

**2025-2026**  
**USASF DANCE**  
**Rules Chart & Glossary**

All adjustments in **RED** indicate **EARLY RELEASE** changes/additions for the 2025-2026 season.

We do not anticipate additional changes but reserve the right to make changes as needed.

**U.S. ALL STAR FEDERATION**



**CLUB CHEER & DANCE TEAMS**

*The USASF Cheer and Dance Rules, Glossary, associated Age Grids and Cheer Rules Overview (collectively the “USASF Rules Documents”) are copyright- protected and may not be disseminated to non-USASF members without prior written permission from USASF. Members may print a copy of the USASF Rules Documents for personal use while coaching a team, choreographing, or engaging in event production, but may not distribute, post, or give a third-party permission to post on any website, or otherwise share the USASF Rules Documents.*

**01** General Rules

**02** Premier Tier - Individuals

**03** Premier Tier - Groups & Pairs

**04** Intermediate Tier -  
Individuals

**05** Intermediate Tier - Groups & Pairs

**06** Intermediate/Novice - Skills  
Rules

**07** Novice Tier - Individuals/  
Groups & Pairs

**08** DanceABILITIES

**10** Rules Glossary

**13** Skills Glossary



## GENERAL RULES

1	All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified coach/instructor.
2	Coaches must consider the dancer and team skill level regarding skills incorporated and proper progression.
3	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.
4	All programs should have and review an emergency action plan in the event of an injury.
5	Each team will have a minimum of 1 minute and 45 seconds (1:45) to a maximum of 2 minutes and 15 seconds (2:15) 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, <i>whichever happens last. (Exception: Teams competing in the Novice Tier have no time minimum and a maximum of 1 minute and 30 seconds (1:30).</i>
6	Substitutions may be made in the event of an injury or other serious circumstance. Substitutes must also abide by the age restrictions in all divisions in which they compete.
7	Use of fire, noxious and inert gasses, live animals, weapons, and other potentially hazardous elements are strictly prohibited (including but not limited to guns, knives, swords, nun-chucks, etc.). Violation of this rule may result in disqualification. Please submit questionable items and how it used/choreographed into routine for prior approval via USASF Coach App. <i>(Clarification: See Service Animal exception in DanceABILITIES Rules.)</i>
8	Teams may not compromise the integrity of the performance surface. <i>(Examples: residues from sprays, powders, oils, etc.)</i> Teams are responsible for clearing the performance surface from debris. <i>(Examples: poms, props, petals, etc.)</i>
9	Legality officials shall document and report any imminent safety concerns to the Director of Rules and Safety.
10	A participant wearing a hard cast (i.e. fiberglass or plaster) or a walking boot may not be involved in choreography that may cause harm/injury to others.

## CHOREOGRAPHY, MUSIC, and COSTUMING

1	Tights are strongly recommended when costuming provides limited coverage, specifically above mid-thigh (i.e. leotards, shorts, briefs, etc.) in consideration of athlete safety.
2	Routine choreography, music, costuming (including make-up) should be appropriate and acceptable for family viewing. Vulgar or suggestive material is not permitted. This may include music, movement and/or choreography that is profane, inflammatory, offensive, sexual in content, and/or relays lewd gestures. Inappropriate choreography, costuming and/or music may also affect the panel judges' overall impression and/or score of the routine. Music labeled "explicit" is not allowed. Music labeled "radio" or "clean" is permissible as long as it is suitable for family audiences.
3	Footwear is recommended but not required. Wearing footwear with wheels, socks and/or footed tights only is prohibited. <i>(Exception: socks are allowed on a carpeted performance surface. (Clarification: Socks designed for dance that provide shock absorption, arch support, ankle stability, traction are allowed.)</i>
4	Jewelry as a part of a costume is allowed. <i>(Clarification: Safety of the dancer should be considered.)</i>
5	<b>Dancers registered as male must cover their torsos. Shirtless, unbuttoned shirts with nothing underneath, and mesh-only coverage will not be allowed.</b>

## PROPS

1	Wearable and/or handheld items are allowed in all categories and may be removed and discarded from the body. They may not be used to elevate dancer(s) from the performance surface. Props cannot be used to intentionally obscure/cover skills that need to be viewable by a legality official <i>(i.e. fabric used to cover lift). (Clarification: Safety of the dancer should be considered.)</i>
2	Standing props are not allowed. <i>(i.e. chairs, stools, benches, ladders, boxes, stairs, etc.)</i>

*Effective June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2026 and are subject to review by the USASF Rules Committee at any time.*

**PREMIER TIER-EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS**

*Tumbling & Aerial Street Style Skills as a dance skill are allowed but not required in all divisions with the following limitations:*

