



**\* GHSA RULES CLINIC  
Cheerleading  
2015 - 2016**

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- \* Cheerleading Manuals, forms, scoring guides and rubrics may be downloaded from the following sites:

- \* GHSA Website - [www.ghsa.net](http://www.ghsa.net)
- \* State Cheerleading Site - [www.ghsacheerleading.com](http://www.ghsacheerleading.com)

\* All coaches should download a copy of the manuals and review the guidelines for their sport. A copy should be maintained by each coach and official

**\* GHSA Materials**

\*The National Federation of State High School Associations has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and activities that help students to safely succeed in their lives.

- \* Rules provide direction
- \* Rules build awareness
- \* Rules support activities
- \* Rules improve activities
- \* Rules establish a consistent standard



**\* NFHS Rules and Guidelines**

- \* It is suggested that all cheerleading programs order the NFHS Spirit Rules Book from the GHSA or the NFHS. The NFHS Spirit Rules Book is needed to provide the coach with immediate access to rules, guidelines, regulations, and most important a key advisory tool to interpreting liability issues.
- \* Order your NFHS Spirit Rules Book today and keep it handy for quick reference! Cost \$10
- \* It can be used as a reference in responding to questions in this GHSA Rules Clinic.

**\* NFHS Spirit Rules Book - A MUST!**


**\* NFHS SPIRIT RULES BOOK**

\* All provisions of the NFHS SPIRIT RULES BOOK shall govern all aspects of cheerleading and all teams (Spirit, Competitive, Support). The book will cover all types of cheerleading and all sports where cheerleaders provide support. Including:

- \* Practices
- \* Games - Sideline and Halftime Performances
- \* Competitions
- \* Exhibitions and Performances

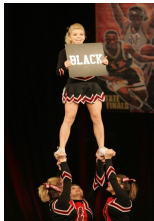
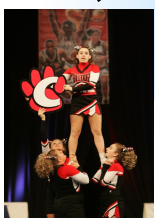
**\* NFHS Rules and Guidelines**

* Current Year Changes	* Rule 2 Situations (*)
* Points of Emphasis	* Rule 3 - Dance/Drill/Pom Risk Management
* Rules Committee	* Rule 3 Situations
* Table of Contents	* Illustrations/Photos
* Index	* Resources
* Rule 1 - Definitions	
* Rule 2 - General Risk Management	




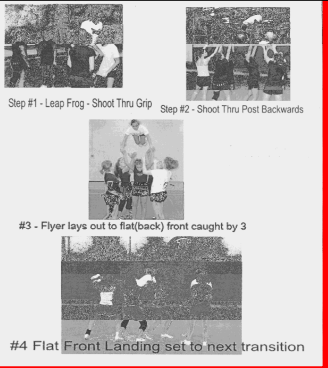
**\* How to Read the NFHS Spirit Rules Book**

- \* The book covers:
- \* General Announcement
- \* Sportsmanship
- \* Apparel & accessories
- \* Stunting Personnel
- \* Non-Release Stunts
- \* Release Stunts/Tosses
- \* Dismounts
- \* Tumbling
- \* Twist
- \* Drops
- \* Situations

## \* How to Read the NFHS Spirit Rules Book





- \* Pictures and Photographs -
- \* legal or illegal ???

## \* How to Read the NFHS Spirit Rules Book

- \* Items to read and review as you begin to coach:
- \* A. Points of Emphasis which provide further clarification.
- \* B. Code of Ethics and Mission Statement
- \* C. Suggested guidelines for a concussion
- \* D. General guidelines for sports hygiene
- \* F. General guidelines for Lighting and Thunder

## \* Beyond the Rules

- \* It is the professional integrity of our coaches that we rely on to make sure all rules are followed.
- \* It is the responsibility of the coach to understand that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the students and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.
- \* The coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession.
- \* The coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, administrators, parents and athletes.

