Selecting the appropriate level for your routine

Teams from all kinds of youth organizations attend the New England Cheer and Dance Competition so we try to make the division restrictions as broad as possible while still attempting to offer a somewhat level playing field. The divisions and levels at this competition may not match those of your particular organization so please use the guidelines below to help you determine how to register your team. Our goal is to have a fun, relaxed atmosphere, yet provide an exciting venue where teams get to compete against someone other than who they traditionally come up against at their league or regional tournament.

Coaches of cheer teams need to choose between the Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Diamond levels. We aim to allow teams presenting similar skills to compete against each other, and coaches to focus on clean, safe execution rather than feeling pressure to attempt difficulty with their often first-year athletes. We have created these levels based on the divisions offered by your organizations. As you know your squad's choreography, please examine your routine closely to determine which category it belongs in this year. No matter which level you choose, squads are limited to what their individual organizations allow. You must follow the guidelines set out by your program.

Last year we reconfigured the format and skills allowed in each level to better correspond with the divisions offered by OCYCA and YCADA. Our goal was for teams to be able to compete their routines 'as is', with minimal to no changes. We will tweak these levels to continue their alignment once the updated restrictions for 2026 are released by these organizations.

Bronze level routine restrictions (Novice or Level 1 Limited):

Stunts (including inversions, release moves and tosses)

- two leg stunts at and below prep level
- single leg stunts at knee and below level (including on nuggets)
- no inversions
- no release moves
- no baskets/tosses

Pyramids

- must follow ‘Stunts’ restrictions

Dismounts

- no cradles

Tumbling

- no advanced/elite tumbling (any number may perform rolls, cartwheels, roundoffs and walkovers)

Silver level routine restrictions (Beginner or Level 1):

Stunts (including inversions, release moves and tosses)

- two leg stunts at and below prep level
- single leg stunts at and below waist level (exception: at prep level if braced with hand/arm contact with a base/post/spotter)
- hitches, show and go’s, stunts where the bases’ arms are extended but the flyer is seated or horizontal
- twisting entries and transitions limited to ¼ turn
- no inversions in stunts (exception: ground-to-ground cartwheel over partner)
- no baskets/tosses
- release-style transitions (spotter or post maintains contact) at and below waist level and
- during cradles/cradle reloads/flatback positions

Pyramids

- extended two legs stunts and prep level single leg stunts braced hand/arm on at least one side
- no flips
- no release transitions (exception: flyer may remain braced during cradle)

Dismounts

- cradles limited to ¼ twist
- no flips or inversions

Tumbling

- advanced/elite tumbling limited to 25% of team (any number may perform rolls, cartwheels, roundoffs and walkovers)

Gold level routine restrictions (Intermediate or Level 2):

Stunts (including inversions, release moves and tosses)

- two leg stunts at and below extended level
- single leg stunts at and below prep level
- twisting entries and transitions limited to 1/2 turn
- inversions from the ground to below prep level
- release-style transitions (post or spotter maintains contact) at and below prep level and during barrel rolls/cradles/cradle reloads and flatback positions (may pass through extension)
- straight ride baskets/tosses only

Pyramids

- extended single leg stunts braced hand/arm on at least one side
- release transitions (1 bracer maintains hand/arm contact) at and below prep level and during cradles/cradle reloads/flatback positions (may pass through extension)

Dismounts

- single twist cradle from 2 legs at prep
- inversions with hands to mat from below prep level
- no flips

Tumbling

- elite tumbling limited to 50% of team (any number may perform rolls, cartwheels, roundoffs, walkovers and handsprings)

Platinum level routine restrictions (Advanced or Level 3):

Stunts (including inversions, release moves and tosses)

- single leg stunts at and below extended level

- twisting entries and transitions limited to one full twist at prep level
- ½ twists up to 2 leg extensions
- inversions at or below prep level
- releases at or below prep level (may pass through extension)
- tosses limited to single trick or up to 1 and ¼ twist

Pyramids

- extended single leg stunts braced by extended or below 2 leg stunts
- release transitions (1 bracer maintains hand/arm contact) at and below extended level
- braced flips (no twisting) beginning/ending at prep level or below