	Tiny & Mini	Youth & Junior	Senior & Open
1	<p><u>Inverted skills:</u></p> <p>a. <u>Airborne inverted skills</u> with hand support are not allowed. (Clarification: <u>Kip ups</u> with hand support originating from performance surface are allowed but the <u>executing dancer</u> may not hold poms/props in supporting hand(s).</p> <p>b. <u>Airborne</u> inverted skills without hand support are not allowed.</p>	<p><u>Inverted skills:</u></p> <p>a. <u>Airborne inverted skills</u> with hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props. (Exception: <u>Kip ups</u> are allowed while holding poms/props.)</p> <p>b. <u>Airborne inverted skills</u> without hand support are not allowed.</p>	<p><u>Inverted skills:</u></p> <p>a. <u>Airborne inverted skills</u> with hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props. (Exception: <u>Kip ups</u> are allowed while holding poms/props.)</p> <p>b. <u>Airborne inverted skills</u> without hand support are not allowed.</p>
2	<p>Skills with <u>hip-over-head rotation:</u></p> <p>a. With hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props in supporting hand(s). (Exception: <u>forward rolls, backward rolls</u>.)</p> <p>b. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills are allowed.</p> <p>c. <u>Airborne</u> skills with hand support are allowed provided they:</p> <p>i. Are limited to two <u>consecutive hip-over-head rotation</u> skills.</p> <p>ii. Are not <u>airborne</u> in approach but may be <u>airborne</u> in the descent. (Clarification: In the approach the hands must touch the ground before the feet leave the ground.) (Exception: MINI follows Youth/Junior rule 2c.)</p> <p>d. <u>Airborne</u> skills without hand support are not allowed. (Exception: 1. <u>Aerial cartwheels</u> not connected to any other skill with <u>hip-over-head rotation</u>. 2. MINI ONLY-<u>front aerials</u> not connected to any other skill with <u>hip-over-head rotation</u> are allowed.)</p> <p>e. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support over another dancer are not allowed.</p>	<p>Skills with <u>hip-over-head rotation:</u></p> <p>a. With hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props in supporting hand(s). (Exception: <u>forward rolls, backward rolls</u>.)</p> <p>b. Non <u>airborne</u> skills are allowed.</p> <p>c. <u>Airborne</u> skills with hand support are limited to two <u>consecutive hip-over-head rotation</u> skills. (Clarification: Both skills must have hand support.)</p> <p>d. <u>Airborne</u> skills without hand support are allowed provided they:</p> <p>i. Involve no <u>full twisting</u> transition.</p> <p>ii. Only <u>connect</u> to one <u>hip-over-head rotation</u> skill with hand support. (Clarification: Skills are limited to two <u>consecutive hip-over-head rotation</u> skills.)</p> <p>e. <u>Airborne hip-over-head rotation</u> skills without hand support over another dancer may not have a <u>blind landing</u>. (*Exception: Jr follows Sr &amp; Open Individual Rule 2)</p>	<p>Skills with <u>hip-over-head rotation:</u></p> <p>a. With hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props in supporting hand(s). (Exception: <u>forward rolls, backward rolls</u>.)</p> <p>b. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills are allowed.</p> <p>c. <u>Airborne</u> skills with hand support are limited to two <u>consecutive hip-over-head rotation</u> skills.</p> <p>d. <u>Airborne</u> skills without hand support are allowed provided they:</p> <p>i. Involve no more than one <u>full twisting</u> transition.</p> <p>ii. Do not <u>connect</u> to another skill that is <u>airborne</u> with <u>hip-over-head rotation</u> without hand support.</p> <p>iii. Are limited to two <u>consecutive airborne hip-over-head rotation</u> skills.</p>
3	Simultaneous <u>tumbling</u> over or under another dancer that includes <u>hip-over-head rotation</u> 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.	Only <u>drops</u> to the shoulder, back or seat are permitted provided the height of the <u>airborne</u> dancer does not exceed <u>hip-level</u> . (Clarification: <u>Drops</u> directly to the knee, thigh, front or head are not allowed.)	Only <u>drops</u> to the shoulder, back or seat are permitted provided the height of the <u>airborne</u> dancer does not exceed <u>hip-level</u> . (Clarification: <u>Drops</u> directly to the knee, thigh, front or head are not allowed.)
5	Landing in a push up position onto the performance surface from any <u>airborne</u> skill is not allowed.	Landing in a push up position from any <u>airborne</u> skill is not allowed while holding poms or props.	Landing in a push up position from any <u>airborne</u> skill is not allowed while holding poms or props.

