

Gymnastics Skills & Drills

Partner Body Tension Drills

- 1) Standing upright with arms above the head - partner tries to break body tension.
- 2) Push up position - partner tries to break body tension, then picks up ankles and shakes body to break tension.
- 3) Lying on back - partner picks up ankles & the entire body should raise as a "plank of wood".
- 4) Tipping drill - one person in middle and 2 partners either side of person. Person in middle tips forward and backward keeping body tight. Partners catch and push person back. Gradually increase the distance of the "fall".
- 5) Push up position - 2 partners lift ankles and raise person to a handstand and back down to a push up.

Safety Rolls

- 1) **Back safety roll** - as you fall backwards roll backwards with arms above your head - back rounded - chin tucked in - arms banging to floor before head
 - 2) **Front safety roll** - as you fall forward roll forwards - tuck head to chest - dip one shoulder to side - place arm along mat - roll over one shoulder
- Intent of both rolls is to dissipate the force of the landing by attenuating it over the extent of the roll.**

Roll Variations

- 1) Pencil roll - roll with arms above head & body tight
- 2) Log roll - roll with arms by side and body tight
- 3) Egg roll - roll in a tucked position
- 4) Side roll - 1 knee to 1 knee - roll sideways across shoulders
- 5) Side roll - 2 knee to 2 knee - roll sideways across shoulders
- 6) Dolly roll - sit in straddle & roll to one side, back and other side

Forward Roll

- 1) Rock and roll
- 2) Rock and roll reach to partner and stand
- 3) Hand-hips high- roll
- 4) Roll down an incline
- 5) Forward roll tuck to tuck

Key Points:

- hips high
- place back of head on ground
- back stays rounded
- heels by bottom reach forward

Cues:

- Flat hands
- Tuck your head
- Round & roll

Spotting:

- hands on hips, lower to ground, tuck head underneath

Variations:

- *Straight leg & pike leg forward roll*
- *Forward roll to straddle*
- *Forward roll step out 1 foot*
- *Forward roll to kneel (side & 1 knee up)*
- *Forward roll with straight legs to stand (very difficult)*

Backward Roll (typically do not teach in schools)

- 1) Rock and roll with bunny ears
- 2) Sit on cheese and roll back with bunny ears
- 3) Squat to rock and roll
- 4) Back roll with a spot
- 5) Back roll from squat to squat

Key Points:

- hands by ears and push hard
- stay tucked
- good momentum to get over

Cues:

Hands flat & push
Tucked like a ball

Spotting:

- once gymnast has started rolling place hands either side of hips and lift as they roll over the head

Variations:

- *Backward roll to straddle stand*
- *Backward roll to straddle sit*
- *Backward roll to 1 leg stand*
- *Backward roll with straight leg entry*

Headstand

- 1) Knees to head triangle position
- 2) Tripod
- 3) Headstand against safety mat or with support
- 4) Tuck headstand
- 5) Straight leg headstand

Key Points:

- head and hands in a triangle position
- hips over head
- weight toward hands
- balance on forehead (hairline) part of head
- good body tension

Cues:

Triangle
Hairline
Balance with hands

Spotting:

- from behind (back) place hands on hips and assist with entry and balance

Variations:

- *straddle to headstand and straddle down to straddle stand*
- *straight leg entry to straight leg headstand*

Handstand - one of the most critical skills in gymnastics)

- 1) Mule kicks
- 2) Donkey kicks
- 3) Step lunge and place hands on the floor
- 4) Hands on floor and little kick
- 5) Hands on box and kick raise to stand
- 6) Handstand walking feet up a wall
- 7) Kick to mini (3/4) handstand
- 8) Handstand with a partner spot
- 9) Handstand by self

Key Points:

- long lunge
- long reach with hands
- kick hard
- good body tension
- straight body position over hands
- look at your hands
- step down out of the skill
- push off your hands
- lunge to finish

Cues:

- Long lunge
- Kick hard
- Tight body
- Look at hands

Spotting:

- from side get near hand on front of hip and assist the kick up, far hand comes across far side of the back of the hip and supports the balance, lower to floor

Variations:

- *Stag handstand*
- *Straddle handstand*
- *Straddle up handstand*
- *Kneel kick to handstand*
- *Handstand turn*
- *Split handstand*
- *Tuck up handstand*
- *Pike up handstand*
- *Handstand forward roll*

