

cheerleading

Get a whole room of kids jumping and singing with their very own cheerleading routine.



An introduction to cheerleading

This is a really sporty style of dance – in fact, it often looks more like gymnastics when practised at an advanced level. It's performed in teams, in organised routines which last around 1 – 3 minutes. Many troupes make up their own songs and customise their outfits, making it a really good activity for groups of friends or classmates. It's high energy and a fantastic way to burn off calories and build strength.

Suitable for: Girls and boys, though boys of an older age may be less keen.

Equipment: A good pair of shoes, ideally trainers, are needed to provide support when jumping. And a tracksuit or loose clothing should be worn to allow movement and keep kids cool. Of course, half the fun is in customising uniforms and making pom poms (fluffy balls) to hold and make arm movements extra eye-catching.

Music: Any sort of music with a lively beat. Or the kids can make up their own 'team song'.

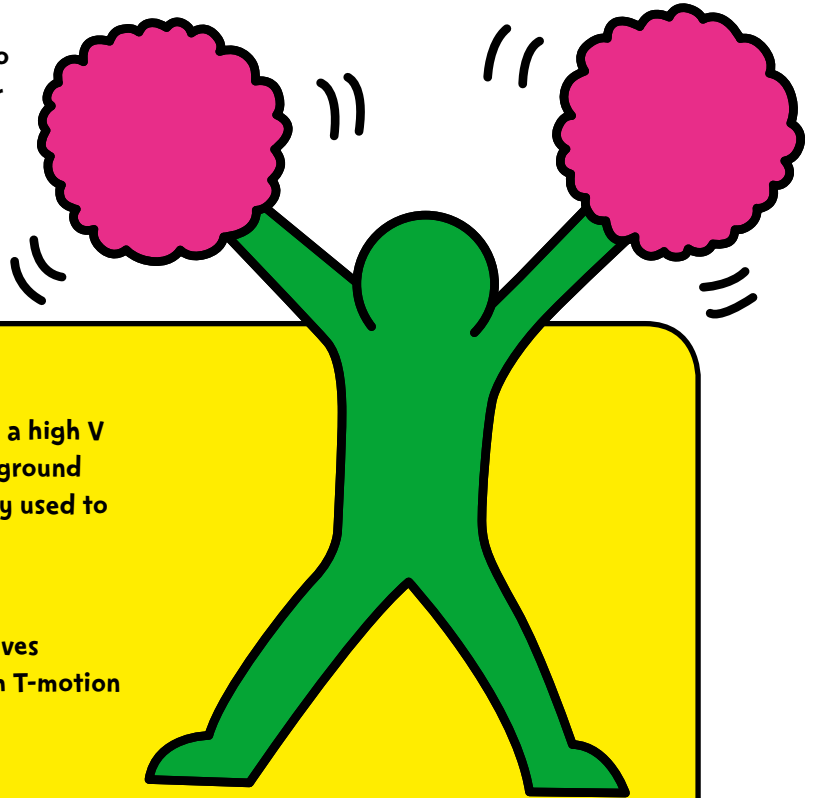
Space: Children will need a lot of space and a non-slip floor.

Safety: Although many of the routines featured in films look simple, they are, in fact, very ambitious 'gymnastic-style' dances. Extreme care must be taken with any lifting. If tumblers and similar moves are to be attempted, make sure there's something soft on the floor to cushion the body. A little warm up is important, before any stretches begin, to avoid the risk of pulling a muscle or feeling sore afterwards. Try a few jumps and shakes of the body, tensing and releasing muscles, in time to the music.



cheerleading moves to try

All it takes is a few jumps and steps for the kids to make up their own routine. For young children, or those who aren't that strong, keep things really simple. Older children may want to try more ambitious jumps and tumblers – please make sure they can do so safely.



X Jump/Spread Eagle

You simply swing, and jump with your arms in a high V and your legs spread apart. Just jump off the ground and it will look like an X. This jump is generally used to practice group timing.

Pencil/T Jump

This jump is probably the most simple. It involves jumping completely straight with your arms in T-motion or in a point above your head.

Toe-Touch

In this jump, the legs are straddled and straight in a 'V', parallel to the ground with toes pointed. Arms should match your legs and look like they're trying to reach your toes!

Tuck

A jump in which the cheerleader uses stomach muscles to pull the legs up with their thighs as close to the chest as possible, knees facing upward as if in a tucked position.

Hurdler

There are two types – the front hurdler and the side hurdler. The front hurdler is a jump with the front leg outstretched and the back leg bent with the knee facing down. Both arms are outstretched in front and above the body. A side hurdler is when the back leg goes out to the side and the arms remain the same as for a front hurdler.

Pike

This jump is among the most difficult of jumps. Both legs are straight out, knees locked. Arms are in a touchdown motion out in front to create a folded position in the air, this motion is also called "candlesticks". This is often performed at a ninety-degree angle to the audience in order to show off the air position.

Double Jump

This is when a jump is performed twice in a row.

Power Jump

A jump where there is no swinging of the arms in preparation for the jump. All the power for the jump comes from the legs. This jump is also known as a "Dip Jump."