**PREMIER TIER - EXECUTED BY GROUPS OR PAIRS**

*Lifts and Partnering are allowed but not required in all categories with the following limitations:*

	Tiny & Mini	Youth & Junior	Senior & Open
1	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with a <u>Supporting Dancer</u> who is in direct <u>contact</u> with the performance surface. <i>(Exception: leaps and jumps of connected dancers)</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 <u>shoulder-level</u> .	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 <u>shoulder-level</u> .
2	At least one <u>Supporting Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with the <u>Executing Dancer(s)</u> throughout the entire skill above <u>shoulder-level</u> .	At least one <u>Supporting Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with the <u>Executing Dancer(s)</u> throughout the entire skill above <u>head-level</u> . <i>(*Exception: Jr follows Sr &amp; Open Rule 2)</i>	The <u>Supporting Dancer</u> does not have to maintain <u>contact</u> with <u>Executing Dancer</u> above <u>head-level</u> provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. There is only one <u>Executing dancer</u> and one <u>Supporting Dancer</u> involved in the skill prior to <u>release</u>.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is not <u>inverted</u> when <u>released</u>.</li> <li>c. The <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips do not cross the <u>vertical axis</u> while <u>airborne</u> and <u>inverted</u>.</li> <li>d. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is either caught or assisted to the performance surface by one or more <u>Supporting Dancers</u> and is not caught in a <u>prone</u> position.</li> <li>e. <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> do not hold poms/props in hands during any portion of the skill.</li> </ol>
3	Hip-over-head rotation of the <u>Executing Dancer(s)</u> is allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Contact</u> between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and at least one <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips have crossed the <u>vertical axis</u>.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is limited to one <u>continuous hip-over-head rotation</u>.</li> </ol>	Hip-over-head rotation of the <u>Executing Dancer(s)</u> is allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Contact</u> between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and at least one <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips have crossed the <u>vertical axis</u>.</li> </ol>	Hip-over-head rotation of the <u>Executing Dancer(s)</u> is allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Contact</u> between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and at least one <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips have crossed the <u>vertical axis</u>.</li> </ol>
4	A <u>Vertical-Inversion</u> is allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Contact</u> between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and at least one <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer</u> returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.</li> <li>b. When the height of the <u>Executing Dancer's</u> shoulders exceeds <u>shoulder-level</u> there is at least one <u>spotter</u> who does not bear the weight of the <u>Executing Dancer</u>. <i>(Clarification: When there are 3 Supporting Dancers an additional spot is not required.)</i></li> </ol>		

**DISMOUNTS TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE**

5	<u>Dismounts</u> are allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At the highest point of the dismount, the <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips do not elevate above <u>shoulder-level</u> and the <u>Executing Dancer</u> lands on their foot/feet.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips do not cross the <u>vertical axis</u> while the dancer is <u>airborne</u> and <u>inverted</u>. <i>(Clarification: Dance is free of contact from both the performance surface and other performers).</i></li> <li>c. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is not <u>inverted</u> when <u>contact is lost</u>.</li> </ol>	<u>Dismounts</u> are allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At the highest point of the <u>dismount</u>, the <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips do not elevate above <u>head-level</u> and the <u>Executing Dancer</u> must land on their foot/feet.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips do not cross the <u>vertical axis</u> while <u>airborne</u> and <u>inverted</u>. <i>(Clarification: Dancer is free of contact from both the performance surface and other performers).</i></li> <li>c. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is not <u>inverted</u> when <u>contact is lost</u>. <i>(*Exception: Jr follows Sr &amp; Open Rule 5)</i></li> </ol>	<u>Dismounts</u> are allowed provided: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At the highest point of the dismount, at least one part of the <u>Executing Dancer's</u> body is at or below head-level.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> lands on their foot/feet or is assisted the upright position. Exception: Executing Dancers may land on their hand(s) provided                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The contact point prior to <u>loss of contact</u> between <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> and <u>Executing Dancer</u> is at or below knee level.</li> <li>ii. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is not holding poms or props in supporting hands.</li> </ol> </li> <li>c. The <u>Executing Dancer's</u> hips do not cross the <u>vertical axis</u> while <u>airborne</u> and <u>inverted</u>. <i>(Clarification: Dancer is free of contact from both the performance surface and other performers).</i></li> </ol>
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**INTERMEDIATE TIER - EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS**

