



2026-2027

**ALL STAR
HANDBOOK**



W E L C O M E

Welcome to Mustangs Cheerleading! If you are new to Mustangs Cheerleading, thank you for joining us. If you are returning for another wonderful season, welcome back.

This handbook helps you navigate the world of competitive cheerleading at Helena Athletic Club. It contains all the pertinent information regarding our season: schedules, expectations, season layout and more.

If you have any coaching questions, contact your child's coaches directly before/after practice, on Band or via email at mustangs@hacmt.com. If you have administrative or financial questions, please contact office@hacmt.com

D R E S S C O D E

Dress code at practice and competition is very important. We are in the public eye often, and as such must maintain "classy" attitudes and attire. Please follow the rules and remember to both look and act like a Mustang at all times.

At PRACTICE, all athletes are to wear their Mustangs Cheerleading practice wear. This is to build team unity and dress safely for practice. Mustangs practice wear is issued to each athlete at the start of the season. More clothing may be purchased during our clothing orders throughout the season.

At COMPETITION, when not competing, athletes need to wear their Mustangs Cheerleading uniforms, warm ups, or gym colors and tennis shoes or cheer shoes. No sandals, slippers or boots.

PARENTS AT COMPETITION are encouraged to wear Mustangs Cheerleading parent gear or team colors to competitions. Our athletes love the support that they see in the stands when parents are decked out in red and navy! Parent gear will be available to order prior to our first competition. Please note, only parent gear purchased through our team stores is permitted, **please do not use our name or logo on any other apparel or other products.**

ALL STAR CHEERLEADING

Mustangs Cheerleading is inclusive to athletes of all ages and experience levels. Tryout and placement clinics are required for all participants 8 years of age or older. Participants ages 5-7 are placed on teams based on their age.

Placements are made solely at HAC Coach's discretion based upon age and skill level of the athletes. Teams are set based upon the USASF Team Divisions/Age Grid. Using the athletes birth year, they are first placed on a team based on the youngest possible division the athlete can compete. Once grouped by age, coaches look at skill levels of the athletes and separate athletes as needed. The ultimate goal is to create teams that are cohesive with age and skill level and results in the most competitive scenario for each team.

FAQs:

Q: Can I be on a competitive team if I have no cheer or tumbling experience?

A: In most cases, yes! As long as we do not have more athletes at tryouts than we have positions, all athletes will be placed on a team. If we have more athletes than positions, or if an athlete requires additional time to work on his or her skills, some athletes may be recommended for a pre competitive team.

Q: If I don't make the team I want in the spring can I move up later?

A: If an athlete achieves new skills during the summer and there is a space and a need on a higher level team, we will consider moving the athlete up. Conversely, if an athlete is chosen for a higher level team and cannot perform the necessary skills or loses skills, he or she may be moved down a level.

Q: Can I be on an older team even if my age doesn't fit within the ones listed?

A: No. We strive to have well balanced teams in regards to both age and ability. If there is a team for your skills at your age division, you will not be moved to the next age division unless the coaches determine that a specific spot needs to be filled and the athlete fits within the age limits set by USASF. Athletes should experience what it is like to be the youngest and the oldest on a team for a well-rounded experience.

TEAM SCHEDULE

Team Name	Team Division (Birth Year Eligibility)	July-August Practice Schedule	September-April Practice Schedule	MANDATORY Choreography Camp	Parent/athlete Welcome Meeting
Pearls	Tiny (2019-2021)	N/A	TBA	N/A	TBA Early September
Rubies	Mini (2017-2020)	M/W - 5:30-7:00 pm	M/W - 5:30-7:00 pm	TBA	June 29 th 6:00 pm
Sapphires	Youth (2014-2019)	Mon. - 5:30-7:30 pm Tues. - 5:00-8:00 pm	Mon. - 5:30-7:00 pm Tues. - 5:00-8:00 pm	August 29-30	June 29 th 6:00 pm
Obsidian	Junior (2011-2018)	Mon. - 7:00-9:00 pm Tues. - 9:00-10:00 am Wed. - 6:00-9:00 pm	Mon. - 7:00-9:00 pm Wed. - 6:00-9:00 pm	August 29-30	June 29 th 6:00 pm
Platinum	Senior (6/1/2007-2014)	Tues.- 9:00-10:00 am Wed. - 6:00-9:00 pm	Tues. - 7:00-9:00 pm Wed. - 6:00-9:00 pm	TBA	June 29 th 6:00 pm
Diamonds	Solos (6/1/2006-2017)	TBA	TBA	TBA	June 29 th 6:00 pm

COMPETITIONS

Local events include our home competition (GNCD) as well as local performances at events in Helena.

