



Competitive Squad Handbook

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Introduction

Firstly, we'd like to congratulate your child on being selected to become a Squad Member at Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club. Squads represent the top 5% of gymnasts at our club and only the most hard-working and dedicated candidates are chosen.

Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club's competitive squads have been a huge success since the club opened in 2021. Our gymnasts have competed at club, county, regional and national level events bringing back numerous medals in the process.

This handbook has been created to provide you with all of the information needed as a competitive squad member and outlines the expectations of the gymnast, coach and the parent.

Competitive gymnastics is a demanding sport, but an incredibly rewarding one. The skills learned go beyond physical ability and help pave the way forward for success in life. Such skills include; teamwork, commitment, resilience, discipline and confidence.

Please take the time to read through this booklet and consider the information carefully. It is a helpful resource for parents and gymnasts to refer back to.

We'd like to thank you for choosing Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club and look forward to seeing your child develop into an elite athlete!

Jimmy Taylor Cardoso

Jimmy Taylor Cardoso
Head Coach
Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club



Disciplines

Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club have a number of squads across different disciplines and at different age/ability levels. They are as follows:

Women's Artistic Gymnastics (WAG)

Encompassing the Floor, Beam, Bars & Vault, Women's Artistic Gymnastics remains one of the biggest crowd pleasers and most watch sports at the Olympic games. In order to succeed, gymnasts must develop strength, flexibility, artistry and elegance across all apparatus.

Notable British WAG Gymnasts:

Beth Tweddle | Alice Kinsella | Jessica Gadirova | Jennifer Gadirova | Georgia-Mae Fenton

Men's Artistic Gymnastics (MAG)

Encompassing the Floor, Rings, High Bar, Vault, Pommel & Parallel Bars Men's Artistic Gymnastics requires strength, mobility, endurance, flexibility, body control and coordination. The physique of an elite male gymnast says it all - years of hard work and dedication.

Notable British MAG Gymnasts:

Nile Wilson | Jake Jarman | Max Whitlock | James Hall | Courtney Tullock | Harry Hepworth

Tumbling (TUM)

Tumbling is characterised by the complex, swift and rhythmical succession of acrobatic bounding from hands to feet, feet to hands or even feet directly back to feet. A tumbling pass may be over in a matter of seconds and is performed on a tumbling track that is 25 metres in length.

Notable British TUM Gymnasts:

Kristof Willerton | Jaydon Paddock | Fred Teague | Comfort Yates | Megan Kealy

Aerobic (AER)

Aerobic Gymnastics is perhaps the most dynamic and energetic of all the gymnastics Disciplines. Aerobic gymnastics is a recent addition to the stable of gymnastics disciplines and boasts a growing number of enthusiasts throughout the UK. Immediately recognisable for its high energy and heart pounding routines set to lively up-tempo music, Aerobic Gymnastics is popular with both males and females and offers opportunities for participation as individuals, mixed pairs, trios and groups.

Notable British AER Gymnasts:

Lola Lawrence | Emily Blackhurst | Connor Keane | Niamh Keane | Felix Smith

Housekeeping

Personal Belongings

Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club will not be held responsible for the loss of personal items. Items found within the gym may be placed in our lost property drawers for a limited time period before being donated to a charity or otherwise discarded.

We encourage you to clearly label all personal belongings, in particular, personal gymnastics equipment and club branded attire which can easily be mixed up.

Parental Viewing

Parents/carers may watch squad sessions from the viewing area. When sessions run alongside recreational classes, viewing priority goes to recreational parents. If the area is full, please wait outside until the class finishes.

Drop off/Collection

Please drop off your child as close to the session start time as possible and avoid arriving very early or late. Squad training sessions overlap, and frequent door entry disrupts coaching time.

Photography

In our squads, coaches use photos and videos as part of the learning process — especially for visual feedback, celebrating progress and capturing achievements.

Once gymnasts move into the competitive pathway, there are media factors we cannot control. Many competitions allow audience filming, use official photographers, or live-stream routines. At some levels, gymnasts' names, scores, clubs and performance videos are published online by the event organisers.

Because this exposure is part of the competition framework, a certain level of photo and media consent is required for gymnasts to take part in squad competitions. If your family has restrictions around consent, privacy or security, please speak with us before accepting a squad place so that we can discuss whether this pathway is suitable and ensure it aligns with your needs.

Our aim is to be open and transparent from the beginning, so that every family can make an informed decision in the best interests of their child.

Jewellery & Hair

Our club rules apply here - all jewellery must be removed before the training session. Newly pierced ears can be taped from home for a maximum of 6 weeks, after which, they **MUST** be removed.

Hair must be tied up in a bun. Squad gymnastics involves a lot of vigorous exercise and hair must be tied up in a bun to avoid obstructing vision.