	Tiny & Mini	Youth	Junior & Senior
<b>1</b>	<p><u>Inverted skills:</u></p> <p>a. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills must involve hand support with at least one hand throughout the skill and are not allowed while holding poms/props in supporting hand(s). (Example: headstand)</p> <p>b. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support are not allowed. (Clarification: <u>Kip up</u> with hand support originating from performance surface is allowed but the dancer may not hold poms/props in supporting hand(s).)</p>	<p><u>Inverted skills:</u></p> <p>a. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills must involve hand support with at least one hand throughout the skill and are not allowed while holding poms/props in the supporting hands. (Example: headstand)</p> <p>b. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support are not allowed. (Clarification: <u>Kip up</u> with hand support originating from performance surface is allowed but the dancer may not hold poms/props in supporting hand(s).)</p>	<p><u>Inverted skills:</u></p> <p>a. <u>Inverted skills</u> with hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props in supporting hand(s).</p> <p>b. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support are not allowed. (Clarification: <u>Kip up</u> with hand support originating from performance surface is allowed but the dancer may not hold poms/props in supporting hand(s).)</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>Skills with <u>hip-over-head rotation:</u></p> <p>a. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props in supporting hand(s). (Exception: <u>forward rolls, backward rolls.</u>)</p> <p>b. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills are limited to two <u>consecutive</u> skills.</p> <p>c. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support are not allowed. Exception: a roundoff that is not connected to any other skill with <u>hip-over-head rotation.</u>)</p> <p>d. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support over another dancer are not allowed.</p>	<p>Skills with <u>hip-over-head rotation:</u></p> <p>a. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props in supporting hand(s). (Exception: <u>forward rolls, backward rolls.</u>)</p> <p>b. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills are limited to two <u>consecutive</u> skills.</p> <p>c. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support are not allowed. Exception: a roundoff that is not connected to any other skill with <u>hip-over-head rotation.</u>)</p> <p>d. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support over another dancer are not allowed.</p>	<p>Skills with <u>hip-over-head rotation:</u></p> <p>a. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms/props in supporting hand(s). (Exception: <u>forward rolls, backward rolls.</u>)</p> <p>b. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills are limited to two <u>consecutive</u> skills.</p> <p>c. <u>Airborne</u> skills with hand support are allowed provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. They are limited to two <u>consecutive hip-over-head rotation</u> skills, airborne or non-<u>airborne</u>.</li> <li>ii. They are not <u>airborne</u> in approach but may be <u>airborne</u> in the descent. (Clarification: In the approach the hands must touch the ground before the feet leave the ground.)</li> </ul> <p>d. <u>Airborne</u> skills without hand support are not allowed. (Exception: a single <b>airial cartwheel not connected to any other skill with hip-over-head rotation.</b>)</p> <p>e. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support over another dancer are not allowed.</p>
<b>3</b>	Simultaneous <u>tumbling</u> over or under another dancer that includes <u>hip-over-head rotation</u> by both dancers is not allowed.		
<b>4</b>	<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.		
<b>5</b>	Landing in a push up position onto the performance surface from any <u>airborne</u> skill is not allowed.		

**INTERMEDIATE TIER - EXECUTED BY GROUPS & PAIRS**

*Lifts and Partnering are allowed but not required in all categories with the following limitations:*

	Tiny & Mini	Youth	Junior & Senior
1	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with a <u>Supporting Dancer</u> who is in direct <u>contact</u> with the performance surface. <i>(Exception: leaps and jumps of connected dancers)</i>	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with a <u>Supporting Dancer</u> who is in direct <u>contact</u> with the performance surface. <i>(Exception: leaps and jumps of connected dancers)</i>	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with a <u>Supporting Dancer</u> who is in direct <u>contact</u> with the performance surface. <i>(Exception: leaps and jumps of connected dancers)</i>
2	At least one <u>Supporting Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with the <u>Executing Dancer</u> throughout the entire skill and the <u>Executing Dancer</u> 's hips cannot elevate above <u>head-level</u> . <i>(Clarification: The Executing Dancer may not be released.)</i>	At least one <u>Supporting Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with the <u>Executing Dancer</u> throughout the entire skill and the <u>Executing Dancer</u> 's hips cannot elevate above <u>head-level</u> . <i>(Clarification: The Executing Dancer may not be released.)</i>	At least one <u>Supporting Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with the <u>Executing Dancer</u> above shoulder height and the <u>Executing Dancer</u> 's hips cannot elevate above <u>head-level</u> .
3	<p>Hip-over-head rotation of the <u>Executing Dancer(s)</u> is all allowed provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Contact between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and the <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer</u> returns to the performance surface in an upright position.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is limited to one continuous <u>hip-over-head rotation</u>.</li> <li>c. The height of the <u>executing dancer</u>'s hips does not exceed <u>head-level</u>.</li> </ul>	<p>Hip-over-head rotation of the <u>Executing Dancer(s)</u> is all allowed provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Contact between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and the <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer</u> returns to the performance surface in an upright position.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is limited to one continuous <u>hip-over-head rotation</u>.</li> <li>c. The height of the <u>Executing Dancer</u>'s hips does not exceed <u>head-level</u>.</li> </ul>	<p>Hip-over-head rotation of the <u>Executing Dancer(s)</u> is all allowed provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Contact between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and the <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer</u> returns to the performance surface in an upright position.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is limited to two continuous <u>hip-over-head rotations</u>.</li> <li>c. The height of the <u>Executing Dancer</u>'s hips does not exceed <u>head-level</u>.</li> </ul>
4	Vertical Inversion: The <u>Executing Dancer</u> cannot be <u>inverted</u> in any elevated skill. <i>(Clarification: The Executing Dancer may be vertically inverted if connected to the performance surface.)</i>	Vertical Inversion: The <u>Executing Dancer</u> may be <u>inverted</u> in an elevated skill provided the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Contact</u> between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and at least one <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer</u> returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position.</li> <li>b. The height of the <u>Executing Dancer</u>'s shoulders do not exceed <u>hip-level</u>.</li> </ul>	Vertical Inversion: The <u>Executing Dancer</u> may be <u>inverted</u> in an elevated skill provided the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Contact</u> between the <u>Executing Dancer</u> and at least one <u>Supporting Dancer(s)</u> is maintained until the <u>Executing Dancer</u> returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position.</li> <li>b. The height of the <u>Executing Dancer</u>'s shoulders do not exceed <u>shoulder-level</u>.</li> </ul>
5	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> may not <u>lose contact with the Supporting Dancer while elevated from the performance surface</u> .	<u>Dismounts</u> are allowed provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At the highest point of the dismount, the <u>Executing Dancer</u>'s hips do not elevate above <u>shoulder-level</u> and the <u>Executing Dancer</u> must land on their foot/feet.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer</u>'s hips do not cross the <u>vertical axis</u> while <u>airborne</u> and <u>inverted</u>. <i>(Clarification: Dance is free of contact from both the performance surface and other performers).</i></li> <li>c. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is not <u>inverted</u> when <u>contact is lost</u>.</li> </ul>	<u>Dismounts</u> are allowed provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. At the highest point of the dismount, the <u>Executing Dancer</u>'s hips do not elevate above <u>shoulder-level</u> and the <u>Executing Dancer</u> must land on their foot/feet.</li> <li>b. The <u>Executing Dancer</u>'s hips do not cross the <u>vertical axis</u> while <u>airborne</u> and <u>inverted</u>. <i>(Clarification: Dance is free of contact from both the performance surface and other performers).</i></li> <li>c. The <u>Executing Dancer</u> is not <u>inverted</u> when <u>contact is lost</u>.</li> </ul>

