

5,6,7,8 LET'S CHEER: What to expect at your first cheerleading class

In this guide:

- Prepare your child
- Find out what to expect
- Pick up tips on making this a rewarding experience

Cheerleading is a fun, dynamic sport that lets boys and girls feed their inner performer, daredevil or Olympic champion in a team setting. Here are 8 key things to know when your child starts their cheer journey!

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

Bring your child to class dressed and ready to participate. Dress is a close fitting t-shirt and shorts, long hair tied up in a high pony tail or bun for girls. Bring a named water bottle with you.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

When you first walk into a gym, it can be overwhelming and exciting. Classes will be held on the matted floor area in your facility. Some facilities have multiple floors. Please make yourself known to an on duty coach or receptionist on arrival. The coach or receptionist will show you to the waiting area and will call the athletes onto the floor when it is time for class to start. Please help us to keep your child safe by not allowing them to play on the equipment, jump or tumble on the floors before class begins.

If the classes you have decided to enrol in take place at a school gym, you may encounter a slightly different set up. For example, folding mats might replace a full spring floor. This does not mean the instruction you receive will be better or worse than that of a dedicated cheer or gymnastics facility.

WHEN CLASS BEGINS

Athletes are asked to take the floor promptly when called and to leave all belongings including water bottles in the designated cubby area. Parents and siblings are asked to remain seated in the parent viewing area for the duration of the class other than for our "Sparkles" classes for children aged 3 & 4 years where parent oversight is required.

CLASS STRUCTURE

All classes start with a team warm-up and stretch before covering fundamental skills in each of the core areas:

- Stunting

- Tumbling
- Jumps
- Dance

Your child's team will work towards incorporating the skills they acquire in each core area in a routine for competitions and/or performances.

The types of skills taught can vary based on the age and experience of the children in the class. For example, older students are able to understand complex instruction better than 2-4 year olds. Your coach will tailor the instruction to the age group and class type.

WHERE ARE THE POM POMS?

Cheerleading classes focus on developing strength, stamina, flexibility, listening skills and team work. Your child's team will work to develop and demonstrate proficiency in stunts (group lifts), tumbling, jumps and performance skills. Dancing to music with pom poms like you may have seen at the rugby is not a part of our programme.

WHERE ARE THE FLIPS?

Watching cheerleaders flying through the air, twisting, spinning, and flipping across the floor, all the while under complete control, is jaw dropping. At the beginner entry level however you can expect skills such as rolls, handstands, bridges, cartwheels, as well as jumps, to be covered. If your child desperately wants to learn how to "flip," please let them know that the skills they are learning now are the foundation to build up to that skill. Before you can land a back tuck, you need to learn a backwards roll. Before you go for an aerial, you must master the cartwheel. Each skill is a building block towards a more advanced skill. To prevent injury, children should not try advanced skills on their own until their coach lets them know they are ready.

Please do not be concerned if your child does not have any tumbling skills immediately, the development of strength and coordination is required first. Above all else, at the beginning of your journey, the goal of the coach is to foster a love for the sport in your child.

FUN

Cheerleading is fun from the beginning, filled with new friends and new experiences. Whilst there may be challenging moments as your child progresses and the skills become more difficult, it's hard to top that feeling when you learn — then master — something new!

Warning: the fun usually does not end at the gym! Your bed may be adopted as the perfect crash mat and walls filled with feet marks from handstands. Cartwheels in the

supermarket and around the house are a sure sign your son or daughter has fallen for cheer!

AFTER CLASS

Talk to your coach or the receptionist and let us know how you found the class. If you loved the class and would like to join we will ask you to complete an online enrolment form (if you have not already done so). Once you have completed your online enrolment form you are able to start attending classes.

If you found the class was not quite right for you please talk to us to discuss other class options that may be more suitable. Most locations offer multiple different class option types to cater to the varying ages and ability levels of individual children.

PAYMENTS

Once you are enrolled you will be asked to make payment for the term. If you start late, your invoice will be adjusted to reflect the point that you started in the term. If at any stage you have any queries regarding payments or invoices please email accounts@allstarcheerleaders.co.nz