Health/Injury

Your child's health and well-being is our number one priority. The club may refuse your child from training if they feel that participating will compromise the safety of themselves or others in any way.

Accidents are an unfortunate, yet inevitable risk of gymnastics participation. The club makes every effort to minimise the risk of accidents occurring within the gym by using appropriate equipment, training methods and qualified staff.

As a member of Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club, you consent to our staff providing the appropriate first aid treatment which they are qualified to administer to help care for your child in the event of an accident.

In the unfortunate event of an accident/injury, parents will be contacted as soon as convenient following the appropriate medical provision being provided to the gymnast. In the event of your child requiring external medical provision, such as a trip to the hospital, our staff may accompany your child in an ambulance to the hospital until you are present to take over the duty of care. Our club has an accident reporting procedure to log accidents and a copy of the form can be sent to you, upon request.

Gymnastics as a sport requires a lot of repetition which can cause stress related injuries. To minimise the impact on your child's health and performance, we may recommend a reduced number of training hours and days to help speed up the recovery process. It may be that a gymnast can continue attending training working on developing a different area of the body until the injured area has healed sufficiently.

Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club reserve the right to refuse your child's right to train if they feel like continued participation will be detrimental to their health or wellbeing. We may also refuse your child's right to train if they do not feel sufficient information has been provided and evidenced by external medical practitioners supporting their fitness levels.

Ceasing membership at Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club following injury, or throughout a rehabilitation period may affect your child's recovery and their place within the squad.

Should you seek any external medical provision, or have an update to your child's overall health, please keep our coaching team updated.

Illness

It can be difficult to know whether or not to keep your child off gymnastics when they are not feeling well. Government guidelines for schools/nurseries are a good indication which we follow at Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club.

Description	Time off?	Further Guidance
Chicken Pox	Yes	All spots must be crusted over before returning
Cold Sores	No	Encourage your child not to touch the infected area, washing their hands regularly, avoid sharing cups
Conjunctivitis	No	As long as the child is being treated, your child can attend classes once treatment has started. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash hands regularly.
Coughs and Colds	No	So long as gymnasts feel able to, they can train with a cold unless they have a fever.
Diarrhoea	Yes	May return 48 hours after the last episode
German Measles (Rubella)	Yes	Four days from onset of rash (please inform the club in case of vulnerable children/staff)
Ear Ache	No	Sometimes pain relief eases discomfort and can help reduce a high temperature.
E Coli	Yes	May return 24 hours after the last episode
High Fever (38°+)	Yes	If a member has a fever of 38°+, they are likely to be too unwell to benefit from a training session.
Flu	Yes	Until recovered, usually 5-7 days
Head Lice & Nits	No	As long as they are being treated, check your child's hair regularly and seek further medical advice if necessary.
Impetigo	Yes	Antibiotic treatment needed from the GP. Keep off gymnastics until all the sores have crusted and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage hand washing regularly, don't share towels, cups etc...

Welfare

Description	Time off?	Further Guidance
Injuries to limbs	No	Children with injured limbs can, in most cases, continue attending gymnastics classes. Our Head Coach will adapt the programme accordingly.
Measles	Yes	Four days from onset of rash (please inform the club in case of vulnerable children/staff)
Mumps	Yes	Five days from onset of rash (please inform the club in case of vulnerable children/staff)
Ringworm	No	As long as the child is being treated. See your pharmacist unless it's on the scalp, in which case you should see the GP. It's fine to attend gymnastics once they have started treatment.
Scabies	Yes	24 hours after first treatment. Antibiotic treatment is recommended.
Scarlet Fever	Yes	24 hours after first treatment. Antibiotic treatment is recommended otherwise they'll be infectious for 2-3 weeks.
Sickness/Vomiting	Yes	May return 24 hours after the last episode.
Slapped Cheek Syndrome	No	Once the rash appears, they are no longer infectious (please inform the club in case of vulnerable children/staff).
Shingles	Yes	Exclude if the rash is weeping or cannot be covered. Can cause Chickenpox. It is spread by very close contact and touch (please inform the Club in case of vulnerable children/staff).
Sore Throat	No	Sometimes pain relief eases discomfort and reduces a temperature.
Threadworms	No	As long as they are being treated. See your Pharmacist for advice on treatment.
Tonsillitis	No	There are many causes, but in most cases are due to viruses and do not need an antibiotic.

Your child's welfare is of the utmost importance to us.

If you are concerned about the welfare of your child, or anyone else you encounter at the club, please refer to our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy. This can be found on our website.

Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club have 3 Welfare Officers with varying roles at the club.