### INTERMEDIATE Technical Skills

	Tiny/Mini/Youth	Junior/Senior
1	Connected/Consecutive technical skills (skills executed without a step, pause, or break in between) are limited to <b>two (2)</b> . (Exception: kicks are not restricted in Number.)	Connected/Consecutive technical skills (skills executed without a step, pause, or break in between) are limited to <b>three (3)</b> . (Exception: kicks are not restricted in number)
2	Leaps and jumps are allowed provided the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Leaps and jumps that release the head toward the back while <u>airborne</u> are not allowed (Example: C-jump, Firebird or Ring Leap) (Exception: Youth follow JR/SR)</li> <li>a. Legs do not move across the <u>vertical axis</u> while <u>airborne</u>. (Example: switch leaps are not allowed)</li> </ol>	Leaps and jumps are allowed provided the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Leaps and jumps that release the head toward the back while <u>airborne</u> are allowed (Example: C-jump, Firebird or Ring Leap)</li> <li>b. Legs do not move across the <u>vertical axis</u> while <u>airborne</u>. (Example: switch leaps are not allowed)</li> </ol>
3	<u>Stationary Turns</u> are allowed provided the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Working leg</u> is held in a <u>pencil, passé</u> or <u>coupé</u> position. Rotations are limited to two (2). (Exception: Youth teams may perform a single leg hold turn. Youth teams may perform two a la second/fouetté turns ONLY.) (Clarification: Illusion turns are not allowed.)</li> <li>b. <u>Axle</u> turns are not allowed.</li> </ol>	<u>Stationary Turns</u> are allowed provided the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Rotations are limited to three (3). (Clarification: the leg may be held in any position waist-height or lower.) (Exception: A single <u>illusion</u> or a single leg hold turn are allowed)</li> <li>b. <u>Axle</u> turns are not allowed.</li> </ol>

### NOVICE Technical Skills

	All Divisions
1	Connected/ <u>Consecutive</u> technical skills (skills executed without a step, pause, or break in between) are limited to <b>two (2)</b> . <b>Exception:</b> kicks are not restricted in number
2	Leaps and jumps are allowed provided the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Leaps and jumps that release the head toward the back while <u>airborne</u> are not allowed (Example: C-jump, Firebird or Ring Leap)</li> <li>b. Legs do not move across the <u>vertical axis</u> while <u>airborne</u>. (Example: switch leaps are not allowed)</li> </ol>
3	<u>Stationary Turns</u> are allowed provided the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Working leg</u> is held in a <u>pencil, passé</u> or <u>coupé</u> position. Rotations are limited to two (2). (Example: double <u>pirouette</u>).</li> <li>b. <u>Axle</u> turns are not allowed.</li> </ol>

\*\*NOTE: The Technical Skill rules are for all categories (genres). Please refer to the Individual and Groups & Pairs rules above for further restrictions.



