



ESTONIAN CHEER UNION

COMPETITION RULES & REGULATIONS 2026/2027 season



www.cheer.ee

Table of Contents

1. GENERAL REGULATIONS	3
1.1. General Conditions of Participation	3
1.1.1. Registration	3
1.1.2. Cancellation and substitutes	3
1.1.3. Accreditation	4
1.1.4. Awards	4
1.2. Participants	4
1.2.1 Estonian National Cheer Championship 2026	4
1.2.2. Estonian Cheer Open 2027	4
1.3. Categories	5
1.4 Age groups and divisions	5
1.5. Crossovers	6
1.6. Time of the routine	6
1.7. Rules	7
1.8. Music	7
1.9. Performance surface	7
2. GENERAL COMPETITION RULES & REGULATIONS	8
2.1 General Rules	8
2.2. How to handle procedural questions	8
2.3. Sportsmanship	8
2.4. Interruption of performance	9
2.5. Interpretations and / or Rulings	10
2.6. Disqualification	10
2.7. Judging procedure	10
2.8. Scores and Rankings	10
2.9. Finality of Decisions	11
2.10. Penalties	11
3. GENERAL SAFETY RULES CHEERLEADING	12
3.1. General rules	12
3.2. Specific Routine Guidelines	12
4. GENERAL RULES AND SPECIFIC ROUTINES GUIDELINES PERFORMANCE CHEER	14
4.1. General rules	14
4.2. Specific Routine Guidelines	14
4.2.1. Choreography and costuming	14
4.2.2. Props	15

1. GENERAL REGULATIONS

The following rules and regulations apply to all EstCU Championships 2026/2027 season.

1.1. General Conditions of Participation

The following rules and regulations apply for Estonian Cheer Championship 2026 and Estonian Cheer Open 2027, and are based upon the rules given by the ICU (International Cheer Union).

1.1.1. Registration

Registration is done via the [ECU Registration system](#). Registration ends 5 weeks prior to competition.

To express your intention to participate and for registration details please send email to cheer.emv@gmail.com. The organizing committee will then send you an individual log in details. To register, information about the routines and participants must be entered no later than the event registration deadline.

NB: Each registering team must have a unique name (for example, multiple teams cannot be registered under the name AllStar Stunt; instead, use AllStar Stunt A, AllStar Stunt B, AllStar Stunt C, etc.).

We strongly recommend registering your routine under the correct name and in the correct category from the start, as routine names and categories cannot be changed after the registration deadline. **After the registration deadline no additional routines or participants can be added to the Championships.** Routine names and categories also cannot be changed after this date. For justified reasons (e.g. injury or illness), participants may be replaced or withdrawn. Such changes must be submitted by email to cheer.emv@gmail.com.

The organizing committee reserves the right to disqualify any team whose registration fee remains unpaid three days prior to the competition.

The organizing committee reserves the right to make changes to the event should extraordinary circumstances arise.

1.1.2. Cancellation and substitutes

After the registration deadline, the list will be considered final and confirmed. The calculated participation fee is non-refundable and cannot be cancelled for any reason.

Clubs have the right to replace athletes until one week before competition. Starting from competition week onwards, athletes may be removed from the list; however, no recalculation or refund of the participation fee will be made.

Once the registration deadline has passed, any team removed from the competition cannot be reinstated.

1.1.3. Accreditation

Accreditation will take place before the warm-up. The athletes will need to show Photo-ID to compete at this competition. The accreditation will follow this procedure: The athletes line up alphabetically according to their last name. When checked every athlete will say their full name, then they will be checked for piercings/jewelry.

1.1.4. Awards

The top 3 teams of the division get a trophy and a diploma. All the top 3 teams athletes get medals. All the participating teams get a diploma.

1.2. Participants

1.2.1 Estonian National Cheer Championship 2026

Only Estonian clubs who are an effective member of EstCU can register for the Estonian National Cheer Championship 2026.

National championship is open to Estonian citizens and legal residents. Identity, age and permanent residency of the athlete will be determined by inspection of the valid photo ID document and supporting documents that need to include the following information:

- name and surname,
- date of birth,
- photo,
- citizenship or proof for the duration of residency.

