

**2023-24**

**TWIRL MICHIGAN**

# **Rule Book**

Coaching Staff

Director- Victoria Dierks

Assistant Coach- Elizabeth Geer

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- Monthly payments conducted online through Wave invoicing.
- **Batons:** Members should twirl either a Sharp or Starline Lite baton of 7/16". It is also important that you have the correct length. Too long or too short of a baton can make many twirls difficult to do.
  - New Baton: \$30
  - Used Baton: \$15
- **Insurance:** Members are covered for accidents to, during, and returning from any baton event. If any accident occurs and your child needs medical attention, this must be reported immediately to the director.
- **Attendance for Competition:** All twirlers must commit to competition weeks in advance. There is a competition entry fee of \$5/twirlers for team events that will be added to your monthly invoice. If you commit to a competition and do not attend, you will be charged for your child's entry fee.
- **Folders:** Twirlers must bring their folders with level sheets to each practice. This is how we keep track of their progress and how they gain ribbons for passing each level. Once they have completed levels 3 through 9, they will have a solo to perform at competitions.
- **Absences:** If you are unable to attend class, please text Victoria 734-652-6142 or the Facebook messenger group to let us know. If you are no longer going to attend classes, please let us know so you will not be billed for the following months. You will be billed for the full month if you take a leave of absence or quit once the month starts.
- Practice is mandatory. Excused absences are only accepted for emergencies, school-related events, twirling-related events, etc. These events must be approved ahead of time with the director. Our team relies on 100% attendance to progress every week. Your teammates are depending on you.
- You **MUST** attend practice the week of competition. If you don't, you will not be allowed to perform with the team at that competition.

**Special Notes:** More than anything, it is our goal for our twirlers to have a fun and positive experience while learning to twirl baton. Baton twirling offers excellent opportunities well into the college years, including possibilities for scholarships, and we really love the sport. If you have questions, concerns, or wish to discuss any topic regarding your twirler or the organization, please feel free to reach out to the instructors, including the director.

## **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

- Class Prices
  - Team Only/Rec Team: \$60/Month
  - Individuals Only: \$85/Month
  - Individuals and Team: \$110/Month
- Batons and Shoes:
  - Batons- \$30 New, \$15 Used
  - Shoes- Tan jazz shoes are required for competitions. They can be ordered from Amazon or any dancewear site. They do not have to be the same brand, but they must be tan and have the stretch on the sides, not the top (See link for example: [amzn.to/3Z2ivGU](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B073Z2ivGU)).
- Prices and days are all subject to change. There is a discount for multi-twirler families.
- Membership fees cover expenses of belonging to the organization, not just for the weekly classes. Membership is the same each month regardless of the number of classes held. Some months have five classes, whereas some may only have two or three due to holidays. Membership also covers gym rental for teams, along with all of our extra activities, such as parades, performances, parties and awards. This does NOT include competition fees.

## **CLASS RULES**

- No food in the gym. If you need to eat before or during practice, you may do so in the lobby.
- Attitude- Come ready to work with a positive attitude, ready to practice, learn and twirl.
- Do not interrupt the instructors while teaching.
- Do not leave the gym without asking for any reason. You must ask to get a drink or use the restroom.
- Be ready to take criticism. The instructors are not “picking on you.” We are there to teach you and help you learn.

## **PARENT GUIDELINES**

- Please, no parents, siblings or friends at group practices. This can be distracting for our twirlers. You are welcome to wait in the hallway.
- Please drop your twirler off early to class and pick them up promptly after class. Being early means your shoes are on and you are stretching AT 5, not walking in at 5, or later. An instructor is always at the gym at least 15 minutes early.
- Do not interrupt class to ask questions. Please wait until classes are dismissed or call the director at home.
- If you have a complaint, please do not hesitate to call. Complaints should not be given in front of the twirlers, in public, or taken to other parents. Call the director and discuss the problem with them. Problems cannot be solved if we do not know about them.
- Parents who use profanity or misconduct in front of the members or in public will not be tolerated.

- Do not criticize other teams, instructors or twirlers, especially when you are out in public. You never know who you are talking to or who is listening.
- Please make new parents feel welcome into the group!
- At competitions, please have team spirit and cheer for all of our Twirl Michigan teams. Please sit together as a team.
- If weather conditions are severe, classes will be canceled. If school is canceled, classes are canceled- even if the weather has cleared up by class time. Please check Facebook messenger or email for updates.

### PRACTICE

- Consistency makes the twirler better. Memorization is part of baton twirling. This is why daily practice is important. Everyone should practice daily to remember their routines.
- If your child is not progressing as you wish, please first ensure that your twirler is practicing regularly. Even if the parent does not know the routine, they can help with making sure the twirler is pointing their toes, has a correct freehand, and most importantly, is memorizing the routine. Every twirler's individual routines are recorded either on video or on paper.

