



Cheer Abilities Division List

Adopted on: June 21, 2023

Cheer Canada Cheer Abilities Divisions 2023-2024



UNIFIED vs TRADITIONAL

Team divisions are first categorized using the following criteria:

CATEGORY	UNIFIED	TRADITIONAL
Adaptive Abilities (aka Paracheer)	At least 25% of team has a disability*	100% of the team has a disability*
Special Abilities	At least 50% of the team has an intellectual disability	100% of the team has an intellectual disability
Special Olympics**	Team must be comprised of a 1:1 ratio of athletes with and without intellectual disabilities	100% of the team has an intellectual disability

*Note that Adaptive Abilities may have physical, neurological and/or intellectual disabilities. Special Abilities and Special Olympics must be intellectual disabilities only. See the Cheer Canada Cheer Abilities Rules for more information concerning disability classifications.

**Entering a Special Olympics division requires that the program and coach meet all additional requirements of Special Olympics division and designation. Please contact executivedirector@cheercanada.ca for additional information on this category.

TEAM SIZE

Maximum of 30 athletes. There is no minimum.

*CHEER DIVISION / LEVELS

Beginner (B): Similar to Level 0, no basket tosses - with Adaptive Ability / Special Abilities rule modifications

Novice (N): Similar to Level 1, no basket tosses - with Adaptive Ability / Special Abilities rule modifications

Intermediate (I): Similar to Level 2, no basket tosses – with Adaptive Ability / Special Abilities rule modifications

Median (M): Similar to Level 3, no basket tosses - with Adaptive Ability rule modifications

Advanced (A): Similar to Level 4, no basket tosses - with Adaptive Ability rule modifications

CHEER DIVISIONS

Category Type:	Age	Birth Years	Division / Level*				
			B	N	I	M	A
Adaptive Abilities (Unified or Traditional)							
	6+	2018 or earlier	√	√			
	8+	2016 or earlier			√		
	12+	2012 or earlier				√	√
Special Abilities (Unified or Traditional)							
	6+	2018 or earlier	√	√			
	12+	2012 or earlier			√		
Special Olympics							
Special Olympics Unified	12+	2012 or earlier			√		
Special Olympics Traditional	12+	2012 or earlier		√			

PERFORMANCE CHEER DIVISIONS

Category Type:	Age	Birth Years	Division / Level
Adaptive Abilities (Unified or Traditional)	6+	2018 or earlier	Freestyle Pom, Hip Hop, or Jazz
Special Abilities (Unified or Traditional)	6+	2018 or earlier	Freestyle Pom, Hip Hop, or Jazz
Special Olympics (Unified or Traditional)	12+	2012 or earlier	Freestyle Pom or Hip Hop

ELIGIBILITY & AGE

Athletes can belong to a school, club, rec program, all star team, studio, gymnasium, or any institution. Athletes must be compliant with the criteria for their division.

The eligible age for an athlete is determined by the BIRTH YEARS column in the division list. The age of an athlete is based on the year of Worlds; so, this year's Age Eligibility is based on 2024. Therefore, an athlete is age eligible if they are of the given age for that category at any time between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024. Ages listed are minimums for the division / level. Example: You must be at least 8 years old to compete in the Cheer Adaptive Abilities Intermediate division.

Note that there are no maximum ages for any Cheer Abilities divisions. This means that older age groups also qualify for the divisions / levels offered in the lower age groups.

Clarification: Athletes who are 8+ years old OR 12+ years old, are also 6+ years old by default, AND have access to the lower age group divisions for their category.

Example 1: A 12-year old athlete in the Cheer Adaptive Abilities Category has the option of 5 different "levels"; Beginner through Advanced.

Example 2: At an cheer event, an Adaptive Abilities Unified Beginner Division could have the following teams competing in one division since they are all 6+ years old:

- A team of 6 athletes who range in age from 6 to 9
- A team of 15 athletes who range in age from 8 to 14
- A team of 20 athletes who range in age from 13 to 24
- A team of 10 athletes ranging in age from 6 to 42

GENDER

Adaptive Abilities Median and Adaptive Abilities Advanced cheer divisions may be split into All Girl and Coed (1+ males) divisions when required. All other Cheer Abilities divisions on the cheer age grid are mixed gender divisions.

Provincial associations may choose to further divide Cheer Abilities Performance Cheer categories by gender as regionally required.

DIVISION SPLIT SUGGESTIONS

If further division splits are required, Cheer Canada recommends to split the teams as equitably as possible while considering the following:

- Similar size teams within the split
- Similar number of teams in the split
- Similar age groups within the split

CHEER ABILITIES TIME LIMITS

Cheer:

1. Cheer Portion: Can be placed in the beginning or middle of routine. Cheer Portion minimum time requirement* is thirty (30) seconds. Maximum time between Cheer and Music Portion is twenty (20) seconds.

*In Canada, a Cheer is not required if a sizable percentage of athletes are not able to due to their disability.

2. Music Portion: Two minutes and 15 seconds maximum (2:15)

Performance Cheer: Two minutes and 15 seconds maximum (2:15)

**** Cheer Canada encourages all teams competing outside of Canada to consult with the appropriate event producers and governing authorities to ensure their routine parameters, team size and composition meet event specific requirements. ****