Important side note: The Sports Act of Estonia stipulates: § 8. Participation in international championship competitions. Estonian citizens and minors under 18 years of age residing in Estonia who do not hold the citizenship of any other state have the right to compete in international championship competitions as members of the Estonian national team or individually.

Please read the rules for qualification for International Championships and specific divisions: [Tiitlivõistlustele kvalifitseerumise tingimused](#)

1.2.2. Estonian Cheer Open 2027

Estonian Cheer Open 2027 is open for all national and international teams. Competing participants must meet the eligible age group.

1.3. Categories

Discipline	Performance Cheer	Cheerleading
Team Divisions	Pom Hip Hop Jazz	Cheer
Small Team divisions	Doubles	Group Stunts Partner Stunts
Age	Mini Primary Youth Junior Senior Master	Primary Youth Junior Senior
Level	Premier	Novice Intermediate Median Advanced Elite Premier

1.4 Age groups and divisions

Overview Age groups and divisions [for 2026/2027 season](#). The Organizer has the rights to merge and dismiss divisions if there are less than 3 participants.

EXCEPTION: In teams that compete in Team divisions we allow some age differences: Teams are allowed up to 2 athletes (maximum 2 years) younger or older.

NB: This rule does not apply to Partner Stunt and Performance Cheer Doubles categories.

Cheerleading

In Coed divisions at least one male athlete must be participating on the team.

No male athletes are allowed in Allgirl Divisions.

Performance Cheer

Males and females are allowed to participate on the same team.

Substitutes

Team Divisions: up to 5 substitutes per team. Small Divisions: up to 1 substitute per team

Entourage

Team divisions: up to 5 coaches or accompanying persons per team. Small Divisions: up to 2 coaches or accompanying persons per team.

1.5. Crossovers

Cheerleading: Cross-overs to other team divisions are not allowed. Each athlete may only compete in one age group. Cross-overs to other age groups are not allowed.

Performance Cheer: Cross-overs to other divisions are allowed. Cross-overs to other age groups are allowed, as long as the age eligibility criteria are met.

1.6. Time of the routine

Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement, voice, or note of the music whichever comes first.

Timing will end with the last choreographed movement, voice, or note of the music whichever comes last.

If a team exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. One point deduction for 5-10 seconds and three (3) point deduction for 11 seconds and over per judge.

Because penalties are severe, it is recommended that all teams time their performance several times prior to competition and leave a several second cushion to allow for variations in sound equipment.

In order to keep the competition on time, teams must enter the performance floor as quickly as possible. Teams will have limited time to enter the floor and start their routine. Elaborate choreographed entrances will not be allowed. Additional conditions are as follows:

Entrances: When teams are introduced, teams must take the floor and assume their starting position within 20 seconds.

Exits: At the conclusion of the routine and following the completed dismount of the team (e.g. from an ending pyramid(s) or stunt(s)), teams must exit the floor immediately and must be off the performance floor within 20 seconds.

Cheerleading

Team: The total maximum time for the routine is three minutes (3:00), including the Cheer.

a. Cheer portion: can be placed in the beginning or middle of the routine. Cheer portion time minimum recommendation is thirty seconds (0:30).

b. Cheer portion: can be placed in the beginning or middle of routine.

Music portion: Maximum two minutes (2:00).

Group Stunt / Partner Stunt: Maximum one minute (1:00)

Performance Cheer

Team: Maximum two minutes (2:00)

Doubles: Maximum one minute, thirty seconds (1:30)

1.7. Rules

The rules for the competition are the 2027 Sport of Cheer Rules & Guidelines. Complete rules can be found [ICU Sport of Cheer Rules & Guidelines](#). For clarity, the cheerleading levels are understood as follows: L1 - Novice, L2 - Intermediate, L3 - Median, L4 - Advanced, L5 - Elite, L6 - Premier.

All trainers, athletes and assistant personnel are required to follow the ICU antidoping rules. Athletes may be subjected to doping tests during competitions. They are requested to follow the procedure for obtaining exemption for therapeutic use, for those who use drugs on WADA's list of prohibited drugs. Competitors must follow all the safety rules of the sport of Cheerleading. We also follow [Estonian Sports Ethics](#).

Please send all the questions about the rules and regulations until 15.11.2026 to cheer.emv@gmail.com. Please include a video of the stunt/element.