## \* Professional Responsibilities of the Coach

- \*The Legal duties of the coach are:
  - \* The coach should properly plan all activities including practices.
  - \* Coaches should be knowledgeable of their sport.
  - \* Coaches are responsible for correct and proper instruction.
  - \* Coaches should provide a safe physical environment for all activities and safe and appropriate equipment.
  - \* Coaches should be conscious of each athlete's ability and skill level.

**\*Legal Responsibilities of the Coach**

- \*The Legal Duties of a Coach:
  - \* Coaches should be able to evaluate injuries.
  - \* Coaches should know basic first aid and CPR.
  - \* Coaches should provide emergency assistance as needed.
  - \* Coaches should closely supervise all activities (including practice).
  - \* Coaches should warn athletes and parents of inherent risk.

**\*Legal Responsibilities of the Coach**

**Inherent Risks of Cheerleading**


This is one example of an inherent risk form that would be signed by both cheerleaders and parents. The form would contain possible list of instructions to help prevent injuries from occurring. **Reminder: Any form distributed to the cheerleaders or parents which requires a signature should be approved by the AD and/or Principal.**

Cheerleading is a sport and with any sport there is risk of injury. Cheerleading is an anaerobic/aerobic activity that includes jumping, stunting, motions, and tumbling. All physicals must be on file in the school before the student can participate in the sport, practices or games. Coaches should be informed of any injury or chronic conditions.

Although the probability of injury is minimized if you practice correctly, there is always the possibility of one occurring. Injuries that can occur in cheerleading include but are not limited to the following: blisters, muscle strains, ligament sprains, joint and muscle soreness, abrasions, contusions, stress fractures, broken bones, spinal cord injuries involving paralysis and even death. However, if you take certain precautions, the possibility of such injuries may be largely decreased.

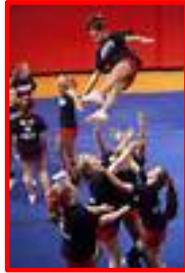
**GOOD RULES TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR CHEERLEADING PROGRAM**  
**PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR TEAM!**

- Never stunt or tumble unless a coach is present.
- Always practice in the presence of a qualified coach.
- Always warm-up appropriately before cheering (practice and games) by jogging and stretching.
- Do not attempt a stunt that you do not know how to perform safely and that has not been cleared by the coach.
- Always use attentive spotters when stunting.
- Always use mats or a grassy area when stunting during practice.
- Always cheer in an area free from obstructions.
- Do not stunt on uneven ground, wet surfaces, and concrete. Do not stunt in cold or rainy weather.



### More Good Rules to Consider

Never talk, laugh, or mess around when performing a stunt or learning a stunt.  
 Report injuries to the coach as soon as they occur.  
 Follow all trainer and doctor recommendations.  
 Lift weights to increase strength and guard against injuries.  
 Always wear shoes and clothing appropriate for cheerleading.  
 Never wear jewelry of any kind or chew gum when cheering including practices and games.  
 Always have your hair pulled back from your face and shoulders.  
 Eat nutritious meals and get plenty of rest.  
 Always ask for assistance or advice at any time.  
 Do not stunt or tumble when game is in process.  
 Never show off.  
 Take all activities seriously.  
 Do not participate in cheerleading if you are sick.



## \* NFHS SPIRIT RULES CHANGES



\* 2015 - 2016

Answers to Questions in this section may be found in the  
NFHS Spirit Rules Book

### \* RULE ONE:

- \* Drop - Now defined as being airborne
- \* Flatback - Now defined as being both non-extended and extended, and specifies that hips and shoulders are in alignment.
- \* Prop - Deleted wording about props used as bases.
- \* Prop as bases - (NEW) An object that primarily supports a participant's weight.
- \* Toss - Clarifies that a toss begins with the base(s) hands underneath the top person's foot/feet.

## \* Changes and Additional to the Definitions

### \* Section 5 Inversions: (Reorganized, renumbered and added to):

- \* 2-5-3 Non-flipping braced inversions (New)
  - \* A. Top person must not begin in an extended inverted position.
  - \* B. Braced inversions that do not release have the same requirements as an upright braced non-release stunts.
  - \* C. Braced inversions that do release have the same requirements as upright braced release transitions.