Lucy
(Parent)



cggcwelfare@gmail.com

Maya
(Parent/Coach)



cggcwelfaremaya@gmail.com

Martin
(Director)



cggcwelfaremartin@gmail.com

Alternatively, you can speak to someone at:

Childline: 0800 1111

British Gymnastics: 0345 1297129

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

childline

British Gymnastics
More than a sport

NSPCC

Discipline

The gym is a safe space for all our members and the following rules have been drawn up in order to encourage good discipline and foster positive relationships. The following rules have been created by gymnasts, for gymnasts.



Great Attitude:

Maintain a positive and enthusiastic mindset during training and competitions.



You Are A Team:

Embrace the concept of teamwork, recognising that success is achieved together.



Motivate Each Other:

Encourage and uplift teammates through both their successes and challenges.



Nurture Sportsmanship:

Display graciousness in victory and dignity in defeat, showing respect and kindness to others.



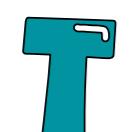
Aim For Excellence:

Strive for continuous improvement in skill mastery, technique, and overall performance.



Supportive Environment:

Foster a supportive and inclusive atmosphere where every gymnast feels valued and included.



Talk About It:

Communicate openly with coaches and teammates if you have a question or concern.



Integrity In Actions:

Uphold the highest standards of honesty, fairness, and ethical conduct at all times.



Commitment To Safety:

Prioritise safety above all else, adhering to proper techniques and equipment usage at all times.



Stay Dedicated:

Remain dedicated to the sport, showing perseverance and determination in the face of challenges.

Social Media

As parents, you'll likely have your own experiences and thoughts regarding social media. It can be a powerful tool for connecting with friends and family, but also has its dangers.

We feel that parents/guardians are best positioned to make decisions regarding your child's social media activity, however, it is worth considering the following information...

Recommended minimum ages for platforms:



Facebook **Age 13+**



Instagram **Age 13+**



Snapchat **Age 13+**



TikTok **Age 13+**



DID YOU KNOW?

A recent study found that 11% of children created their first social media account before they turned 10 years old

39% of children signed up to social media before they turned 12 years old.

We kindly request that any gymnastics posts, linked to your child and/or Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club are kept positive and supportive. Should you have an issue or complaint, we would appreciate this being aired through more appropriate channels.

Please remember that it is not appropriate for your child to befriend a coach's personal account or message them via social media. Our safeguarding procedures are created using British Gymnastics and the NSPCC's best practice guidelines which includes policies relating to social media contact between gymnasts and coaches. You are more than welcome to follow our official channels and engage in topics promoted there.

Finally, there are many gymnastics website and social media communities on the internet. Please refrain from engaging with these communities for help/advice relating to new skills your child may wish to learn, conditioning/flexibility advice or your own coaching knowledge. Much of this information is out of date or not always applicable to our country/region. Our coaches undergo extensive training via accredited institutions and are up to date with the latest trends and techniques. They also have the relevant insurances due to their coaching qualifications.

For further details, you can refer to guidance from British Gymnastics and the NSPCC.

Additional Costs

We understand the financial burden which can be placed on families when a child pursues a sport at a competitive level. Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club try to keep extra costs to a minimum, however, some of them are unavoidable.

Extra costs can include:

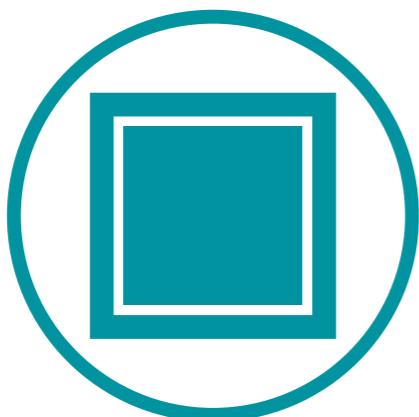
- Training/competition leotards
- Training/competition tracksuits
- Competition entry fees
- Personal training equipment (for example, glove & loops, hand guards, wrist guards...)

Additional Training

In the lead up to competitions, the club may add extra training sessions to help with any last minute preparation. Where possible, this will be offered free of charge, however in some cases, a small fee may be due. This will be communicated to you beforehand. It is recommended that you attend as many additional training sessions as possible as this can help with pre-competition nerves.

Floor Routines

Gymnasts participating in disciplines which require floor routines may be given a newly choreographed routine or learn an existing one from another member. The music and dance will be chosen based on the individual's strengths. It is common practice for gymnastics clubs to have multiple gymnasts competing the same routines, with the same music. This is especially true for younger gymnasts.



Expectations

Overview

At Cheltenham & Gloucester Gymnastics Club, we pride ourselves on being a tight-knit community made up of members, parents, coaches, and volunteers, each bringing their own unique perspectives and expectations. Just like in any community, we understand that there's a diverse range of opinions on what makes a gymnastics club great.

