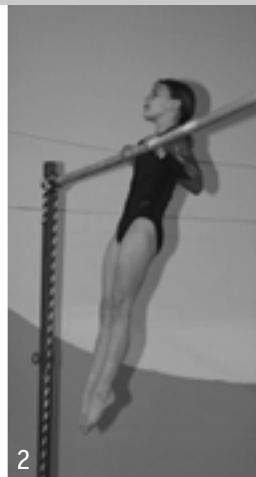
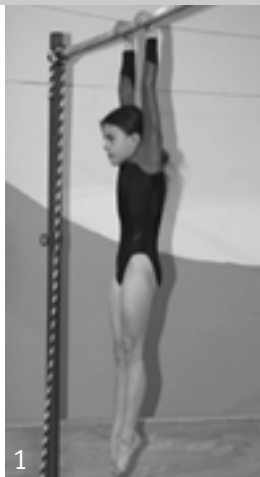


GetFit

YOSHI NAKAYAMA, a coach in the Pacific Northwest, has 9 basic shape conditioning drills which he uses for his Level 3 & Level 4 gymnasts. These are basics of all other advanced conditioning and future gymnastics skills (Level 7 to Elite).

1 Chest Touches (or Advanced Pull-ups)

Start from a dead hang on a high bar. Overgrip, straight elbows, extended shoulders, eyes forward, ribs in, hips flat, butt under, knees tight, toes pointed, and feet together. Pull up to touch chest on the bar. Body shape must remain PERFECT while performing the pull-ups. By pulling elbows behind back (touching chest on the bar), she is developing her strength for kips.



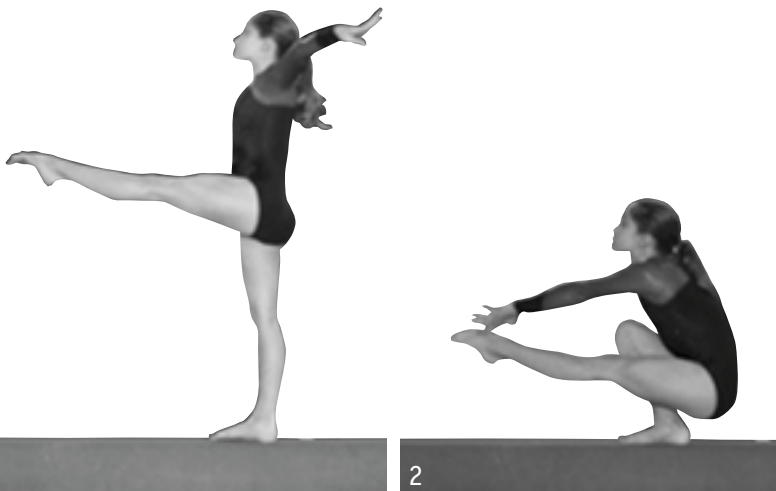
2 Leg Lifts

Start from a dead hang on a stall bar. Overgrip, straight elbows, extended shoulders, eyes forward, ribs in, hips flat, butt under, knees tight, toes pointed, and feet together. Lift legs together and touch feet on the bar. Arms and legs remain PERFECT while performing the lifts. By emphasizing locked knees, she develops kips with perfect legs.



3 Headstand Handstands (Inverted Military Press)

Start with a headstand with toes on a hip-height box. Fingers forward, elbows at right angle straight above wrists, head straight, torso vertical, ribs in, knees tight, feet FLEXED and together. Push the floor without moving hands all the way to achieve a piked handstand with forehead on the box. Knees MUST remain tight and off the box throughout the pushups. If feet come apart, do it again. By requiring knees/legs off the box, this forces the gymnast to use deltoid muscles. She will develop strength to push through her shoulders (instead of chest) for her front and back handsprings, vaulting, and cast handstands. ▶

