

Tumbling

The Flyspring

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If done well, the flyspring is a great front accelerator; Podkopayeva of the Ukraine competed a double front with 1/2 turn from a flyspring - an amazing skill. Your gymnast may not be good enough for this, but with some work, the flyspring can be a great asset and help in forward tumbling.

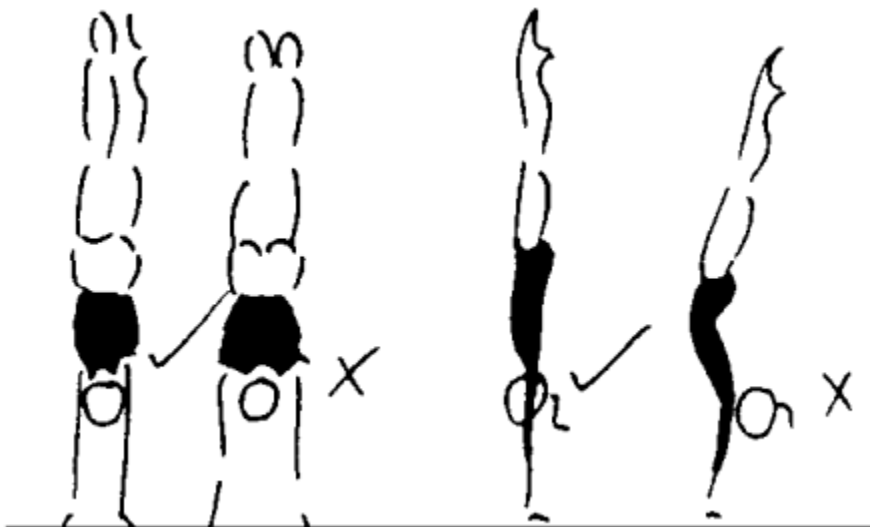
It must be noted that the diagonal of a floor exercise mat is approximately 17 meters from corner to corner. If the gymnast is to do two or more somersaults in one acrobatic series, then skills used prior to the somersault must make the gymnast go faster. He or she cannot rely on just a fast run, there is no room with a multiple somersault series.

Prerequisites

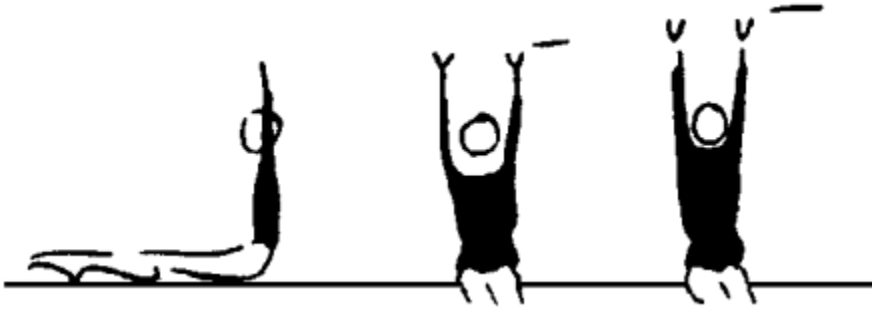
Good shoulder extension in the handstand is vital.



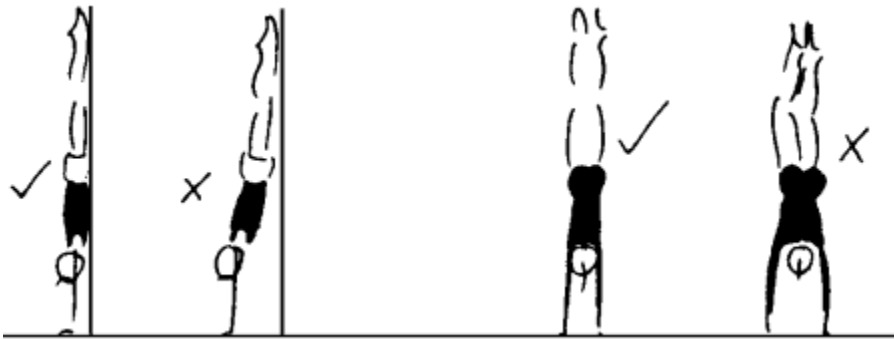
The shoulder muscles must be strong to create a 180 degree angle through the shoulder.



Make sure that your gymnast understands what is to hold the arms up by the ears. Sitting will get them to extend their arms up as far as possible. This could be done with the back to the wall and a mark placed on the wall for relaxed position and then extended position.



Now have them do a handstand against the wall, chest to the wall. Look at the shape of the gymnast (they should wear a leotard and shorts or leotard and tights). Look at the tightness of the gluteals and the extension through the shoulders.