Dismounts

- cradles from 2 legs at extension and single leg prep level limited to 1 and ¼ twist
- inversions during dismounts from prep level and below

Tumbling

- elite tumbling limited to 75% of team (any number may perform rolls, cartwheels, roundoffs, walkovers and handsprings)

Diamond level routine restrictions (Elite or Level 4):

- Teams must follow the rules set out for them by their individual organizations

We will have level judges in the warm-up area to help ensure that all teams are in the appropriate divisions before they hit the competition floor. Any post-performance concerns will be addressed privately between the coaching staff and head judge prior to the awards ceremony, if possible.

Feel free to contact Lisa Moskow at 413-531-2095 or moskow_lisa@yahoo.com with any questions on your squad's routine components. We will be happy to work with you to help you make any necessary adjustments to your choreography or determine the best fit for your team.

Here are some frequently asked questions about the levels:
Q) "Most of our stunts and pyramids are done at shoulder height or below.

We have 3 of our 15 cheerleaders doing standing back-handsprings. Can we still enter the Silver level since most of our stunts are thigh and shoulder level?"

A) Yes, 3 out of 15 is below the 25 % allowed in the Bronze level. The 5 points for tumbling are assessed primarily on the 'team tumble', not skills performed by a few individuals, so there is not an unfair advantage over teams performing only beginning level tumbling.

Q) "Our routine is all-music, we don't do a cheer portion. How can we compete against teams doing a cheer if we get zero points for voice?"

A) The top category on the score sheet "Cheer/Voice" allows it's 10 points to be distributed differently if a team has an all-music routine. The judges will know in advance if your routine includes a cheer in which case points will be awarded for volume and/or crowd interaction. If no cheer, those 5 points will be assessed based on the Creative Impact of the routine. The other 5 points are given for Effective Use of Props and/or Visual use of Skills, which can apply during a cheer portion or over the course of the routine if all-music.

Q) "Our program doesn't allow us to do basket tosses, if other teams are doing them how can we compete?"

A) Our judges are scoring your routine based on what skills you do perform, not what you don't, and execution is their primary driver. Specific stunts are not listed on the scoresheet, so you won't be deemed to be 'missing' an element. Remember that it's likely the team doing a basket in their routine is not allowed to, for example, perform an inverted entry into a stunt, which your program might permit. One stunt, no matter how beautifully performed, is not going to make or break the results, especially with 90 points in other categories being distributed.

Q) "Our team of 16 has great stunting, we have 4 groups twisting from extended heel stretches and a cool release flipping transitional pyramid. Unfortunately we don't have strong tumbling, only 7 have back handsprings and 5 have round-off back handspring back tucks. The rest of the team is doing cartwheels and forward rolls. Should we water down our stunts and enter Platinum?"

A) No, you should keep in the skills you've worked so hard on. Tumbling is only worth 5 points and since it's category judging, that's from just one judge. If what they do is well executed and creatively choreographed, your score won't be so far behind a team with more advanced tumbling that you can't make it up in the

other 95 points up for grabs on the scoresheet.

The primary goal of this tournament is to offer teams an opportunity to show off their routines and be recognized for the hard work they have put into preparing them. Squads from many different organizations attend, and they all have different rules and requirements. We have tried to create more categories to reduce the need for teams to make big changes to their choreography while still offering a somewhat level playing field. We make adjustments each year based on feedback from the coaches who've attended, and will welcome yours after the event!

If you have any questions about the levels, please don't hesitate to call Lisa Moskow, judge's coordinator, at 413-531-2095 for more information or clarification.

THE ANNUAL NEW ENGLAND CHEER AND DANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

The New England Cheer and Dance Championship will be held on Saturday, November 7, 2026 at the Reggie Lewis Track Center located in Boston near Northeastern University. The Reggie Lewis Center is the number one track facility in the United States. The field house, which has over 100,000 square feet, seats 3,000 spectators and will enable you to sit with your cheerleading teams in comfort. The separate warm-up area contains three full-size basketball courts. Our two regulation competition mats (please see the diagram on the web site for the velcro layout) will have an additional strip on either end of each floor for a 42 x 54 total surface.