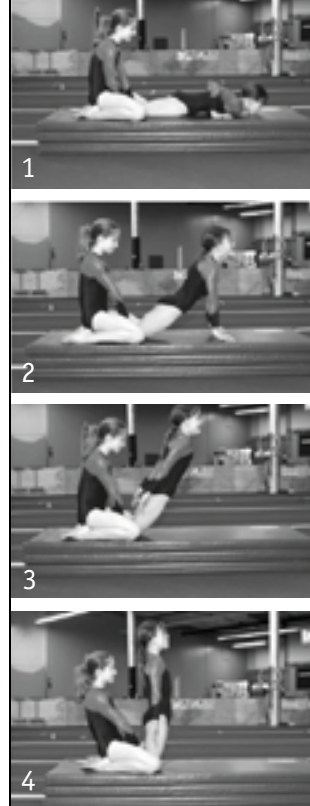


Single Leg Squats

Start with standing on a line or a beam (advanced) with one leg lifted forward at horizontal level or higher and arms pressed back at horizontal. Fingers stretched, elbows tight, chin up, eyes forward, chest projected, ribs in, butt under, hips square, BOTH knees straight, feet turned out. Lower into full squat with FLAT base foot. Maintain the front leg angle. Squeeze thighs together hard at the end of the squat to stabilize the position. Also bring arms forward and squeeze wrists together at the squat position. Eyes remain forward. Maintain chest projection throughout. By requiring the gymnast to keep the front foot directly over the line or the beam, she will gain control of knee bend or "plié" at any angle with exceptional balance, which leads to a very safe landing for variable situations.

Push Ham

Start in a prone position on floor with face down placing hands on the floor by chest (Alligator Position). Have partner hold legs or put feet under some immovable object (advanced). Chin on floor, ribs in, tummy off the floor, hips pressed out, butt under, knees tight, HEELS TOGETHER, toes pointed. Thrust with the hands against the floor, lift upper body to arrive in a vertical kneestand. Once her hands are off the floor, immediately squeeze arms against the sides of the body, with thumbs touching thighs. Body alignment MUST be maintained during the maneuver: RIBS IN, HIPS FLAT, and BUTT

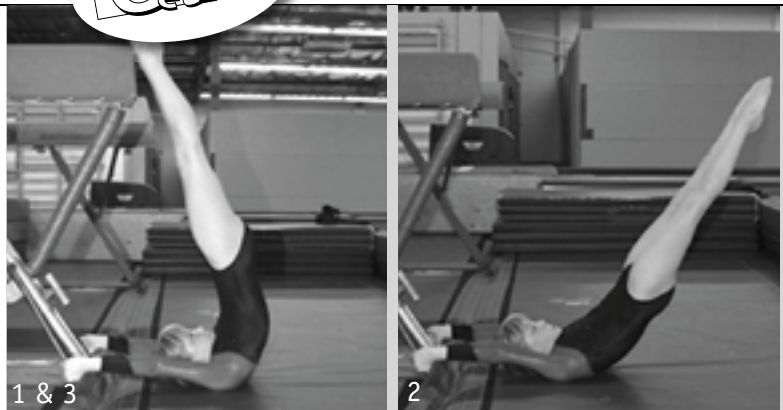
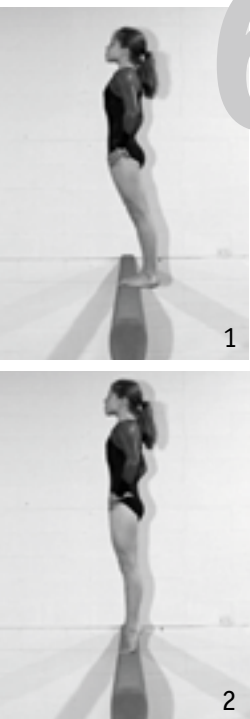


UNDER! By requiring the shape to be maintained with very high demand, the gymnast will learn how to maintain alignment during any skills with large external forces and inertia coming from sudden change of movement direction or change of rotation. This enables the gymnast to hold body alignment in Layout Tsuk/Yurchenko without arching (ribs out) or piking (hips gave in).



