

BC Sport Cheer



STARTING A HIGH SCHOOL CHEER TEAM

HANDBOOK



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INTRODUCTION

The sport of Cheer provides a pathway towards success. 1 in 3 females discontinue participating in sport come late adolescence. In the sport of cheer, 85% of those participating are female. Cheer directly provides a fun, healthy, and engaging activity that promotes these individuals to stay in sport.

Scholastic Cheer encompasses athletes in school, who are a part of competitive and/or non-competitive teams. Scholastic cheer showcases routines that feature music and a traditional cheer/chant. The Cheer portion is choreographed to encourage audience participation and may be enhanced by using props, stunts, tumbling, school Mascots, and authentic energy. Teams may elect to be competitive, while others elect to focus purely on boosting school spirit at games and events, while some choose to fulfill both roles.

There are multiple collegiate teams in the province of BC, providing a future avenue in sport for females at the post secondary level. It is highly recommended to check out the National Sport Organizations website for more information: www.cheercanada.ca.

RECOMMENDED STEPS

1. Review BC Sport Cheer's coaching tiers on the website. It is recommended that all Coaches obtain a minimum of the Bronze Tier. Begin this process.
2. Email BC Sport Cheer and notify them you are interested in beginning a scholastic team, and will be in touch in future regarding registration.
3. Research and establish a vision for division that the team would train at, competition vs. non-competitive, and number of athletes.
4. Create a tentative budget. This could include items such as:
 - a. Practice gear (t-shirt, shorts)
 - b. Props (poms, signs)
 - c. Music
 - d. Athlete fees
 - e. Competition registration fees and travel
5. Create a letter of interest on beginning a cheer program.
6. Contact local high schools by email, with a copy of your letter of interest. Individuals recommended to contact are the school administrator, Principle, and/or Athletic Director.
7. Set up a meeting with the school if they respond with interest. Review what the schools requirements for a sports team are, and follow their recommended next steps.

8. Secure a practice space. If you plan to stunt and/or tumble, it is important to secure a venue that has training mats and high ceilings. A few venue options could be:
 - a. The school facilities (gym, dance room, boxing room)
 - b. A local cheer gym
 - c. Local gymnastics facility
9. Establish weekly practice times, and your team's calendar for the year. This could include practices, community events, choreography sessions, and games you would like the team to attend.
10. Establish if the choreography of a routine will be done in house or contract out, and look at purchasing music if needed. Rules for a routine can be found on Cheer Canada's website. www.cheercanada.ca. There are many music producers online, however ensure you are able to secure a music license at time of purchase
11. Finalize your budget, working collaboratively with the school
12. Create a "Cheer Information Packet" for parents and students to review prior to tryouts. This should include items such as annual fees, vision for the team, who are the coaches, practice times, code of conduct, and policies
13. Set a tryout date, location, and create a tryout plan. Once this is done, post!
 - a. What is the scoring system you will use to select athletes? Consider having a diverse panel which includes coaches, school administrators, and someone experienced in the sport.
 - b. Creation of posters, social media, and school newsletter.

14. Set a parents information date where you can review the Cheer Information Packet and answer any questions parents/students may have prior to tryouts
15. Host your tryout and select your team!
16. Host a first team meeting with the athletes and parents. Review expectations for the season, collect a deposit from participants, and collect any/all paperwork required. If you are purchasing practice gear for your team, this is a great opportunity to collect sizing.
17. At this time, contact BC Sport Cheer to begin registering your team as members with the provincial sport organization.
18. Begin your season - good luck and enjoy!

RULES & AGE DIVISIONS

Scholastic Rules and Age Divisions

- Scholastic Rules and Age Divisions can be found on the Cheer Canada website.
www.cheercanada.ca

Scholastic Cheer Scoring;

- Scoresheets can be found on the Cheer Canada website. www.cheercanada.ca
- Cheer Canada Scholastic Cheer scoring consists of multiple categories that separate the main facets of a routine, which can be dependent on your division. There are unique score sheets for scholastic, scholastic non-tumble, game day.

