

MICHIGAN YOUTH FOOTBALL AND CHEER CONFERENCE

2010 Cheerleading Rules

Section 1. Cheerleading Eligibility Rules:

- A. The age of the participants, ages 5 through 14, shall be their age on or before September 1st of the year concerned.
- B. A non-competing mascot is considered to be anyone on a squad which is below the eligibility age requirement of the squad. Mascots are required to furnish the same proof of age.
- C. Cheerleaders participating in a MYFCC member program shall not participate in any other cheer program during the MYFCC season (August through November).
- D. Each cheerleader must provide a photocopy of her birth certificate at registration for each organization
- E. Prior to the start of practice, cheerleaders must have an annual physical, signed by a physician and co-signed by parents. Physicals shall be dated in the current calendar year. Physicals shall be kept on file with the member organization and available for inspection at all times.
- F. Try-outs for Cheerleading are not permitted.

Section 2. Cheerleading Rules

- A. Michigan High School Athletic Association Cheerleading Safety Rules shall apply except as hereinafter noted.
- B. The rules of the League will be binding on all members without exception.
- C. Cheer teams will be allowed to participate in Non-League competitions, providing that they have been approved by the MYFCC Board of Directors.
- D. The cheerleading director or designated person should be present at all practices and games. Stunt Trained Head Coaches can be designated person.
- E. The use of the opposing team's name in a negative manner in a cheer, banner or poster is prohibited.
- F. Cheerleaders are NOT to cheer when a football player is injured. Cheerleaders must kneel until the injured player leaves the field, or until otherwise directed by head coach.
- G. The sportsmanship and conduct of the cheerleaders, directors, coaches and/or designated persons will fall under the same rules, guidelines and penalties as the football players, unit directors and coaches.
- H. It is mandatory for at least one cheerleading director or a cheerleading representative to attend all MYFCC league meetings during football season.

- I. Cheerleading head coaches must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- J. When teams are located on the same side of the football field, the cheerleading squads must alternate cheers (away squad, home squad, away squad, home squad, etc.).

Section 3. Stunting and Tumbling

- A. MHSAA General Safety Guidelines shall apply to all stunting and tumbling techniques. The MHSAA rules book clarifies legal and illegal stunts and specifies required spotting techniques for each type of stunt prep and dismount in Michigan and how it relates to Junior High/Middle School age limitations. (See MYFCC Cheer Stunting addendum) MYFCC limitations are as follows:
 - (a) Junior Freshmen may NOT stunt higher than waist level
 - (b) Freshmen may NOT stunt higher than shoulder level
 - (c) Junior Varsity may NOT stunt higher than shoulder level
 - (d) Varsity is permitted to do all stunts with the exceptions noted and stated in the addendum.
- B. All MYFCC cheerleading head coaches will be required to be trained by a current MHSAA Coach (JV or Varsity level) or Judge on the Safety Rules for at minimum of 4 hours of instruction. Proof of certification shall be maintained by the member organization's cheer director, with a copy provided to the MYFCC cheer director.
- C. No tumbling skills allowed where hands do not touch the ground (i.e. aerial, tuck, etc.)
- D. A trained head coach MUST be present during all stunt and tumbling activities, including instruction. If no trained head coach is available, NO stunting or tumbling will be allowed.
- E. Stunting and tumbling is allowed during practice and games with proper safety precautions.

Section 4. Squad Ages and Placement

- A. All Rosters are final by the September League Meeting of the current year. Only cheerleaders on those rosters will be eligible to cheer. Members may continue to add cheerleaders up to the September League Meeting. Rosters will then be considered final, except for cheerleaders transferring from one squad to another within age guidelines during the season.
- B. All returning cheerleaders will be grandfathered in based on each organizations age requirements for the prior year of joining MYFCC. The discretion of this rule is up to each individual organization.
- C. Cheerleaders are able to move up to a higher team with a ratio of 9 to 1. Once a cheerleader is moved up they can NOT move back down to a lower team.
- D. Age groups by squad for cheer
 - (a) Junior Freshmen: Ages 5 through 8
 - (b) Freshmen: Ages 7 through 9
 - (c) Junior Varsity: Ages 9 – 11
 - (d) Varsity: Ages 11 - 14

Section 5. Dress and Appearance

- A. All cheerleading shoes shall consist of a laced supportive leather upper construction, with solid arch support. No hard sole shoes, sandals or bare feet are permitted.

