

ONLY

Twirlers

THE
2026

AYOP
Survival guide

NOTRE
DAME



TOP PHOTO
SPOTS



LOCAL
EATS



PACKING
LISTS



AYOP
TRADITIONS



INSIDER
TIPS



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WELCOME from Shaylie



Welcome Twirlers, Families, and Fans!

I have attended nationals for **20+ years** wearing many different hats from competitor, teammate, judge, coach and vendor. Every year, I look forward to this special week when **twirlers take over South Bend**.

This year is extra special as we celebrate **10 YEARS OF ONLY TWIRLERS** and our honor of being **THE ONE AND ONLY OFFICIAL AYOP VENDOR!** We are so grateful for this amazing twirling community and can't wait to see the memories we'll make together.



As you step onto the floor, remember to **enjoy each moment** and be present. Success is not defined in placements, it is defined in **your own personal controllable accomplishments**. Laugh with your friends, cheer for others, try your best, and most importantly—have fun! ♥

Be sure to eat a **Ben's pretzel** for me!

Twirlingly,
Shaylie ♥

THANK YOU FOR BEING
A PART OF THE MAGIC
THAT IS **AYOP!** ♥



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AYOP Traditions

These are the moments, memories, and must-do's that make AYOP so special! Embrace the traditions, *make new memories, and have the best week ever!*

1

DECORATE YOUR DOOR

Twirlers love to decorate the door of their hotel rooms. Get creative and decorate your door!



2

CAR CHALK IS A MUST

Rep your team, your town or your title!



3

PINNING IS WINNING

Bring decorated clothes pins to trade with twirlers throughout the duration of the competition!



4

GRAB A BEN'S PRETZEL

No trip to AYOP is complete without it.



5

VENDOR SHOPPING

Be sure to shop all of your baton favorites throughout South Bend! (Make sure your first stop is to Only Twirlers for the one and only official merchandise of AYOP!)



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AYOP WEEK

AT A GLANCE

YOUR GUIDE TO AN UNFORGETTABLE WEEK IN SOUTH BEND! ♥



1 MONDAY
JULY 13



ARRIVAL DAY ♥

- Arrive in South Bend
- WFNBTB Inspiration Cup Qualifier
- Shop the Only Twirlers Pop-Up
- Practice & Get Settled
- Explore Notre Dame Campus



2 TUESDAY
JULY 14



LET THE COMPETITION BEGIN! ♥

- National Rhythmic Championships
- Warm Up
- Vendor Shopping
- Take your first AYOP photos
- Team dinners begin

3 WEDNESDAY
JULY 15



FULL COMPETITION DAY ♥

- National Majorette
- Little Big One
- Dancelines & Poms
- Pageant Model
- Men's Nationals
- Grab dinner with your team

4 THURSDAY
JULY 16



BIG EVENTS CONTINUE ♥

- Miss Majorette
- X-Strut
- Solos
- Teams
- Duets
- More shopping!

5 FRIDAY
JULY 17



DON'T MISS TODAY! ♥

- Corps
- Collegiate Prelims
- World Open Twirl Offs
- Team Member of the Year
- Last chance to shop!

6 SATURDAY
JULY 18



CHAMPIONSHIP DAY ♥

- Finals
- Awards
- Grand Team Finals
- Miss Majorette Awards

★ THE BIG SHOW ★ 7:00 PM

- Top 6 Twirl-Off
- New Royalty Crowned
- Giveaways
- Happy Tears

SHAYLIE'S TIP! ♥



Don't try to do everything! Pick a few "must-do" moments each day, leave time to cheer on friends, explore campus, and **soak in the memories**. AYOP goes by faster than you think!



FOR DETAILED EVENT TIMES, LOCATIONS, AND UPDATES,
PLEASE REFER TO THE OFFICIAL 2026 AYOP SCHEDULE PUBLISHED BY NBTA INTERNATIONAL.

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AYOP SHOPPING GUIDE

THE ONE & ONLY OFFICIAL VENDOR
SUPPLYING OFFICIAL AYOP GEAR!

ONLY
TWIRLERS
IS THE
OFFICIAL
SOURCE!

HILTON GARDEN INN

☆ *Pop-Up Shop* ☆



MONDAY, JULY 13
12:00 PM – 6:00 PM



TUESDAY, JULY 14
8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

NOTRE DAME LOCATION

(Outside the Monogram Room)



**WEDNESDAY –
SATURDAY**

☆ *Visit us throughout
championship week!* ☆



AYOP GEAR WILL SELL OUT!
♡ *SHOP EARLY!* ♡

Popular items and sizes go fast. Don't wait—be sure to stop by early to grab your must-haves!

DON'T MISS:



PHOTO BOOTH

Capture the memories with your besties!



NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN MERCHANDISE

Exclusive designs you won't find anywhere else!



TWIRLEBRITY AUTOGRAPHS

Meet your favorites and get their autograph!



AYOP EXCLUSIVES

Official AYOP gear you can only get here!



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FIRST TIMER'S Guide



Welcome to **AYOP!** Whether this is your first time or you're coming back for more memories, we're so excited to have you in **South Bend**. Here are a few things every first timer should know!

YOU'VE GOT
THIS!

1 THE BATON TWIRLING COMMUNITY *is amazing!*

Don't be afraid to ask questions and ask for help from seasoned parents. You'll find that twirlers and families are always ready to help and welcome you!



2 THE MONOGRAM ROOM *is your hub*

for assistance. You will pick up **awards** and **scoresheets** here for all open events. If you need help with your entry, changing events, etc. The staff in the monogram room will be able to help.