ATTIRE, MUSIC, & EQUIPMENT

Uniform

Uniforms can range in pricing, depending on design. The goal of a team's uniform should be to enhance team uniformity and will need to follow the Cheer Canada Image Policy, which can be found on their website. A uniform can be t-shirts and shorts, or a more traditional cheer uniform with a skirt/pants/shorts, liner, and shell. Please also keep in mind that uniforms should be made of fabric/material that comfortably allows for athletic movement and should be secure to avoid malfunctions. Appropriate shoes must be worn (i.e. clean runners and/or cheer shoes). www.cheercanada.ca

Music

All music used must follow Cheer Canada rules. There are many websites and companies that offer cheer music services. It is important to ensure that proper licensing has been acquired to fulfill any national and, if traveling, international licensing requirements. A team may be required to show proof of their licensing prior to competing, therefore it is important to print and bring the license with you. Music must be appropriate for all ages.

Equipment

Teams will compete on either a sprung, or non-sprung, cheerleading floor depending on the event producer's setup. It is always recommended athletes train on surfaces similar to what they will compete on for their own safety. Athletes should train on surfaces that will not be jarring on their joints during high-impact skills such as jumps and tumbling. Examples of appropriate training surfaces include; wrestling mats, carpet bonded gymnastics flooring (1 inch + thick). Practice areas should have adequate space and height capacities to allow for stunting. Please reference the rules on Cheer Canada's website for more information about the use of poms and other props.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is Scholastic Cheer?

A: Scholastic Cheer encompasses athletes in school, who are a part of competitive and/or non-competitive teams. Scholastic cheer showcases routines that feature music and a traditional cheer/chant. The Cheer portion is choreographed to encourage audience participation and may be enhanced by using props, stunts, tumbling, school Mascots, and authentic energy. Teams may elect to be competitive, while others elect to focus purely on boosting school spirit at games and events, while some choose to fulfill both roles.

Q: Is Scholastic Cheer considered a sport in British Columbia?

A: Scholastic Cheer is recognized under BC Sport Cheer which is the Provincial Sport Organization, as well as Cheer Canada, which is the National Sport Organization. Cheer Canada is recognized as the National Sport Organization (NSO) governing cheerleading in Canada by the Canadian Olympic Committee and is recognized as the National Governing Body for the sport of cheer by the International Cheer Union.

Q: Do Athletes need experience to be on a Scholastic Cheer team?

A: No experience necessary. There are divisions for all ages and experience levels. There are no restrictions for entry-level opportunities.

Q: Do small and large groups compete against each other?

A: The minimum and the maximum number of team members are displayed on the Cheer Canada website on the Scholastic Cheer Division List. Cheer Canada recommends Event Producers split divisions while considering the following:

1. Similar size teams within the split
2. Similar number of teams in the split
3. Programs with multiple teams within an age divisions may compete against each other
4. Crossovers between teams in the same division are not permitted

Q: Can you be on an All-Star team and/or a Special Abilities team, as well as a Scholastic Cheer team?

A: Yes, this is permitted. Please review Cheer Canada's rules and regulations to ensure you have the most up to date information.

Q: What type of floor can we expect at a competition?

A: It is recommended to connect with the Event Producer of the competition you plan to attend and confirm the type of floor that will be used. Some examples of flooring could include, but are not limited to, sprung floors and carpeted mats.

Q: Where can I find the rules I am supposed to follow?

A: www.cheercanada.ca

Q: What does a Scholastic Cheer routine involve?

A: Scholastic Cheer routines can include building (stunts and pyramid), tumbling (except in non-tumble divisions), jumps, dance/motions and a cheer. Competitive Game Day routines can include sideline cheers, fight songs and band chants. Cheer Canada Score Sheets and rules further outline the routine composition for each division.

Q: How are the routines judged?

A: Routines are judged by a panel of judges. Each section of the score sheet is divided into many subcategories to guide teams and their training. There is also a safety judge watching to ensure teams do not violate any rules or safety guidelines. Please review the Cheer Canada website to review scoresheets. It is always recommended to confirm with the Event Producer what scoresheet they will be using.

Q: What training is available for coaches and where can coaches become certified?

A: Certification, and courses are available through BC Sport Cheer. Please visit the website for more information.

Q: Do I need insurance?

A: It is important to ensure that athletes and coaches have adequate insurance coverage. Please check with your school to determine what is required.