

Parent Handbook



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Introduction to Rhythmic Gymnastics

Rhythmic gymnastics is an elegant blend of dance, gymnastics, and ballet, performed with apparatuses such as ribbon, hoop, ball, clubs, and rope. Originating from physical training methods in the early 19th century, it became an Olympic sport in 1984. Rhythmic gymnastics requires flexibility, strength, coordination, and grace as athletes execute choreographed routines with music, focusing on the art of expression and athletic skill.

Rhythmic gymnastics differs from artistic gymnastics in its emphasis on flowing, continuous movements, where apparatus handling plays a central role. Each performance is scored for difficulty, technique, artistry, and expression. This unique combination makes rhythmic gymnastics an engaging and inspiring discipline for young athletes to develop self-confidence, discipline, and physical fitness.



Rules of Conduct and Behavior

Rules of Conduct and Behavior

For Gymnasts:

During Training:

- **Respect Coaches and Peers:** Always listen carefully to coaches, follow instructions, and show respect to fellow gymnasts.
- **Stay Focused and Positive:** Avoid distractions and maintain a positive attitude during training.
- **Be Punctual and Prepared:** Arrive on time, dressed appropriately, with hair tied back and all necessary equipment ready.
- **Follow Safety Rules:** Adhere to all safety guidelines and avoid rough play to ensure a safe environment.
- **Display Good Sportsmanship:** Support teammates and refrain from any disrespectful or discouraging behavior.

During Competitions:

- **Demonstrate Discipline and Professionalism:** Represent our program with pride and maturity. Arrive on time, follow event schedules, and be ready for your performance.
- **Respect Judges and Competitors:** Show respect for the judges and gymnasts from other teams.
- **Adhere to the Competition Dress Code:** Wear the designated competition attire and avoid any accessories not permitted by the rules.
- **Support Your Teammates:** Cheer for your teammates during their performances, showing team unity.

For Parents:

During Training:

- **Support but Don't Interfere:** Parents should support their child's training but are not allowed to intervene or direct the gymnast during the session.
- **Observe from Designated Areas:** If observation is permitted, stay in the designated areas to avoid distractions.
- **Trust the Training Process:** Respect the coach's expertise and avoid giving unsolicited advice to the gymnasts.
- **Encourage Positive Behavior:** Encourage your child to respect coaches, follow instructions, and maintain a positive attitude.

During Competitions:

- **Show Respect for All Athletes and Judges:** Show respectful support for all participants and avoid negative comments about judges or other gymnasts.
- **Stay in Designated Spectator Areas:** To ensure smooth event progression, stay in the designated spectator zones and refrain from approaching the competition floor.

- **Follow Event Protocols and Schedules:** Adhere to event protocols and schedules to ensure your child is ready and on time.
- **Celebrate Effort, Not Just Results:** Focus on your child's dedication, growth, and love for the sport, not just the results or scores.

For Parents—Additional Responsibility: Parents are essential in explaining and reinforcing these rules of behavior to their children, both during training and at competitions.

Most importantly, parents should emphasize the importance of supporting their children regardless of the result, whether they win or lose. Teach them that receiving any score or placement is part of the sport and an opportunity for growth and improvement. Encouragement from parents helps build resilience and motivates the child to continue striving for personal progress.

Program Levels and Descriptions

1. Recreational Classes

Description:

The recreational classes are designed for students who want to learn the basics of rhythmic gymnastics in a fun, supportive environment without the pressure of competing. These classes focus on developing coordination, flexibility, strength, and basic rhythmic gymnastics techniques like handling apparatus (hoop, ball, ribbon, etc.). The emphasis is on building a love for the sport, learning basic routines, and improving physical fitness.

Training Hours:

Typically, recreational classes meet once or twice a week for 1 to 1.5 hours.

Requirements:

- No prior experience is needed.
- Suitable for all ages, from young beginners to older students.
- Focus on developing general gymnastics skills and physical fitness.

Differences:

- No competition participation.
- Less intensive training compared to the higher-level programs.
- Flexibility in scheduling (students can join as per availability).

2. XL Program

Description:

The XL Program is for students interested in developing more advanced rhythmic gymnastics skills and committed to consistent training. This program is ideal for athletes who want to pursue a more serious gymnastics path but may still need to be ready for the demands of full-time competition. The program focuses on mastering more complex techniques, improving apparatus handling, and preparing students for possible future competition participation.

Training Hours:

- Training 2-3 times per week for 1.5 to 2 hours per session.
- Depending on the age and progress of the athlete, there may be additional practice or individualized training sessions.

Requirements:

- Students should have a basic understanding of rhythmic gymnastics and be able to demonstrate foundational skills (balance, coordination, flexibility, etc.).
- A commitment to regular training and improvement.
- The athlete should show progress in skill development and be prepared to join competitions at a later stage.

