



2020-2021 Season
Cheerleading Handbook

Team Placement Breakdown

Teams are formed by both age and skill level. According to the USASF, your child's age birth year will determine his/her competition age for the season. For this reason, **birth certificates are required**, if we don't already have one on file from a previous season.

2020-2021 USASF AGE GRID

Tiny Exhibition	2013-6/1/17
Tiny	2013-2015
Mini	2011-2015
Youth	2008-2015
Junior	2004-2014
Senior	6/1/01-2008

Tumbling Skill Grid

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Level Appropriate				
Standing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward Roll • Backward Roll • Cartwheel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back Handspring • Front Handspring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Series BHS • Jump connected to 1 BHS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Back Tuck • Standing BHS Tuck • Jumps connected to a BHS Tuck
Running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round-off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round-off BHS(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round-off Back Tuck • Round-off BHS Tuck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round-off Layout • Round-off BHS Layout
Advanced				
Standing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handstand Forward Roll • Back Walkover • Front Walkover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back Walkover BHS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing BHS Step out • Round-off BHS Tuck • Jumps to multiple BHS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing BHS(s) to Layout • Jump BHS(s) to Layout • Jumps BHS(s) to Whip to Layout
Running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cartwheel Back Walkover • Front Walkover to Cartwheel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front Walkover to Round-off BHS(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front Walkover to Round-off BHS Tuck • Aerial • Punch Front 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punch Front connected to Round-off BHS Layout • Whip to Layout

** These are the suggested tumbling skills for each level. We do look at athletes' potential and their overall abilities (stunting, jumps, etc.) but nearly every athlete will have all of the appropriate skills for their level and some of the advanced skills. They will be able to perform them with consistency and with good technique. **

If an athlete continues to work towards developing their skills and manages to obtain skills more advanced than they demonstrated during team placements, they are still eligible to change teams as long as it does not affect choreography that is already in place.

Prep Teams vs. Elite Teams

Prep (Half Year) Teams: Travel locally (about 2 hr. driving distance) to about 4- 6 competitions. Optional Pre-season runs from August-October, while mandatory team practices run from November through May. Competition fees as well as program costs are considerably less than those of full-year athletes.

Elite (Full Year) Teams: Travel locally (about 3 hr. driving distance) to about 6-8 competitions. Attending two-day competitions are likely. Competition season runs from July through May. Registration begins June 1st.

Elite (Full Year) vs. Prep (Half Year) Price Comparison

** Some prices mentioned below are subject to change. Bold items are “approximate” prices based on previous years. In the event that a supplier we use raises their prices, we will notify you of any changes right away **

Full Year Cost Breakdown		Half Year Cost Breakdown	
USASF Fee	\$30	USASF Fee	\$30
Uniform (If Needed)	\$370	Uniform (If Needed)	\$360
Competition Bow	\$22	Competition Bow	\$22
Warm Up (Optional- Purchase Online)	\$75	Warm Up (Optional- Purchase Online)	\$75
Competition Backpack (Optional)	\$100	Competition Backpack (Optional)	\$100
Choreography Attire	\$45	Choreography Attire	\$45
Competition Music Fee	\$80 -\$70	Competition Music Fee	\$80 -\$70
Choreography Fee	\$150 \$135	Choreography Fee	\$150 \$135
Coaches Fee	\$100	Coaches Fee	\$100
Competition Fees	\$550- \$750	Competition Fees	\$400- \$550
Tuition	\$1,350 (\$135 Aug-May)	Pre-Season Tuition	\$136 (\$68/ Aug-Sept)
		Comp Season Tuition	\$1,080 (\$135/ Oct-May)

Regardless of which team you are placed on this season, you will be receiving a discounted price for both choreography and music. If you are a returning athlete placed on a team using a routine from the 2019-2020 season, your choreography and music fee's will be discounted an additional amount (not shown here.)

