



# ROYAL TWIRLING ASSOCIATION

## Official Competition Rule Book

2026 Edition

**President: Liam Crooks**



*Royal Twirl Association Rulebook 2026*



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### **Amendments:**

*Please note that the rulebook has been amended. See the highlighted sections.*



## **Welcome Message**

*Welcome to the 2026 competitive season of the Royal Twirling Association.*

*RTA represents dedication, creativity, and teamwork at every level.*

*Our vision is to nurture talent, uphold integrity, and deliver inspiring events that celebrate both athletic skill and artistic performance.*

## **Our Mission and Purpose**

*The Royal Twirling Association (RTA) serves as the organisation for majorette, baton, pom, military freestyle, dance twirl, and solo & duo performance. We strive to:*

- Provide transparent and consistent judging standards.*
- Offer clear progression pathways from grassroots to elite.*
- Encourage safe and inclusive participation.*
- Promote national and international recognition for all performers.*

## **Core Values**

***Integrity** – Fair governance and unbiased scoring.*

***Creativity** – Encouraging artistic originality.*

***Respect** – Sportsmanship between competitors and officials.*

***Safety** – An Environment where athlete welfare comes first.*

***Growth** – Education, mentorship, and pathway development.*



# SECTION 1: GENERAL COMPETITION RULES

## 1.1 Members:

Competition entries must be submitted on the official RTA entry form, and payment must be made by Bank Transfer to the RTA bank account (details on the entry form). All payments must be made by the competition's closing date.

## 1.2 Memberships:

For the 2026 competition season, Dancer memberships to RTA are £5. Please ensure that the list of all dancers and their DOB is submitted with all memberships. All payments must be made to the RTA bank account.

*Please note that this is subject to change for future competition seasons. Updates to this will be provided in a timely and appropriate manner before the start of the competition year.*

## 1.3 Teams:

All team members should be listed before the competition date.

## 1.4 Entries:

All entries should be checked by the troupe leader or an independent member before the competition closing date. No amendments or additions to entries will be taken on the day except in exceptional circumstances.

*The cost of entries per event:*

*Per team entry: £15*

*Per solo event: £5*

*Per Duo: £ 7*

## 1.5 Music:

Music should be submitted to Dropbox electronically. This should be at the same time as your entries before the closing date. All music files must have a single MP3 track name.

*Example: EVENT-LEVEL-NAME-CLUB*

A backup version should be taken to the competition- single track on an iPod, phone or memory stick.



## 1.6 Health and Medical:

All dancers must be fit and well before competing at any RTA competitions. Dancers who have an injury, are sick or are pregnant compete at their own risk; RTA will not be held responsible for dancers taking the floor. *Please note that **ALL** teams must have an appointed first aider who must be registered with RTA as the team's point of contact.*

*The RTA are **not** liable for any injuries sustained by members during our events or whilst dancing*

## 1.7 Costumes and Hair:

There are no costume requirements for any disciplines; however, athletes should bear in mind that this is a sport. Jewellery is worn at the athlete's risk.

Hair should be well-groomed, in a similar style, away from the face.

Tattoos do not need to be covered, but should not display any offensive or rude content.

Make-up is allowed for all disciplines; however, RTA requests a natural-looking look.

Nail extensions are to be worn at the athlete's own risk. RTA will not be held responsible for any injuries that may occur.

## 1.8 Opening Ceremonies and Presentations

**Opening ceremony:** one member from each team will be selected before the event to carry the Royal Twirling Association Flag. One member of the association will be chosen to read the majorette and baton twirling oath, and a judge will read the judge's oath.

**Presentation:** All athletes are expected to be appropriately dressed in a competing costume. Athletes must be in their competition costumes and on the presentation floor.

## 1.9 Health and Safety:

All troupe leaders, supporters and members should be aware of and comply with the RTA health and safety policy.

*Please find attached the health and safety policy, which is also available upon request.*

## 1.10 Safeguarding:

All troupe leaders, supporters and dancers should be aware of and comply with the RTA safeguarding policy.

*Please note that **all** teams should have a designated safeguarding officer who should be registered with the RTA as the team's point of contact.*

*Please find attached the safeguarding policy, which is also available upon request.*



### 1.11 Social Media:

*Please find attached the social media policy.*

The RTA social media pages will contain all relevant information regarding competitions, including dates, draws and results.

RTA officials will moderate all social media pages and any posts before publication. This helps to ensure the safety and protection of the children and the charity. All persons accepted into the groups must be 13 or older. RTA officials may request that troupes confirm the ages of individuals.