Differences:

- Greater focus on advanced skills and apparatus manipulation.
- This program is more structured than recreational classes but less intensive than competitive teams.
- Possible participation in small local competitions to test skill level.

3. Competitive Team

Description:

The Competitive Team program is designed for students who have demonstrated significant skill and commitment to rhythmic gymnastics and are ready to pursue competition-level training. Athletes in this program prepare for regional, national, and international competitions. This highly structured and demanding program focuses on mastering complex routines, precision, and consistency. The team will also work on choreography, strength training, and mental preparation for high-stakes events.

Training Hours:

- Training 3-5 times per week for 2 to 3 hours per session.
- Additional sessions may be required during competition preparation periods.
- Additional cross-training in flexibility, strength, and conditioning may also be incorporated depending on the level.

Requirements:

- Athletes must demonstrate advanced technical skills and consistent performance in both apparatus handling and choreography.
- A high level of commitment, including willingness to train frequently and travel for competitions.
- The minimum age may vary depending on the competition level (it typically starts around 7-9 years old for national-level competitions).
- Must participate in regular evaluations to assess readiness for competition.

Differences:

- Focused on competition preparation, with rigorous physical and technical demands.
- High training intensity and **frequency**.
- Must adhere to competition regulations, including attire, routines, and discipline.
- Competitive athletes are expected to travel for competitions, which may involve additional time and financial commitment.

Programs Cost

Recreational Classes

- **Description:** These classes are designed for children who want to enjoy rhythmic gymnastics in a non-competitive setting. Students focus on developing basic gymnastics skills and enjoying the sport at their own pace.
- **Cost:**
 - **Monthly Fee:** From \$90-210
 - **Registration Fee:** \$45
- **Additional Costs:**
 - **Cost for Performance Local Show:** From \$25-50
 - **Attire for Show:** From \$15-45

XL Program

- **Description:** This program is designed for children looking to take their skills to a higher level, focusing on improving technique and performing at more competitive levels. The program is invite-only.
- **Cost:**
 - **Monthly Fee:** From \$210-280
 - **Registration Fee:** \$45
 - **Rhythmic Gymnastics Apparatus and Shoes:** From \$10-100
- **Additional Costs:**
 - **Cost for Performance Local Show:** From \$25-50
 - **Attire for Show:** From \$15-45
- **Competitions:**
 - **Competition Fees:** From \$30-50 per routine
 - **Entrance fee for Spectators:** From \$ 15-30
 - **Competitive leotard:** From \$40 and up
 - **USA Gymnastics membership:** From \$25-99, allowed to compete in the USA Gymnastics sanction event. Non-USA gymnastics sanction events permitted to compete without membership.
 - **Travel Expenses:** Costs for transportation, accommodation, and meals during travel to competitions.
 - **Coach's Fees at Competitions:**
 - **Local Competitions:** For local competitions, the coach's Fee covers the Cost of the time spent coaching during the event. The total Fee for the coach will be divided among the athletes participating in that competition.
 - **Traveling Competitions (Out of Town):** For out-of-town competitions, the coach's Fee Applies. The Fee includes not only the coach's time spent coaching during the event but also travel expenses (such as transportation, accommodation, and meals) necessary for the coach to accompany the athletes. The total Cost will depend on the location of the competition and the number of participants traveling. Since travel and accommodation can

vary based on the distance and the number of participants, the final price is shared equally among all the athletes attending the competition.

Competitive Team

- **Description:** This program is for children committed to training for and competing in rhythmic gymnastics. It focuses on advanced skills and preparing students for high-level competitions.
- **Cost:**
 - **Monthly Fee:** From \$250 and up
 - **Registration Fee:** \$45
 - **Uniform Cost:** From \$ 25-50
 - **Rhythmic Gymnastics Apparatus and Shoes:** From \$10-100
- **Additional Costs:**
 - **Cost for Performance Local Show:** \$25-50
 - **Competitions:**
 - **Competition Registration Fees:** From \$ 100-200
 - **Entrance fee for Spectators:** From \$ 15-30
 - **Competitive leotard:** From \$55 and up
 - **USA Gymnastics membership:** From \$25-99, allowed to compete in the USA gymnastics sanction event. Non-USA gymnastics sanction events permitted to compete without membership.
 - **Travel Expenses:** Costs for transportation, accommodation, and meals during travel to competitions.
 - **Coach's Fees:**
 - **Local Competitions:** For local competitions, the coach's Fee covers the Cost of the time spent coaching during the event. The total Fee for the coach will be divided among the athletes participating in that competition.
 - **Traveling Competitions (Out of Town):** For out-of-town competitions, the coach's Fee includes not only their time spent coaching during the event but also travel expenses (such as transportation, accommodation, and meals) necessary for the coach to accompany the athletes. The total Cost will depend on the location of the competition and the number of participants traveling. Since travel and accommodation can vary based on the distance and the number of participants, the final price is shared equally among all the athletes attending the competition.