We want to make it clear that while we strive to meet the needs and expectations of everyone involved, it's simply not feasible to perfectly align with every individual's preferences. Running a gymnastics club involves juggling various factors, from safety protocols to training methods, and even organisational decisions.

However, despite the inevitable differences in opinions, our commitment remains unwavering: to provide a safe, supportive and enriching environment for all our members. We value open communication and feedback, and we're always eager to listen to suggestions and concerns from our community members.

Ultimately, by working together and respecting each other's perspectives, we can continue to foster a positive and inclusive atmosphere within our gymnastics club. Together, we can ensure that every member feels valued and supported on their gymnastics journey.

Training Times

The times your child is expected to train will depend on the squad level and discipline they are offered. Details of training days and times will be communicated to you in your welcome email.

The number of days and hours per week will likely change as the gymnast gets older and starts to participate in more competitions. It is expected that you will be able to accommodate this change in order to keep up with the demands of the club & sport.

Gymnasts may be given additional rest days after competitions in order for their body to recover before the next phase of training.

Attendance & Timekeeping

Gymnasts are expected to attend every training session and you should inform the coach via The squads' Whatsapp group if they are going to be absent or late.

Any planned absences which will involve missing 2 or more squad training sessions should be discussed and agreed with the Head Coach in advance in order to minimise the impact it will have on training. Unplanned absences may affect your child's development which can affect their ability to enter competitions.

Please make sure you arrive on time for classes. Each training session begins with a warm up which is essential in preparing the body for the demands of the session and avoiding injury.

Whilst we understand children have many different hobbies/interests they may wish to pursue, competitive gymnastics requires a high level of commitment in order to progress. Due to this, squad members should prioritise gymnastics training and not take part in extra curricular sporting activities outside of school with the exception of ballet (which helps with athlete's Posture), and swimming (for safety).

What happens if a gymnast is not progressing in line with expectations?

Not every gymnast progresses at the same pace and every gymnast's journey is unique. While factors like hard work, dedication, and parental support are undoubtedly crucial aspects of a gymnast's journey, the ability to excel in elite gymnastics requires a combination of various skills and attributes. Simply showing up to practice consistently or having supportive parents may not be sufficient to ensure success in the competitive arena.

When a gymnast's performance is not aligning with expectations, coaches may implement a performance improvement plan. This plan is designed to provide targeted support and guidance to help the gymnast overcome any challenges they may be facing. It may involve personalised drills or focused attention on specific skills that need improvement. The goal of the performance improvement plan is to give the gymnast the tools and resources they need to succeed while providing them with the opportunity to demonstrate growth and progress.

If despite the implementation of a performance improvement plan, a gymnast continues to struggle to meet the required standards, coaches may need to explore alternative options. This could include moving the gymnast to a different squad or considering a transitioning back to a recreational class. While this decision is never taken lightly, it is made with the best interests of the gymnast in mind.

Communication

Each individual plays a vital role and honest communication between all parties is essential in developing a healthy training atmosphere.



Parent:

The best way you can help your child is to be their parent. As parents, we naturally want to fix everything for our children, however, being a competitive gymnast involves processing and overcoming emotions such as frustration, failure & fear.

Be the listening ear who doesn't offer advice or judgement, allow them vent their frustration and sadness.

Technical information including skills, routine composition, team selection and competition preparation should be left to the coaches.

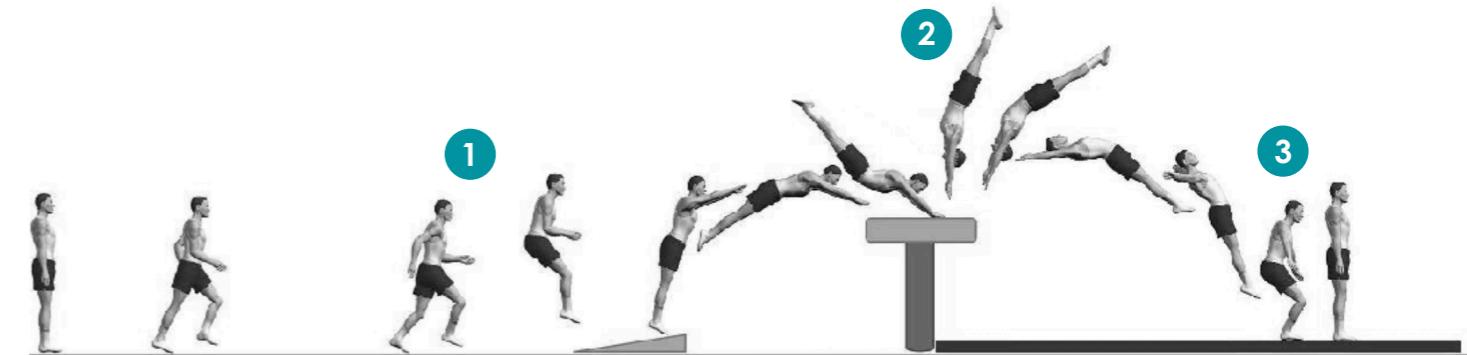
Coach:

The coach's main role is to provide technical guidance, training programs and skill development tailored to each gymnast's abilities and goals.