## \* General Risk Management Changes

**\*Section 5 Inversions continued:**

**\*2-5-4 Braced flips:**

- \* 1. Top person can rotate sideways
- \* 2. Bracers must be in double-base preps
- \* 3. Top person can execute a half twist

**\*General Risk Management Changes**

**\*Section 5 Inversions continued:**

**\*2-5-6 Holding Props:**

- \* An inverted person on the floor can hold a prop while being transitioned to a non-inverted stunt.

\* (Please keep in mind that the only prop allowed in Georgia would be the pom.)

**\*General Risk Management Changes**

**\*Vertical to Horizontal Transitions:**

- \*2-6-4: Catching a person on his or her side is now allowed.

**\*General Risk Management Changes**

**\*Release Transitions:**

- \* 2-7-5: Single bases now allowed during release transitions.

**\*General Risk Management Changes**

\* **Suspended Stunts (New):**

\*2-8-6: A top person can't be suspended face down with arms and legs held above the torso.

\* **General Risk Management Changes**

\* **Tumbling: (New)**

\*2-10-7: Prohibits participant from jumping backwards onto the next, shoulders, hands as entry to a kip. (a.k.a. suicide kip, rubber band...). This does not affect back handsprings.

\* **General Risk Management Changes**

\* **Section 11 - Drops:**

\* 2-11-1: Eliminates restrictions on knee, seat, thigh, or split drops in which contact is maintained with the floor/mat.

\* From the NFHS Rules Committee

\* **Rule 2-11-1 - passed**

\* **DROPS**

\* ART. 1 . . . Airborne drops that go directly to the thighs, splits, knees, seat or a push up position on the performing surface are illegal unless most of the weight is first borne on the hands or feet or the descent is controlled.

\* **EXCEPTION:** Springing from a crouch to a pushup position is allowed.


\* **General Risk Management Changes**

\* **Section 11 - Drops continued:**

\*2-11-2: Allows airborne front drops that start in a crouch and land in a push-up position.

\*2-11-3: Prohibits falling directly from a standing position to the stomach or back.

\* **General Risk Management Changes**



\* Georgia High School Association  
Guidelines to Remember

\* GHSAA RULES TO KNOW



State Associations may authorize exceptions to the NFHS rules or implement sports specific rules that are used as guidelines in that state. Guidelines and responses to these questions may be found in the Constitution and By-Laws of the GHSAA and the GHSAA Cheerleading Manual.

- \* 1. No glitter is allowed.
- \* 2. In competition no props may be used other than poms.
- \* 3. No noise makers at indoor events.
- \* 4. All team members must be bona fide students of the school they are cheering for. (Exception: At all male schools a spirit cheerleading team may be comprised of spirit cheerleaders from another school.)
- \* 5. Teams may only participate in GHSAA sanctioned events.
- \* 6. No jewelry is allowed in any type of cheerleading.

\* GHSAA RULES TO KNOW

- \* 7. All cheerleaders must keep fingernails short and near the end of the fingernails.
- \* 8. All coaches, including community coaches, must complete a GHSAA Rules Clinic.
- \* 9. Cheerleading teams can attend camp after the last day of school and up until August 1.
- \* 10. All teams must be dressed in the appropriate school uniforms that display the school identification.
- \* 11. Practices for tryouts are limited to ten consecutive school days between February 1 and the last day students are in school.
- \* 12. No practices can be held prior to the end of school.
- \* 13. Attendance at a summer camp, clinics or gym classes cannot be a mandatory requirement to remaining on a team.

\* GHSAA RULES TO KNOW



A participant, coach, substitute, trainer, or other team attendant must not commit an unsporting act. This includes but is not limited to acts or conduct such as:

- a. Disrespectfully addressing or contacting an official or gesturing in such a manner as to indicate resentment.
- b. Using profane language, music, or gestures.
- c. Baiting or taunting an opponent.