Coach's Fees (Explanation)

Coach's fees cover the coach's time and expertise at competitions. This Fee includes:

- **Local Competitions:**

This is for the coach's time during local competitions.

- **Traveling Competitions:**

When traveling out of town, this Fee includes the coach's time at the event and travel-related expenses (e.g., transportation, accommodation, meals). This Fee helps cover the costs of sending a coach to the team to ensure proper guidance and supervision throughout the competition.

Personalized Routines for Level 7 and Higher

- **Personalized routines for students at level 7 and higher.** We offer personalized routines designed specifically for each student's skills and goals if requested. However, a standard routine (with the same music and choreography) is available for everyone at this level.

Custom Routine Options:

- **Custom Music:** Parents can request a unique music track for their child's routine.
Cost: It starts at \$50, depending on the music's origin.
- **Personalized Choreography:** The routine can be created to showcase the student's strengths. This ensures it fits their current abilities and goals for the future.
Cost: It starts at \$150, but the price may vary depending on the choreographer's affiliation (whether from the same gym or an outside coach) and location (state or country).

Competition Rules and Guidelines

USA Gymnastics Membership

All gymnasts competing in USA Gymnastics-sanctioned events must be registered members of USA Gymnastics and renew their membership annually.

The XL Program offers flexibility for competitions. Gymnasts may:

- **Not participate** in competitions,
- **Compete in non-USA Gymnastics-sanctioned events** without requiring a membership or
- **Compete in USA Gymnastics-sanctioned events.**

Level 3 Competition

Level 3 competition may be held at invitational competitions and State Championships as an invitational.

Level 4 Competition

- Level 4 competition will be held at Invitational, State, and Regional Championships and the Level 4-5 Classic.
 1. To enter a State Championships, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in at least one sanctioned event prior to her State Championships.
 2. To enter a Regional Championships, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in her State Championships.
 3. To enter the Level 4-5 Classic, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in her Regional Championships.

Level 5 Competition

- Level 5 competition will be held at Invitational, State, and Regional Championships and the Level 4-5 Classic.
 1. To enter a State Championships, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in at least one sanctioned event prior to her State Championships. A
 2. To enter a Regional Championships, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in her State Championships
 3. To enter the Level 4-5 Classic, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in her Regional Championships.

Level 6 Competition A. Level 6 I

- Level 6 competition will be held at Invitational, State and Regional Championships, and the Development Program Championships.
 1. To enter a State Championships, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in at least one sanctioned event prior to her State Championships.
 2. To enter the Regional Championships, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in a minimum of three (3) sanctioned events prior to her Regional

Championships (State Championships plus two invitational or other sanctioned events)

3. Level 6 gymnasts may need to attain a qualifying score set annually by each Regional Committee and/or obtain a placement at the State Championships if the Regional Committee deems such qualification necessary and establishes it.
4. Development Program Championships. Refer to Section

Level 7 & 8 Competition

- Level 7 and 8 competitions will be held at the Invitational, State, Regional, and Development Program Championships.
 1. To enter a State Championships, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in at least one sanctioned event prior to her State Championships
 2. To enter the Regional Championships, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in a minimum of three (3) sanctioned events prior to her Regional Championships (State Championships plus two invitational or other sanctioned events).
 3. To enter the Regional Championships, Level 7 & 8 gymnasts may need to attain a qualifying score set annually by each Regional Committee and/or obtain a placement achieved at the State Championships.
 4. Development Program Championships. Refer to Section.

Level 9 Competition

- Level 9 competition will be held in the Level 9 Classic, Elite Qualifier, and USA Gymnastics Championships. It may also be held at the Invitational, State, and Regional Championships.
 1. To enter the Level 9 Classic, a gymnast must have competed individual all-around in at least two (2) sanctioned events prior to the Level 9 Classic.
 2. Elite Qualifier. Refer to Section
 3. USA Gymnastics Championships. Refer to Section

Level 10 & Elite Competition

- Level 10 & Elite competition will be held at the Elite Qualifier and USA Gymnastics Championships. It may also be held at the Invitational, State, and Regional Championships.
 1. Elite Qualifier. All Level 10 & Elite gymnasts may advance directly to the Elite Qualifier.
 2. USA Gymnastics Championships. Refer to Section.

Registration Fees for Competitions

Responsibility for Payment: The participant's parents or guardians are responsible for ensuring that all competition registration fees are paid by the specified deadline.

Non-Refundable Fees: Registration fees are non-refundable, regardless of whether the participant can attend the competition due to unforeseen circumstances.

Deadline and Late Entries: Once the registration deadline has passed, you cannot enter the competition. All submissions are final, and no late entries will be accepted.

