



Orange Bowl Cheer Championships

**Sunday, November 22, 2026
Broward County Convention Center**

Competition Rules & Procedures

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page No.</i>
<i>Team Operations</i>	
Recreational Ages and Divisions	3
All Star/ Club Ages and Divisions	3
Levels	4
Categories	4
Category Specifications	4
Squad Size	5
Order of Performance	5
Tie Breaking Procedures	6
Time Requirements	6
Performance Policy	7
Uniform Policy	7
General Rules	8
 <i>Performance Operations</i>	
Scores and Rankings	9
Interruption of Performance	9
How to Handle Procedural Questions	9
Finality of Decisions	10
Disqualification	10
Sportsmanship	10
Recreational Deductions	11
Allstar & Club Deductions	12
 <i>Event Day Operations</i>	
Event Day Registration Overview	13
Event Day Registration Procedures	13
Music and PA System	14
Credentials	14
Backstage / Warm up Area Guidelines	15
Team Pre-Performance Rotations	15
Awards Presentations	16
Orange Bowl Contact Information	17
 <i>Rules & Scoring- Separate Hand Out</i>	
General Rules & Routine Requirements	
Scoring System	
Score Sheets	
Safety & Deduction Sheets	

TEAM OPERATIONS

Ages and Divisions

Teams are placed into specific divisions according to the age categories listed in the charts below.

*All Star/ Club Age Grid		*Recreational Age Grid	
Divisions	Ages	Divisions	Ages
Tiny	4-6 yrs	Mini	4-5 yrs
Mini	5-8 yrs	Peewee	6-8 yrs
Youth	8-12 yrs	Prep	8-11 yrs
Junior	8-15 yrs	Varsity	10-13 yrs
Senior	10-18 yrs	Pro	12-16 yrs

*A team can only have participants that fall within the ages listed in the specific divisions in the category chart above. Thoroughly

Selecting a Division

Select the appropriate team division based on the specific ages of the participants on the team. To determine a squad's correct placement within the competition (based on the above chart of ages and divisions) please proceed as follows:

- **All Star/ Club:**
 - o Example #1: "Youth" division.
 - Team participant ages (8,9,10,9,8,11,12,10,10,8,8,12,11)
 - o Example #2: "Tiny" division
 - Team participant ages (4,5,5,5,6,4,6,6,4,4,4,4)
- **Recreational:**
 - o Example #1: "Prep" division.
 - Team participant ages (8,9,10,9,8,11,10,10,8,8,9,11)
 - o Example #2: "Mini" division
 - Team participant ages (4,5,5,5,6,4,6,6,4,4,4,4)

Please use the age that the cheerleaders will be per the calendar year as of December 31, 2026 for your cutoff date.

Selecting a Level

To ensure the success of your team, please adhere to the parameters provided in the chart below and basic rules for the corresponding levels

All Star/ Club Level Grid		Recreational Level Grid	
Divisions	Allowed Levels	Divisions	Allowed Levels
Tiny	1	Mini	1 & 2
Mini	1 & 2	Peewee	1-3
Youth	1-4	Prep	1-4
Junior	1-4	Varsity	1-4
Senior	1-4	Pro	1-4

Teams are not allowed to perform above the allowed levels as listed above per their division.

Categories

Recreational: Cheer/Dance/Stunt/Tumble

Allstar: Dance/Stunt/Tumble

Category Specifications

- **Recreational:** Cheer/Dance/Stunt/ Tumble
 - o Each squad's presentation must include at least one cheer or sideline chant (min of 20 sec). During the sideline chant music cannot be heard and/or over power the chant. It is at the discretion of the Judges to determine the quality & clarity of the chant during the performance.
 - o Squads are solely responsible for the coordination of their music during the routine and ensure the music is at the proper volume during the chant. No exceptions will be made to errors in music during the performance.
 - o Squads may prepare different routines to perform within the allotted time.
 - o More than one song may be used if it does not exceed the time constraints.
 - o Squads may utilize "mixed" music, which features segments of several songs mixed.
 - o Poms may or may not be used in this category.