- B. The following are considered proper personal guidelines to be followed by all cheerleaders.
 - (a) Proper undergarments.
 - (b) Dance briefs or trunks are required at all times when uniform skirt is worn.
 - (c) Make-up shall be kept moderate.
 - (d) Fingernails shall be neat and trim, no longer than the tip of your finger. No nail polish or artificial nails allowed.

- C. The following are considered hazardous and should not be worn to practices or games:
 - (a) No jewelry (earrings, rings, bracelets, anklets, etc.)
 - (b) Hooded sweatshirts with strings. In the event your hooded sweatshirt has strings, they shall be tucked inside the neck of your sweatshirt.
 - (c) Clothing that is loose fitting.

- D. Hair that is shoulder length or longer MUST be secured in a high ponytail. Hair elastics, snappy/hair clips and ribbons are the only approved hair accessories to be worn during practices, games and competition. Bobbie pins are not allowed.

Section 6. Cheer Rally/Competition

- A. A post-season Cheerleading Rally/Competition will be held on the weekend of the Playoffs or the weekend of the Super Bowl, and will include all league franchises.

- B. The rally will be hosted as determined by a drawing.

- C. The exact time and location to be determined by the committee.

- D. All post-season Cheerleading Rally/Competition Rules will be discussed with the committee and made available to all league franchises.

- E. League franchises are allowed to attend competitions outside of the league competition during the season. They must share the information with the other league franchises so all have an opportunity to participate.

MYFCC CHEER STUNTING ADENDUM:

**At all levels of stunting and tumbling, trained coach must be present during any performance of these activities

Junior Freshman:

Stunts:

Single Based Thigh Stand - One and Two Leg Stunts (Spotter only required for Junior Freshman level)
Double Based Thigh Stand (Spotter only required for Junior Freshman level)
Double Base Pony Stand (Spotter only required for Junior Freshman level)
Shoulder Sit (Spotter only required for Junior Freshman level)
Dismounts Directly to the Performance Surface (mat, track, spring floor, ground, etc.) Only
No Cradle Dismounts

Freshman:

(all of junior freshman)

Stunts:

Pony Stand
Elevator (spotter required)
Suspended Splits at shoulder level (spotter required)
Straight Cradle Dismounts and Dismounts Directly to the Performance Surface Only

Junior Varsity:

(all of junior freshman & freshman)

Stunts:

Double/Triple Base Straddle lift/V-Sit - Elevator and Extension level (spotter required)
Chair (spotter required)
Double/Triple Base Single Leg Stunt at Elevator Level (spotter required)
Pop to a Stunt (spotter required)
Double Based Elevator Boxed Out (spotter required)
Double Based Log Roll
Side Press (spotter required)
Straight Cradle Dismounts and Dismounts Directly to the Performance Surface Only

Varsity:

(all of junior freshman, freshman, and junior varsity)

Stunts:

One leg stunts at elevator level (spotter required)
Extensions (front and back spotter required)
Cupie (front and back spotter required)
Half Pendulum (front and back spotter required)
Pendulum (front and back spotter required)
2-Foot Show and Go (front and back spotter required)
Floor up to Extension (front and back spotter required)
Mountain Climber (front and back spotter required)
Extended Suspended Splits (spotter required)
Single Twist Cradle Dismounts (from Elevator level only)
Cradle Dismounts with Flairs (from Elevator level only)
Dismounts Directly to the Performance Surface

Prohibited Stunts for ALL levels:

Suspended Rolls
Basket Tosses
Single Base Extension
Single Leg Extension
Double Twist to Cradle
Inverted Entrances and Exits

Floor Skills:

Floor skills are gymnastic skills, rolls and jumps along with tumbling skills and drops that are performed by competitors when the skill begins and ends on the performing surface.