Our competition has been the most successful one in New England because it is low stress and places the emphasis on fun! Every squad will win a trophy. Helpful oral critiques of your team's routine will be emailed to you immediately following their performance by the technology of DJ Justin O'Hallaran. There will be no more than seven teams in any given division, and these are broken up by age, skill level, and squad size.

The deadline for competition entry is Sunday, November 1, 2026, but register before October 25th to take advantage of our early bird pricing! Payment is not required to register, we just need to know who's attending to set up the OOA for the day. We know some teams' attendance may hinge on the results of their qualifying tournaments on 11/1, that's no problem. We request that you register in advance and then just let us know if you're unable to attend.

Over 130 cheer and dance teams competed in our competition in 2025 and we hope to have a similar turn-out this year. The competition will include divisions for all ages: Tiny Mites, Mighty Mites, Mites, Pee Wees, Mixed Level, Junior High-age and 18U Cheer divisions, College cheer teams, and performances by Dance teams of all age groups.

Coaches of cheer teams from the Mighty Mites, Mites, Pee Wees, Junior High and 18U have the option of placing their squad in the Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum or Diamond divisions.

Our goal is to offer as level a playing field as possible, allowing teams presenting similar skill levels to compete against each other. As you know your squad's routine elements, please examine your routine closely to determine which category it belongs in this year.

Please see the "Cheer Division's Level Restrictions" form for a list of specific restrictions, additional critical details, and choreographic recommendations.

We realize that things may change for your team in the weeks between your registration for the tournament and the big day. The week prior to the competition, we will be emailing each team to confirm the age group they have registered in, an email address to send their oral critique to, an update on the number of cheerleaders competing, and a final declaration of their division (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum or Diamond). Based on this up-to-the-minute information (response required by Sunday, November 1st) we will set the schedule. Once the final grid has been released, NO CHANGES will be allowed unless WE have inadvertently listed your team in the wrong place.

We will have Level Judges in the warm-up area to help ensure that all teams are in the appropriate divisions before you hit the competition floor. Any post-performance concerns will be addressed privately between the coaching staff and the head judge prior to the awards ceremony, if possible.

Feel free to contact judge's coordinator Lisa Moskow at 413-531-2095 or Moskow_lisa@yahoo.com with any questions or to assist you in evaluating your cheer routine elements.

Each cheer team will have the opportunity to warm up their stunts, pyramids and tumbling prior to the competition and have them checked out by a safety judge. This will be done during a five minute time frame on a matted section of floor in the warm-up gym. Dance teams will perform on the cheer mats and will have the opportunity to run spacing on the surface they will be performing on prior to the start of the tournament.

Tentative check-in, warm-up and competition times for each division are available in the "Projected Registration, Warm-up and Competition Times" form on our web page. A listing of your team's exact arrival, practice, competition and awards time will be posted on our website by Thursday, November 5th, 2026 (or earlier in the week, if possible) in the format of the "Sample Cheer Grid" and "Sample Dance Grid" currently displayed.

Please see the "Cheer and Dance Rules" forms available on our website for specific routine guidelines. Cheer Divisions maximum routine length is remaining at three minutes, and the maximum length of the music portion is two and one-half minutes.

We have a 'Club' Division for our Rec cheer squads who do not regularly cheer for games. Coaches must check off the "Club" box on the Registration Form to ensure that their team is correctly entered in these divisions.

An entry fee of $100.00 must be paid for each squad entering the competition (except for teams entering the "Tiny Mites" exhibition division who have older teams from their same program registering for competitive divisions in the tournament and Inspiration teams).

Please register your team by October 25th for this special early-bird rate! Teams registering after October 25th will pay $120 per team. However, as payment is not due at time of registration – sign up now!

Please make checks payable to:

New England Cheer & Dance Competition

PO Box 1995 c/o Andy Yosinoff

Brookline, MA 02446.