- Stunting (building) WILL BE allowed in this category and is defined as any toss, mount, or pyramid. All stunting should correspond to the skill & age level of the squad.
- Tumbling will be allowed in this category and is defined as any hip-over-head rotation. Tumbling will need to be in accordance with the level team registered.
- **Allstar:**
 - **Allstar teams will not be required to have a cheer**
 - Squads are solely responsible for the coordination of their music during the routine and ensure the music is at the proper volume during the chant. No exceptions will be made to errors in music during the performance.
 - Squads may prepare different routines to perform within the allotted time.
 - More than one song may be used if it does not exceed the time constraints.
 - Squads may utilize “mixed” music, which features segments of several songs mixed.
 - Poms may or may not be used in this category.
 - Stunting (building) WILL BE allowed in this category and is defined as any toss, mount, or pyramid. All stunting should correspond to the skill & age level of the squad.
 - Tumbling will be allowed in this category and is defined as any hip-over-head rotation. Tumbling will need to be in accordance with the level team registered.

Squad Size

Squad sizes are as follows

Size	Participant Total
Small	8-13
Medium	14-20
Large	21- 35

All squads must have a minimum of eight (8) participants including the day of the competition. Squads with less than eight (8) participants (including the day of competition) will have the option to participate as a non-scored exhibition team.

Order of Performance

The order of performance will be selected at random immediately following the deadline for submitting team registration forms. Team registration forms must be submitted on or before **Friday, November 6th, 2026, by 5pm**. To register use the following link <https://www.orangebowl.org/cheer/>

Tie Breaking Procedures

In the event of a tie, a review of the score sheets will take place. The judges' panel will be responsible for breaking all ties and their decision will be final.

*All decisions made by **HEAD JUDGE** are final. **NO FURTHER PROTESTS MAY BE MADE.***

Time Requirement

Recreational Teams:

Each cheer squad, regardless of division (*including Mini*), will perform a choreographed routine with a minimum duration of 2:00 minutes and a maximum duration of 2:30 minutes. The routine must include at least one 20-second cheer or sideline chant.

During the cheer or chant, background music must not be audible or overpower the athletes' voices. Judges will determine whether the chant is clear, audible, and effectively performed.

Teams are responsible for coordinating their music and ensuring the volume is appropriate. No reruns will be granted due to team music or technical issues.

The total performance, including the cheer/chant and music, must not exceed 2:30 minutes. For example, if the cheer or chant is 25 seconds, the music may be no longer than 2:05 minutes.

Allstar Teams:

Each cheer team will perform a choreographed routine with a maximum duration based on its division:

- **All Star:** Maximum routine time of **2:30 minutes**
- **Prep:** Maximum routine time of **2:00 minutes**
- **Tiny:** Maximum routine time of **1:30 minutes**

The routine, including all music and choreography, must not exceed the maximum time limit for the applicable division. Teams are responsible for ensuring their routine remains within the allotted time. No exceptions will be made for routines that exceed the division time limit.

THERE WILL BE A FIVE (5) POINT DEDUCTION FOR FAILURE TO MEET THE 20 SEC CHEER OR SIDELINE CHANT MINIMUM AND/OR EXCEEDING THE MAX TIME LIMIT OF 2:30 MINUTES FOR THE OVERALL ROUTINE!

Performance Policy

Recorded voice-overs or vocal enhancements may not be used to amplify or replace the team's live vocal projection during any portion of the routine.

Squads should enter and exit the performance floor promptly and efficiently. The PA announcer will announce when the Team may enter onto the mat. Teams may enter the competition mat with spirit and enthusiasm. The judges will signal the PA announcer when the performance area is ready. The PA announcer will then announce, **"Ladies, You May Begin,"** at which time timing will begin with the team's first organized word, movement, or note of music.

All routines must be age-appropriate and suitable for a family audience. Vulgar, offensive, or sexually suggestive music, language, choreography, gestures, tear-away uniforms, or the removal of clothing during a performance are prohibited and may result in significant deductions or disqualification at the judges' discretion. Please refer to the Judging Score Sheet for additional information.

Questions regarding music selection or the policies outlined in this section should be directed to Competition Consultants Thomas or Makayla Ciaramitaro at makaylaciaramitaro@gmail.com prior to the competition.

Uniform Policy

Participants must arrive in a uniform manner for registration. This may consist of a uniform vest or T-Shirt and a uniform skirt or shorts. Participants are permitted to wear warm up suits, sweatshirts or jackets during registration.