The coach also serves as a mentor and role model, offering encouragement, feedback and constructive criticism to help gymnasts navigate challenges and improve their performance.

In order to help understand the emotions your child is going through, it might be helpful to understand how we teach and build skills.

For the purpose of this, we will use a Handspring Vault as an example skill...



1. Pre - requisites

The first thing we do is identify what a gymnast needs to be capable of doing before they can start working towards the skill. In our handspring example, the gymnast needs to be confident in the following:

- 1 - Running fast to the springboard and taking off in the correct position
- 2 - Supporting their body weight in a handstand position
- 3 - Ability to land safely when landing from a height

The coach will need to be satisfied with the above before the gymnast can move on to...

2. Physical Preparation

The next stage is to identify and develop the parts of the body which are involved in the skill we are going to learn. Most gymnastics skills involve the whole body, however, the following parts are crucial for the execution of a Handspring Vault:

- Jump strength from the springboard
- Heel drive and body tension in the first flight
- Arm strength in contact with the vault
- Shoulder shrug strength in preparation for second flight
- Body tension in the second flight
- Leg and ankle stability in landing

Our coaches will then work through a range of exercises to help develop the above areas. Again, the coach needs to be satisfied with the physical preparation before the gymnast can move on to...

3. Progressions

Before attempting the full skill, our coaches prepare progressions which focus on the different stages of the skill. This builds the gymnasts' confidence before combining everything together.

For example with the Handspring Vault, the main progressions involve the first and second flights.

The first involves running and taking off from the springboard, taking off to handstand, landing flat on the gymnasts' back on a pile of mats. This replicates the first half of the vault and builds confidence approaching the vault at speed.

The second progression involves completing a handstand on a high block and going over to land on a safety mat. This replicates the second flight of the Handspring and landing position.

Once the coach is happy with the gymnasts' progressions they will move on to...

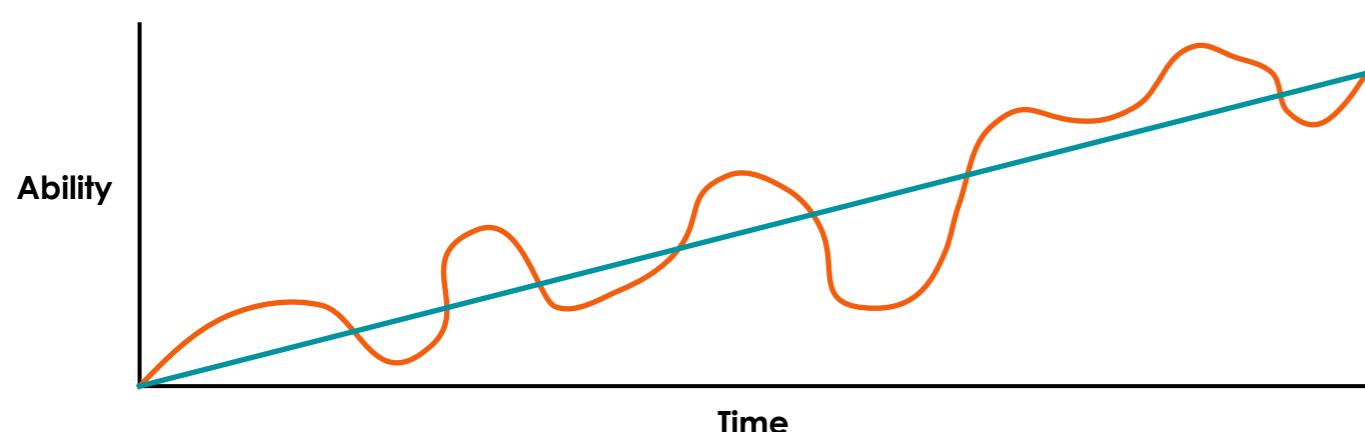
4. Full Skill

Now that we have prepared the body and progressed the skill, the gymnast is ready to try the full skill with the support of a coach. For their first few attempts, a coach will need to provide a significant amount of physical support and will gradually reduce the amount of assistance until they can confidently complete it on their own.

While this detailed breakdown of skills falls under the coach's role and responsibilities, we believe it's beneficial for you to understand the coaching process. This understanding can be helpful if your child ever feels like they are not progressing as quickly as others in their group and don't know why.