We are excited that Fine Designs, one of the largest clothes merchandisers in the country with over twenty years of experience will be joining us as our vendor for t-shirts, sweatpants, tank-tops, shorts, sweatshirts, etc.. Personalized onsite souvenir apparel will also be offered.

Flowers for Dream will again provide their services and you can Pre-Order your flowers by going to w.w.w.flowersfordream.com/cheerdance.

Judges will be provided by the Universal Cheerleaders Association, Universal Dance Association, YCADA and the MSAA.

Sponsors of the event are: Fine Designs, The Best Western Inn at Longwood, Varsity Spirit, Lubin's Trophies, Children's Hospital Sports Medicine, Flowers for Dream and Midcoast Photo.

The Best Western Inn at Longwood – Host hotel of The New England Cheer and Dance Competition. Stay in comfort and close to the action. The Inn is conveniently located on Longwood Avenue on the edge of Boston's Back Bay. With 161 rooms and a full-service restaurant, The Inn will surely make your next trip to Boston a great one.

Admission to the competition is $14.00 for adults and $3.00 for children (6 and under).

DON'T FORGET TO DOWNLOAD THE COMPETITION FORMS YOU NEED!

Please contact me if you should have any questions and/or need additional information. I look forward to seeing you at the Reggie Lewis Track & Field Center on Saturday, November 7, 2026.

Sincerely,
Andrew Yosinoff
Competition Director

AYC and the New England Cheer and Dance Competition

Teams from all kinds of youth organizations attend the New England Cheer and Dance Competition so we try to make the division options as broad as possible while still attempting to offer a somewhat level playing field. The levels at this competition do not match up exactly with AYC's, so please use the guidelines below to help you determine how to register your team. Our goal is to have a fun, relaxed atmosphere, yet provide an exciting venue where teams get to compete against someone other than who they traditionally come up against at their league or state tournament.

Select the division which best matches the age or grade composition of the vast majority of your team. Please email or call us if you have questions as to where your team(s) belong, we can generally find a good home for every squad. If your team does not cheer for games (competition only), please check "Club" on your registration.

There are five different levels to choose from, based on the difficulty of the elements in the routine and the scoresheet is friendly to both cheer-music and all-music routines. Level 1 Limited teams should enter Bronze, Level 1 routines will fit under Silver, Level 2 under Gold, Level 3 with Platinum and Level 4 into Diamond. We ask that the coach examine the elements in their team's routine compared to the description of the five levels to see which one will be the best fit. Our goal is for teams to be able to compete their routine 'as is', and not need to make any adjustments.

Please go to "Cheer Division's Level Restrictions" to see a complete list of the skills restricted/permitted at each of these levels plus some FAQs. Feel free to contact Lisa Moskow at 413-531-2095 or moskow_lisa@yahoo.com with any questions on your squad's routine components. We will be happy to work with you to help you determine the best fit for your team or make any minor tweaks to your choreography.

We look forward to seeing your team this year!

NEW ENGLAND CHEER & DANCE COMPETITION PROGRAM BOOK AD ORDER FORM

Please return no later than Saturday, November 7th

Company Name (if applicable) _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

City/State_____ Zip Code _____

E-mail contact: _____ Phone #: _____

( ) Full Page – 7 ½ wide x 8 1/2 high $400
( ) Half Page – 7 ½ wide x 4 1/4 high $200
( ) Quarter Page -3 ¾ wide x 4 1/4 $100

Amount enclosed with Contract $_____ ( ) Check

Make Check or Money Order Payable to:

New England Cheer and Dance Competition
PO Box 1995
Brookline, MA 02446
All proceeds will go to the Emmanuel College Women's Basketball team

PLEASE DO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
1) Attach PDF Format
2) Attach an ad that you want enlarged to a larger size
3) Type the copy for an ad and we will make the ad – PLEASE CHECK ALL

SPELLING.

4) Send your business card to Fenway Printers at 870 Commonwealth Ave, Boston, Mass 02215 C/O Todd Nugent

5) E-mail any of the above to antz@mmpbrookline.com and call Todd at (617) 226-1900 at Fenway Printers, or Andy Yosinoff (617) 877-8049, if you have any questions.