



CHEER STARS

A development-focused competition model
for Mini and Primary divisions in cheerleading



WHY CHEER STARS?

CURRENT CHALLENGES

- Competition pressure at a young age
- Focus on rankings rather than development.
- Difficulty is often rewarded over proper fundamentals.
- Limited recognition for growth and progress

A DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

- Teams earn recognition for specific development goals
- Teams are not ranked against one another
- Technique and safe progression matters more than difficulty
- Coaches receive better feedback for future training

OUR GOAL

Create a positive competition environment that encourages:

-  Safety
-  Development
-  Teamwork
-  Long-term athlete growth
-  Enjoyment of the sport
-  Less drop out

OUR PHILOSOPHY

FROM RANKING TO DEVELOPMENT

INSTEAD OF ASKING:



**Who is
better?**

WE ASK:



**What has this team
achieved?**

Teams are not ranked against one another. Instead, they earn stars based on predefined development goals.

THE SEVEN STARS



Safety

Legal and safe routine



Complete Routine

All required components



Technique

Correct and controlled execution



Skill

Level-appropriate progression



Synchronization

Shared timing and coordination



Performance

Sustained engagement



Hit Zero

no athlete-fall deductions

**Each star has its own criteria.
One result does not automatically determine
another.**

SAFETY STAR

PURPOSE

Promote safe participation through legal, age-appropriate choreography under ICU safety rules

AWARDED WHEN

- ✓ No illegal skills or elements are performed
- ✓ No safety deductions or warnings are issued

EVALUATED BY

Official legality judge



COMPLETE ROUTINE STAR

PURPOSE

Encourage teams to demonstrate the fundamental components of their discipline.

AWARDED WHEN THE ROUTINE CONTAINS

Cheer

Motions

Jumps

Tumbling

Stunts

Pyramid

Baskets, if applicable

MINIMUM PARTICIPATION

At least half of the team must complete each element. Failed or incomplete attempts do not count.



TECHNIQUE STAR

PURPOSE

Reward correct execution throughout the routine—not perfection.

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Building: stable bases, controlled top athletes, and secure catches
- ✓ Tumbling and jumps: body control, clear positions, and safe landings
- ✓ Motions: placement, extension, and consistency

KEY PRINCIPLE

A simple skill performed correctly is more valuable than a difficult skill performed incorrectly.



PURPOSE

Reward level-appropriate progression while protecting technique and athlete safety.

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Level-appropriate stunts
- ✓ Level-appropriate tumbling
- ✓ Level-appropriate pyramids
- ✓ Level-appropriate baskets, if applicable

IMPORTANT CONDITIONS

More than half of the athletes must participate in each section. The Technique Star is required.



SYNCHRONIZATION STAR

PURPOSE

Reward team timing and uniform execution.

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Timing across motions, dance, jumps, tumbling, and building
- ✓ Coordination and consistent pace
- ✓ Team unity and shared execution

KEY PRINCIPLE

Judge the overall team picture. One minor, isolated timing error is not decisive.



PURPOSE

Reward an engaging performance from start to finish.

JUDGES LOOK FOR

- ✓ Energy appropriate for the age group
- ✓ Natural expressions and audience awareness
- ✓ Confidence and commitment throughout the routine
- ✓ Athletes should perform—not simply execute skills.

KEY PRINCIPLE

Athletes perform throughout, including transitions and recovery.



HIT ZERO STAR

PURPOSE

Recognize a routine completed without falls, major building errors, safety deductions, warnings, or illegal skills.

AWARDED WHEN

- ✓ No individual falls.
- ✓ No building falls.
- ✓ No major building errors.
- ✓ No safety deductions or warnings.
- ✓ No illegal skills.



RESULTS & STAR PRESENTATION



Written feedback from ICU judges by email



Paper certificate with the stars you've earned

HOW COACHES CAN PREPARE



Build a complete, level-appropriate routine



Prioritize safe technique and suitable progression



Check that the required number of athletes participate in every section



Explain the positive, development-focused model to athletes and parents