### 1.12 Photo and Media

*Please find attached the photo and media policy.*

Filming and photography are permitted during events. RTA asks that all dance troupes designate one person to this task. They will be provided with a lanyard to ensure officials easily identify them. This is to ensure the safety of dancers, supporters and officials.

### 1.13 Queries and complaints procedure

**General complaints:** All correspondence between RTA and dancers should be directed through the troupe leader. Any complaints must be submitted in writing to the Secretary within 7 days of the incident. All complaints will receive acknowledgement and will be addressed promptly, appropriate to their nature. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to convene a disciplinary committee to address specific issues.

**Appeals or queries:** All appeals or queries should be sent within 7 days of the troupe leader submitting the results to the secretary. Who will then liaise with the head judge. All appeals will receive acknowledgement and will aim to respond within five working days.

### 1.14 BATON PICKERS

Teams may have two designated baton pickers per routine. Please ensure that they are wearing suitable footwear and **do not** affect the judging process.

### 1.15 TIMING TABLE

Teams must designate one person, over the age of 18, to sit at the timing table for each routine.

### 1.16 HAIRPIECES

Hairpieces are permitted but not compulsory across all dance disciplines. Please ensure that all hairpieces are secure, as failure to do so could result in a penalty drop.

Please note that it is **compulsory** for teams competing in Military freestyle to wear headpieces/hat.



## 1.17 Para Classification

When deciding which classification a para dancer should enter, the following should be considered. What is the main reason for not accessing the standard competition? Would it be physical, learning, or social and emotional needs that affect the athlete the most?

### Physical Disability:

- *A physical disability is a “limitation on a person’s physical functioning, mobility, dexterity, or stamina.” It has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ adverse effect on a person’s ability to do daily activities. (Equality Act, 2010)*
- The disability may impede a dancer's ability to walk or move in a coordinated way. It may affect movement, stamina, balance and strength. The dancer may require a walking aid to help them walk and move independently
- Physical disabilities may include, but are not limited to, complex medical needs, limb differences, musculoskeletal conditions, traumatic brain injury (physical and birth)

### Learning/intellectual Disability

- *A learning or intellectual disability affects the way a person learns new things throughout their life. Their cognition, which refers to the mental processes in the brain, including thinking, attention, language, memory, learning, and perception, will be affected. (nhs.uk 2022)*
- Intellectual or learning disability may include, but are not limited to, traumatic brain injury, global developmental delay, chromosome disorders, degenerative conditions
- The disability may cause a dancer to experience difficulties processing, retaining and comprehending information (auditory and visual) that is presented to them, resulting in a slower level of understanding and attainment.

***Please note that Para Classification may include the disabilities stated above, but is not limited to them; please get in touch with RTA if there are any further queries.***

### **Restrictions:**

Please note that all para event content will be limited to level C maximum.

### **Eligibility:**

For dancers to be eligible for entry to Para Events, please submit the following to RTA:

- Letter of confirmation of diagnosis from GP or consultant
- Copy of Education, Health and Care Plan (ECHP)

*Please note that any dancers who are eligible for Para events **do not** have to compete within these sections if they do not wish to; they can compete in standard competition. However, please note that they must stay in the entered section for the duration of the competition season.*



# SECTION 2: COMPETITION STRUCTURE

## Disciplines:

### 2.1 Majorettes:

- Traditional Pom Team
- Dance twirl Team
- Military Freestyle

### 2.2 Baton twirling:

- Twirl Team
- Dance Pom Team

*Each team must include a **leader** and a **Mascot** registered with RTA*

### 2.3 Solo and Duo:

- Solo Events
  - *Baton solo, Pom solo, Para Solo baton, Para solo pom*
- Duo Events
  - *Baton Duo, Pom Duo, Para baton duo, Para solo pom*

*Please note that the baton solo sections, Babies, Dinkies, Tinies and Juniors are to set music chosen by RTA; seniors are permitted to dance to music of their own choosing.*

*Please note that the baton duo sections, Babies, Dinkies, Tinies and Juniors are to set music chosen by RTA; seniors are permitted to dance to music of their own choosing.*

*Dancers entered in both Pom solo and duo events are permitted to dance to music of their choosing,*



## SECTION 3: AGE DIVISION (BY DISCIPLINE)

An athlete's age throughout the competition year will be their actual age (in whole years) as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the current year.

Teams are permitted to have dancers compete in other sections where appropriate

Please note that to promote inclusivity, majorette and baton twirling teams **will not** compete against each other.

**ALL team events require a minimum of 4 athletes, including the leader and mascot.**

### 3.1 Majorette Team Events:

	BABIES	DINKIES	TINIES	JUNIORS	SENIORS
AGES	2-5	6-9	10-12	13-15	No age limit

### 3.2 Baton Twirling Team events:

Please note that twirling team sections are determined by the average age

To calculate the team's average age, add all members' ages and divide by the number of team members.