1.8. Music

Each club is responsible for playing its own music on the day of the competition (press "play" and "stop"). We ask the team representative to be ready in the music desk 2 routines beforehand. Music should be played on their own device with AUX compatibility. To avoid notifications and other distractions, we recommend that you put Flight Mode on. The sound of the device must be on the maximum sound level.

Teams are required to follow the [ICU Music Initiative Overview](#).

All teams entering confirm that they have read and understood the ICU Music Initiative Overview and all sound recordings used in a team's music shall only be used with the written license from the owner(s) of the sound recordings.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the lyrics of the music are appropriate for all audience members. For purposes of family viewing and in promotion of international sport, routine music must not include content that is suggestive/sexual in nature, offensive, vulgar or inferences violence of any kind. Violations of this rule will be impacted in the Overall category on the respective score sheet(s).

Excessive use of sound effects and/or the addition of generic and/or custom voiceovers to the music are not appropriate and should be avoided. Exceptions can include the name of the team, team mascot, team colors, the team's country, etc. which is recommended to be used a maximum of 2 times throughout the routine. Violations of this rule will be impacted in the Overall category on the respective score sheet(s). For more information: [Music Information](#)

1.9. Performance surface

Performance Cheer: Marley dance floor, minimum surface area of 16 meters x 10 meters.

Cheerleading: No spring floor, standard foam mat surface. Minimum surface area of 16mx14m.

Teams may line up anywhere inside the competition area. No penalty for stepping outside the area.

2. GENERAL COMPETITION RULES & REGULATIONS

2.1 General Rules

All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/advisor/coach.

Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group, and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement.

All directors, advisors and coaches should have an emergency response plan in the event of an injury.

2.2. How to handle procedural questions

Rules & Procedure: Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the advisor / coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Officials. Such questions should be made prior to the team's competition performance. For any questions concerning the legality of a move or trick, it is recommended to send a video of any skill in question to cheer.emv@gmail.com or rules@europeancheerunion.com.

Performance: Any questions concerning the team's performance should be made to the Competition Officials immediately after the team's performance and/or following the outcome of the competition.

2.3. Sportsmanship

All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine.

The advisor and coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents and other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.

Actions that exhibit excessive boasting, a delay in competition, poor sportsmanship, unprofessional behavior, etc. may be penalized. These actions include but are not limited to:

- An athlete calling unnecessary attention to themselves or the team using long and excessive entrances (e.g., aggressive motioning/taunting to the crowd, etc.)
- Excessive pre- or post-competition team rituals (team bonding traditions must take place behind the stage area)
- Excessive celebration (e.g. athletes dropping to the floor, pounding on the floor, etc.)
- For more information regarding ICU's sportsmanship policies, please see the following ICU sportsmanship guidelines video: <https://cheerunion.org/coaches-sportsmanship/>

In the promotion of international sport and the global athletic image of the Sport of Cheer, facial expressions and mannerisms on stage should be genuine, natural and authentic. Forced, choreographed, aggressive, vulgar and offensive facial expressions and gestures are not appropriate and should be avoided. Singing and/or pantomiming the lyrics is also not appropriate to the sport and should be avoided.

2.4. Interruption of performance

Unforeseen Circumstances

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected should stop the routine.
2. The team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.

Fault of Team

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated only from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.

Injury

1. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are:
 - competition officials,
 - the advisor / coach from the team performing or
 - an injured individual.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.
4. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
 - The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) AND THEN the head coach/advisor of the competing team.

- If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
- In the event of a suspected concussion / head injury, the participant cannot return to perform without clearance from a medical professional that has training related to head injuries, and waiting 24 hours, even with a waiver from a parent or legal guardian.

2.5. Interpretations and / or Rulings

Any interpretation of any aspect of these Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the EstCU. The EstCU will render a judgment in an effort to ensure that the competition proceeds in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition. If the interpretation needs to be made during an ongoing competition, it is made together by those committee members present and holding a function in the jury of the respective competition and the Head Judge.

2.6. Disqualification

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of these "Rules and Regulations" will be subject to disqualification from the competition, will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition, and may also forfeit the opportunity to participate the following year.

