



# NFHS High School Cheer Rules Changes for 2021/22 Season

**NJCDCA Fall Forum**

**September 29, 2021**

National Federation of State  
High School Associations





**For the 2021/22 season USA Cheer and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) reached an agreement to publish one set of rules for high school cheerleading under the NFHS Spirit Rules Book.**

**USA Cheer is recommending the NFHS Spirit Rules Book for high school cheerleading. The current recommendation to prohibit basket and sponge tosses for elementary, junior high, and middle school cheerleaders remains in effect.**

**For the latest updates for rules for all disciplines of cheer, visit [www.usacheer.org](http://www.usacheer.org)**



**Although this rules session is designed to help provide consistent training and understanding of the rules across the country, the final decision on any interpretation is still handled at the state level. As a coach/interpreter you should always check with your state association for any changes or interpretations specific to your state.**



## **This training will cover:**

- **Rule Updates for 21-22 School Year**  
(changes are in **RED**)
- **NEW! USA Cheer Membership Requirement**



# Guidance on Rule Modifications

Update sent on 2/9/2021 by NFHS Spirit Rules Committee

## Cheerleading Apparel

- **Facial Coverings:** Well-fitted and snug may be worn during cheerleading activities. State associations should assess the safety risks for performing stunts while students are masked. Any mask worn must be secure.



VARSITY  
UNIVERSITY

## Rule 3 - Changes Summary

Detailed list available: [NFHS.ORG](http://NFHS.ORG) under “Spirit” & [USACHEER.ORG](http://USACHEER.ORG) under “Rules”

2.3.1 Letter B: Exception is listed that says “A base(s) and top person may share a pom during a dismount from a thigh stand, shoulder sit/straddle, shoulder stand or prep

3.3.3.c: Top and bracer(s) for an inverted release pyramid do not require hand to hand/arm contact.

3.5.5: Top and bracer(s) for a release pyramid do not require hand to hand/arm contact. Also, top can land in any legal position out of the release and bracer(s) are not required to be in a double base prep with a spot.

3.3.6.d: Editorial: This was removed because it is no longer needed with the changes to the contact requirements between a base(s) and top during and inverted skill.

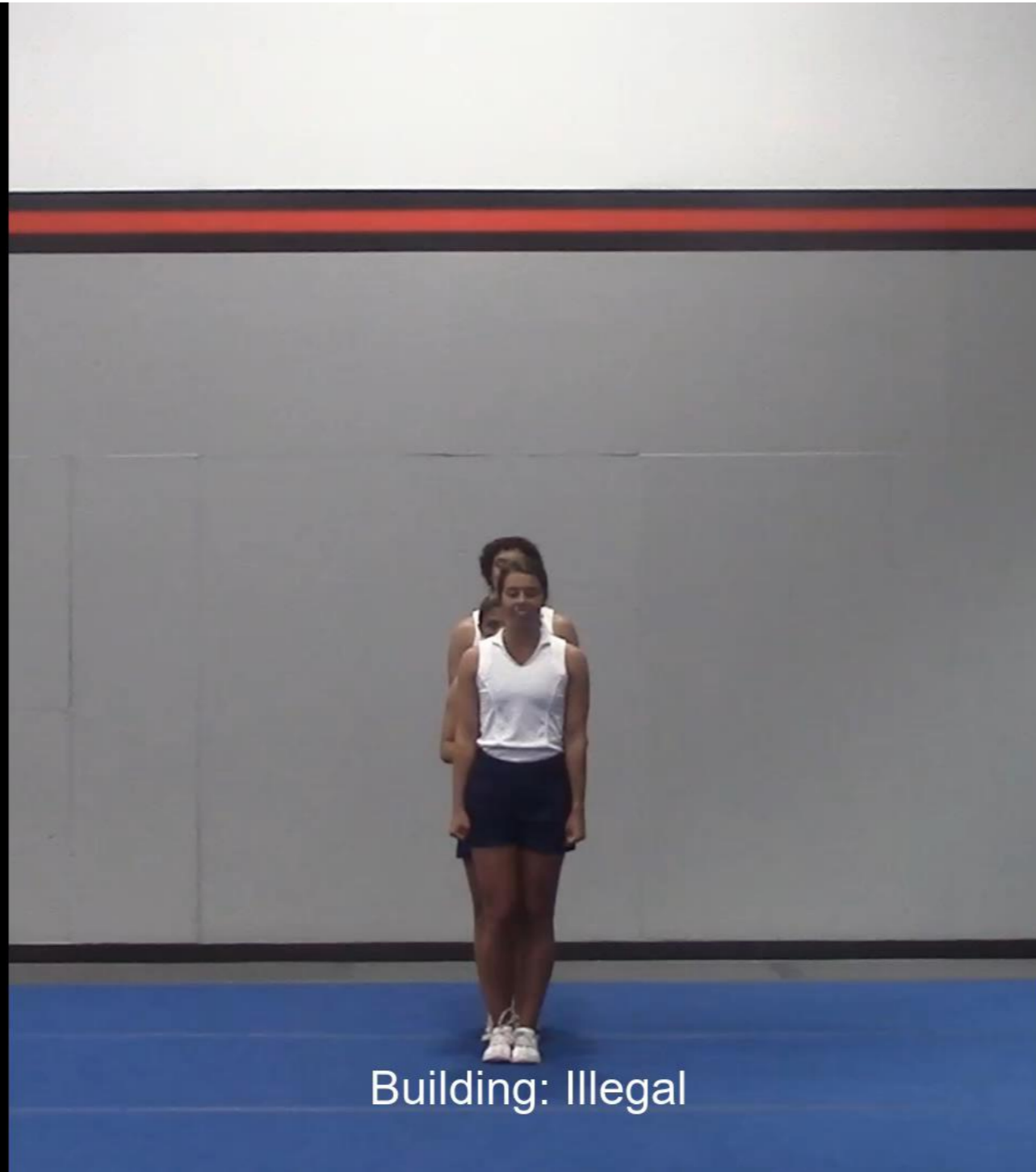


2.3.1 Letter B: Exception is listed that says “A base(s) and top person may share a pom during a **dismount** from a thigh stand, shoulder sit/straddle, shoulder stand or prep

This was added as exception to put into print the interpretation that was used in the 2020/2021 season regarding poms and props being held in the hands of a base(s).