### NOVICE TIER - EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS

#### Applicable to all NOVICE divisions and categories

<b>1</b>	<p><u>Inverted</u> skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills must involve hand support throughout the skill and are not allowed while holding poms/props in the supporting hand(s). <i>Example: handstand</i></li> <li>b. Airborne skills with or without hand support are not allowed. (<i>Clarification: <u>Kip up</u> with hand support originating from performance surface is allowed but may not hold poms/props in supporting hand(s).</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p>Skills with <u>hip-over-head rotation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms/<u>props</u> in supporting hands. <i>Exception: (forward rolls, backward rolls)</i></li> <li>b. Non-<u>airborne</u> skills are limited to two <u>consecutive</u> skills.</li> <li>c. <u>Airborne</u> skills with or without hand support are not allowed. Exception: a <u>roundoff</u> not connected to any other skill with <u>hip-over-head rotation</u>.</li> <li>d. Airborne skills with or without hand support over another dancer are not allowed.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	Simultaneous <u>tumbling</u> over or under another dancer that includes <u>hip-over-head rotation</u> by both dancers is not allowed.
<b>4</b>	<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.
<b>5</b>	Landing in a push up position onto the performance surface from any airborne skill is not allowed.

### NOVICE TIER - EXECUTED BY GROUPS & PAIRS

*Partnering and lifts are allowed (not required) with the following limitations:*

#### Applicable to all NOVICE divisions and categories

<b>1</b>	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with a <u>Supporting Dancer</u> who is in direct <u>contact</u> with the performance surface.
<b>2</b>	At least one <u>Supporting Dancer</u> must maintain <u>contact</u> with the <u>Executing Dancer</u> throughout the entire skill and the <u>Executing Dancer</u> 's hips cannot elevate above <u>head-level</u> . ( <i>Clarification: The <u>Executing Dancer</u> may not be released.</i> )
<b>3</b>	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> may not perform a hip-over-head rotation skill while elevated from the performance surface.
<b>4</b>	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> cannot be <u>inverted</u> in any elevated skill. ( <i>Clarification: The <u>Executing Dancer</u> may be vertically <u>inverted</u> if connected to the performance surface.</i> )
<b>Dismounts to the performance surface</b>	
<b>5</b>	The <u>Executing Dancer</u> may not <b>lose contact with the <u>Supporting Dancer</u> while elevated from the performance surface.</b>



2025-2026  
DanceABILITIES Rules

1. **All DanceABILITIES teams will follow the USASF general rules and routine requirements.** Exception: General Rule 7: The use of Service Animals by athletes is permitted.
2. **Individuals: Executed by one person not in contact with another person.**
  - a. Inverted skills may not be airborne and must involve hand support with at least one hand throughout the skill (example: headstand, handstand)
  - b. Skills with hip-over-head rotation may not be airborne and are limited to two consecutive rotations. Poms/Props are not allowed in supporting hands in any hip-overhead rotation skills. (Exception: forward and backward rolls.)
  - c. No simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer is allowed.
  - d. Drops are not allowed.
  - e. Dancers may not land in a push up position from any jump.
3. **Groups & Pairs: Executed by two or more individuals in contact with one another.**
  - a. All Partner and Groups lifts must be performed independently and with a Coach/Assistant as an additional spotter with the following limitations:
    - i. Lifts may not elevate Executing Dancer(s) hips above head-level.
    - ii. The Executing Dancer(s) must maintain contact with a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the performance surface.
    - iii. At least one Supporting Dancer(s) must maintain contact with the Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill.
    - iv. Hip-over-head rotation skills and inverted skills are not permitted when the Executing Dancer is elevated from the performance surface.
    - v. Unassisted dismounts to the Performance Surface are not permitted. (Clarification: Contact must be maintained between the Executing Dancer and the Supporting Dancer throughout any skill.)
4. **Mobility and Support Device Rules** (*Note: The use of the term 'wheelchair' below also applies to the use of scooters and similar mobility devices, as is applicable.*)
  - a. All mobility equipment, prosthesis, canes, crutches, elbow crutches and braces are considered part of the athlete unless they are removed, in which case they are considered props and therefore are required to follow the props rules. Please refer to USASF Coach App to send in videos of use of device if in question.
  - b. Wheelchair users, when acting as the supporting dancers in a lift, must have all wheels in contact with the performance surface during the skill, with wheels locked and an added and appropriate anti-tip attachment (or a spotter with both feet firmly placed on the performance surface with both hands gripped on the two back handles stabilizing the wheelchair with both wheels on the performance surface) for safety.
    - i. Clarification: For a wheelchair anti-tip attachment to be appropriate, it must be in contact with the chair, in working order and prepared to be used on the performance surface as an additional point of contact to the performance surface while both wheels of the wheelchair are also in contact with the performance surface. Wheelchairs MAY NOT be altered from the original manufacturer's design.