### COSTUMES

- All team members will purchase a team costume to keep. Prices vary.
- Team members will receive a garment bag with the costumes needed and all the accessories. Bring these to all competitions.
- You will be responsible for your team costume.
- Wear this only for baton performances. Do not wear it to lessons or to play in.
- Do not eat or drink in your costume unless a warm up is worn. If you dirty your costume before a performance, you will not be able to perform.
- It is best to wash costumes in cold water and hang them to dry. Tights will be worn for competitions, parades, and performances. Please purchase these on your own- see director for link to order.

### PERFORMANCES

- A performance is any event that the group participates in.
- You must attend lessons the week prior to the performance to participate unless excused by the director.
- Cleanliness- It is the most important part of a good performance. Costume, shoes, socks, baton ends, body and hair must all be clean.
- **No nail polish or jewelry.** Only team earrings will be allowed.
- Hair- Please have hair in a neat, curled ponytail with all flyaways sprayed down.
- No colored hair bands.
- If socks are worn, make sure they are the correct color for the uniform worn.

## **PARADES**

- All members are eligible to march in parades.
- We will ask for a list of who can attend as soon as we have final details for that parade.
- Parents are to meet their child as soon as our group has finished the parade. Report for your child ASAP- do not wait until the parade is finished. Members are not allowed to go meet their parents. Parents must come to where we disband to pick up their child. This is for the safety of the child. The child must stay with us until a parent reports for them.

## **COMPETITIONS FOR TEAMS**

- Competitions encourage the child to practice more. We encourage all members to participate in team competition. When members are ready to compete in team competition, you will be notified.
- During team competition, all members will sit together and wait for their division to perform. Do not go eat, practice or wander around.
- Competitions vary in size and the time we get done depends on the size and what number we compete at. Morning team competitions are usually done by noon.
- All members can also enter individual events. Beginner Basic March is the first event to try. All team members know how to do this.
- Please make every effort to attend competitions. Competition team members are only allowed 2 missed performances/competitions per season before being released from the team. You MUST attend practices the week before competition in order to compete. If you don't, you will NOT be allowed to perform with the team at that competition.
- We do not expect our twirlers to be perfect. Performing is an excellent experience- the only way to improve is to try.

## **ENTERING INDIVIDUAL EVENTS**

- Twirl Michigan starts all twirlers learning Basic March, Modeling, and Solo.
- We encourage all Twirl Michigan members to compete individually, but they do not have to.
- You do not need to know all three events to compete. You are able to enter one or two and add more as you advance. In order to compete well, you need to perfect the routines you have. Having too many routines to practice makes it hard to perfect them all.
- Once the director determines you are ready for another level, we will discuss individually about adding 2-Baton, 3-Baton and Show Twirl.
- Please confirm with Victoria before entering individual events. The levels can be confusing for our beginner parents, and we need to make sure they are in the correct events.

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

- Members of Twirl Michigan may take private lessons only from instructors on our approved list. There are many reasons why we do not want certain instructors teaching our members, and we will explain this personally to you, if necessary. Please check with the director before taking private lessons to make sure that the instructor is on our approved list.

- Private lessons are available to all of our members. Competition team members are required to take at least 1 private lesson a month. It is encouraged to do more than that. Private lessons are \$20/half hour and \$40/hour.
- Beginner twirlers will take lessons from local instructors. When we feel the twirler is ready to advance, we have advanced instructors come into our area a few times a year to give lessons. You will be notified when the instructors think your twirler is ready for the next step.
- Private lessons may be taken at any time, but beginners benefit most with a weekly lesson. When scheduling private lessons, if you do not show or do not cancel within 24 hours, you will be charged for that lesson. When taking private lessons, make sure you have your folder each week with all routines, notes, and score sheets to review.
- Twirl Michigan members may be charged a gym rental fee for private lesson time.
- We would love to have parents sit in on the private lessons for our beginning students. This ensures that you, as a parent, see the progress they are making, and it allows us to show you how to help them practice at home.

### **LEVEL RIBBONS**

- There are different level sheets for ribbons:
  - Special Beginner: Levels 1-9 (Levels 3-8 creates a solo for competition)
  - Fancy Strut: Levels 10-15
  - Novice: Levels 16-20 (Next level solo)
  - 2 Baton: Levels 21-25
  - There are 25 levels. Twirlers will receive a ribbon for each level completed. Parents and instructors will be able to tell how the child is progressing by their level sheet. Starting with level 3, the levels are connected to form a competition solo routine.
- Level ribbons will be awarded as each twirler passes a level. It is normal for our younger members to take longer to pass levels. The more the parents practice the levels with the twirler at home, the faster they will pass. Please keep your level ribbons at home- if you lose them, we cannot replace them.