Rules

- Floor Skills – Must be able to be performed without the needed assistance of another person.

1. Drops

Dropping is the action of landing on the performing surface but appearing to fall onto the performing surface.

Rules

- Drops are legal from a jump, stand or inverted position when most of the weight of the competitor is absorbed by her hands/feet to allow a controlled drop. Knee, seat, thigh and split drops are legal when there is absorption of the impact by the hands/feet.

• **Front drops from an airborne position are always illegal.**

• **Tension drops are illegal.**

• **A drop from a handspring, salto, cartwheel, etc., is illegal.**

2. **Rolls** Rolls are tumbling type skills rotating head over heels in a tuck position.

Rules

- A forward roll begins with the body in a tucked, crouched position with hands on the performing surface, the person then rolls forward. This is a legal skill.
- A backward roll begins with the body in a tucked, crouched position, the person rolls back-ward. This is a legal skill.

• **A dive roll is a forward roll with flight. The person stretches her body in a layout flight position before the roll begins. A jump/dive roll is an illegal skill.**

3. **Tumbling** Tumbling involves an acrobatic motor skill.

Rules

- A twist (jump-twist-land) performed on the competitive surface must not involve more than two complete rotations.
- A flip/salto must be performed from and to the performing surface.
- **Tumbling at MYFCC level may not contain any aerial skills.**
- **A flip that ends into a stunt or cradle is illegal.**
- **Tumbling, rolling, or flipping over or under a stunt is illegal.**

Stunting:

****Spotters needed beyond requirements, must be used until skills are mastered**

1. **Below shoulder level** The flyer's feet/legs are below shoulder level.

Rule:

- Stunts that are below shoulder level only require spotters at the Junior Freshman level.

2. **Shoulder level** The flyer's feet/legs are at or on shoulder level.

Rule:

- Stunts at shoulder level require spotters. (see individual stunts for complete spotting rules)

3. **Extended stunt** One in which the supporting arm(s) of the base(s) is fully extended above her head.

Rule:

- All extended stunts require a spotter.

4. **Extension** A stunt in which the supporting arm(s) of the base(s) is fully extended above the head, and the flyer is standing in the hand(s) of the base(s).

Rule:

- All extensions require a spotter.

Stunt, Pyramid Components:

Stunting

Stunts/pyramids involve person(s) supporting one or more persons.

Rule

- Stunt Limitations All stunts and/or pyramids are limited to two persons high, meaning the flyer receives primary support from a base(s) who is in direct, weight-bearing contact with the mat.
- No participant is allowed to be, or move, under a stunt.

Components

1. **Base** A person who is in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface and provides primary support for another person.

Rule

- A base is not allowed to take a back-bend or inverted position such as hand stand or head stand.
2. **Flyer** A person who receives primary support from another person **anytime** during a stunt.

Rules

- A flyer is not permitted to drop her head backward out of alignment with her torso during a flair or a toss.
- A flyer is not permitted to be in an inverted position.

Flyer Positions

- Horizontal – The flyer is parallel to the floor.
- Splits – The flyer's legs are in an extended forward and backward position from her torso or on each side of her torso.
- Straddle – Legs are bent at the hips with knees straight. Each leg is extended 45 degrees sideward from the front of the torso.
- Vertical – The flyer is in an upright position.
- **Inverted – The person's head is below her waist. This term is used with gymnastic, tumbling and stunting skills. This is illegal.**

3. **Spotter** A person who is in direct contact with the performing surface and may help control the building of, or dismounting from, a stunt. This person(s) shall not provide the primary support, meaning the stunt or pyramid would remain stable without the spotter(s) when the stunt is in a static position.