Participants may enter the venue wearing hair curlers, scarves, rags, or similar items if permitted by their respective programs. All hair styling must be completed before entering the warmup areas. Per facility regulations, hot curlers, flat irons, blow dryers, and similar items are not permitted. **NOTE: Dressing rooms will not be available.**

No uniform alterations are allowed during competition. Uniform skirts and tops may not be altered, rolled etc. to make them shorter. Penalties will be levied by judges for competitors whose skirts are deemed to be purposefully too short. Refer to Judging Score Sheet.

Squads must be dressed in competition uniform for the awards ceremony.

General Rules Overview

1. **Recreational** teams have a total of 2:30 minutes. Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement, or note of music by the squad.
2. **Allstar** teams will perform a choreographed routine with a maximum time limit based on its division: All Star – 2:30, Prep – 2:00, Tiny – 1:30.
3. **If a squad exceeds the time limit, a five (5) point penalty will be assessed for each violation.** This includes the 20 sec minimum cheer or sideline chant and the max time limit for the overall routine of 2:30 minutes. Because penalties are severe, it is recommended that all squads time their performances several times prior to attending the competition and leave several second cushion to allow for variations in sound equipment. *(Example: If the cheer portion does not meet the 20 sec min time requirement and the overall routine exceeds the 2:30 minute time requirements this would total 10 points in deductions)*
4. Participants must start in the competition area with at least one foot on the ground. Squads may line up anywhere inside the competition area. The competition area will be determined by the Competition Consultant according to the size of the facility being used and mat size availability. Approximate floor size will be 54 feet wide by 42 feet deep (9 strips). In executing their routine, participants must always remain within the limits of the performance mat.
Stepping outside of the specified mat area creates a safety hazard and is punishable with a five (5) point penalty for each occurrence.
5. All introductions (tumbling, entrances, chants, spell outs, etc.) are considered part of the routine and are timed as part of the performance. There should not be any organized exits or other activities after the official ending of the routine.

Note: For rules & standards, please refer to the Building, Pyramid and Tumbling Rubrics along with the scoring system and basic rules provided.

For any questions or more information, please contact our **Competition Consultant** at makaylaciaramitaro@gmail.com

PERFORMANCE OPERATIONS

Scores and Rankings

Individual judges score sheets are for the exclusive use of each judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. In calculating final team scores, the competition officials will total up all the judges scores to determine the team overall score.

Recreational: The judges will score the squads according to the judging criteria on a 105-point system. The music portion of the routine will be worth a total of 70 possible points, and the cheer portion will be worth a total of 35 possible points.

Allstar/ Club: Teams point system will be based on 100 points. Stunting, Tumbling, Jumps, Dance & Overall.

Interruption of Performance

If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a squad's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the squad, the squad will be allowed to perform its routine again from the beginning. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials. When an interruption occurs squads should not stop their routine unless directed to do so by the competition officials. Performances should continue through the interruption.

In the event a squad's routine is interrupted because of failure of the squad's own equipment, the squad must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition. No second opportunity for a performance will be allowed.

If an injury causes the squad's routine to be interrupted, the squad must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition. Competition officials reserve the right to stop the routine if an injury occurs.

How To Handle Procedural Questions

Any question concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the head coach of the team and will be directed only at the Competition Consultant. Such questions should be made prior to the team's competition performance. Any questions concerning the team's performance should be addressed with the Competition Consultant **immediately** after the team's performance.

Finality of Decisions

By participating in this competition, each team agrees that the decisions by the judges will be final and will not be subject for review. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition, and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative, or procedural review of such decisions.

Disqualification

Any squad that fails to follow these “Rules and Regulations” may be disqualified from the competition. A disqualified squad will automatically forfeit any prizes or awards presented by the competition and may lose eligibility to participate in future years.

Sportsmanship

All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition. The head coach of each squad is responsible for seeing that squad members, coaches, parents, and any other person affiliated with the squad conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification as explained in the section above. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to, taunting, teasing, talking, booing, fighting, vulgar language, etc. Misbehavior in the audience by a team or a team’s spectators can result in the removal of the offender(s) from the competition area **and** team penalties, up to and including disqualification. The Competition Consultant and the Orange Bowl have sole discretion to determine final judgments and impose penalties.