Calf Raises

Start in a standing sideways position on beam with big toes at the edge of the beam. Hands may be placed on hips or arms in crown (advanced). EYES FORWARD, chin straight, chest projected, ribs in, tummy in, hips flat, knees tight, feet together. Push down on the beam with toes all the way to achieve relevé, squeezing HEELS TOGETHER and hold 3 to 20 seconds. Maintain body alignment AND shaping: LOW BACK FLAT (no wrinkles) & ANKLES FLAT (overarch) at the same time. Must be in a PERFECT straight line while holding. MUST hold 3 to 20 seconds to be effective. The gymnast will quickly learn the feeling of being in balance standing on two toes (big toe and second toe). Now she can turn on the ball of her foot with precision and she can punch the floor with perfect alignment while tumbling.



Body Curl

1) Start with bent-arms or straight-arms (advanced) holding a beam leg or a bar post in candlestick position. Toes pointed, feet together, knees tight, butt under, HIPS FLAT, ribs in with toes or feet touching the beam or the post. 2) Lower whole body as far as possible WITHOUT changing the body shape, 3) then pull it back up to the start position. Gymnasts may start by lowering only 10-20 degrees for the first year; however, by the second year, she should lower to more than 45 degrees with PERFECT shape. By requiring the gymnast to maintain hips flat, body awareness will be learned while being inverted, giving a great control of body shapes in Giant Swings, Layout Flyaways, Clear Hip Handstands, Overshoot Handstands, Straddle back Handstands, Pak Saltos, Back Layout Saltos on floor, and more in the future. ►

8

Tulip Petals (Reverse Leg Lifts)

Start in prone position with legs hanging off the end of the beam and holding the beam leg. For smaller gymnasts, hold the beam itself (little bit harder for them but they get used to it). Toes pointed, feet together, knees tight, hips at the beam end. Kick legs back and up to arrive in an inverted position. By requiring the gymnast to maintain tight knees and to SQUEEZE the heels TOGETHER at the completion of the lift, she will learn a straight leg kick and increase her body awareness in an arch position. Straight leg kicks lead to a straight round-off for tumbling, beam acro and Yurchenko vaulting. Once the gymnast can do this exercise fluently, require her to squeeze buttocks at the completion of the lift to flatten low back and elevate the inverted position higher.



9 Giant Sit-ups

Start in a hang with knees over a beam, a bar, a box, or a trampoline. Have a partner hold the feet or hook the feet under an immovable object. Hang straight down with arms behind the ears. Fingers stretched, elbows tight, shoulders extended, ribs in, hips flat, butt under, knees together, feet together. Toes may be flexed or pointed (advanced). Gymnast lifts herself up to touch her toes with her fingers. For beginner gymnasts, bring arms down in front of the ears. For an advanced gymnast, arms must remain behind ears all the way until chest touches legs. The holder may need some training and experience to hold the gymnast safely and comfortably.



Key Concepts:

Each exercise must be followed by a 10-second shape hold at the most difficult position. For example, after a gymnast performs one set of Chest Touches (6 repetitions for age 6), then she holds her chest touching on the rail for 10 seconds before she gets off of the bar.

First year, do two to three sets of the drills in the exact order above. Do one set of all 9 types first, then start over from #1. Repetitions should be the number of the gymnast's age. If she is 5 years old, the

repetition is 5. If she is 11 years old, the repetition is 11.

Second year, after they master the shape correctly, then do one to two sets at the most, with repetition of 8 for any age. However, make it harder by adding weights around the hips or ankles for gymnasts who excel. My guideline is if a gymnast can perform 8 good reps in 60 seconds (except calf raises, it is 12 in 60 seconds), then add a chain weight around her waist for conditioning. The chains are two feet long and the heaviest ones you can find on the market weigh 2 to 5 pounds.

I have been using these 9 shape conditioning drills since 1992 and have had good success with ALL of my lower level gymnasts. The gymnasts will not only increase their strength quickly, but will also learn shapes and body awareness at the same time, resulting in basic skills development (Level 3 to Level 7 skills). The gymnasts' performance of the skills is almost perfect from their first attempt because of the quality control of their body. They already know how to exert their strength and power holding a good shape. They just do not know any other way! ✨