Required Techniques

- The spotter must **TOUCH** either the base and/or the flyer when performing a stunt in which the supporting arm(s) of the base(s) is fully extended above the head.
- During the stunt and the dismount, the spotter must be **WATCHING** for possible errors and **ACTING** to prevent injuries with special emphasis on the head, neck, and back areas of the flyer.
- While **TOUCHING**, the spotter must be sufficiently **A W A Y** from the stunt so as to not provide primary support.
- Best practice would be to train all spotters to follow the **TWA** rule – whether spotting is required or not.

Rules

- A spotter cannot provide primary support for a flyer(s).
- A spotter is required until a tumbling skill, stunt or pyramid is mastered.
- A spotter is required for stunts in which the supporting arm(s) of the base(s) is at or extended above shoulder level.
- The spotter must touch, watch, and assume a correct position which is away, not under the flyer
- A spotter cannot grab the sole of the foot of the flyer or grab the hand(s) of the base(s) beneath the flyer's foot.
- A person is still considered a spotter when bracing, lifting, or balancing a stunt or pyramid.

4. **Bracer** A bracer is a flyer who stabilizes a stunt by **direct** contact with another flyer. The stunt would remain stable without a bracer.

Rules:

- A bracer who is also a flyer, cannot provide primary support for a flyer.

- A bracer who is in direct contact with a flyer, stabilizes the stunt with the following requirements:
- A bracer must be at shoulder height or below.

5. Dismount

Releasing the flyer to a cradle or onto the performing surface. It is the end of the stunt.

Types of Dismounts

- Backward Dismount – The flyer dismounts backwards, with or without the feet being held, to catchers who are not the original bases.
- Cradle Catch – The flyer is caught in a face up position with the base's hands/arms up and by placing one arm under the back and one under the thighs of the flyer. The cradle catch also needs a head and shoulder catcher.
- Roll Down Dismount – A flyer in a horizontal extended position, rolls down the front of the base(s) and is caught by the original base and a spotter.
- To the Performing Surface – The flyer goes directly from a stunt position to the performing surface.

Rules:

- Dismounts from shoulder height or above must have assisted landings to the mat. An elevator is considered shoulder height.
- Dismounts that are caught/cradled, the catcher(s) must see the flyer at all times.
- A flyer dismounting from multi-bases to a cradle must be caught by at least two catchers and a head and shoulders catcher.
- A skill may be performed to a cradle catch EXCEPT when the dismount is backward to separate catchers.
- A twist with no more than one complete rotations may be performed to a cradle dismount.
- Movement of bases or catchers during a dismount is not allowed except for the safety of the flyer.
- The flyer may perform a skill prior to dismounting directly to the mat when constant hand-to-hand contact with the bases occurs (i.e., pike off dismount).
- Roll down dismounts must have a head and shoulders catcher.
- Backward dismounts must be to a cradle and must have at least two catchers and an additional head and shoulder catcher.

Types of Stunts:

1. Flatback

The flyer is transitioned from a vertical position to a horizontal face-down or face-up position **between** two or more bases. This is NOT a pendulum.

Rule:

- It is a legal flatback when a flyer in a vertical position transitions to a horizontal position "between" at least two bases and, at least two catchers to protect the head and shoulders area of the flyer.

2. Helicopter A flyer in a horizontal position is tossed by the bases, then rotates in a horizontal plane before being caught by the original bases.

Rule:

- A helicopter is illegal.

3. Show-N-Go

Definition:

A "show and go" includes lifting the flyer from below elevator level to a brief extended position or to a position in which the flyer's feet are above the bases' heads, then returning instantly to a position that is below elevator level. Entrance and exit are part of this stunt.

Explanation:

Just as a basket toss includes the cradle (the cradle is not scored separately), a show and go includes both lifting and lowering actions.