Deduction Overview

2026 Orange Bowl Cheer Championships	
Summary of Deductions (Recreational)	
<u>Deduction Overview</u>	<u>Deduction</u>
Exceeding or not meeting time limit in Cheer & Overall Routine	5 pts
Inappropriate music or movements Ex: Foul or improper language, gyrations, movements with sexual innuendo, music with sexual or non-age-appropriate innuendo	10 pts
Violation of safety regulations/ definitions	2 pts/judge
Stunt Fall	5 pts/occurrence
Athlete Fall	.25 pts/occurrence
Unsportsmanlike conduct	Disqualification
Violating mat boundaries (out of bounds)	5 pts per occurrence
Unruly & loud talking within the registration area	Disqualification at the OBC's discretion
Tardiness to registration (15 min grace period enforced)	up to 10 pts
Failure to depart warm up mats in a timely fashion	OBC's discretion
More than one coach on the floor	10 pts

2026 Orange Bowl Cheer Championships

Summary of Deductions (Allstar)

<u>Deduction Overview</u>	<u>Deduction</u>
Exceeding or not meeting time limit in Cheer & Overall Routine	1 pts
Inappropriate music or movements Ex: Foul or improper language, gyrations, movements with sexual innuendo, music with sexual or non-age-appropriate innuendo	10 pts
Violation of safety regulations/ definitions	2 pts/judge
Stunt Fall	.75 pts/occurrence
Athlete Fall	.25 pts/occurrence
Unsportsmanlike conduct	Disqualification
Violating mat boundaries (out of bounds)	2 pts per occurrence
Unruly & loud talking within the registration area	Disqualification at the OBC's discretion

EVENT DAY OPERATIONS

Event Day Registration Overview

- Team check-in will be conducted on a rolling schedule beginning at 7:00 AM
- The first five (5) teams on the competition schedule must check-in no later than 7:30 AM
- Teams must check in 1.5 hr. before their warm up time.

NOTE: Above times are subject to change based on the final competition schedule. The Orange Bowl will issue a final competition schedule four (4) days prior to competition day.

Event Day Registration Procedures

6. Registration is on a rolling schedule beginning at 7:00 AM. The first five (5) teams on the competition schedule must check in no later than 7:30 AM. Teams must check in at least 1.5hr. before their warm up time.
7. The entire team with its participants must check in together. Teams must check in at least 1.5hr. before their warm up time, failure to do so may result in a penalty.
8. Once called inside the registration space, teams should proceed to the table designated for their program.
9. **One (1) Coach** will lead each team into the assigned registration area. All other Coaches must remain in line behind their squad.
10. **All participants must register with their respective squad.** Each team must provide a verified copy of the roster uploaded during registration. Must include each athlete's date of birth (DOB) and Coaches Background Check.
11. Random roster checks may be conducted at any time by comparing a team's roster with the roster submitted on the cheer competition registration form.
12. Only a total of **3 Coaches / Team Assistants** from each team, including the Head Coach, will be allowed to enter with the team and gain access to the restricted participant areas (seating, backstage etc.). They must all register with their squads.
13. Coaches will receive their credentials upon checking in with their team. Within the packet, there will be a total of **three (3)** credentials that allow coaches access to the restricted participant seating and backstage areas. One (1) pass

for coach access to the music box and Two (2) passes for designated Coaches Box. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that they have the correct number of credentials (per the above allotments) in hand before they exit the registration area. Additional credentials **will not** be issued.

NOTE: Cheerleaders attempting to participate whose names are not listed on the submitted rosters and competition registration form will not be allowed to compete.

14. After checking in, teams will then proceed to their seats.
15. If a team arrives later than the required 1.5-hour window the following rules will apply: **If available team will be pushed to an open time slot. If no open time slot is available, they will be forced to perform as exhibition at the end of the event.**
16. Since the consequences for lateness are severe, it is strongly recommended that teams' factor in plenty of additional time into their travel and arrival pattern, including parking and participant drop-offs.

Music and PA System

1. USB's, MP3, & Phones will be the supported forms of music. Teams will be **required to bring their own Auxiliary cords. If using a phone, the music MUST be properly downloaded to the phone prior to the performance time.** Exceptions will not be made for music skipped or streamed, interrupted by phone calls and/or messages etc. (this includes phones USB's or mp3 players). Auxiliary capabilities will be available in both the warmup and competition areas. If utilizing a phone or auxiliary form of music, it is required that the Head Coach carries his/her own aux cord. **If a phone is used, please place your phone on DO NOT DISTURB to avoid any potential interruptions.**
2. **Music MUST be cued for performance when the squad takes the floor,** and no other music selections should be in the form of music provided.
3. Seating will be available for one (1) Coach to sit next to the PA while their squad is performing. This Coach must be wearing the "Floor" credential distributed at registration. A separate coach box will be allocated near the Floor for up to (2) coaches to watch the performance.

