

Women's Skill Preparation

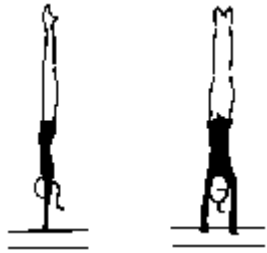
The Handstand for Beam

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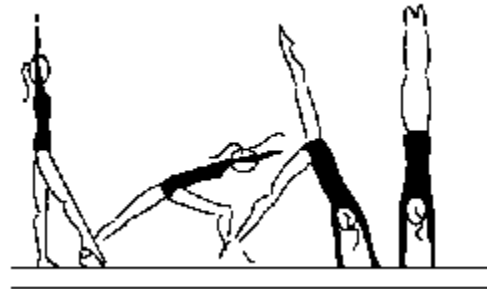
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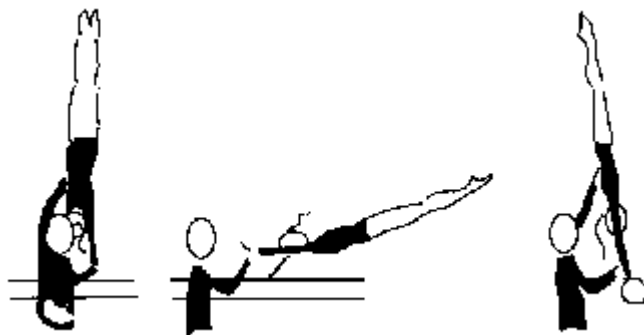
There are two types of handstands on beam - cross handstand and side handstand.

Although the cross handstand is difficult to hold, it is somewhat easier to learn as the gymnast has no fears about going into or stepping out of the cross handstand position. With the side handstand, the gymnasts must first be taught progressions that provide an "escape" route.

1. Using a bench or a beam (depending on the gymnast's ability), step into a handstand from a cartwheel entry. Support the gymnast at the hips and make sure that she thinks about stopping the first leg at the vertical.



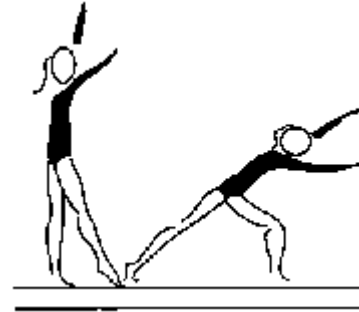
2. Once the gymnast is comfortable stepping into the handstand, the coach then takes hold of the wrist of the second hand that is placed on the beam. Still holding the hips with the other hand, the coach guides the gymnast slightly towards him/her and at the same time pulls the wrist off the beam... making the gymnast do a 1/4 turn. The coach lifts this arm forwards and upward while stepping back and turning to make the 1/4 turn.



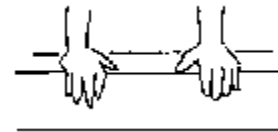
3. If the gymnast is poorly conditioned or does not maintain good body tension, she is likely to be a hazard for herself and the coach. Therefore, she should only do the handstand on the floor or low beams and conditioning exercises.

4. A well-controlled gymnast should think of the following:

- Look over the leading shoulder as she steps into handstand to get the shoulders over the hands.



- Make sure the fingers are well down the side of the beam.

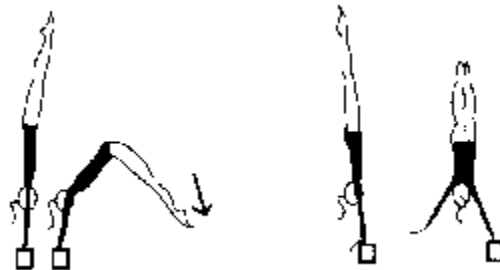


Now when the gymnast practices a side handstand, she has two options:

- She can come down by piking at the hips (dismounting the beam on her chest side), or



- she can take the second hand off and 1/4 turn to dismount safely with the feet together.



Gymnasts need to be taught an escape route for safe handstands on the beam.

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