- c. Athletes may not stand on any part of a mobility device (i.e. wheelchairs, crutches, etc.).
    - i. Exception: A mobility device may be used to aid the executing dancer into a groups or pairs skill but may not be utilized as the executing dancer's primary support. Example: An executing dancer may place their foot on the arm rail or handlebar of a wheelchair. Must have additional safety spotter behind mobility device. All weight-bearing usage of wheelchairs must be pre- approved through the USASF Coach App.
  - d. Wheelchair users, when acting as supporting dancers, in the wheelchair (or similar apparatus) must use a seatbelt with wheels in locked position. All weight-bearing usage of wheelchairs must be pre-approved through the USASF Coach App.
  - e. All athletes spotting and/or catching a skill have mobility through their lower body OR the strength in the upper body enough (with or without use of mobility equipment) to absorb the impact of the skill, as well as with adequate lateral speed to spot and/or catch the skill.
  - f. All athletes spotting and/or catching a skill must have at minimum 1 arm extended, not including a prosthetic or other device, beyond the elbow to adequately assist with the skill. Executing Dancers may be caught by individuals who are not the original Supporting Dancer(s) if the original Supporting Dancer(s) are not capable of catching the skill.
  - g. When non-motorized wheelchairs are in motion, if there is an individual pushing the Exceptional Athlete in the wheelchair, that individual must remain in contact with the wheelchair while it is in motion. The wheelchair MUST NOT be released during motion.
  - f. Motorized wheelchairs must have all 4 wheels on the floor at all times.
5. It is the responsibility of the coach to determine the capability and proficiency of the individual athletes when choosing the skills to be performed.

Pre-Performance Note: Please contact the Event Producer about the performance surface being provided at the competition and for additional information on how to get mobility devices onto the stage if a lift is not provided.

## **2025-2026 USASF RULES GLOSSARY**

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

**Airborne Hip-Over-Head Rotation (executed by Individuals):** A tumbling skill in which the hips continuously rotate over the head and there is a moment of no contact with the performance surface (Example: round off or a back handspring).

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

**Blind Landing:** A landing in which a dancer does not have the opportunity to see the ground when landing an airborne hip-over-head rotation skill.

**Category:** Denoting the style of a performance piece or competition routine. (Example: Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, Contemporary/Lyrical, Kick, and Variety)

**Connected/Consecutive Skills:** An action in which the dancer executes skills without a step, pause or break in between. (Example: double pirouette or double toe touch)

**Contact (executed by Groups or Pairs):** When two (or more) people physically touch each other. Touching hair and clothing does not qualify as contact.

**Dance Lift (executed by Groups or Pairs):** A skill in which a dancer(s) is elevated from the performance surface by one or more dancers and set down. A dance lift is comprised of an Executing Dancer(s) and a Supporting Dancer(s)

**Division:** Denoting the composition of a competing group of dancers. (Example: Senior Coed, Junior and Youth).

**Dismount (executed by Groups or Pairs):** An action in which the Executing Dancer(s) returns to the performance surface or upright position with or without assistance from a Supporting Dancer(s) with whom there was prior contact.

**Drop: (executed by Individuals)** An action in which an airborne dancer lands on a body part other than his/her hand(s) or foot/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 is in contact with a Supporting Dancer(s).

**Full Twisting:** A 360-degree twisting rotation.

**Hands-free Poms:** Poms specifically made so that performers do not have to hold the poms but rather they are affixed to the performers hand. Proper use means bars cannot be in palm of the hand and only an elastic band can be between the supporting hand and performance surface.

**Head-level:** A designated and averaged 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.*)

**Hip-level:** A designated and averaged 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 through the vertical axis, where an individual's hips pass through the inverted position in a tumbling skill. (Example: Back Walkover or Cartwheel)

**Hip-Over-Head Rotation (executed by Groups or Pairs):** An action characterized by continuous movement through the vertical axis, where an individual's hips pass through the inverted position in a lift or partnering skill.

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

**Inverted Skills (executed by Individuals):** A skill in which a dancer's waist and hips and feet are higher than his/her head and shoulders and there is a stop, stall, or change in momentum.

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

**Perpendicular Inversion (executed by Individuals):** A skill that begins with backward airborne momentum and lands on the hands and head in an inverted position in which the dancer's head, neck and shoulders are directly aligned with the performance surface, creating a 90-degree angle between the head and floor.

**Prop:** An object that can be manipulated and is typically used to enhance the visual effect of a routine.

**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.

**Release (executed by Groups or Pairs):** An action that results in a moment of time when the Executing Dancer is free of contact from the performance floor and the Supporting Dancer(s) with whom there was prior contact.

**Shoulder Inversion (executed by Individuals):** A skill that begins with backward airborne momentum and lands on the hands/shoulders /upper back area on the performance surface and the dancer's waist and hips and feet are higher than his/her head and shoulders.

**Shoulder-level:** A designated and averaged 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.*)

**Spotter:** A dancer not physically involved in a lift/skill whose proximity and attention to the execution of the choreography allows them to provide support/safety to the Executing Dancer as needed.

**Standing Prop:** A type of prop that can support itself, free from a dancer's control and not wearable or commonly handheld (*i.e. chairs, stools, benches, ladders, boxes, stairs, etc.*)

**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.

**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 “Groups or Pairs” who supports or maintains contact with an Executing Dancer.

**Tumbling:** A collection of skills that emphasize acrobatic or gymnastic ability, are executed by an individual dancer without contact, assistance or support of other dancer(s) and begin and end on the performance surface

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

**Vertical Axis (executed by Groups or Pairs):** a designated line in space that goes straight up and down and has no slope.