Gym Closings

Monday, Sept 7th - Labor Day
Saturday, Oct 31st - Halloween
Nov 25th – 29th – Thanksgiving Break
Dec 23rd – Jan 1st - Holiday Break
Sunday, Apr 4th – Easter
Monday, May 31st – Memorial Day

Competition Schedule

Full Year Competition			
Competition Date	Location	Length	Distance
Sat & Sun Feb 13th & 14th	JAMfest New England Championship 50 Foster Street, Worcester, MA	2 Day	1 hr 14 min
Sat Feb 27th	Spirit Unlimited- Epic Tour Massachusetts UMass Amherst, Amherst MA	1 Day	1 hr 9 min
Sat & Sun Mar 13th & 14th	Spirit Fest Nationals (used as possible Jamfest alternative) 1 Sabin Street, Providence, RI	2 Day	1 hr 36 min
Sun Mar 21st	Cheersport- Boston Grand Championship 300 Arcand Dr. Lowell MA	1 Day	1 hr 49 min
Sat & Sun Mar 27 & 28th	Encore- Springfield 1277 Main Street, Springfield MA	2 Day	38 min
Sat & Sun Apr 17th & 18th – Must Qualify	Northeast Regional Summit 50 Foster Street, Worcester, MA	2 Day	1 hr 14 min
Apr 29th -May 2nd – Must Qualify	Summit		

Half Year Competition			
Competition Date	Location	Length	Distance
Fri Feb 12 th	JAMfest New England Championship 50 Foster Street, Worcester, MA	1 Day	1 hr 14 min
Sat Feb 27th	Spirit Unlimited- Epic Tour Massachusetts UMass Amherst, Amherst MA	1 Day	1 hr 9 min
Fri Mar 12 th	Spirit Fest Nationals (used as possible Jamfest alternative) 1 Sabin Street, Providence, RI	1 Day	1 hr 36 min
Sat Mar 20 th	Spirit Unlimited- Empire State Championship 1001 Crooked Hill Road, Brentwood, NY	1 Day	2 hr 13 min
Sat Mar 27	Spirit Unlimited- Epic Athlete Tour 1400 Washington Ave UNH 212 Albany, NY	1 Day	2 hr 15 min
Fri Apr 16 th -Must Qualify	US Finals 50 Foster Street, Worcester, MA	1 Day	1 hr 14 min

Some competitions are subject to change. Empire may add/remove events from those listed above. Attending competitions is at the coach's discretion, however, refunds for competitions will not be given unless a refund is given by the event host. **Please let us know ASAP in the form of an "absentee form" if you have any conflicting plans with these dates. This also includes conflicts two weeks prior to one of these events.**

Attendance Policy

- Attendance to **ALL** team practices (regularly scheduled or added) is **REQUIRED**. The possibility of additional/extended practices nearing competitions is probable.
- No more than **three** absences are permitted during competition season.
- Make sure all family members aiding in drop off/pick up of the athlete is aware of days/times of practice and the importance of attendance.
- Excessive absences could result in a demotion to the athlete's role in the competition routine, or any additional punishment your coach sees fit.
- Everyone must be present to **ALL** competitions, no exceptions.
- Missing a practice two weeks prior to a competition is **NEVER** allowed under any circumstances.
- If you are absent nearing a competition, expect for your position in the routine to be altered.
- When aware of a schedule conflict, an "absentee request form" is to be filled out and given to a coach at least two weeks in advance. Absentee Request Forms allow coaches to know, on paper, when your child will not be attending practice, so they can plan accordingly

Excused Absences

- Examples of excused absences: contagious illness, mandatory school event, family emergency/death in the family.

Unexcused Absences

- School work is not an excuse for an absence. Although a priority, it is the job of the athlete to balance the two.
- Unless an activity/function directly affects their grade, school is not an excused absence. If there is a conflict, we ask to be provided with a note from staff on school letterhead.
- Withholding a child from practice should not be used as a form of punishment. This is unfair to the rest of their teammates.