It's important to recognise that gymnasts progress at different rates. It's highly likely that some gymnasts may still be focusing on physical preparation, others may have moved on to more advanced progressions. Each gymnast will have unique goals, and it's crucial not to measure your child's success in comparison to others.

In general, a gymnast's ability will improve gradually over time, but their journey will involve both progress and setbacks. During times when progress may seem slower, your child may express a desire to quit the sport. It's important for them to understand that progress is not always linear and that improvement comes with consistent practice and dedication.



Supporting Your Child:

We love that parents are passionate about their child's gymnastics journey! Nothing makes us prouder than when we hear parents cheering on their children from the sidelines.

Gymnastics, by design, is a sport which emphasises mistakes. Competitors start with a perfect execution score and judges deduct points based on technical errors and fails. When performing, gymnasts of all ages present themselves professionally with a great deal of composure and it's easy to forget that underneath the uniform, there is a young person.

The videos linked below were created by the CPSU and are a great reminder for parents & coaches of what children's sports should be about. Please take a few minutes of your time to watch these important videos.



[My Magic Sports Kit](#)



[My No.1 Fan](#)



Competitions

Competition Entries:

Gymnasts are expected to attend all competitions as selected by their coach and you will be informed of competition schedules/information in advance.

Different competitions have different entry criteria and it may be that not all members of the squad will be entered into every competition. Deciding factors include:

- Date of birth/age
- Skill level/syllabus requirements
- Team size restrictions

If a gymnast is not able to complete the skills required for a competition, they will not be entered. Our focus is on long-term learning goals that are attainable, rushing gymnasts to compete before they're ready can be detrimental.

The decision to not enter a gymnast or withdraw them from a competition will not be taken lightly and will be discussed with the parent, coach and gymnast.

Competition Attire:

At gymnastics competitions, gymnasts are judged on their artistry and technique and it's important that competitors are well presented. Gymnasts should bring the following with them:

- Competition Leotard: this will either be the club training leotard or one loaned out for the competition. This will be communicated in advance.*
- Club tracksuit: all gymnasts will need to purchase the club tracksuit and wear it to competition.
- Ensure long hair is tied into a neat bun with club colour scrunchie.
- All jewellery must be removed.
- Long nails should be cut for safety.

*Whilst BG's guidance is slowly changing, some competitions still require female gymnasts to only wear a leotard and not shorts on top.

Parents:

Please keep the following in mind when attending competitions:

- The final program, including timings for your child, is not usually distributed until a week or two before the competition. The competition schedule will be emailed out as soon as it is ready.
- Any questions or concerns about the competition should be sent to the Club. Please do not contact the competition venue or organisers directly.
- Make sure you arrive at the venue at the time directed by the club. It is important to be there on time in case the competition is running early or late.
- Please do not try and communicate with your child whilst the competition is taking place, even if they are on a rest rotation. It is important they remain focused on their performance.

- Gymnasts should not leave the competition area without permission from the coach. At some competitions, it is against the rules for the gymnast to leave without the permission from the Head Judge.
- Similarly, parents should not enter the competition area or warm-up room.
- Show pride in your child's achievements, no matter the score or placement. Sometimes our goal is not to win medals but to debut a new skill, for example.
- A little bit of support goes a long way, please clap and cheer for athletes as they are presented to the competition.
- Do not boo or jeer at gymnasts from other clubs. Remember that at competitions, you are also a representative of CGGC and our values.

Hydration



Hydration is key to a productive training session. All gymnasts should have a water bottle with them at every training session, they can refill at the club.

Please note, gymnasts should be drinking **WATER** at training sessions, not squash or fruit drinks. Sugary drinks actually dehydrate gymnasts.

Optimal Performance - Staying hydrated ensures that gymnasts can perform at their best during training sessions, maintaining energy levels and preventing fatigue.

Enhanced Focus - Proper hydration supports cognitive function helping gymnasts stay focused and alert during skill practice and routines.

Reduced Risk of Injury - Adequate hydration keeps muscles and joints lubricated, reducing the risk of cramps, strains and other injuries during training.

Improved Recovery - Hydration plays a crucial role in post-training recovery, aiding the replenishment of fluids lost through sweat and promoting muscle repair and recovery.

Temperature Regulation - Proper hydration helps regulate body temperature, preventing overheating and heat-related illnesses, especially during intense training sessions.

Optimised Endurance - Hydration supports cardiovascular function, enabling gymnasts to sustain their efforts for longer periods, leading to improved endurance and stamina.

Prevention of Dehydration - Consistent hydration prevents dehydration, which can negatively impact performance, concentration, and overall well-being.

Mental Clarity - Hydration is essential for maintaining mental clarity and decision-making abilities, which are crucial for executing complex gymnastics skills safely and effectively.