3 WHAT IS A *Major?*

This might be a term you hear throughout the week of AYOP. A Baton twirling Major is a title given to a person who has contributed to the sport of baton twirling in a significant way. Majors are named by **NBTA International**. Be sure to thank them when you see them!



4 DON'T MISS *THE BIG SHOW!*

The Big Show is a signature moment of AYOP. The Top 6 Twirl off, the farewell performances of our Teenage and College Miss Majorette's of America, the crowning of new royalty, surprise giveaways and so much more are part of this iconic event.

SAVE SEATS EARLY, GET SOME SNACKS
AND ENJOY THE SHOW!



5 WHAT IS THE *Blue Curtain?*

The Blue Curtain is a nickname given to the Grand National Twirling Championship event. Advanced twirlers who qualified in their state or regional competition twirl off in front of the Blue Curtain in the arena.

- ★ After the first round, each age division is cut to the Top 20.
- ★ The Top 20 then twirl off again in front of the Blue Curtain to determine the Top 6.
- ★ The Top 6 will twirl off once more during The Big Show for the title of Grand National Twirling Champion.
- ★ **Fun fact:** The top 3 twirlers from this event in certain age groups will qualify to represent the USA in Italy at the World Baton Twirling Championships!



6 HAVE FUN!

- ♥ Try not to get overwhelmed with the big landscape of AYOP.
- ★ Be intentional with your time.
- 😊 Be happy for your twirler and their successes.
- 👑 Establish traditions that work for you and your family.





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ADVICE

FROM THE TWIRLEBRITIES



INSPIRED. EXPERIENCED. UNSTOPPABLE.

Some of the biggest names in baton twirling share the advice they wish every athlete heard before stepping onto the competition floor.

Kaycee Shultz

TEENAGE MISS MAJORETTE OF AMERICA
& GRAND NATIONAL TWIRLING CHAMPION



“ Rely on your practice and twirl calm, you’ve put in the work, and now it’s time to trust yourself. Take a deep breath, stay focused, and let your confidence shine through. Along the way remember to seize every opportunity, strive for greatness, and surpass your limits. You got this. ”

Brooke McClain

2025 COLLEGIATE
NATIONAL CHAMPION



“ My biggest piece of advice for girls is to trust yourself. You have practiced too hard to let nerves control your routine. When you step out on that floor you only get one chance. It is now or never. Take charge on that floor and trust yourself. All the practice, all the time, and all the effort will pay off. You need to give it your all and most importantly be proud of yourself. Don’t leave with any regret even if a routine doesn’t turn out perfect. The most important thing is to be confident and leave a presence everytime you compete. We spend too much time practicing to let our nerves take the best of us. Own the floor and be proud of how far you have come. ”

☆ CHAMPIONS AREN'T FEARLESS—THEY TRUST THEIR PREPARATION. ☆





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RESTAURANT GUIDE



GREAT FOOD. LOCAL FAVORITES.
PROUD SUPPORTERS OF TWIRLERS!



ONLY TWIRLERS PICK:
BEST BREAKFAST
& BRUNCH ♥



UPTOWN KITCHEN®

Whether you're fueling up before competition or celebrating after awards, Uptown Kitchen is one of our favorite local spots for breakfast, brunch, and lunch.



7am - 2pm Monday - Friday
8am - 2pm Saturday & Sunday



Brunch features on the weekends



Reservations recommended on weekends



Online ordering, takeout and delivery available



Breakfast/Lunch/Brunch catering available with 24 hours notice



Can deliver to hotels, Notre Dame, etc.



Entire restaurant can be rented for private events after hours (starting at 4pm daily)



Locally owned & operated



ONLY TWIRLERS PICK:
BEST TEAM DINNER ♥

PapaVino's ITALIAN KITCHEN®

Looking for a delicious meal with your team? Papa Vino's is a local favorite with plenty of room for groups and classic Italian dishes everyone will love.



11am - 10pm Sunday - Thursday
11am - 11pm Friday & Saturday



Online ordering, takeout and delivery available



Large catering orders available with 24 hours notice



Can deliver to hotels, Notre Dame, etc.



Four private rooms with seating for up to 60 (based on availability, additional charges apply)



Locally owned & operated



JUST MINUTES FROM NOTRE DAME!

Convenient locations for teams and families.



UPTOWN KITCHEN



PAPA VINO'S

THANK YOU TO UPTOWN KITCHEN & PAPA VINO'S FOR SUPPORTING THE BATON TWIRLING COMMUNITY!



SUPPORT LOCAL. EAT WELL. ENJOY AYOP!





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PACKING List

BE PREPARED.
BE CONFIDENT.
BE YOU!



A little planning goes a long way! Use this checklist to make sure you have everything you need for a successful, stress-free, and **FUN** week of AYOP! ♥



If you forget tights or need a new pair, don't fear! **Only Twirlers** is selling tights this year!


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 College Gear for College Nights
(Rep your school!)

 Costumes

 Good Luck gifts to pass out

 Decorations for your Door

 Practice outfits for everyday of the competition

 A jacket
(the arena gets cold!)

 A blanket to save seats in the arena for the Big Show



Your official AYOP 2026 Gear



Hairspray



Bobby Pins



Practice Shoes



Competition Shoes



Competition earrings



And of course....
Your batons!

PACK SMART.
TWIRL STRONG.
MAKE MEMORIES!

YOU'VE GOT THIS!





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See You in **SOUTH BEND!**

May this week be filled with unforgettable performances, lifelong friendships, happy tears, and memories *you'll treasure forever.*



“ Twenty years later, I still look forward to this week more than almost any other. I hope AYOP becomes just as special to you as it has been to me. ”

Twirlingly, Shaylie

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