	MICRO TOT	TINY TOT	YOUTH	JUNIORS	SENIORS
AGES	3-7.99	8-10.99	11-13.99	14-16.99	17+

### 3.3 Solo and Duo Events:

	BABIES	DINKIES	TINIES	JUNIORS	SENIORS
AGES	2-5	6-9	10-12	13-15	16+



## SECTION 4: TIMINGS

*RTA will remain relaxed regarding timing to encourage creativity, but the durations below are recommended for smooth competition flow*

### 4.1 Solo and duo

CATEGORY	DURATION (MINUTES)
BABIES	1:00
DINKIES	1:15
TINIES	1:30
JUNIORS	1:30
SENIORS	2:00

### 4.2 Majorette Teams

	MILITARY FREESTYLE	BATON	POM
BABIES	2:00 – 4:00	3:00 - 4:00	2:00 – 3:00
DINKIES	4:00 – 6:00	4:00 – 5:00	3:00 – 4:00
TINIES	5:00 – 7:00	5:00 – 6:00	4:00 – 5:00
JUNIORS	6:00 – 8:00	6:00 – 8:00	5:00 – 6:00
SENIORS	8:00 – 12:00	7:00 - 9:00	6:00 – 7:00

### 4.3 Baton twirling teams

	BATON TEAM	POM TEAM
MICRO TOT	2:30 – 3:00	2:30 – 3:30
TINY TOT	3:00 – 3:30	3:00 – 3:30
YOUTH	3:00 – 3:30	3:00 – 3:30
JUNIOR	3:00 – 3:30	3:00 – 3:30
SENIOR	3:30 – 4:00	3:30 – 4:00



## SECTION 5: LEVELS AND RESTRICTIONS

*It is the responsibility of the troupe leader and athlete to enter the appropriate level based on the athlete's true proficiency of skill and experience. RTA expects that all athletes will promote an honest competitive environment.*

### 5.1 Restrictions Baton Team Division

	DIVISION 3	DIVISION 2	DIVISION 1
<b>SPIN</b>	1 Spin: Release (no restrictions) Receptions (no restrictions)	2 Spin: Release (no restrictions) Receptions (no restrictions)	No restrictions
<b>BATON</b>	No restrictions	No restrictions	No restrictions
<b>ILLUSIONS AND ACROBATICS ROLL</b>	No Restrictions	No restrictions	No restriction
<b>LEADER AND MASCOT</b>	Max 2 spin Release (standard) Receptions(standard)	Max 3 spin Release (standard) Receptions(standard)	No restrictions



## 5.2 Restrictions Solo and Duo

	LEVEL D	LEVEL C	LEVEL B	LEVEL A
<b>CONTACT ROLLS</b>	NO RESTRICTION No continuous front neck rolls (with or without hands) No monster rolls (partial or complete)	NO RESTRICTION No continuous front neck rolls (with or without hands) No monster rolls (partial or complete)	NO RESTRICTION No continuous front neck rolls (with or without hands) No monster rolls (partial or complete)	NO RESTRICTION NO RESTRICTION
<b>SPINS</b>	High toss only Releases (no restrictions) Receptions (no restrictions)  Max 1 Spin Releases (standard) Receptions (standard)	1 Spin Releases (no restrictions) Receptions (no restrictions)  Max 2 Spin Releases (standard) Receptions (standard)	2 Spin Releases (no restrictions) Receptions (no restrictions)  Max 3 Spin Releases (standard) Receptions (standard)	NO RESTRICTION
<b>ILLUSIONS AND ACROBATICS</b>	A single illusion/acrobatic move can be used within material, but not permitted under a toss.  A single minor body move is permitted under a toss. The moves permitted under a toss: kick, pas de chat, egg roll from the floor, and knee change.	A single illusion/acrobatic move permitted under a toss.  A single minor body move is permitted under a toss. The moves permitted under a toss: kick, pas de chat, egg roll from the floor, and knee change.	Two single illusions/acrobatic moves permitted under a toss.  Two minor body moves are permitted under a toss. The moves permitted under a toss: kick, pas de chat, egg roll from the floor, and knee change.	NO RESTRICTION



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# SECTION 6: JUDGING SYSTEM AND AWARDS

## 6.1 Judging system

AREA	PERCENTAGE	CONSIDERATION
EXECUTION & TECHNIQUE	30%	Skill accuracy, baton control, timing
CHOREOGRAPHY & CREATIVITY	25%	Originality, variety, formations
PERFORMANCE & PROJECTION	25%	Energy, facial expressions, and confidence
OVERALL EFFECT & ENTERTAINMENT	20%	Audience appeal, show impact

## 6.2 Awards

*Please note these awards are at RTA's discretion and subject to change.*

Placement trophies: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>

*Please note that, depending on the size of the section in the discipline, RTA might choose to award up to 7 places.*

Special Recognition: Best technique, best choreography, best costume, Judges' choice, Crowd favourite.

