are subject to the following deduction:

- 1 or more seconds over time will result in a .25 deduction
- 6 or more seconds over time will result in a 1.0 deduction

Routines that exceed the time limit, run a risk of being assessed a deduction. Judges will use a stopwatch or similar device to measure the official time. Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatch/clock shows a time that exceeds 3 seconds over the time limit.