

# NORTH GEORGIA YOUTH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

## CHEERLEADING RULES

Updated 5/30/25

### GENERAL RULES

1. Membership is \$12 per athlete
2. All athletes must be members of the NGYFA and actively participate with a sideline cheerleading team to be eligible for competitive cheerleading
3. Cheer programs will follow all age, eligibility, and practice guidelines set forth by the NGYFA. These rules can be found at [www.ngyfa.org](http://www.ngyfa.org) (the same age and eligibility policies as football)
4. All athletes should be placed on teams according to the organization's policies and procedures
5. Minimum team participants shall be 8
6. Maximum team participants shall be 35
7. All athletes must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/coach, registered with the NGYFA according to policies found at [www.ngyfa.org](http://www.ngyfa.org)
8. Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement
9. Athletes must always practice and perform on an appropriate surface. Technical skills (stunts, pyramids, tosses or tumbling) may not be performed on concrete, asphalt, wet or uneven surfaces or, surfaces with obstructions
10. Soft-soled shoes must be worn while competing. No dance shoes/boots, and/or gymnastics slippers (or similar) allowed. Shoes must have a solid sole
11. Jewelry of any kind, including but not limited to, ear, nose, tongue, belly button and facial rings, clear plastic jewelry, bracelets, necklaces and pins on uniforms is not allowed. Jewelry must be removed and may not be taped over. Exception: medical ID tags/bracelets
12. Flags, banners, signs, pom poms, megaphones and pieces of cloth are the only props allowed. Props with poles or similar support apparatus may not be used in conjunction with any kind of stunt or tumbling. All props must be safely discarded out of harm's way (example: throwing a hard sign across the mat from a stunt would be illegal). Any uniform piece purposefully removed from the body and used for visual effect will be considered a prop
13. Casts that are hard and unyielding or have rough edges must be appropriately covered with a padded material. Clarification: The appropriately padded material must be such that it protects both the athlete and fellow athletes from injury
14. Required spotters for all skills must be your own team's members, and be trained in proper spotting techniques. All performers (on the mat or sideline) must be NGYFA registered athletes. This includes mascots
15. Competition routines/half-time routines shall not exceed 2 minutes and 30 seconds
16. Athletes must have at least one foot, hand or body part (other than hair) on the performing surface when the routine begins. Exception: Athletes may have their feet in the hands of base(s) if the base(s) hands are resting on the performing surface
17. The competitors who begin a routine must remain the same throughout the course of a

routine. A performer is not permitted to be “replaced” by another performer during a routine

18. An athlete must not have gum, candy, cough drops or other such edible or non-edible items, which may cause choking, in her/his mouth during practice and/or performance

## TUMBLING

NOTE: As it is for all skills, it is the responsibility of the coach to determine the capability and proficiency of the individual athletes when choosing the skills to be performed

1. All tumbling must originate from and land on the performing surface Exception: Tumbler may (without hip-over-head rotation) rebound from his/her feet into a stunt transition. Rebounding to a prone position in a stunt is allowed. A clear separation from the tumbling to the stunt is needed to make this legal. Catching the rebound and then dipping to create the throw for the rotation is legal.
2. Skills must involve constant physical contact with the performing surface. Tumbling skills must involve hand support with both hands when passing through the inverted position. Exception: Block cartwheels and round-offs are also allowed.
3. Tumbling over, under, or through a stunt, individual, or prop, is not allowed. Clarification: An individual may jump over another individual.
4. Tumbling while holding or in contact with any prop is not allowed.
5. Dive rolls are allowed. Exception: Dive rolls performed in a swan/arched position are not allowed. Exception: Dive rolls that involve twisting are not allowed.
6. Standing skills allowed: Forward and backward rolls, front and back walkovers, handstands cartwheels, roundoffs, front and back handsprings, flips, aerials, front tucks, back tucks, and tuck variations.
7. Series front and back handsprings are allowed.

## STUNTS

1. A spotter is required for each top person at prep-level and above. Example: Suspended splits, flat-bodied positions and preps are prep-level stunts. Extended arm stunts that are not in the upright position (such as extended v-sits, extended flat backs, etc...) are considered prep-level stunts. Exception: Shoulder sits/straddles are not considered prep-level stunts; and therefore, do not require a spotter.
2. single-leg stunts are only allowed at prep-level (shoulder). Extended single-leg stunts require a spotter/braced. See rule 19.
3. Extensions on two feet are allowed.
4. Twisting mounts and transitions are allowed up to a ½ twisting rotation by the top person in relation to the performing surface. Clarification: A twist performed with an additional turn by the bases performed in the same skill set, would be legal if the resulting cumulative rotation of the top person exceeds ½ rotations. The safety judge will use the hips of the top person to determine the amount of total rotation a top person performs in a skill set. Once a stunt is hit (i.e. prep) and the athletes show a definite and clear stop, then they may continue to walk the stunt in additional rotation.