Tardiness

- Tardiness is defined as being 10+ minutes late and is unacceptable
- Being tardy three times throughout the season results in one unexcused absence.
- Notify coaches immediately (via calling or text messaging) of any unexpected delays.

Injury and Illness

- Parents are responsible for seeking professional help should an injury or illness occur.
- A doctor's note is required to be presented to a coach so they are aware of the severity of the situation.
- A release note is also required for serious injuries.
- Unless a medical professional says otherwise, athletes are still **REQUIRED** to attend practices. Participation is not necessary, but athletes should be at practices to observe. Exceptions are made for contagious illnesses.
- If the timeline of recovery to an injury is extensive, recognize that a coach must do what's best for the team and may need to make adjustments to the choreography.

Family Vacations

- Family vacations are not permitted during competition season unless the gym is closed or the athlete has cleared it with their coaches.
- If a family vacation was planned before joining our program, please take the team into consideration to ensure the athlete is missing the least amount of practices possible

Weather Conditions

- Coaching staff will determine whether or not weather conditions are suitable to hold practice.
- If you do not receive notification that practice is cancelled, assume it is still being held and you are required to attend.

Family Emergencies

- Although a death in the family is absolutely considered an excused absence, please do not use the term "family emergency" lightly.
- If an emergency occurs, please contact a coach as soon as possible to inform them of the situation.

General Policies

Practice Attire

- Athletes should arrive to practice dressed appropriately. This includes practice wear, hair pulled back with bow, and cheerleading sneakers.
- For visual choreography purposes, we prefer athletic wear to be cohesive throughout the team.
- If practice wear has not been purchased, we ask that both top and bottoms are black in color. (This only applies for regularly scheduled weekly team practice days-not additional tumbling classes.)
- Hair will always be a distraction while tumbling/stunting. Do not forget to tie the hair back before practice. We request that a bow is worn to ensure your athlete gets accustomed to performing with it in their hair.

Practices & Practice Etiquette

- All routine decisions are at the discretion of the coaches.
- Bullying, bad mouthing, or any sort of verbal/physical abuse will not be tolerated. (This includes giving excessive criticism to a teammate about their abilities/performance during practice.)
- Cell phones must remain in bags, turned off or on silent for the duration of practice. There is no cell phones use unless it is an emergency, and okayed by a coach.
- No individual, other than an owner or coach, may post music, videos of choreography, stunts, routines, etc. on any social media account until the season is complete. It is important to keep things private in order to hold a competitive advantage.

Competitions & Competition Etiquette

- Depending on the order of appearance, we ask that there is always at least one team present to cheer on another Empire team during their performance.
- The only people permitted to discuss matters with judges or competition officials are coaches/owners.
- Disrespecting teammates, coaches, other Empire athletes, parents, opposing team members, spectators, or competition officials, in any way (via social media/in person,) will not be tolerated.
- Good sportsmanship is mandatory at all competitions. Our staff expects all participants to represent Empire in the highest of standards, before, during and after all practices and competitions.

Travel

- When traveling to a competition, staying at a hotel is not mandated.
- We understand all families have different financial situations. However, if possible, we request that teammates try to stay at the same hotel in order to promote team comradery.
- Please ensure your booking a hotel with a refund policy, in case events are cancelled. Empire will not be responsible for compensating hotel fees if athletes do not attend a scheduled competition

Parental Concerns/Team Issues

- Feel free to speak to coaches before/after practice regarding any issues you or your athlete might be experiencing.
- Please contact Chris Cote/Ashley Martin at EmpireCheerCT@gmail.com with any concerns as well.
- If a problem arises between teammates or parents, the issue will be addressed with all parties involved in a meeting with coaches/owners.
- Never hesitate to request a private meeting to further discuss any issues you feel were not resolved via conversation or email previously.