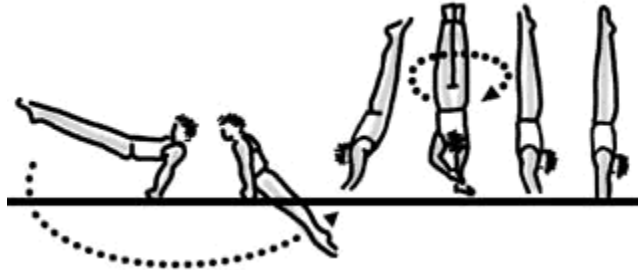


Hop Pirouette-Parallel Bars

by Mas Watanabe

In the *Code of Points*, the hop $\frac{3}{4}$ pirouette in arm support swing is one of the most commonly used D moves on parallel bars. This skill is relatively easy to learn even for younger gymnasts and has good potential for connecting with other skills for additional bonus. Before a gymnast tries to learn hop $\frac{3}{4}$ pirouette, he should learn, or at least have a good grasp of, how to execute a simple hop pirouette. The hop pirouette is a good foundation for any other variation of hops on parallel bars.



Progression For Hop Pirouette

1. Swing to hop handstand

- a. This is a very important basic drill that all gymnasts need to learn first. During the backward swing up toward the handstand, the body should be in an arched position from the upper chest and the heels should be driven up until the hop is initiated.
- b. The shoulders must be shrugged through the bottom of the swing to ensure a good push off during the hop.
- c. The hop should occur as the upper chest goes into an arched to hollow position very rapidly.
- d. The shoulders should be vigorously extended as the hop occurs. It is very crucial that the shoulders are fully extended as the gymnast finishes the hop in handstand.

Note: The most common fault during this drill is to initiate the hop too early and the mid-section of the back is lifted instead of the upper chest. Lifting of the mid-section of the back does not give a full extension of the shoulders. However, lifting to a hollow position in the upper chest region will ensure full shoulder extension at the end of the hop.

2. Swing to reverse pirouette

- a. The reverse pirouette should be done without excessive arch. The moment that both hands are on the single rail, the chest should be elevated upward as the second half of the pirouette is initiated.

- b. When the reverse pirouette is learned well, it is a good idea to extend the pirouette to a full pirouette instead of just a half pirouette. An additional half turn should be added on the single rail.

3. **Hop pirouette with a spot**

A hop pirouette should be initiated as a reverse pirouette hopping backward instead of forward. In other words, the shoulders going forward should not initiate the hop pirouette. If a gymnast can make a hop pirouette in the same spot on the bar, or can release his hands simultaneously, the hop pirouette is done well.

Hop $\frac{3}{4}$ Pirouette

1. **Swing hop handstand**

Make sure that the each hop is done correctly with the proper body position.

2. **Hop $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to single bar in mixed grip with a spot.**

- a. This is a simple drill but an important one. The hand of the axis arm should be turned to an under grip and the other hand is in over grip when hopping to a single bar.
- b. The shoulders must be well extended and the rest of the body is straight over the shoulders.

3. **Hop $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to single bar in mixed grip then, $\frac{1}{2}$ turn with a spot.**

- a. Simply add the $\frac{1}{2}$ turn after the first hop $\frac{1}{4}$ pirouette.

The second $\frac{1}{2}$ pirouette should be initiated after the straight body position is secured in the mixed grip position on the single rail.

- b. There should be a slight hesitation prior to the second pirouette. Once consistency is achieved, the pause between the first $\frac{1}{4}$ hop pirouette and the second $\frac{1}{2}$ pirouette should be shortened.
- c. When the above drill becomes consistent, the first hop $\frac{1}{4}$ turn pirouette should be caught almost with the one shoulder of the under grip arm. That will require slightly more shoulder extension of the axis arm in order to put all the weight on one shoulder. Then, complete the $\frac{1}{2}$ turn on the axis shoulder. This is a very delicate transition period. The shoulder extension of the axis arm and the straightness of the body is absolutely necessary.
- d. A spotter should assist less as consistency improves. It is important to note that checking the technique of the basic swing hop drill should be done throughout this progression. A typical problem of hopping with a shoulder angle and/or a too early hop can be corrected by doing the swing hop handstand well.