4. Hanging Pyramid

The flyer(s), whose feet are free hanging, is suspended by another flyer(s).

Rules: A hanging pyramid is legal when:

- Bases remain stationary.

- There are spotters for each shoulder stand.
- The base(s) has continuous contact with the suspended person(s).
- The suspended person is not higher than a shoulder stand.
- The suspended person is not inverted.
- The suspended person's feet are not in contact with anyone.

5. Jump Rope

A flyer is swung between two bases. The hands are held by one base while the feet are held by another base. A third base assists with the rotation of the flyer during the swing.

Rules:

- The flyer's head must be in alignment with her torso.
- The flyer's head must remain above her waist.

6. Log Roll

A flyer held in a horizontal position is tossed, then rotates parallel to the performing surface before being caught by the original base(s).

Rules: Log Rolls

- Log rolls are legal from multi-bases.
- A log roll cannot revolve more than two rotations.
- The flyer in a log roll cannot be in contact with a flyer in another stunt
- The flyer must begin and end the log roll in a face-up cradle position when three or fewer catchers are present.
- The flyer may be caught in a face-up or down position when four catchers are present. The flyer may be caught in a cradle or straight body position.

7. Pendulum

A stunt in which the flyer in a straight body position falls forward and/or backward away from the base(s) to a horizontal position to catchers while maintaining constant hand-to- feet/legs contact with the base(s).

Rules: A legal pendulum:

- Must begin at shoulder level or below.
- A full and half pendulum requires two bases.
- Cannot pass through an extended overhead position.
- The flyer may be caught in a face-up or face-down position.
- The flyer must be caught by at least 4 catchers.
- The base(s) must remain stationary.
- The catchers must remain in a stationary position.
- The area between the bases and catchers must be free of other competitors.
- A half pendulum requires a spotter facing the flyer when the flyer returns to the upright position.

8. Power Lift

A power lift involves a base in a standing position lifting another standing person from the floor to a shoulder sit position.

Rules:

- **A single base power lift to a shoulder sit is illegal.**
- A single base power lift with spotter(s) to help control the lift to a shoulder sit is legal.

9. Suspended Roll

The flyer rotates feet over head while both hands are in continuous hand to hand/arm contact with her bases.

Rules: *Forward Suspended Rolls are Illegal.*

10. Suspended Splits

The flyer is in a split position suspended between two bases at shoulder level.

Rules: Suspended splits are legal from multi-bases and when the flyer has both hands in contact with the bases.

- **A single base split is illegal.**
- **Straddle catches are illegal.**

- A flyer in an elevator position can be lowered into the suspended splits when these procedures are followed:
- Four bases must support the flyer under her thighs and lower leg area as the flyer is being lowered to the split position, OR
- Three bases must support the flyer under her thighs and lower leg area while a fourth base holds the flyer's hands.
- Once the suspended splits position is reached, the flyer must have both hands in contact with the base(s).

11. Extended Suspended Splits

The flyer is in a split position suspended between two bases who are extending the flyer at arms length above their heads. Another base acts as a post in front of the flyer to support her hands/arms.

Rules:

- Extended suspended splits are legal from multi-bases.
- The flyer must have both hands in contact with a base.

12. Swinging Stunt

13. The flyer is held by the hands and feet and is suspended between bases.

Rules: A swinging stunt is legal when:

- The flyer's head is above her waist.
- The flyer's head is in alignment with her torso.
- The flyer is in a face-up position.
- The flyer is swung face/head upward.
- The flyer cannot be swung downward in a head first direction.

13. Totem Pole

The totem pole is a pyramid in which a flyer(s) is stabilized by another flyer.

Rules: A totem pole is legal when:

- Each flyer leaning forward is posted/supported by the stunt/flyer directly in front of her.
- No flyer in an extension posts/supports another flyer.
- A spotter is required for each flyer at shoulder level or above. (below shoulder level spotters required for Junior Freshman).