2.7. Judging procedure

There is a separate jury for cheerleading and performance cheer. As the teams perform, a panel of judges will score the teams using a 100-point system. Results will be publicly available at www.estonianopen.cheer.ee and www.cheer.ee after the competition. Each team will receive their score sheets by email.

2.8. Scores and Rankings

Individual score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches or captains at the conclusion of the competition. No scores or rankings will be given over the telephone. After the competition, teams will receive the judges' score sheets. In addition, teams will receive a ranking sheet with the names and scores of the team's final placement.

2.9. Finality of Decisions

By participating in this championship, each team agrees that judges' decisions are final and will not be subject for review. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges and competitions officials to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition, and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative or procedural review of such decisions.

2.10. Penalties

A five (5) point penalty per judge whose individual score was added to the overall team's score will be assessed to any team violating any of the specific rules. This deduction does not apply to violations that are designated a lesser point value. Violation of a specific rule in more instances at the same time (ripples included) will be considered as just one violation of that specific rule and will result in just five (5) point penalty. If you have any questions concerning the legality of a move or trick, please send a video to the EstCUcheer.emv@gmail.com. This must be submitted early before the competition.

Penalty Master

Team #		# 63 ⓘ	# 65 ⓘ
	points	 Protocol	 Protocol
Disqualification	-	no	no
Time Limit Violation: 5 - 10 seconds	-1	0	0
Time Limit Violation: 11 seconds and over	-3	0	0
Drop from Stunts, Tumbling, Tosses or Pyramids	-3	0	0
Illegal element	-5	0	0
Missing Spotter	-5	0	0
Other violation of the safety guidelines	-5	0	0
TOTAL		0	0

3. GENERAL SAFETY RULES CHEERLEADING

3.1. General rules

All athletes must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/coach.

Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group, and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement.

All teams, gyms, coaches and directors must have an emergency response plan in the event of an injury. Athletes and coaches must not be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, performance enhancing substances or over-the-counter medications that would hinder the ability to supervise or execute a routine safely, while participating in a practice or performance.

Athletes must always practice and perform on an appropriate surface. Technical skills (stunts, pyramids, tosses or tumbling) may not be performed on concrete, asphalt, wet or uneven surfaces or, surfaces with obstructions.

3.2. Specific Routine Guidelines

1. Soft-soled shoes must be worn while competing. No dance shoes/boots, and/or gymnastics slippers (or similar) allowed. Shoes must have a solid sole.
2. Jewelry of any kind including but not limited to ear, nose, tongue, belly button and facial rings, clear plastic jewelry, bracelets, necklaces and pins on uniforms are not allowed. The jewelry needs to be removed from the body part, taping them is not allowed.” (Exception: medical ID tags/bracelets). Clarification: Rhinestones are allowed when adhered to the uniform and not allowed if adhered to the skin.
3. Any height increasing apparatus used to propel an athlete is not allowed.
4. Flags, banners, signs, pom poms, megaphones, and pieces of clothes are the only props allowed. Props with poles or similar support apparatus may not be used in conjunction with any kind of stunt or tumbling.
5. All props must be safely discarded out of harm’s way (e.g. throwing a hard sign across the mat from a stunt would be illegal). Any uniform piece purposefully removed from the body and used for visual effect will be considered a prop once it is removed from the body.
6. Supports, braces and soft casts that are unaltered from the manufacturer’s original design / production do not require additional padding. An athlete wearing a hard cast (example: fiberglass or plaster) or a walking boot must not be involved in stunts, pyramids, tumbling or tosses.
7. From a level grid standpoint, all skills allowed for a particular level encompass all skills allowed in the preceding level.
8. Required spotters for all skills must be your own team’s members and be trained in proper spotting technique.