*These awards will be recognised and presented throughout the competition day.*



## SECTION 7: Penalty Definition

PENALTY	DEFINITION	DEDUCTION (PER VIOLATION)
<b>HEADCOUNT</b>	A team <b>cannot</b> dance with fewer than 4 members.	
<b>TEAM DROPS</b>	Baton and Poms	0.5 After 15 drops, points will no longer be deducted
<b>POM TEAM</b>	Hazardous Move	1.0
<b>TEAM TIMING</b>	Exceeding maximum time by >30 seconds	1.0, but the judge's discretion applies
<b>LIFTS</b>	Lifts are permitted in Team Baton and Pom if fully supported. Any lifts performed and considered not supported will incur a penalty	5.0, but the judge's discretion applies
<b>COSTUME</b>	In the event of a costume malfunction, such as a headpiece or hat falling off during the routine	1.0



## SECTION 8: EVENT DEFINITIONS

*Royal Twirl Association prioritises the technique and quality of contact materials, rolls, accompanying bodywork and aerial work over content and difficulty*

### 8.1 BATON TEAM

#### DEFINITION

An ensemble of at least 4 athletes showcasing twirling, manoeuvring and bodywork, resulting in visual effectiveness with quality, unison and precision of trained skills. This is a baton-dominant event.

**MUSIC:** personal choice

**AREA:** Whole floor

#### CONTENT

The programme and the dancers should be 'one' in their timing responsibilities and demonstrate a uniform approach to execution. The routine should display choreography paced with impactful movements, dynamic performance qualities, highs and lows, and interaction and expression that yield quality entertainment value. No props allowed.

The representation of three twirl modes should be present, with movement, exchanges, and synchronicity layered. Dancers should demonstrate compatible and equal skills. Working together to convey one unified concept. Although multiple batons are not required, they can be utilised to enhance baton content when completed by multiple dancers. Floor coverage, staging, forms, and transitions should serve as the 'blueprint' for the dance, showcasing a uniform and controlled display of baton and skills. Content restrictions apply.

#### EXECUTION

The skills executed should be seamless in connecting, demonstrating precise and proper baton and technique that reflects the three twirl modes and exchanges throughout. Performance qualities and the mastery of trained skills will yield the highest level of general effect.



## 8.2 MAJORETTE POM TEAM

### DEFINITION

A pom team is a discipline with a minimum of 4 athletes and 1 set of poms. It is a musically interpretative and body-dominant event. The main objective is to entertain the judges and the audience.

**MUSIC:** personal choice

**AREA:** whole floor

### CONTENT:

The routine should display a variety of manoeuvres and motions using dance and pom, incorporating both lower- and upper-body movement to create effective pictures, patterns, and transitions. Any dance style may be used. Routines should utilise the entire floor space. Changes to the floor pattern should be incorporated, and staging and overall effect should be considered throughout.

Poms may leave the hands, but the majority of the routine must be performed with each dancer using a pair of poms in a full hand grip. Exchanges are not permitted, and the tossing of poms to team members or to oneself is not allowed.

Placing poms on the ground without touching the poms is not permitted. No props or accessories allowed. Mounts can be used up to 1.5 storeys.

All pompoms must be of the same size and type. They should be large enough to cover the back of the hand.

### EXECUTION

Routines should demonstrate perfection and uniformity throughout, be seamless in connection. Dancers should be as 'one' with music. Correctly demonstrated musical styles to bring the music to life.



## 8.3 MILITARY FREESTYLE

### DEFINITION

Minimum of four athletes, no maximum. Each with one standard baton. This should display an ensemble of dancers prioritising precision and perfection. This is a military dominant event with the emphasis on the correct technique of both body and baton

MUSIC: personal choice

AREA: whole floor

### CONTENT:

An entry and exit onto the competition area is required. (It is up to the individual team where this may be)

The routine should display a mix of military formations, a variety of upper- and lower-body marching styles, baton sequences, and use all models of twirl and a variety of dance steps.

### EXECUTION

Timing to the music is key, and all members must be in step throughout. Spacing, lines and precision are to be expected along with excellent showmanship and musicality. The expectation is that any content is performed with good technique and at the correct level for the athletes.