5. During transitions, at least one base must remain in contact with the top person.
6. Free flipping or assisted flipping stunts and transitions are not allowed.
7. No stunt, pyramid, or individual may move over or under another separate stunt, pyramid or individual. Example: A shoulder sit walking under prep is illegal. Exception: An individual may jump over another individual.
8. Pendulum and pendulum style transitional stunts, where the top person falls away from the Original bases, must use at least three stationary catchers, at least two of which are not original bases. Physical contact must be maintained with all of the original base(s). When lifting a top person from the flat body position in a pendulum to the upright position, an additional base/spotter must be on the opposite side of the stunt and is responsible for catching the top person in the case of an overthrow. This additional spotter must be stationary, may not be involved with any other skill or choreography when the transition is initiated and must maintain visual contact with the top person throughout the entire transition. (The dip to throw the top person is considered the initiation of the skill.)
9. A single full twisting log/barrel roll is allowed as long as it starts and ends in a cradle position and may only be assisted by a base. Clarification: Log/Barrel roll may not include any skill (example: kick full twists) other than the twist. Clarification: The log roll may not be assisted by another top person.
10. Only straight pop downs, basic straight cradles and  $\frac{1}{4}$  turns are allowed.
11. Release moves (example: cradles) may not land in a prone or inverted position.
12. Release moves must return to original bases. Clarification: An individual may not land on the performing surface without assistance.
13. Helicopters are not allowed.
14. Release moves may not intentionally travel.
15. All inversions must maintain contact with the performance surface. Example: supported handstand.
16. Bases may not support any weight of a top person while that base is in a backbend or inverted position. Clarification: A person standing on the ground is not considered a top person
17. Pyramids must follow Stunts and Dismounts rules listed above and are allowed up to 2 high.
18. Top persons must receive primary support from a base. Clarification: Anytime a top person is released by the bases during a pyramid transition, the top person must land in a cradle or dismount to the performing surface and must follow the dismount rules.
19. Single-leg extended stunts:
  - a. Must be braced by at least one person at prep-level or below with hand/arm connection only. The hand/arm of the top person must be, and remain, connected to the hand/arm of the bracer. The connection must be made prior to executing the single-leg stunt. The connection must be made at or below prep-level.
  - b. If the person bracing the top person is standing on the performance surface, the bracer must be a separate person not involved with basing or spotting.
  - c. Prep-level top persons must have both feet in bases' hands. Exception: prep-level top persons do not have to have both feet in the bases' hands if they are in a shoulder sit, flat back, straddle lift or shoulder stand.
  - d. No dismounts are allowed from extended stunts in pyramids. Clarification: An extended stunt in a pyramid must be brought down to prep-level or below before it

can be dismounted.

20. Basket tosses are not allowed.

## **COMPETITIVE TEAMS**

During the season, NGYFA will hold a cheerleading competition. These competitions give our teams a chance to face-off against one another and display their half-time routines for scores. Teams entering into the cheerleading competition must follow the rules contained herein this document.

1. All athletes must be members of the NGYFA and actively participate with a sideline cheerleading team to be eligible for competitive cheerleading. Athletes may not cross-compete. You may only compete for one team.
2. All player eligibility must be verified at the annual Roster Check-In meeting. Proper paperwork includes:
  - a. Complete team roster with full names and dates of birth
  - b. Copy of birth certificates or school record signed by schools principal
  - c. Copy of school documentation verifying school attendance
  - d. In lieu of birth certificate and school/residence verification, a school document (ex: Infinite Campus, Power School) may be used as it contains all of the above information
  - e. Exception: Cheerleaders and cheer squads not participating in the NGYFA Cheer Competition are not required to submit eligibility paperwork
3. Competitions will be divided into divisions based on age and level for safety and level-play purposes. The following divisions will be available. Team placement will be decided by the age of your oldest team member.
  - a. 6U (ages 6 and under): Sideline and Competition
  - b. 7U (ages 7 and under): Sideline and Competition
  - c. 8U (ages 8 and under): Sideline and Competition
  - d. 9U (ages 9 and under): Sideline and Competition
  - e. 10U (ages 10 and under): Sideline and Competition
  - f. 11U (ages 11 and under): Sideline and Competition
  - g. 7th Grade (ages 13 and under): Sideline and Competition
  - h. Mixed Age Division: Sideline and Competition
4. You must declare an age and performance division when registering for competitions. You may not change levels/divisions once your registration has been submitted.
5. Competitions will be held on a 42' x 42' foam cheer floor. Floors will be taped down mat seams and not "grid".
6. Music and Timing: Each team will be responsible for providing someone to play/pause/stop and control music. Music must be provided on a device that can be connected to a standard aux cord
7. Routine time limit is 2:30. Timing will begin with the first organized movement, choreographed vocal, or beat of music. Spirit entrances and exits are permitted and are not included in the routine time.
8. Only registered NGYFA coaches will be allowed in warm-up area and on competition floor. There is a maximum of 4 coaches allowed per team.