Health guidelines for the amount of water for children to consume per day is as follows:

4-8 Years Old	5 Cups
9-13 Years Old	5-6 Cups
14 - 18 Years Old	6-8 Cups

Nutrition

Nutrition is the foundation of an athlete's development !



What Gymnasts Need - Macronutrients:

Gymnasts need a balanced diet to help with...



Lasting Energy - Carbohydrates



Stronger Muscles - Protein



Brain & Body Protection - Healthy Fats

What Does A Balance Meal Look Like?



Carbohydrates (55% - 65%)

Fast Carbs. - Deliver instant energy = great for a snack boost!
Simple grains (Pretzels) and low-fibre Fruit (Grapes, Bananas)

Slow Carbs. - Deliver lasting energy = great for preparation and recovery!
Whole grains (Vegetables) and high-fibre Fruit (Blackberries, Raspberries)



Protein (10% - 25%)

Type - Prioritise lean meats/alternatives (Chicken, Turkey) over high fat (Bacon)

Amount - Gymnasts need approximately 1.5g of protein per kg of body weight per day.
For example, a child weighing 40kg should have around 60g of protein/day.

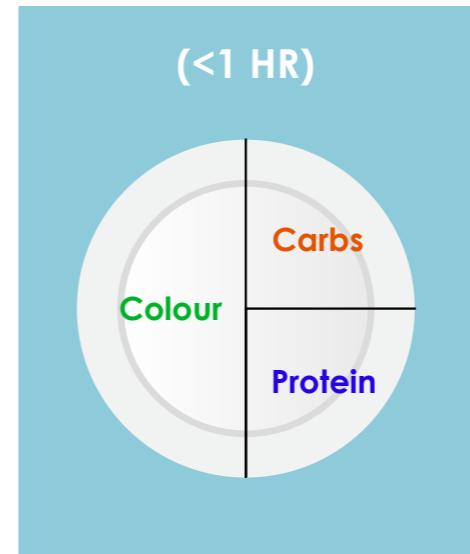


Healthy Fats (25% - 35%)

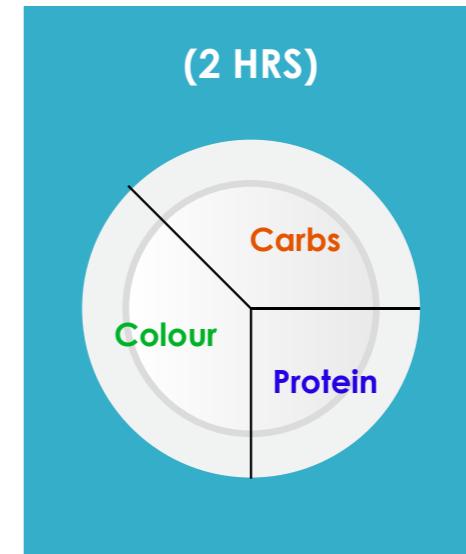
Type - Prioritise unsaturated fats (Avocado, Nuts, Fish)
Helps the body absorb vitamins, reduce inflammation and good for brain health.

Building Your Gymnast's Plate By Practice Duration

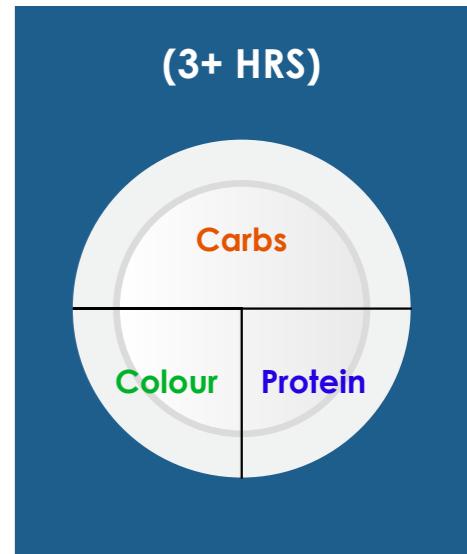
No Training



Moderate Training



Heavy Training



What About Micronutrients?

VITAMIN A

Good for: Vision, immune function, new cell growth

Good foods: Spinach, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, carrots, peppers



VITAMIN C

Good for: Healing, immune health, iron absorption

Good foods: Citrus fruits, red peppers, kiwi, strawberries, broccoli, sprouts, tomatoes

VITAMIN D

Good for: Bone growth, calcium absorption, energy

Good foods: Seafood, fortified (D added) dairy, orange juice, sunshine!