Backstage/Warm up and Practice Area Guidelines

1. On event day a warm up and practice area, with mats, will be provided. The warm up and practice will be arranged for all teams and is mandatory to compete.

2. **Warm up and practice times will be scheduled. Squads are only permitted in the warm up and practice area during their allotted time.** The Orange Bowl will provide a schedule of warm up and practice times in each team's registration packet received during check-in.
3. **Warm up and Practice Area Punctuality**
 - a. Teams must arrive on time for their assigned warm up and practice period. No extensions will be granted for late arrivals, regardless of the reason.
 - b. If a team arrives after its scheduled start time, it may use only the remaining portion of its assigned time. Teams may not remain on the mats past their scheduled end time or use another team's allotted time.
 - c. No accommodation will be made for late arrivals. Teams that fail to leave the warm up mats on time may be penalized at the discretion of the Competition Consultant and the Orange Bowl.
4. **Warm up Procedures:** In the warm up area squads are allowed to stretch, stunt, tumble and walk through their routine without any music or sound.
5. **Practice Procedures:** In the practice area squads are allowed to review their routines with sound and equipment to play USB's, MP3, & Phones. Music must be played at a very low level, or it will be turned off. Chanting, cheering, etc. can be recited at a very low level. Practice will be stopped if chanting, cheering etc. becomes too loud.
6. Warm up and practice will be approximately four to five (4-5) minutes each. The exact number of minutes allowed will be distributed with the schedule during onsite registration.
7. Staff will be positioned in the warm up and practice area to monitor squads.

Team Pre-Performance Rotations

1. Each team will have a two-point pre-performance rotation.
2. Point one of the pre-performance rotations is an assigned warm up and practice time given to each team. Please see the above section on Backstage / Warm Up and Practice Area Guidelines.
3. Point two of the pre-performance rotation is an assigned **mandatory "on deck" time**. The mandatory "on deck" time is the time by which teams must report and be in position in the competition floor ingress tunnel. At this time, teams should be prepared to approach the competition mat to do their routine.

4. On deck times will be distributed by the Orange Bowl during onsite registration.
5. Full responsibility for moving teams through the rotation in accordance with the published assigned schedule lies with the Head Coach. No staff member will be retrieving teams from the stands, no announcements will be made by the Emcee, and no staff will be escorting teams.
6. If a team is late for their assigned-on deck time and subsequently misses their assigned performance time, the following rules will apply:
 - a. If their division is still competing, they will be assessed a **5-point penalty for tardiness** but **will** be permitted to compete as the last performance within their division.
 - b. If their division is no longer competing, the team **will not** be allowed to perform.
7. The Orange Bowl bears no responsibility and accepts no liability whatsoever for issues arising from tardiness.

Award Presentations

There will be two awards presentations, one at the conclusion of the Recreational Session and the other at the conclusion of the All Star/ Club Session. One (1) coach and two (2) cheerleaders are required to be present at the awards presentation.

The following awards will be distributed:

- First, second and third places will be awarded (as applicable) within each division, by size and level
- Four (4) Category Champions for Level 1, 2, 3 & 4 will be awarded for the top score in each level
- Mini Overall Champion will be awarded to the overall highest scoring team across the entire mini division
- A Competition Grand Champion in the Recreation Division and Competition Grand Champion in the All Star/Club Division will be awarded to the overall highest scoring team across each session.

ORANGE BOWL CONTACT INFORMATION

2026 Orange Bowl Cheer Championships Orange Bowl Contact Information			
<u>Office Information</u>			
14360 NW 77 th Ct Miami Lakes, Florida 33016 305-341-4700 www.orangebowl.org			
<u>OBC Staff</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>E-Mail Address</u>
Latoya Williams	SR VP Comm Outreach	305-341-4728	lwilliams@orangebowl.org
Makayla Ciaramitaro	Cheer Consultant	772-342-5201	makaylaciaramitaro@gmail.com
Myles Kleeman	Coordinator, Community Outreach	305-341-4740	mkleeman@orangebowl.org