

For: Dance Team Coaches and Athletic Directors
Spirit Bulletin#2
Welcome & Spirit Safety Reminders
Feb 2026

Welcome Dance Team Coaches, Athletic Directors and Dancers–

As the season moves forward after the first 2 weekends of Competition for Winter, below are definitions and rule reminders that may impact Dance/Drill teams with Apparel and Accessories.

The below rule reminders are not meant to be inclusive of all performance dynamics, rather a tool to look at your costuming, stunt/lift/tumbling skill elements to ensure safety and rule compliance. **Red Headers** provide a look into what the Tech judges have observed so far this winter season.

As the season has moved forward the JA Technical Director and I have had many discussions about Rule 3.1.2 in the NFHS Spirit Book and what that interpretation is. Below you will see an updated interpretation, and I hope more clarity on what will be acceptable moving forward for the rest of the season. Note on Prior Scoring: Penalties issued during the early weeks of the season will remain as recorded, as the standing interpretation at that time prohibited flatback lifts while wearing long, flowing skirts.

Thank you for all the hard work you do and please reach out if you need anything. My email is below, and the attachment will help with the JA Technical Director and I to answer all your Questions. I'm super excited to see where all your hard work shows at the end of this season. Thanks to you all!

Section 1 - Apparel and Accessories

Rule 3.1.2 Situation G: (Participants wear Flowing Dresses/Skirts): A dance team while performing executes (a) Walk over (b) forward roll (c) a cartwheel Ruling: (a) illegal, (b) and (c) legal

Rule 3.1.2 Situation H: (Skirts/Lifts) Participants execute a flatback or 'superman' lift at prep level or fully extended while wearing skirts. RULING: Legal with Specific Requirements. To maintain safety standards and ensure the stability of the lift group, the following requirements apply to all apparel, regardless of fabric type, skirt length, or design:

- General Compliance: The executing dancer's costume must be secured so that it does not interfere with the vision, grip, or safety of any member of the lift group.

Fabric should not drape or hang freely if there is a base supporting under the executing dancer.

- Simple Lifts (e.g., T-Lifts): A hanging skirt or dress is generally permissible, as the vertical nature of the lift typically does not obstruct the bases' line of sight.
- Supported Straddle Splits: When a participant is supported in a straddle split, the fabric must be secured so that it does not interfere with the bases' grip on the legs

Rule 3.1.2 Situation I: (Skirts-Airborne Tumbling) Participants in below knee dresses execute side aerials. **RULING:** Legal, if the skirts are not long enough to impair the vision or movement of any participant while inverted.

A reminder for us all:

3-1-3: Dancers must wear footwear that is appropriate for the activity.

1. At a minimum, footwear must cover the ball of the foot.
2. Exceptions: Dancers who perform on a floor cover may be barefoot.
3. Footwear that covers the entire foot/feet and have non-slip soles must be worn for:
4. 1. Lifts at prep level or above in which the executing dancer's foot/feet are in the hand(s) of a supporting dancer(s).
5. 2. Airborne tumbling with the exception of front and side aerials, kip-ups, roundoff and headsprings.

I want to encourage all of you to submit stunts/lifts/costumes to the Google Form even if you don't have questions at the moment. While at this time we don't have pre approvals, this will allow The SRI and Technical Director to address any potential safety issues ahead of time, and can help inform the NFHS rules in the future. I also will be sending this out to all of the technical judges so that we all have the exact same communication and that the tech judges will be using these interpretations in competitions as soon as this weekend.

Please reach out with questions to: [25-26 Spirit Safety Contact Form](#)

Please reach out to your State Rules Interpreter (SRI) if you have any questions:

Email Casie Hanson: dance_drill.sri@osaa.org.

Best Wishes,
Casie Hanson
Dance/Drill SRI