VITAMIN E

Good for: Antioxidant, muscle building, anti-inflammatory, skin and cell regeneration

Good foods: Nuts and seeds, nut butters and oils, collard greens, spinach, red bell peppers

VITAMIN B-6

Good for: Energy conversion, immune function, haemoglobin formation

Good foods: Chickpeas, tuna, salmon, chicken, turkey, potatoes, bananas, cereals

VITAMIN B-12

Good for: Energy conversion, mood boost, haemoglobin formation

Good foods: Beef, seafood, dairy, eggs, nutritional yeast, cereals

CALCIUM

Good for: Heart and blood vessel function, nerve function, bone structure

Good foods: Dairy, seafood, tofu, greens, kale, fortified orange juice

IRON

Good for: Carries oxygen to tissues, supports muscle growth, healthy connective tissues

Good foods: Liver, clams, muscles, oysters, beef, chicken, pork, beans, tofu, pumpkin seeds

ELECTROLYTES

Good for: Cell function, support hydration, produce energy

Good foods: Sodium (salt), potassium (bananas, potatoes, mushrooms), magnesium (greens)

ANTHOCYANINS

Good for: Recovery, anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, antioxidants

Good foods: Cherries, blueberries, pomegranate, red cabbage, aubergine

Snack ideas for training breaks...



- Yoghurt
- Cheese Sticks
- Pretzels
- Grapes
- Mango
- Pineapple
- Berries
- Apricots
- Apples
- Pickles
- Light Popcorn
- Hummus
- Smoothies
- Granola Bars
- Fruit Snacks
- Boiled Egg
- Edamame
- Crackers
- Cheese Cubes
- Dried Fruit



Do NOT bring candy, cookies, doughnuts, fast food, fried food, crisps or other similar foods with no nutritional value to the gym for their snack. These foods are fine to eat in moderation, but will not nourish the body during a workout session.

Remember, there is no such thing as a **"Gymnast Body"**. Successful gymnasts at the highest level have come in a variety of shapes and sizes!

Genetics, energy availability, growth rates, nutrition and recovery practices all contribute to an athlete's success, regardless of body type.

Focus on nutrition for high level athleticism, not on how a gymnast looks.

Get Involved!

If you are interested in becoming a judge or coach, or if you possess skills that could benefit the Club, we encourage you to reach out!

In addition to their coaching responsibilities, our staff generously volunteer their time behind the scenes to create opportunities for our members. Without their dedication and enthusiasm, we wouldn't have achieved our current level of success.

Your involvement not only benefits the club but also helps you gain a deeper understanding of the gymnastics community, strengthening your connection with your child's gymnastics journey.

Thank you for reading!

Flexibility training

Guide for gymnasts



You can stop flexibility training at any point.

Your flexibility training should not go beyond mild pain/discomfort.



Flexibility training should be individual to you and achievable.



Flexibility is likely to decrease during periods of fast growth.



Flexibility training should take place in an open environment, where adults are present including one appropriately qualified coach.



Make sure your joints and muscles are warmed-up before taking part in any flexibility training.



There are lots of different methods that can be used during flexibility training.

Sometimes this will include working with your coach or with other gymnasts, whilst supported by your coach.



Anyone helping with your flexibility training should never make you feel awkward or upset. If you feel this way, speak to a trusted adult.



Keep communicating with your coach during flexibility training. This includes your pain levels.

Further details can be found in the British Gymnastics Flexibility Training position statement

Hydration

Best practice guidelines



Encourage & educate gymnasts to check their hydration status regularly by checking their urine (see colour chart & descriptions below).



Very strong smell
Once or twice a day
Little amount



Strong smell
Every 3-4 hours
Small amount



Mild or light smell
Every 1-2 hours
Medium amount



No smell
More than every hour
Large amount

SEVERE
DEHYDRATION

MILD
DEHYDRATION



OVER HYDRATION



Gymnasts should consume fluids regularly throughout the day



Ensure gymnasts have their own water bottle



Ensure gymnasts rehydrate to replace fluids lost through sweat



Normalise using the toilet during training



Follow hydration best practice throughout the year



Different fluid options can be utilised around training & throughout the day.



Hydration throughout the day



Hydration before or during training



Hydration post training



Hydrating foods

Pain, injury and gymnastics

Guide for gymnasts



It is your decision as to whether you are able or unable to train or compete due to pain or injury.

If you are in pain or injured, always prioritise your long-term health when making any decisions.



Have regular discussions with your coach about the demands of gymnastics, including soreness and pain.



Seek help from a qualified medical professional (E.g., Physio, Sports Doctor or GP) if your pain:

- ① Is moderate or severe in nature (see pain scale below), OR
- ② Lasts for **3** or more consecutive days, OR
- ③ Impacts on training for **3** or more consecutive days



Pain scale

Use this pain scale to help describe your pain.



If you are injured or are in pain, work with your parent/guardian (if under 18), coach and a medical professional to help continue training and competing safely if appropriate.

Further details can be found in the British Gymnastics Pain, Injury and Gymnastics position statement