The number of regional and national events may change based on teams following tryouts/placements

Team Name	Local	In State	Regional	National
Pearls	2	2	0	0
Rubies	2	3	1	0
Sapphires	2	3	1	0
Obsidian	2	3	3	1
Platinum	2	3	3	1
Diamonds	2	2	0	0

COMPETITION SCHEDULE

Event	Location	Dates	Pearls	Rubies	Sapphires	Obsidian	Platinum	Diamonds
Icebreaker	Helena, MT	Dec. 18	X	X	X	X	X	X
All Star Challenge	Salt Lake City, UT	Jan. 8-9				X	X	
Glam Jam	Missoula, MT	TBA	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jamfest	Tempe, AZ	Feb. 6				X	X	
Pacific NW Challenge	Spokane, WA	Feb. 27-28		X	X	X	X	
Battle in Missoula Cheer	Missoula, MT	March 6-7	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lilac City Championship	Spokane, WA	April 3-4				X	X	
GNCD	Home	April 10-11	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fusion Cup	Manhattan, MT	April 25	X	X	X	X	X	X

Dates and Locations are to provide a general idea but are subject to change.

*TBD following tryouts/team placements. A Nationals competition is not included in the attached competition account.

**Withdrawal from a competition does not allow for a deduction or proration of comp. fees or entries. Entries are due months in advance and refunds will not be issued for “scratches”.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

There are two types of financial commitment required of cheerleaders' families. The first is the monthly tuition or training fee that is due on the first of each month and covers all team practices, instruction and team gatherings. The second is the competition account that consists of every expense associated with participating on a competitive and/or traveling cheer team. Each team's expenses vary and are split into installments due on the 15th of each month and finished by the time competition season begins.

Monthly Tuition/Training Fees

School Year (September 8-April 30)

Pearls, Tiny, ages 5-7, 1-2 hr/week, \$115

Rubies, Mini, ages 6-12, 3 hrs/week, \$155

Sapphires, Youth, ages 8-12, 4.5 hrs/week, \$175

Obsidian, Junior, ages 10-16, 4-5 hrs/week, \$215

Platinum, Senior, ages 13-19, 5 hrs./week, \$215

****Monthly tuition is due on the first of each month. A \$25 late fee will be charged on all accounts with outstanding balances on the 10th of each month.****

Team Budget and Expenses

Each family also has a competition account, or "comp. account" with HAC that the family is responsible for according to the due dates outlined in the installment schedule. The following grid shows the costs that are associated with competitive and/or travelling-cheerleading. Although it is a substantial expense for the season there are many individual fundraising opportunities through the gym. Participation in fundraising events are at your discretion only and the portion of the funds raised by your family during each event goes directly to your competition account. Monies fundraised above and beyond the comp. account fees can be applied to the monthly tuition for team members. Don't hesitate to visit with the office manager, head coach or current team families regarding the various options available for assistance with this account.

Fundraisers already planned for the season and their tentative time frame:

"Fill Your Freezer" Raffle (July)

Chocolate Sales (September)

Haunted House (group event-October)

Wreath Sales (October-November)

Great Northern Cheer and Dance Competition (group event-April)

Participation in the individual fundraisers is optional. Participation in the Great Northern event is essential. Meeting and getting to know the fellow Mustangs families is great support to your daughter's membership on the team. This event especially is a great team building opportunity for both the athletes and parents. Often, friendships among families continue beyond gym activities or competitions.

Team Expenses (Comp. Account) and Installments

	Pearls	Rubies	Sapphires	Obsidian	Platinum	Diamonds	Crossovers
Competition Entries	\$325	\$495	\$715	\$1,565	\$1,565	\$265	\$625
USASF Dues		\$15	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$15	
Music/Choreo	\$95	\$295	\$535	\$555	\$555	\$385**	\$455
Teamwear	\$40	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75		
Warm-ups		\$105	\$105	\$105	\$105		
Uniform	\$160	\$160	\$415	\$415	\$415		
Bows	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$60	\$60		
TOTAL	\$670	\$1,195	\$1,910	\$2,790	\$2,790	\$665	\$1,080

*Crossover fees are in addition to the first team placement.

Note that the only competition expense covered by the competition account is the athlete’s entry and coaches’ fees. Athlete/parent/family travel and accommodations will be an added expense for each family. Parents are not required to attend competitions. Coaches and plenty of parents attend each event, competition or activity and there is more than enough adult supervision in the case you cannot accompany your athlete. Travel costs are not included in the competition account.

Team Expenses (Comp. Account) and Installments

	Pearls	Rubies	Sapphires	Obsidian	Platinum	Diamonds	Crossovers
Registration		\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50		
July 15		\$200	\$360	\$475	\$475	\$185	\$200
Aug. 15		\$200	\$300	\$475	\$475	\$180	\$200
Sept. 15	\$200	\$200	\$300	\$455	\$455	\$150	\$200
Oct. 15	\$175	\$200	\$300	\$455	\$455	\$150	\$200
Nov. 15	\$150	\$175	\$300	\$455	\$455		\$200
Dec. 15	\$145	\$170	\$300	\$425	\$425		\$80
TOTAL	\$670	\$1,195	\$1,910	\$2,790	\$2,790	\$665	\$1,080

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

Helena Athletic Club, Inc. (HAC) will order and pay for items listed in the team expenses tables for all members of the Mustangs Cheerleading teams. Due to the nature of such large orders, HAC often pays ahead or above and beyond what each family has already contributed to their competition account.

