

Using the National Federation Spirit Rules Book

Below are some helpful hints for using the National Federation Spirit Rules Book to find information more easily. **ALL specifics in each rule and/or exception must be followed in order to be legal.** Refer to the Index in the back of the book to find the exact rule references.

Rule 1 – Definitions for both cheer and dance/drill/pom

This rule has definitions for various terms used in the rules book. It's a good place to look for descriptions of various skills, dismounts, inversions, and other positions. For example, if a rule says that the top person can't be inverted, the definition for an inverted position is "shoulders are below the waist."

Rule 2 – General Risk Management for both cheer and dance/drill/pom

Section 1 – General

This section deals with general rule information such as coach's responsibility if team member is not following the NFHS rules, spirit team participation, performance surfaces, discarding props, gum and candy, stunting/tumbling during games, artificial noisemakers, blood situations, concussions, and reasonable accommodations.

Section 2 – Sportsmanship

This section lists unsporting acts and the use of substances while representing the school.

Rule 3 – Cheerleading Risk Management

Section 1 – Cheerleader Apparel/Accessories

This section addresses the rules for jewelry, fingernails, hair, appropriate apparel and accessories including shoes, mascots, glitter, supports/braces, and logos/trademarks/American flags on uniforms.

Section 2 – Stunting Personnel

This section deals with the rules specific to bases, spotters, bracers, and top persons, including required spotters for stunts.

Section 3 – Inversions

This rule section covers the rules for situations when a top person is inverted, such as suspended rolls, braced inversions in pyramids that do not flip or roll, braced flips or rolls in pyramids, and all other types of inversions including dismounts from inverted stunts.

Section 4 – Non-Release Stunts

This section addresses all non-release stunts, stunts where the top person is not released – height limitations, moving over or under, braced stunt and pyramid, moving from a vertical to horizontal position, hanging pyramid, and non-release transition.

Section 5 – Release Stunts/Tosses

This section deals with all stunts and tosses where the top person is released – release stunts and tosses, quick tosses, release transitions, helicopters, log rolls, released horizontal top person.

Section 6 – Suspended Stunts

This section covers non-braced and braced suspended splits and swinging stunts.

Section 7 – Dismounts

This section addresses dismounts from stunts, such as dismounts to the performing surface, cradle dismounts from single and multi-base stunts, twists to cradle or the performing surface, dismounts to catchers who are not the original bases, and bracer-assisted cradle dismounts.

Section 8 – Tumbling

This section deals with tumbling skills, such as moving over/under a stunt/person/prop, holding props, dive roll (illegal), flip into a partner stunt or cradle (illegal), flip on the performing surface, surface restrictions, and entrance to kip-up skills.

Section 9 – Drops

This section addresses drops, such as thighs/splits/knees/seat drops, drops to push-up position, falling directly to stomach or back, and handspring/flip over to any drop.

Section 10 – Props As Bases

This section covers rules for cheerleaders standing on boxes when cheering.

Rule 4 – Dance/Drill/Pom Risk Management

This section deals with rules specific to dance/drill/pom which may cover situations more specific to these areas. However, teams standing on boxes during football games must follow all rules pertaining to Section 2, Section 3, and Section 4.

Photographs

The photographs of stunts show both legal and illegal stunts, which can be beneficial in helping coaches better understand the rules.

Points of Emphasis

The Points of Emphasis are very important for the coaches to read and understand. These points emphasize areas of concern not only for the safety of cheerleaders, but also for the liability protection of coaches and schools.

Index

The index can be useful for directing coaches to the correct rule, section, and article. If a coach is looking for rules concerning helicopters, the coach would first look for release stunts since the top person in a helicopter is released. Under Release Stunts, the helicopter rule, section, and article is indicated so the coach can easily turn to that specific rule.