# Top & Base Pom Sharing - Legal



Building: Illegal





3.3.3.c: The top person and at least one bracer maintains hand-to-hand/arm contact:

This condition has been removed

Letter C being removed allows for any type of contact between a bracer(s) and the inverted top during a release pyramid. By allowing any type of contact you allow the initial inverted skill to be executed with proper technique by not requiring one of the top's hands to be in contact with the bracer instead of supporting body weight through base(s) trunk.

Also allows for more power to be generated during the release.



**VARSITY**  
UNIVERSITY

# Inverted Top & Brace w/ Hand to Waist Contact - Legal





3.3.5.c: The top person and at least one bracer maintain ~~hand to hand/arm~~ contact except for the following skills:

"Hand to hand/arm" has been removed from Letter C

This part of the condition being removed allows for any type of contact between a bracer(s) and the top during a release pyramid.

This cleans up the release rule from an interpretation standpoint for both coaches and officials. Examples of what this allows include hand to foot contact or hand on waist contact between a brace and top.

It also now has the same conditions for all types of release pyramid visuals, regardless of the type of contact between the top and bracer(s).



# Hand to Waist Contact - LEGAL





**VARSITY**  
UNIVERSITY

# Hand to Foot Contact to Load - LEGAL







## 3.3.6.d:

When the stunt begins in an inversion and transitions to a non inverted position, the upper body contact may be released before the top person is no longer inverted.

This has been removed because it was longer needed with the adjustments to the contact requirements between a base/bases and an inverted top for the 2020/21 season.



# NEW! USA Cheer Membership Requirement

USA Cheer has developed a comprehensive [Membership Program](#), which includes a background check, athlete protection training, acknowledgement of concussion training with return to participation guidance, a member code of conduct, and safety training courses on risk management and safety rules.

**Beginning with the upcoming 2021-22 competition season, Varsity Spirit will require that all school coaches, choreographers and personnel wishing to access the warmup area, backstage or coaches' box at our competitions have a USA Cheer Coach or Professional Membership.**





# NEW! USA Cheer Membership Requirement

**Varsity Spirit will cover the \$33 membership fee for the 2021-22 season. You must complete your membership requirements before your first competition. December 1 is the last day to complete the requirements to receive this membership free of charge for the upcoming season. *Please note that the background check will take 2-10 days to be processed and returned.***

**CODE: VACH21**



# NEW! USA Cheer Membership Requirement

## Coaches Checklist:

- Login/Create Account: <https://usacheer.webpoint.us/>
  - Use Code VACH21 for FREE Access
- Top Right Corner – Hover over your Name and Select “Member Profile”
  - Background Screening
  - Athlete Protection Course
    - All Coaches
  - Yearly Requirement: June 1 – May 31
- USA Cheer Safety Certificate of Completion (formerly AACCA)
  - Upload OR Complete
  - Current for 4 years
  - One Coach per Program
  - Lookup/Download is available



**VARSITY**  
UNIVERSITY

# NEW! USA Cheer Membership Requirement



## Membership Options

### General – \$20



General membership includes newsletters and course discounts. It does not include a background screening. [\[more...\]](#)

### Professional – \$30



For industry professionals who require a background check (i.e. choreographers, judges, contract employees, etc.) Includes all of the benefits from our general membership, plus additional athlete safety requirements like a background screening and an athlete protection course. [\[more...\]](#)

### Cheer Coach – \$30



Cheer Coach membership includes all of the benefits from our general membership, plus additional athlete safety requirements like a background screening, an athlete protection course, and a current safety certification course. [\[more...\]](#)

### Dance Coach – \$30



Dance Coach memberships includes all of the benefits from our general membership, plus additional athlete safety requirements like a background screening and an athlete protection course. [\[more...\]](#)



[www.varsityuniversity.org](http://www.varsityuniversity.org)



# NEW! USA Cheer Membership Requirement

## *Which membership option should you select?*

One coach per team (usually the Head Coach) must complete the **Cheer Coach Membership**, which requires the Safety and Risk Management course to be completed every four years. This has been a requirement at Varsity Spirit events for the last two years. This course is discounted to \$75 for USA Cheer members and will be at the expense of the coach. If your course certification is up to date, you will not need to retake the course until it expires. All other coaches, choreographers and adults affiliated with the team who wish to access the warmup area, backstage or coaches' box must complete the **Professional Membership**. If you are a college spirit coordinator that coaches cheer and dance, you do not need to complete the Dance Membership in addition to the Cheer Coach or Professional Membership.



# NEW! USA Cheer Membership Requirement

Screenshot or Print:

## CURRENT USA CHEER MEMBERSHIP CARD



Sarah D'Agostino  
Pennsbury High School

Member ID: 107441

Member Type: Cheer Coach

Date of Birth: 5/28/1992

Status: **Current**

Expires: 5/31/2022





## Additional Education

For additional rules training, visit [www.usacheer.org](http://www.usacheer.org) and click on the Safety/Education tab



**Thank you!**

**Good Luck this season, NJ  
Coaches!**

**Email:  
sdagostino@varsity.com**