



The Open Championship Series

Dance Rules & Guidelines

2025-2026

ROUTINE RULES & GUIDELINES

General Safety

- Teams should have an emergency plan in the event of an injury.
- Coaches have the responsibility of recognizing the abilities of the dancers on the team, and should make sure the presented routine does not exceed the team's capabilities or include elements that create a safety risk for their team regardless of whether the element is permitted under the safety rules and regulations.
- Technical skills should not be executed without an advisor/coach present. Teams should always practice in an area suitable for the safety of the dancers.
 - Teams should not perform technical skills on concrete, asphalt, or any other hard or uncovered surface, wet surfaces, uneven surfaces, or surfaces with obstructions.

Tumbling & Tricks

- Front/back aerials and aerial cartwheels, as well as movements where all weight is borne on the dancer's hands and/or head, such as headsprings, should not be executed with poms in both hands that are not hands-free poms.
- Drops directly to the knee, thigh, back, front, head, shoulder, head, neck or seat onto the performing surface should not be executed. The dancer must first bear weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.
- 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 generally not considered to be safe.
- Dancers should not land directly on the head/neck at any time from an airborne skill. Any kip up motion should also initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground.

Lifts & Partnering

- The Executing Dancer should be supported from a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the floor throughout the entire skill. (Exception: Kick Line Leaps).
- Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) is generally considered to not be a safety issue, as long as the Executing Dancer is returned to the performance floor on his/her feet or hands with support from the Supporting Dancer(s).
- Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not permitted.
- Drops to the knee, thigh, back, front, head, shoulder, or seat onto the performing surface are generally considered to be unsafe. In order to address the safety issue, the dancer must first bear weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.

Release Moves

- It is generally not considered to be a safety issue for an Executing Dancer to jump, leap, step, or push off a Supporting Dancer, and a Supporting Dancer may generally release/toss an Executing Dancer without creating a safety issue.
- "Basket tosses" are not considered to be safe for dance teams. However, a dancer may be safely released and caught in a dance lift if the Executing Dancer remains in a horizontal position or vertical position with his/her head above his/her feet.

Competition Routine Guidelines

- Teams may make substitutions in the event of injury.
 - Substitute participants must be listed on the team's participant roster as alternates.
- Any equipment or items that may damage the performance floor are prohibited.
- Maximum time limit for all divisions is 2:30. There is no minimum time limit.
- A responsible adult must be present to start or assist in the start and finish of the routine music.
- Teams may not enter multiple routines **in the same division of the same style** (e.g., two teams same gym entered in senior hip hop) when all of the dancers in both routines are the same. If a team wishes to enter multiple routines in the same division of the same style and all dancers are **not** the same in each routine, then the team must designate different team names and the following should apply:
 - If there are one or more overlapping dancers in the routines, then only the highest scoring routine will advance to finals and receive a placement in final awards
 - If there are no overlapping dancers in the routines, then all routines are eligible to advance to finals and receive a placement in the final awards.
- You are able to compete with less than 5 athletes on the floor but a minimum of 5 dancers must be registered and paid for to compete in a division.

Technical Consultant

- During the season, teams may request the assistance of a technical consultant. If an advisor/coach is unsure of the safety of the skill, he or she can email a video of the activity in question to dance@openchampionshipseries.com. If a team has received approval for a trick from another competition, they may rely on that approval for safety consideration purposes.