**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 the Executing Dancer bears direct weight on the Supporting Dancer(s) by a stop, stall or change in momentum.



## **2025-2026 USASF SKILLS GLOSSARY**

**Aerial Cartwheel:** (*airborne hip-over-head rotation skill without hand support*) A skill which emulates a cartwheel but is executed without placing hands on the ground.

**Axel:** (*airborne skill with axis rotation*) A turn in which the working leg makes a circle in the air to passé as the supporting leg lifts off the ground enabling the dancer to perform a rotation in the air and then lands on the original supporting leg.

**Back Handspring:** (*airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support*) A skill in which a dancer starts from the feet and jumps backwards rotating through a handstand position. The dancer then blocks off the hands by putting the weight on the arms and using a push from the shoulders to land back on the feet, completing the rotation.

**Back Walkover:** (*non-airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support*) A skill in which the dancer moves backward into an arched position, with the hands making contact with the ground first, then rotates the hips over the head and lands on one foot/leg at a time.

**Backward Roll:** (*non-airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support*) A skill in which the dancer rotates backward, rotating the hips over the head while curving the spine (a tucked position) to create a motion similar to a ball “rolling” across the floor.

**Calypso [ka-lip-SO]:** (*airborne skill*) 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:** (*non-airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support*) A 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.

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

**Coupé [koo-PAY]:** A position in which one foot is held lifted and close to the ankle. Also known as Coup de Pied: quickly takes the place of the other; meaning to cut or cutting.

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

**Dive Roll:** (*airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support*) A forward roll where the dancer’s feet leave the ground before the dancer’s hands reach the ground.

**Forward Roll:** (*non-airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support*) A skill in which the dancer rotates forward, rotating the hips over the head while curving the spine (a tucked position) to create a motion similar to a ball “rolling” across the floor.

**Fouetté [foo-eh-TAY]:** A stationary turn 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 stationary turn 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 Aerial:** (an airborne hip-over-head rotation skill without hand support) A skill which emulates a front walkover but is executed without placing hands on the ground.

**Front Walkover:** (a non-airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support) A skill where the dancer moves forward with the hands making contact with the ground first, then rotates the hips over the head passing through an arched position and lands on one foot/leg at a time.

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

**Headspring:** (an airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support) A skill where a dancer moves forward with the hands then head, making contact with the performance surface, then rotates the hips over the head passing through an arched position. It is non-airborne in approach but airborne in descent after hips pass through perpendicular.

**Handstand:** (a non-airborne inverted skill with hand support) A non-airborne, non-rotating, skill where the dancer supports him/herself vertically on his/her hands in an inverted position and the arms are extended straight by the head and ears.

**Headstand:** (a non-airborne inverted skill with hand support) A non-airborne, non-rotating, skill where the dancer supports him/herself vertically on his/her head in an inverted position with hands in contact with the floor to support the body.

**Illusion:** (a stationary turn) A skill where a dancer steps onto a standing leg, releasing the upper body all the way forward, lifting the working leg as close to 90 degrees as possible while rotating on the standing foot.

**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 jeté can be executed in various directions, sizes and positions.

**Kick:** One foot lifts from the floor with force to the waist or higher while the other foot remains on the floor.

**Kip Up:** (non-airborne in approach, airborne in decent, inverted skill **with hand support**) A skill where the dancer begins in a supine position, rolls back onto their shoulders elevating their hips off the performance surface and into an inverted position. Using their arms and/or legs, core, and momentum, the dancer thrusts their body in an upward direction away from the floor. The movement is completed by bringing the feet to the performance surface keeping the body inline and following to an upright position.

**Leap:** (airborne skill). A skill in which the dancer pushes from a plié (bend) off of one foot, becomes airborne, and lands on one foot.

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

**Pencil Turn:** A stationary turn executed with the working leg extended toward the floor and the foot hovering off the ground as the dancer turns.

**Pirouette [peer-o-WET]:** (*axis rotation*). A skill in which the dancer bends (plié) and rises (relevé) to one leg (supporting leg) making a complete rotation of the body; meaning to whirl. A pirouette can be executed 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.

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

**Round Off:** (*airborne hip-over-head rotation skill with hand support*). A skill that takes off on one foot and lands on two feet simultaneously. (*Clarification: the skill becomes airborne after the hips have rotated over the head*).

**Shushunova [shush-A-nova]:** (*airborne skill*) 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.

**Stationary Turn:** A turn that rotates on a single pivot point including, but not limited to, a pirouette, leg hold, illusion. (*Note: Chainé and piqué turns do not qualify as Stationary Turns.*)

**Toe Touch:** (*airborne skill*) A jump in which the dancer lifts the legs through a straddle position. Hips externally rotate to turn out the legs and the chest is upright. Arms are typically held in a T position.

**Tour Jeté:** (*airborne skill with axis rotation*). A skill in which the dancer takes off from one leg, executes a half turn and lands on the other leg.

**Windmill:** A skill in which a dancer 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.