9. All coaches, team members and parents should conduct themselves professionally at all times. Participants are subject to removal should an incident occur.
10. Teams must provide their own sound equipment in the warm-up area.
11. Teams should report to warm-up rotations at their assigned times and should be ready to perform when called to the floor.
12. The coaches, teams, and/or parents should have no contact with officials prior to, during, or after the competition. Any concerns or issues should be addressed, in writing, to the NGYFA Cheerleading Director.
13. The Order of appearance will be assigned by the NGYFA Cheerleading Director.
14. All decisions of the officials are final. NGYFA does not allow appeals or protests.
15. Sideline routines and competitive routines should be fundamentally different and will follow separate scoring guidelines (score sheets).
  - a. A competitive routine should include ALL of the following elements performed by all, or a majority, of team members: cheer, dance, partner stunts, pyramid, standing tumbling, running tumbling, and jumps.
  - b. A sideline routine should contain no more than FOUR of these elements performed by all/majority of team members. These routines should include a cheer and dance and could include jumps and stunts. Exception: a few athletes may also perform an allowed tumbling pass to add to the visual appeal of the routine.
16. Officials will meet with the NGYFA Cheerleading Director prior to the competition to review procedures and guidelines for scoring as well as to review score sheets (categories, etc.)
17. Score sheets should be marked in ink and signed by the completing judge.
18. If a team does not perform an element on the score sheet, a score of zero may be given. However, all judges must agree that the element (dance, cheer, stunts, jumps, tumbling) was not executed by the team or the team did not attempt to execute the element. All judges must agree to score zero.
19. when a stunt falls it will be considered one fall whether one team member or all team members fall. The same would be true of a stunt group in a pyramid.
20. When tumbling, a fall is considered a fall to the floor when the flyer landing on her hands, legs, knees, back, head, rear, elbows, and so on that was not considered a part of the original landing.
21. Any judge may call out-of-bounds, jewelry, violations on sportsmanship, unsafe hair, or nails.
22. Deductions may be made for the following reasons:
  - a. NGYFA Rules Violation – Each Violation 5 Points
  - b. Sportsmanship – Each Violation 10 Points
  - c. Improper Uniform (jewelry, hair, nails, etc) – Each Violation 2 Points
  - d. Falls – Each Violation 5 Points
  - e. Timing Infraction – Each Violation 1 Point (10 seconds to 1 Minute = 1 Violation)
23. The head judge will add all judges' scores and record totals on the Judging Tally Sheet and on the individual judges' score sheets.
  - a. Each individual judge's sheet will be tallied, making sure all areas are scored.
  - b. The scores will then be transferred to the Tally Sheet.
  - c. Deductions from the Safety Infraction Score Sheet will be added and recorded on the Tally Sheet. The deduction will be taken from the total judges' score.
24. Ties will be allowed
25. All scores are final. There are no protests.
26. Disqualifications:
  - a. Too many team members.

- b. Illegal athletes
27. Teams will be announced using the correct procedures as defined by NGYFA (\_\_\_\_\_ is the name of the school/park.)
- a. "Taking the floor now is \_\_\_\_\_"
  - b. "On Deck is \_\_\_\_\_"
  - c. The announcer will then receive a signal from the NGYFA Cheerleading Director and will announce "\_\_\_\_\_, You may begin."
28. Tournaments are at your own risk. Professional medical care will not be present. b. Teams are responsible for bringing their own first aid supplies and equipment. c. When an emergency or an injury occurs, the host and officials should stop the competition until the injured person can be removed from the warm-up or competition floor.
29. Team members who are bleeding, or have an open wound, or have excessive amounts of blood, may not participate in any event until the appropriate treatment is administered and the uniform or body has been cleaned.
30. Casts must be covered with a soft material. Participants with casts must not stunt or tumble and should use caution when performing jumps and other skills.
31. The coach has to select for the team to proceed or withdraw from the event. The coach must notify the NGYFA Cheer Director.