Cartwheel

- 1) Jump from side to side of a bench/box with hips high
- 2) Mini pin wheel (1, 2, 3, 4) with hand and foot prints
- 3) Cartwheel on a line
- 4) Cartwheel with a spot
- 5) Cartwheel side to side

Key Points:

- 1, 2, 3, 4 pattern
- long lunge & long reach
- second hand reaches over top by ear
- kick first leg hard
- body passes over the top of the hands not around the side
- push off hands to stand
- start and finish in a lunge

Cues:

- Hand, Hand, Foot, Foot
- 2nd arm over the top
- Push off hands

Spotting

- back of gymnast to spotter, near hand goes on hip of gymnast, far hand goes on far hip of gymnast as they rotate, hands stay on gymnast as they rotate and spotter moves with gymnast

Variations:

- *Side to side cartwheel*
- *1 handed cartwheel (near and far hand)*
- *Cartwheel to kneel*
- *Dive cartwheel*
- *Front to back cartwheel*
- *Kneel to cartwheel*
- *Running cartwheel*

Hurdle Step - a running step with a skip that precedes skills such as a cartwheel or round off

Round Off

- 1) Cartwheel front to back
- 2) Cartwheel join feet together and pike down
- 3) Running cartwheel
- 4) Round off from a low box
- 5) Handstand snap down

Key Points:

- good hurdle with a long step
- long reach with second hand over the top
- fast kick into the round off
- snap legs together by vertical
- push off hands
- snap down legs quickly
- raise hands above head

Cues:

- Lunge & reach
- Legs together
- Snap down

Spotting

- typically not necessary but can spot similar to a cartwheel

Variations:

The round off can be linked to many other skills:

- Round off back roll
- Round off jump half turn
- Forward roll step out round off
- Cartwheel round off
- Round off jump (straddle/tuck/pike)

Stands/Balances

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|---------------|
| 1) Shoulder | 2) Y-stand | 3) Arabesque |
| 4) Bridge | 5) V-sit | 6) Knee scale |

Jumps/Leaps

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1) Tuck | 2) Straddle | 3) Straddle pike |
| 4) Pike | 5) Arch | 6) Asymmetrical |
| 7) Split leap | 8) Stag leap | 9) Cat leap |
| 10) Scissor - front & Back | 11) Side leap | |

Turns

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1) $\frac{1}{2}$ turn on 2 feet | 2) $\frac{1}{2}$ turn on 1 foot | 3) 1/1 turn on 1 foot |
| 4) 1/1 turn reverse | 5) $\frac{1}{2}$ turn in squat on 2 feet | |

Often Used Components of a Gymnastic Routine

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|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Levels | 2) Pathways | 3) Start & end pose |
| 4) Rolls | 5) Jumps | 6) Balances |
| 7) Turns | 8) Handstands | 9) Cartwheels |
| 10) Tumbling pass | 11) Linking moves | |

Possible Components of a Floor Routine

K & 1 - skill combinations (e.g. roll & jump)

2 & 3 - start & end pose, levels, 2 jumps, 2 balances, turns, 1 roll, 1 weight bearing, linking moves

4 & 5 - start & end pose, levels, 1 jump, 1 balance, 2 rolls, 2 weight bearing, linking moves

Work on combinations of skills in warm up. As you teach a new skill combine it to a previously learned skill. Start building "routines" from the beginning of the unit.

Partner and Group Stunts

Do not do these until you have worked on body tension and weight bearing skills.

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|---|--|
| 1) Double arabesque | 2) Partner pull-up |
| 3) Double V | 4) Double side lean |
| 5) Double bear | 6) Double crab |
| 7) 2-level bear pyramid | 8) Handstand spotted by partner in straddle or kneel |
| 9) 1 leg balance on partner's knee | 10) 2-level standing pyramid |
| 11) Front angel position | 12) Standing in hands of partner on back |
| 13) Bear - partner kick to neck hook stand | |
| 14) Partner on back - jump to sitting on partner's feet | |

- Emphasize "challenge by choice".
- Focus on communication between the performers & spotters.
- Provide peer spotters.
- Do not allow horse play.
- Teach careful climbing in and out of the stunt.
- Encourage body tension.