

# Tryout PACKET

## Tryout Checklist

*Organization and pre-planning are the keys to successful tryouts. Be sure that tryout procedures and scoring reflect the needs of your entire program.*

### January

#### 1. Set tryout date

- Select a date and time for tryouts.
- Check this date with the school activity calendar and athletic director's office.
- Be sure to avoid exam week, spring break, and other major conflicts.
- Put tryout date on the calendar.

#### 2. Set pre-tryout clinic dates

- Check dates with school activity calendar and put dates on the calendar.
- Have back-up plan for dates in case candidates interested play other sports in the Spring that run a risk of conflicting with your tryouts due to a long season (playoffs, State Finals, etc.).
- Remember to communicate openly with other Coaches in the school. This will help foresee any conflicts as well as earn their support early.

#### 3. Reserve tryout facility

- Reserve the gym or auditorium for all days involved.
- The candidates need to be at least 20' away from the judges' table for ideal evaluation purposes.
- Take into consideration the amount of room needed to perform tumbling passes and/or leap combinations.
- Is there an electrical socket for the stereo? Do you need an extension cord?

### Late January/Early February

#### 4. Contact Judges

- Select impartial and qualified individuals.
- Confirm in writing the date of your tryout and compensation to each judge.
- Call the NCA/NDA office in Dallas at 1-800-NCA-2WIN or 1-877-NDA-2WIN for help in securing unbiased and qualified judges.
- Have alternate judges in mind in case someone has to cancel.
- Find out what information your school district needs in order to issue a check (ex: Social Security Number, etc.).

### February

#### 5. Publicize dates

- Use the school website and newspaper, bulletin boards, flyers posted in high-traffic areas, school announcements, and the local newspaper (if applicable) one to two weeks prior to sign-up day.
- When applicable, publicize tryouts at feeder schools (ex: local Junior Highs and Private Schools).

#### 6. Post sign-up sheets

- Announce location where students can sign-up and pick-up applications.
- Have a deadline for signing up and enforce that deadline.

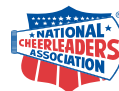
#### 7. Arrange for judges' checks to be drawn

- Many schools require all payments to be passed at the monthly school board meeting.
- Aim to have the checks at least one week prior to tryout date to be on the safe side.
- Arrange for check to be cut to cover cost of food and snacks for judges and administration helping with tryouts.

### Two Weeks Prior

#### 8. Tryout meeting

- Communicating the requirements necessary for trying out.
- It is important that information is taken home to be read by parents/guardians with regard to the cost of being a cheerleader/dancer, commitments of time, travel, and insurance.
- Both a completed medical release form and a parental consent form need to be returned to the coach before the first tryout clinic practice.



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- The consent form should be signed by both the parents/guardians and dated. It gives permission for the student to tryout, as well as indicates an understanding of the required commitment. Signing the consent form can also be used to signify an agreement to follow tryout procedures.

### 9. Assign duties to graduating seniors.

- Select material from the NCA/NDA Tryout Video.
- When delegating authority, choose wisely.
- Possible jobs include teaching material, conducting warm-ups, playing music during tryout, helping bring in groups during tryouts, creating the itinerary for clinic week, making copies of paperwork.
- Be aware of perception of relationships between graduating seniors and returning cheerleaders/dancers.

### One Week Prior

#### 10. Prepare all forms

- Update and distribute teacher evaluation and grade check sheets.
- Update and copy parental consent forms, medical release forms and tryout score sheets.
- Put together a sample score sheet for the candidates and judges to become familiar with.
- Put together a list of common comments for judges to use. It will make it easier for judges to utilize comments as well as give you feedback in case the outcome is questioned.
- Confirm with Judges. Ask them to arrive 1/2 hour early so you may meet with them and review procedures and score sheets. Send them maps if necessary.
- Give Judges your cell phone number in case they need directions or get lost.

### Week of Tryouts

#### 11. Collect sheets

- Gather all applicants, teacher evaluations, and grade checks.
- Verify eligibility requirements for applicants.

#### 12. Pick-up Judges' checks

#### 13. Make sound system arrangements

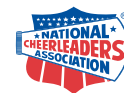
- Be sure equipment is available for practices and tryouts.
- If battery operated, bring extra batteries.

#### 14. First Clinic day

- Reinforce and preview the tryout requirements and squad regulations.
- Collect completed medical release forms and consent forms.
- Take roll.
- Emphasis for males (cheer tryouts) should be placed on masculinity, strength, motion technique, tumbling, and jump technique.
- Always have a warm-up to help keep clinic injuries to a minimum.
- Prepare extra copies of the music or give candidates an option of bringing blank CDs to make their own copies.
- Require a Polaroid snapshot to attach to their application. It may be tedious, but will be worth it later in the event of discrepancies or ties.

#### 15. Each clinic day

- Take roll daily and monitor progress.
- Be available each day to answer questions and make decisions.



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### 16. Tryout attire

- Shirt tails should be tucked in and clothing should be neat and clean.
- Have candidates dress in similar attire as to not call attention to any of the returning candidates. It will also make the new candidates more at ease.
- No jewelry should be worn.
- Hair should be secured up and back (away from the face).
- Heavy make-up is not appropriate.
- If using a number system to identify candidates at tryouts, make sure number can be seen on their attire at all times.

### 17. Tryout Day

- Meet early with Seniors and those helping with tryouts.
- Cover windows in tryout facility so other students can't look in.
- Provide snacks and refreshments for judges and others assisting in tryouts.
- Assign duties.
- Pass out participant tryout numbers.
- Meet immediately with the judges and distribute score sheets, pencils, calculators, scratch paper, etc.  
Encourage judges to make comments (constructive and positive) in case a parent raises a concern in the future.
- Begin tryouts on time!

### 18. Tryout Procedure

- It is recommended that tryouts be closed except for the judges, coach, tabulator, and school administration.
- Graduating seniors may be there to help, but must not be distracting to the Judges or to those trying out.
- Set up tripod and camcorder to tape tryouts in case of discrepancies.

- Candidates come out in groups of 2-4 to perform their group material.
- If your system allows for possible call-backs, made sure candidates are made aware of this possibility before hand and understand how the process will work.

### 19. Post-tryouts and posting results

- Announcing results as soon as possible will help avoid concerns regarding unfair scoring.
- Post results on web, by phone, or by letter in a sealed envelope.
- Follow-up with Thank You cards to the Judges and administration.

### 20. Enjoy your season!

- For more information on camp, contact your State Director today or call 1.800.NCA.2WIN or 1.877.NDA.2WIN