14. Vault

The hands of the flyer are used when going over the top of the bases.

Rules: Vaults are illegal.

15. Inverted Entrance

A flyer is allowed to pass through an inverted position for an entrance when all of the following conditions are met:

Rules: Inverted Entrances are illegal.

16. Inverted Exit

A flyer is allowed to pass through an inverted position for exit when all of the following conditions are met:

Rules: Inverted Exits are illegal.

Motions Initiated by Bases:

1. **Pop** The base(s) push the flyer upward to increase the height of the flyer who will be caught in a cradle catch.
2. **Sweep** The bases push their arms forward to release the flyer into a cradle catch.
3. **Toss** The bases throw the flyer upward with enough power to allow the flyer to become free of contact from the bases.
4. **Basket-toss** Three to four bases toss the flyer, two of which must have their hands interlocked in a basket position.

Rules: Basket-Tosses are illegal.

Legal Stunt Toss Combination Rules:

- The flyer must be directed vertically.

- The flyer shall not become inverted (head below waist).
- The flyer shall not drop her head backward out of alignment with her torso.
- The flyer must not be tossed over or under other persons.

Toss requirements are:

- All tosses must be initiated by bases.
- The flyer must be directed vertically.
- The flyer must not be tossed over or under other persons.
- The catchers and spotter must remain stationary unless adjusting position for safety purposes. (It cannot be a moving skill.)
- The flyer shall not become inverted (head below waist).
- The flyer shall not drop her head backward out of alignment with her torso.
- A tossed flyer cannot land in a loading position (sponge, retake, reload) for another toss.
- A twist toss cannot involve more than one complete rotation.

5. Tossing to a Stunt

Rules: Tossing to a Stunt:

- A flyer can be tossed to a stunt, but the toss shall not significantly exceed the height of the stunt.
- When a flyer is tossed to a stunt the flyer must be cradled or return to the performing surface before being tossed again.
- **Tossing a flyer to be caught in a split or straddle position is illegal.**
- **Toe pitches and thigh pitches are illegal.**
- **A swan dive is illegal.**
- **A helicopter is illegal.**

6. Transitions

A motor skill initiated by the bases to move the flyer from one stunt to the same or another stunt without the flyer bearing weight on the performing surface. A transition can involve changing bases.

Rules: Transitioning the flyer:

- When the flyer is being transitioned from one stunt to another involving the same base(s), physical contact must be maintained between the flyer and the bases.
- Sponge - a flyer is lowered from shoulder level or higher to a crouched position; feet are in the hands of the bases. The bases hands are held at waist to knee level.
- **Head sponging or pushing off the head is illegal.**
- Reload - a flyer in a cradle catch is popped to a position in the hands of the bases to go to another stunt.
- Retake - a flyer is lowered to the floor, from shoulder level or higher, with one foot remaining in the hands of the bases. The supporting weight of the flyer must continuously remain with the bases who instantly lift the flyer to the next stunt.
- Power Press – A flyer in a one leg extension stunt (braced or not braced) is lowered on one leg to the shoulder/elevator level and immediately returned to the extension level still on one leg. The transition is one continuous action with the flyer in a one leg stunt.
- When the flyer is being transitioned to new base(s):
- Transitions to new base(s) is limited to pendulum/flatback.

7. Transitions for Braced Flyers

- A braced flyer who is transitioned from one stunt to another (**involving the same bases must maintain physical contact with bases throughout the transition**).
- A braced flyer is allowed to become free (no contact) of her bases when **all** of the following occurs:
 - The flyer does not move through an inverted position.
 - The flyer has at least two bases and a spotter.
 - There is a spotter for each bracer.
 - The bracer(s) have continuous contact with the flyer.
 - During the flyer's loss of contact with the bases the flyer is in motion.

- The bracer(s) does not hold the flyer in a static position while the flyer is free of the bases.
- The bracers must be a shoulder level or below.