9. Drops including but not limited to knee, seat, thigh, front, back, and split drops from a jump, stunt, or inverted positions are not allowed unless the majority of the weight is first borne on the hands or feet, which Breaks the impact of the drop. Shushinovs are allowed. Clarification: Drops that include any weight bearing contact with the hands and feet are not in clear violation of this rule.
10. Athletes must have at least one foot, hand or body part (other than hair) on the performing surface when the routine begins. Exception: Athletes may have their feet in the hands of base(s) if the base(s) hands are resting on the performing surface.
11. The competitors who begin a routine must remain the same throughout the course of a routine. A performer is not permitted to be "replaced" by another performer during a routine.
12. An athlete must not have gum, candy, cough drops or other such edible or non---edible items, which may cause choking, in her/his mouth during practice and/or performance.
13. Own additional spotters are allowed. Guidelines for Additional Spotters:
14. Should only be used during the stunt, pyramid, and/or basket toss sections. Additional spotters should stand at the back of the floor when not spotting those sections.
15. Should not touch, assist, or save skills being performed.
16. Additional spotters should only be used to prevent a fall to the competition floor.
17. Spotters are not allowed to count or coach while on the floor.
18. Should be dressed so that they are presentable, professional, and distinguishable from the performing athletes. The additional spotters should not wear clothing similar to the performing team's uniform. Should not dress or act in a manner that distracts from the athletes and their performance.
19. For purposes of promotion of international sport and the global athletic image of the Sport of Cheer, athletes must compete in team attire that does not intentionally expose the midriff/mid-section of the athlete while the athlete is in a standing position.

4. GENERAL RULES AND SPECIFIC ROUTINES GUIDELINES PERFORMANCE CHEER

4.1. General rules

All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/advisor/coach.

Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group, and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement.

All directors, advisors and coaches should have an emergency response plan in the event of an injury.

Athletes and coaches must not be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, performance enhancing substances or over-the-counter medications that would hinder the ability to supervise or execute a routine safely, while participating in a practice or performance.

Athletes must always practice and perform on an appropriate surface. Technical skills (stunts, pyramids, tosses or tumbling) may not be performed on concrete, asphalt, wet or uneven surfaces or, surfaces with obstructions.

4.2. Specific Routine Guidelines

4.2.1. Choreography and costuming

1. Suggestive, offensive, or vulgar choreography, costuming, makeup and/or music are inappropriate for family audiences and therefore lack audience appeal.

2. Routine choreography should be appropriate and entertaining for all audience members. Vulgar or suggestive material is defined as any movement or choreography implying something improper or indecent, appearing offensive or sexual in content, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures or implications.

3. Teams may not compromise the integrity of the performance surface. (Examples: Residue from sprays, powders, oils, etc.)

4. Use of fire, noxious gases, live animals, and other potentially hazardous elements are strictly prohibited.

5. Inappropriate choreography, costuming and/or music may also affect the judges' overall impression and/or score of the routine.

6. All costuming, makeup and choreography should be age appropriate and acceptable for family audiences.

7. All costuming should be secure and offer full coverage of body parts appropriate for family viewing. Costume malfunctions resulting in team members being exposed may be grounds for disqualification.

8. Tights should be worn under briefs, hot pants or excessively short shorts.

9. Footwear is required. Partial sole shoes are acceptable. Performing barefoot, in socks and/or footed tights, high heels, roller skates, roller blades or any other footwear that is inappropriate for the sport is prohibited. If in doubt, please consult the ICU Rules Committee for approval.
10. Jewelry as a part of the costume is allowed.
11. All male performers' costumes must include a shirt that is fastened; however, it can be sleeveless.
12. No cheers or chants are allowed.

4.2.2. Props

1. A prop is defined as anything that is used in the routine choreography that is not/was not originally part of the costume.

Clarification 1: For Pom Categories, Poms are considered part of the uniform.

Clarification 2: For Adaptive Abilities, Special Olympics & Special Abilities Divisions, all mobility equipment, prosthesis, and braces are considered part of the athlete unless they are removed, in which case they are considered legal props, until replaced or returned to the athlete.

2. Handheld props and free "standing props" in all categories are not allowed. Use of parts of the uniform/ clothing (e.g., used for choreography purposes. Examples such as a necklace, jacket, hat, etc.) are NOT allowed. In addition, pieces of clothing/costume may not be used to facilitate choreography/movement or to create visual pictures or shapes in staging. All clothing, and pieces of clothing must be worn at all times and may not be removed, used to facilitate choreography or discarded during the performance.
3. Within the Pom Category, it is compulsory to use poms throughout the entire routine. If there are male performers in this category, they are not required to use poms.
4. No large free "standing props" will be allowed in any category, such as chairs, stools, benches, boxes, stairs, steps, ladders, bars, sheets, etc. Any item that bears the weight of the participant is considered a "standing prop".