A participant, coach, substitute, trainer, or other team attendant must not use tobacco, smokeless tobacco, alcohol, or other controlled substance while representing the school

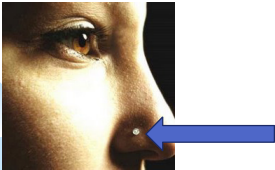
**\* Sportsmanship**

- \* The GHSA and the NFHS disapprove of any form of taunting.
- \* Forms of taunting by a team might include:
  - \* 1. Cheers or chants intended to embarrass the opponent or athletes
  - \* 2. Ridiculing another team/athlete, school, administrator or official
  - \* 3. Demeaning others based upon religion, race, gender, or nationality
  - \* 4. Any activity meant to incite the other team or spectators to react in a negative way

**\* Sportsmanship**

Spirit coaches are expected to follow the rules written for the safety of all participants of cheerleading and dance. The spirit rules regarding jewelry (2-3-1) apply to all spirit activities, which includes both practices and performance events during all cheer sports.

\* **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *Nose piercings are not allowed - It is not acceptable to cover any piercing with tape or fill a piercing with a spacer or clear stud.*



**\* Jewelry**

- \* With the exception of religious and medical medals, examples of jewelry include, but are not limited to: necklaces, bracelets, rings, all facial and body piercings (*includes spacers and fishing line*), wrist bands, corsages, and hair ties on wrists. This rule is consistent with rules concerning jewelry in the NFHS rule books for other athletic activities.

**“No jewelry” means NO JEWELRY.**

**\* Jewelry**

Basketball cheerleaders must follow all guidelines of the GHSA and the NFHS when cheering.

**Remember when coaching basketball cheerleading:**

2-1-5: Performance surfaces and areas must be suitable for spirit activities. **(The coach assumes responsibility for making sure the surface is safe.)**

- (a) Surfaces and areas must be reasonably free from objects and/or impediments.
- (b) Stunts and tumbling must be modified to the surface and in relation to other participants.
- (c) When discarding props that are made of hard material or have corners or sharp edges, team members must gently toss or place the props.

2-1-7: Participants must not chew gum or have hard candy in their mouths during practice or performances. **(This applies to all forms of cheerleading.)**

## \*Basketball Cheerleading

Remember:

2-1-8: Participants must not stunt or tumble during a basketball or volleyball game when the ball is in play, including free throws in basketball and just prior to the serve in volleyball.

2-1-9: Participants must not warm-up stunts or tumble on the court or sideline area during player warm-up if an alternate area is available. If no appropriate alternate area is available, the coach must take responsible precautions to minimize the risk to participants.

2-1-10: Participants must remain outside the playing area during a 30 second or less time-out in a basketball game.

## \*Basketball Cheerleading

2-1-11: Artificial noisemakers must not be used at indoor athletic contest except during pregame or halftime performances. Exception: Megaphones, appropriately used by spirit participants on the sidelines, floor or court, are permitted, if allowed by contest officials.  
**(Please review GHSA rules concerning noisemakers during indoor events.)**

2-1-12: Participants must not stand behind the free throw lane extended during a basketball game.

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2-2-1: A participant, coach, substitute, trainer, or other attendant must not commit an unsporting act. (See Section Two on Page 17 of the NFHS Rules Book)  
Unsporting acts would include: Disrespect of an official, using profane or inappropriate language, music or gestures, baiting or taunting.

## \*Basketball Cheerleading

2-3-1: Jewelry of any kind is prohibited except for the following: A religious medal without a chain is allowed and must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible.

2-3-2: Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept short, near the end of the fingers.

2-3-3: The hair must be worn in a manner that is appropriate for the activity involved. Hair devices must be secure.

2-3-4: Apparel and accessories must be appropriate for the activity involved.

2-3-6: When standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff.

## \*Apparel and Accessories - All Cheerleaders

The Georgia High School Association wishes you a  
safe and successful year.

The Key to Great Coaching is to  
Follow the Rules and  
Display good sportsmanship!



**\*REMEMBER!**