

The Ultimate Guide to...

# BECOMING A PRO CHEER LEADER



The complete  
guide to preparing  
for professional  
level cheerleader  
tryouts!



Featuring Articles by Current &  
Former Pro Cheerleaders &  
Coaches

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ISBN 0-9708602-3-4

Printed in the USA by:  
Darnell Spirit Productions  
317 4<sup>th</sup> St. N.E.  
Orange City, IA 51041

[www.CheerAndDanceBooks.com](http://www.CheerAndDanceBooks.com)

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# CHAPTER ONE: CHOOSING THE RIGHT TEAM

**By Wynter Lloyd**

Considering that I have lived in the Baltimore area almost all my life, choosing the Baltimore Ravens Cheerleading Team was not a hard choice to make. I began cheering my sophomore year of high school, following the influence of a friend of mine who had already been on the team for the fall season. After my first year of cheering I fell in love with the sport and decided I could never give it up. Four years of collegiate cheerleading for Florida Southern College and Salisbury University was not where I wanted to end my cheerleading career. I then decided I could either become a coach and influence our future cheerleaders, or continue to participate in the sport myself. I truly believe that all coaches wish they could still participate in the sport, and I felt the same

way. Coaching just would not be the same as being on that field in front of the screaming fans and leading a team onto victory. I then looked into professional cheerleading.

There are a handful of teams I could select from the area including the Baltimore Blast of the MISL, Philadelphia Eagles of the NFL, and the Ravens. I felt I would enjoy cheering for the NFL because of the incredible support of the fans and of the prestige, which came along with the idea of becoming a NFL cheerleader. I chose to tryout for the Baltimore Ravens for many reasons. Cheerleaders of the NFL seem to be based off of technical and studio dancing. I have never been a studio dancer and had never taken a dance lesson in my life. What attracted me to the Baltimore Ravens Cheerleaders is that their dancing style is more often than not a cheerleader style of dance. I felt I held an advantage since I had been currently cheering for five years. I also felt I had a benefit in trying out for the Baltimore Ravens because they are the only NFL team to have a co-ed cheerleading team. In my cheerleading experience I had been a flyer in stunts. Since this team had this unique quality about them, I felt I had an edge above the rest of the cheerleaders who were trying out.

At the time of the tryouts I was a junior at Salisbury University. I considered many factors when choosing to try out for this team. Since I was attending Salisbury University, which is located approximately 2.5 hours from Baltimore, I had to decide if this commute was feasible with my busy course schedule. Since I truly wanted to be on this team, I was willing to do whatever it would take to make this possible. I

would change my schedule around and quit my cheerleading team at school. I was definitely willing to make some sacrifices for this step in my cheerleading career. I tried out for the stunt team, but unfortunately did not make it that year. I am a girl with a lot of perseverance behind me; I tried out 3 more times before I actually made the team. Each tryout gave me a bit more knowledge on what the coaches were looking for in their cheerleaders. Whether it was the hairstyle, the makeup, or even the outfit I wore to tryouts, it all made a difference in the end.

Having now been on the team for 2 years, I have learned that being on a professional cheerleading team requires a huge time commitment. An easy week consists of two practices that are 3 hours each. Adding to this, I may have an appearance that could be in my hometown or possibly up to an hour away. Game weeks add an additional nine-hour day to the mix. Having an open schedule is somewhat necessary for this type of job. I have found you also need the time to keep in shape so putting in hours at the gym is not an option. Overall, becoming a professional cheerleader is definitely a part-time job, and for this teacher, it definitely keeps me on my toes.