Cheerleading Motions

Motions are one of the basic foundations of Cheerleading and an essential skill all Cheerleaders should master and more importantly keep mastered.

Lots of talented cheerleaders have a tendency to develop bad habits in their motions over time, so it's important to continue to drill your squad on motions, even if it seems repetitive.

Here are some tips on teaching sharp, snappy motions that will wow judges at any cheer competition.

The 4 P’s of Motion Technique

**Placement**

When learning or practicing motions, it is important to check to make sure you have proper placement of each motion.

Using a partner or a mirror will help you to master motions. Each motion should feel comfortable and be exactly the same for other side.

Know exactly where the spot is to hit a motion and don't settle for anything else than that spot. Arms should be stiff, elbows locked, and muscles tight. Don't allow the arms to shake or jiggle.

While in the clasp motion, hands should be under the chin, with the elbows tucked in tightly and your fingers close together.

Know in what direction the fist should be facing for any particular movement.

Keep the thumbs outside the fist, not scrunched up inside the hand.

**Perfection**

Once you've mastered the placement of each motion, it is time to learn how to hit those motions perfectly every time.

Using motion drills to counts or music will help you develop muscle memory for every motion.

It's important to get proper muscle memory for each motion so that you don't learn to hit the motions in the wrong place.
After creating a motion drill begin to change the order of the motions and gradually speeding up the drill, to begin to learn to be even sharper.

Be sure to include both sides of any motion that are created with one arm!

You don’t want to have a great right punch and not be able to perform a left one.

**Precision**

Now it’s time to learn how to have perfect timing with your teammates!

The following methods are a few effective ways of getting your team’s motions sharper.

First, put your team in a bowling pin formation.

Then make sure everyone knows the same motion drill and then start practicing the drill at a fairly slow pace.

Make sure everyone is hitting the motion at the same time and with the same placement.

Once everyone has mastered their timing and placement, then it is time to start speeding up the motion drill.

When the drill gets fast enough you will notice that the team will begin to develop the same timing and placement in their motions.

Sharp ‘n Snappy - We’ve probably all heard this before when referring to motions, but what does it truly mean?

It means your arms should be stiff and your muscles tight. Your transitions should be smooth, snappy and quick. You should punch your motions out with a lot of strength.

Make sure that the motions correspond exactly with the syllables of the words in the cheer or chant, or the count of your dance routines and stunts.

When transitioning to the next motion, take the shortest distance, and wait until the last second to make the motion. Make the movement quickly and precisely.

Punch the motions out with strength and enthusiasm.
**Performing**

Sharp motions add great visual effect to your performances.

This is why it’s very important to drill everyone on the correct technique and placement of their motions.

If they practice it correctly, they will perform it correctly.

It becomes more difficult for the coach to perfect a routine if you skip these important drills.

Incorporate the 4 P’s of Motion Technique into your practices.

You will see improvement in everyone’s motions regardless of their talent level.

Once everyone is confident and comfortable doing motions you can begin to use them more to lead your crowd at games, which can be just as effective as using stunts, pyramids, etc.

If you have a competition team, including these drills as a normal part of practice from the beginning, will mean that you don’t have to worry about last minute run throughs to clean up motion sequences during competition season.

See the next page for illustrations of basic cheerleading motions.
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![Diagram of cheerleading motions](image)