### **YEARLY AWARDS**

- There will be an annual awards program held each December during our recital.
- Members who quit before December 1st will forfeit their awards earned during the year.
- Members with outstanding debts will not receive awards until the account is paid in full. No exceptions.

### **TOSS TURN AWARD**

- Members who complete 10 toss turns in a row will receive a "Toss Turn" plaque. After receiving this plaque, plates will be awarded for completing, two, three, four turns, etc. These must be completed in front of the director during the year.

## TWIRLING CLINICS AND BATON CAMP

- Twirling clinics and camps are fun to do. Please be careful of what you attend. Not all clinics are beneficial or run by instructors on our approved instructor list. If you receive information about a clinic and wish to attend, please contact Victoria beforehand.

## COMPETITION ORGANIZATIONS

- Twirl Michigan supports both Twirling Unlimited (TU) and National Baton Twirling Association (NBTA) organizations for twirling. Both of these organizations' rules are similar, but not exact, so please refer to the following websites for full rules or speak with your instructor before competing. Twirl Michigan follows NBTA rules for the most part, as this is who hosts our state competitions. Both organizations do have restrictions, so please be careful.
  - TU: <http://twirlingunlimited.com>
  - NBTA: <http://www.batontwirling.com/NBTA/Index.htm>
- Twirl Michigan does encourage everyone to compete individually and go to competitions. Although, please be cautious- we do not want you moving to the next level before you are ready.
- Advancing to the next competition level before ready can become very discouraging. Along with advancing in levels, moving age groups can also be discouraging. Please keep track of wins- ask Victoria for a win sheet. This ensures that you move up when you are ready and not too soon. Please always discuss this with your private lesson instructor.

## COMPETITION ADVANCEMENT RULES

- **Special Beginner:** This event is for twirlers who are new to competing and have never won a first place in this event. You must win (2) first places in Special Beginner before moving up to Novice in each event.
- **Novice:** This is a twirler who has won their (2) first places in Special Beginner. You need (3) first places in Novice before moving up to Beginner.
- **Beginner:** This is a twirler who has won their (3) first places in Novice. You need (5) first places in Beginner before moving up to Intermediate.
- **Intermediate:** This is a twirler who has won their (5) first places in Beginner. You need (8) first places in Intermediate before moving up to Advanced.
- **Advanced:** This is a twirler who has won their (8) first places in Intermediate. This is the highest level of competition that a twirler can reach. You are now ready to compete for the official State and National Titles! When reaching the Advanced level, first places are harder to achieve. It is usually an honor to make the Top 5 or Top 10 in a State or National Event.
- Total wins required before moving up in level:
  - Special Beginner- 2
    - Note: Some contests have Special Novice- this is the same level. Please note that this is \*Special\* Novice and not just Novice. Those are two separate levels.
  - Novice- 3
  - Beginner- 5
  - Intermediate- 8

- Advanced
- Awards: Beginners are usually delighted to win trophies and ribbons! When you start accumulating too many, twirlers may turn in awards and get credit towards baton camp or Twirling Unlimited entry fees for Nationals. This is for Twirling Unlimited (TU) only- NBTA does not offer this.
- Win Sheet: When you win first place at competitions in an individual event, you must keep track on your win sheet. This is Twirl Michigan's tool to ensure that our students are moving up in levels at the appropriate time.

### **TEAM COMMUNICATION**

- We have a few methods of communication to make sure everyone is informed at all times.
  - Email: This is our #1 method of communication. Our email is [twirlmichigan1@gmail.com](mailto:twirlmichigan1@gmail.com). Please check this regularly.
  - Facebook Messenger: We have a team group chat on Facebook for quick communication about practices and items that may require a fast response. We will add you to this upon registration.
  - Twirl Michigan Website: You can find all team information on our website: [twirlmichigan.com](http://twirlmichigan.com). This is where the hair and makeup tutorials are, as well as the dates for all upcoming events and videos of each level.
  - Monthly Newsletters: At the beginning of each month we will email our monthly newsletter. This has ALL dates for competitions, performances, parades, etc. that we know of at that time, along with practice schedule changes and birthdays. Please refer to this first to try and answer your questions, and then reach out if you still need an answer.

### **TOTAL COSTS OF ITEMS**

- Cost of items needed (may include more):
  - Batons: \$30 new, \$15 used
  - Jazz Shoes: Purchased on your own- Anything similar to this, as long as they are tan and have the stretch on the sides, not the top: <https://amzn.to/3Z2ivGU>
  - Tan tights: Purchased on your own- Anything similar to this, as long as they are tan: <https://amzn.to/3LVAuaB>
  - Costumes: All team members purchase costumes to keep- cost depends on costume and size.
  - Warm Up Jacket: Purchased semi-annually through Sign Lady, Inc.
  - Team Tank and Shorts: Purchased semi-annually through Sign Lady, Inc.
  - Competition Fees: \$5/team competition added on to that month's bill. Covers team entry fee.