It is extremely important that each family makes timely payments and understands the consequences of delinquency. Any unpaid competition accounts will incur a 10% late fee on the 30th/31st of each month. If an account becomes 60 days past due, the account will be considered delinquent, and the athlete will be suspended from practices and events until the account is brought current.

If the account remains unresolved past 60 days, the delinquent account will be turned over to a collection agency, and the child's membership may be terminated at the sole discretion of HAC Management.

If at any point during the season your child leaves or is dismissed from the squad you will only be responsible for the payments/fees due on or before the date of departure. ***An injured or suspended athlete MAY still be responsible for all team account payments whether she participates in activities, camps, clinics or competitions. Sickness, vacation or other absences DO NOT constitute a proration of fees, training or competition account payments.***

HAC reserves the right to withhold apparel, uniforms or suspend athletes from participation in the event the family's tuition or competition account becomes past due. By signing below, you are agreeing to the terms set forth in the above team and financial information including the monthly tuition and competition account fees. You understand that should you default on payment of your account and collection agency services are required, all costs of collections up to 45% of the balance, including attorney/court costs will be added to the balance of your account.

Early Termination

Every member of each Mustangs team holds a valuable position on the team and in the program. Losing a member puts the coaches, and more importantly- the other athletes on the team in an unplanned setback that includes extra practice time, re-choreographing the routine and a lot of undo stress on all those impacted.

A \$ 100 early termination fee will be charged to the account of any athlete terminating from the program once team placements have been announced.

A \$ 100 early termination fee, and a \$ 100 re-choreographing fee will be charged to the account of any athlete terminating from the program once choreography has been completed.



2026-2027 MUSTANGS CHEERLEADING PLACEMENT FORM

Athlete's Name		Age as of Aug. 31, 2026
Birth Date	School	Grade (2026-2027 school year)
Athlete Cell	Athlete E-mail	
List any cheerleading, dance, gymnastics and/or tumbling experience:		
Are you willing to cheer for any Mustangs team regardless of level? Are you interested in being a crossover athlete (cheering on two teams)?		

Mother's Name	Father's Name
Phone	Phone
Mailing Address	Address
E-mail	E-mail
Preferred E-mail Contact:	Athlete resides with:

Please list any special circumstances that HAC Staff and Coaches should be aware of: This information will be kept private.
--

A Parent or Guardian of the above athlete must sign below indicating that he/she understands and supports the commitment required of Mustangs Cheerleading team members, regardless of age or level. Trying out or requesting placement on a Mustangs team exhibits the athlete's sincerity in competing on the appropriate squad for the entire 2026-2027 season. I have read and agree to all terms and policies set forth in this application.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
---------------------------	------

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

Helena Athletic Club, Inc. (HAC) will order and pay for items listed in the team expenses tables for all members of the Mustangs Cheerleading teams. Due to the nature of such large orders, HAC often pays ahead or above and beyond what each family has already contributed to their competition account.

It is extremely important that each family makes timely payments and understands the consequences of delinquency. Any unpaid competition accounts will incur a 10% late fee on the 30th/31st of each month. If an account becomes 60 days past due, the account will be considered delinquent, and the athlete will be suspended from practices and events until the account is brought current.

If the account remains unresolved past 60 days, the delinquent account will be turned over to a collection agency, and the child's membership may be terminated at the sole discretion of HAC Management.

If at any point during the season my child leaves or is dismissed from the squad you will only be responsible for the payments/fees due on or before the date of departure. ***An injured or suspended athlete MAY still be responsible for all team account payments whether she participates in activities, camps, clinics or competitions. Sickness, vacation or other absences DO NOT constitute a proration of fees, training or competition account payments.***

HAC reserves the right to withhold apparel, uniforms or suspend athletes from participation in the event the family's tuition or competition account becomes past due. By signing below, you are agreeing to the terms set forth in the above team and financial information including the monthly tuition and competition account fees. You understand that should you default on payment of your account and collection agency services are required, all costs of collections up to 45% of the balance, including attorney/court costs will be added to the balance of your account.

Early Termination

Every member of each Mustangs team holds a valuable position on the team and in the program. Losing a member puts the coaches, and more importantly- the other athletes on the team in an unplanned setback that includes extra practice time, re-choreographing the routine and a lot of undo stress on all those impacted.

A \$ 100 early termination fee will be charged to the account of any athlete terminating from the program once team placements have been announced.

A \$ 100 early termination fee, and a \$ 100 re-choreographing fee will be charged to the account of any athlete terminating from the program once choreography has been completed.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
---------------------------	------