Gymnasts need to be able to hold the hollow and "dish" shaped positions. Can they also rock in these positions? The coach can also apply a little pressure to the arms and thighs to test the body tension and put it under pressure.



If under pressure the gymnast's back hollows, then this is an indication of weak abdominals. In this case, the gymnast will need to work on sit-ups; these must be done properly. A reduced dish position is also helpful. Here the legs bend and arms are drawn in while sitting in a dish shape. The back can then easily come back into contact with the floor - then slowly extend outwards to full dish.



The gymnast must have the ability to rebound across the floor on their toes with their arms by their ears. The conditioning for this is related to the conditioning in handstand and the

condition of the abdominals. Work should be done with all gymnasts at a young age on rebound work as well as jumping and landing.



This exercise can be made more difficult by the gymnast holding a small weighted bar. Determine the weight of the bar according to the gymnast's body condition. If they can't do the rebound jumps without the back hollowing and keeping their arms by the ears then don't bother with a weight, they still have plenty of work to do. There needs to be a straight line through the shoulders, spine, hips, knees, and ankles.

The handspring on the floor is a prerequisite. The gymnast also needs to be able to spring from the hands.



With an underarm action the gymnast should kick to near handstand and immediately spring from the hands. When this has been mastered, the gymnast should also do this to jump up a step.



Watch that the gymnast does not manage to jump up the step by bending the arms or taking the arms wide. This is a common fault.

Drills

1. Using the trampoline, bounce from feet to hands, then back again. Keeping the arms by the ears and maintaining a good dish shape.



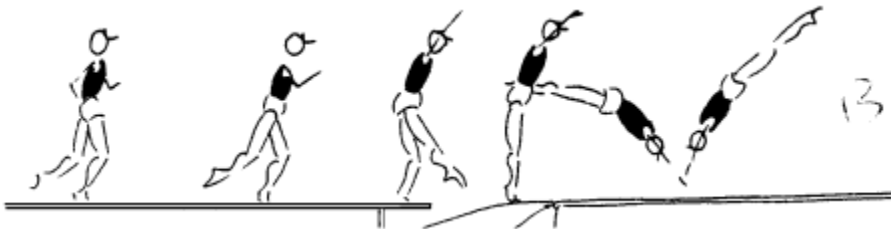
2. Try the complete skill on the trampoline. Start from two bounces with the arms by the ears. If the gymnast is conditioned well enough, they should not need support at this stage. You may, however, want to do practice No. 3 before No. 2



3. From the platform, drop onto the springboard keeping the arms by the ears. all the body tightness should be maintained. A crash mat with a firm surface is needed. Support the first efforts.

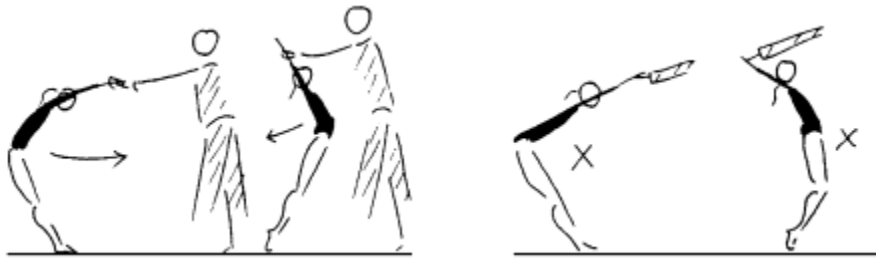


The practice can also be done using a bench in order that the gymnast can run along the bench.



Reinforce shapes

The gymnast must hold the body tight.



Notice in all the figures, the shape of the finish. the gymnast is well arched with the feet behind the body. This means that the gymnast is in an ideal shape for the front somersault to follow. The pre-stretch of the abdominals means that there is a faster snap into the front somersault and that the gymnast is off balance and still traveling forward.

When the gymnast goes into the somersault, the hips move backward just before take off to create eccentric thrust and therefore set-up forward rotation.



Work on the trampoline bouncing through the dish shape and the hollow shape. As the coach, you may have to bounce the bed for the gymnast.



Strengthen these shapes through over-arch and dish on two spring boards end to end. From dish snap up to a hollow shape, at least 10 times. From the hollow snap to dish shape.

Planning the Program

When you decide the time is right to teach the flyspring, you don't suddenly go through the body conditioning skills as shown. These exercises along with others form the basis of gymnastics skill. The gymnast should already be able to rebound from the hands and from the feet as a matter of normal training. The body tension should be worked all the time and the basic dish and arch shapes are fundamental to many gymnastics skills.

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