



# NEW PROGRAM HANDBOOK



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Starting a Cheer Program .....	3
Types of Cheer .....	4
Considerations .....	6
Coaching Requirements .....	7
Rules and Divisions .....	8
Attire .....	9
Music .....	10
Equipment .....	11

# STARTING A CHEER PROGRAM

Getting a cheer program started takes more than a passion for the sport and a love of coaching athletes; it takes planning, support, and a lot of hard work!

Educating yourself and committing the time to prepare before starting such a venture will go a long way in avoiding issues and setting your program up for success.

Before starting a new program, do your own research by speaking to other coaches and owners who have years of knowledge and experience in the world of cheerleading, and support from your peers, community members and your family.

BC Sport Cheer has an online Coach and Admin Group for resource sharing. Send an email to [info@bcsportcheer.ca](mailto:info@bcsportcheer.ca) to be added.

Reach out to the recreation department in your city or town. They can be a wealth of knowledge and support and they may even be aware of grants or financial resources to get your program running.

Your go-to source for information on cheer in BC should always be <https://bcsportcheer.ca/>.

The best plan of action is to do your research, talk to people who have knowledge to share and have a strong understanding of the commitment your new venture will require. [ViaSport](#), [CSI-P](#), and [SportBC](#) also have a number of resources to help you start your program.

# TYPES OF CHEER

	All Star Cheer	Prep Cheer	Novice	Rec
Practices	2-3 times per week, year round	1-2 times per week September to May	Once a week - half year	Once per week - short duration - 6-12 weeks
Competition	Several per season (4-8)	A few per season (3-5)	1-3 per season	Showcase only
Uniform	High performance Uniform	Simple Uniform	Program Tshirt	None
Teams	5-30 athletes	5-30 athletes	5-30 athletes	5-30 athletes
Judging	Ranked with feedback	U12+ ranked with feedback  Under U12 unranked with feedback	Unranked with feedback	No judging
Routine	2:30 2:00 (non-tumble)	2:00	1:30	1:00
Skills	Level specific	No tosses	No tosses, limited building	No tosses, limited building

# CONSIDERATIONS

1. Determine whether there is a demand for a cheer program -
  - a. Does the community have an interest in offering opportunities for participation in cheer?
  - b. Is there a viable population of athletes to build teams from?
2. Determine what training facility/space is needed
  - a. Stand-alone gym
  - b. Space within a school or gymnastics facility
  - c. Recommended ceiling height is at least 20 feet. Each mat is 6 feet wide, and 42 feet long. A full floor measures 54 feetx42 feet. **You do not need a full floor-many programs practice in smaller spaces.**
3. Administrative support:
  - a. Staffing for all-star gym
  - b. Registration system
  - c. Coach certification trackers
  - d. HR manual
  - e. Class schedules
4. Coaching staff:
  - a. Number of coaches needed
  - b. Coaches must be adequately certified (see Coach Requirements)
  - c. Do you need someone who is good with preschool age, or better with teens?
  - d. Will your coaches be someone your community members can identify with?
5. Membership with governing bodies:
  - a. BC Sport Cheer
  - b. Cheer Canada
  - c. Additional registrations, if applicable.
6. Insurance
7. Prepare an Information Package for Athletes/families
8. Goals of the program
  - a. Are you looking to build from the ground up, or leverage existing strong athletes?
  - b. Are you purchasing an existing program and rebranding?

# CONSIDERATIONS

(continued)

## 9. Program Planning:

### a. Type of team(s)

i. All star

ii. Prep

iii. Novice

iv. Rec

### b. Related programming:

i. Specialty training (i.e. flyers class, conditioning class, tumbling)

### c. Secondary programming

i. Parkour

ii. Gymnastics

iii. Fitness classes or bootcamp

## 10. Scheduling/Calendar of events

a. Practices,

b. Competitions,

c. Social events

## 11. Securing service providers

a. Equipment,

b. Gear,

c. Uniforms,

d. Music

## 12. Budgeting:

a. Equipment/facility costs

b. Gear/uniform costs

c. Competition/travel fees

d. Staffing

e. Fundraising

f. Other

# COACHING REQUIREMENTS

BC Sport Cheer follows the Cheer Canada Coaching Requirements.

DUE OCTOBER 2026		
LEVELS 1 & 2 ALL	LEVELS 3 & 4 ALL	LEVELS 5 - 7 ALL
Criminal Record Check (coaches 18+)*	Criminal Record Check (coaches 18+)*	Criminal Record Check (coaches 18+)*
First Aid and CPR-C with AED	First Aid and CPR-C with AED	First Aid and CPR-C with AED
Coaching Certification (BCSC, IASF, ICU)	Coaching Certification (BCSC, IASF, ICU)	Coaching Certification (BCSC, IASF, ICU)
Technical Course	Technical Course	Technical Course
NCCP Emergency Action Plan	NCCP Emergency Action Plan	NCCP Emergency Action Plan
NCCP Make Ethical Decisions	NCCP Make Ethical Decisions	NCCP Make Ethical Decisions
NCCP Making Ethical Decisions	NCCP Making Ethical Decisions	NCCP Making Ethical Decisions
NCCP Planning a Practice	NCCP Planning a Practice	NCCP Planning a Practice
NCCP Safe Sport Training	NCCP Safe Sport Training	NCCP Safe Sport Training
NCCP Understanding the Rule of Two	NCCP Understanding the Rule of Two	NCCP Understanding the Rule of Two
	NCCP Design a Basic Sport Program	NCCP Design a Basic Sport Program
	NCCP Sport Nutrition	NCCP Sport Nutrition
	NCCP Basic Mental Skills	NCCP Basic Mental Skills
	NCCP Teaching and Learning	NCCP Teaching and Learning
	<b>PLUS AT LEAST FOUR OF THE FOLLOWING COURSES:</b>	
	• NCCP Developing Athletic Abilities	
	• NCCP Performance Planning	
	• NCCP Psychology of Performance	
	• NCCP Advanced Practice Planning	
	• NCCP Coach & Leading Effectively	
• NCCP Managing Conflict		
• NCCP Prevention and Recovery		



# RULES AND DIVISIONS

**Rules and Age Divisions** can be found on the [Cheer Canada website](#).

**Scoresheets** can be found here on the [Cheer Canada website](#).

There are unique score sheets for Novice, Prep and All Star Divisions.

We also recommend checking out [this recorded session](#) that was put on by Judge Mimi from the Cheer Canada Officials Committee on changes to the Scoresheet for the 2025-2026 season.



# ATTIRE

## 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](#).

A uniform can be t-shirts and shorts, or a more traditional cheer uniform with a skirt/pants/shorts, bodysuit or top.

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).



# 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; carpet bonded gymnastics flooring ( 1 inch + thick).

Practice areas should have adequate space and height capacities to allow for stunting.