## 8.4 SOLO BATON

### DEFINITION

This section is a baton dominant event, focusing on the use of the three modes of twirling, which consist of aeriels, rolls and contact material.

**MUSIC:** Baby, Dinkies, Tinies and Juniors will dance to the set music provided by the RTA. Seniors are permitted to dance to music of their choosing.

**AREA:** whole floor

### CONTENT:

The routine must include a balance of the three modes of twirling, integrating and executing in various patterns and directions, with the use of varied body work and ambidexterity. Difficulty is created through timing, intricacy, follow-through and speed, with emphasis on the flow, continuity and consistency of the baton.

**Content restrictions apply. See Section 5.**

### EXECUTION

Skills shall be presented with seamless connectivity, demonstrating effortless continuity and flow throughout the routine. The rate of revolution and the coordination of the baton with body movement, together with the consistency of their execution, shall be considered indicators of overall control. Seamless transitions, as well as the uniformity and appropriateness of speed in proportion to the complexity of the skills performed, shall determine the overall mastery of the event.



## 8.5 DUO BATON

### DEFINITION

Duet is an event performed by two athletes, each utilising one standard baton, in which baton work is the primary focus. The routine shall include all three twirl modes, in addition to exchanges, sequences involving multiple batons, and choreography that demonstrates interrelation and interdependence between the athletes.

**MUSIC:** Baby, Dinkies, Tinies and Juniors will dance to the set music provided by the RTA. Seniors are permitted to dance to music of their choosing.

**AREA:** whole floor

### CONTENT:

The routine shall demonstrate equal representation of the three twirl modes, exchanges, multiple baton work, movement, synchronicity, and layered elements, all executed in partnership. The program shall exhibit seamless connectivity throughout. Athletes shall demonstrate equal and compatible skill levels, working collaboratively to present a single, unified concept.

**Contents restrictions apply. Please see section 5.**

### EXECUTION

Correct technique in both body and baton work shall be demonstrated, reflecting the concept of twirling as one through synchronicity and the execution of multi-textured elements within the choreography. While not performed to music, the Duet shall demonstrate precise timing, rhythm, uniformity, coordination, and unison throughout.



## 8.5 POM SOLO

### DEFINITION

Pom Solo is a continuous combination of body and pom movements performed by a single dancer, choreographed to emphasise forward motion throughout the routine. This event is body-dominant, with pom work that enhances and complements the dancer's movement and expression.

**MUSIC:** Dancers permitted to dance to music of their choosing.

**AREA:** whole floor

### CONTENT

The Pom Solo routine shall be constructed in a logical and coherent manner and performed with strong, consistent body technique throughout. The routine shall demonstrate excellent body control and flexibility, with arm and pom movements carefully choreographed to enhance and complement the performance. Use of levels and floor work shall be incorporated seamlessly into the choreography. The routine shall exhibit variety and originality, and shall be performed at a consistent tempo from start to finish.

### EXECUTION

The routine shall demonstrate precise technique and execution of both body movements and pompons, with careful attention to timing, routine construction, difficulty, and variety. Consideration shall also be given to posture, gracefulness, overall appearance, and presentation.



## 8.6 POM DUO

### DEFINITION

Pom Duo is a continuous combination of body and pom movements performed by two athletes, choreographed to emphasise forward motion and partnership throughout the routine. This event is body-dominant, with pom work designed to enhance and complement the athletes' coordinated movements and expression.

**MUSIC:** Dancers are permitted to dance to music of their choosing

**AREA:** whole floor

### CONTENT

The Pom Duo routine shall be constructed in a logical and coherent manner and performed with strong, consistent body technique by both athletes. The routine shall demonstrate excellent body control, flexibility, and synchronised execution, with arm and pom movements carefully choreographed to complement the performance and each other. Use of levels, floor work, and interactive partner elements shall be incorporated seamlessly into the choreography. The routine shall exhibit variety and originality, and shall be performed at a consistent tempo from start to finish.

### EXECUTION

The routine shall demonstrate precise technique and execution of both body movements and pompons by both athletes, with careful attention to timing, routine construction, difficulty, and variety. Consideration shall also be given to posture, gracefulness, overall appearance, synchronisation between partners, and the overall presentation of the performance.





*As founders of the Royal Twirling Association,*

*We would like to wish all teams taking to the floor this season the very best of luck.*

*We are incredibly excited to welcome you and look forward to embarking on this journey together, growing and developing within the sports of Majorettes and Baton Twirling.*

*Thank you for being part of this new and exciting chapter.*

*We cannot wait to see what the season brings.*

*Liam Crooks*