Note: If a competition and a class occur on the same day, the price of the class will not be adjusted. Additionally, makeup classes will not be offered on that day.

Competition Attire and Equipment

Competition Attire for Rhythmic Gymnastics

For rhythmic gymnastics competitions, athletes must have specific attire that meets the sport's regulations. Below is a detailed guide to what is needed, the approximate Cost, and where you can purchase these items:

1. Competitive Leotard

Requirements:

Attire The USAG Development Program utilizes the FIG rules governing attire. A correct gymnastics leotard:

- It must be made of nontransparent material; therefore, leotards with some part in lace or sheer fabric will have to be lined from the trunk to the chest. The pelvic/crotch area (with or without a skirt) should be covered with nontransparent, non-skin-colored material up to the hip bones. A small lace or transparent or skin-colored area for connection/decoration is tolerated if the following is respected:
 - A solid, colored connection between the leotard's front and back is required.
 - The connection may be from fabric or applications but must give the impression of a whole material (not separate pieces).
 - The connection must appear at the hip bones or lower.
- The style of the neckline of the front and back of the leotard is free. The neckline of the front and back of the leotard must be no further down than half of the breastbone (sternum) and the lower line of the shoulder blades.
- The cut of the leotard at the top of the legs must not go beyond the fold of the crotch (maximum); undergarments worn beneath the leotard should not be visible beyond the seams of the leotard itself.
- The leotard must be tight-fitting to enable the judges to evaluate the correct position of every body part; this also includes tight-fitting sleeves.
- The leotard must be in one piece. A gymnast cannot separate additional "socks," "gloves," "decorative legwarmers," belts, etc.
- It is "allowed to wear long tights over or under the leotard. Shorts, semi-length tights, and similar are not allowed.
- A skirt must not fall further than the pelvic area over the leotard, tights, or the unitard.
- Maybe with or without sleeves, narrow straps are allowed.
- The skirt must be fitted to the hips (the look of a "ballet tutu" is forbidden; "fluffy" skirts, which are not fit closely to the hips, or skirts with the "puffy" feathered look that come out beyond the waist and pelvis)
- It is allowed to wear a full-length one-piece leotard if it is tight-fitting (The length and colors(s) of the fabric covering the legs must be identical on both legs)

- Decorative appliques or details on the leotard are allowed, but they should not jeopardize the gymnast's safety. It is not permitted to decorate leotards with light-emitting diodes (LED). Any appliques must stay close to the base (lay flat on the fabric) when the attire is motionless; they should not protrude excessively.
- It is not permitted to adjust the leotard during exercise voluntarily.
- Wearing large and dangling jewelry that jeopardizes the gymnast's safety is forbidden, and piercings are not allowed.
- The hairstyle must be neat and compact. Decorative details are allowed, but they must not be bulky and/or jeopardize the gymnast's safety. Hair decorations must be close to the bun/compact to the hair and cannot extend from the hair onto any part of the skin. Adjusting the hairstyle voluntarily during exercise is not permitted.
- Makeup should be clear and light. Theatrical masks are not allowed, and it is not permitted to adjust makeup during the makeup exercise voluntarily.
- Bandages or support pieces must be of skin color and not be in other colors.
- Level 3 and 4 gymnasts must wear 1 leotard for all routines. Level 5 gymnasts may wear a maximum of 2 different leotards.
- **Cost:**
 - Basic leotards: \$50-\$150.
 - Custom-designed leotards with intricate decoration: \$200 and up.
- **Where to Buy:**
 - Online platforms like Etsy, Amazon, AliExpress, Offer Up or specialized websites.
 - Local sewists/designers who create custom leotards.

2. Undergarments

- **Requirements:**
 - Skin-colored undergarments (e.g., sports bras, briefs) that do not show under the leotard.
- **Cost:**
 - \$10-\$50 depending on brand and style.
- **Where to Buy:**
 - Dancewear shops or online stores like Discount Dance or Capezio.

3. Toe Shoes (Toe Socks)

- **Requirements:**
 - Lightweight and comfortable toe shoes for better grip and control on the floor.
 - Must fit snugly to avoid slipping during routines.
- **Cost:**
 - \$10-\$30.
- **Where to Buy:**
 - Rhythmic gymnastics brands like Sasaki, Pastorelli, or online retailers.

4. Accessories

- **Hair:**
 - Neatly styled (e.g., bun) with hair ties, pins, and sometimes decorative accessories that match the leotard.
- **Makeup:**
 - Light and appropriate for competition (optional but common).

5. Requirements for Rhythmic Gymnastics Equipment

To participate in rhythmic gymnastics, athletes must meet specific equipment.

Equipment

Each gymnast must have personal equipment suited to their level, including:

- Rope
- Hoop
- Ball
- Clubs
- Ribbon

These items must meet the standards set by the FIG (Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique) for competitive use.

- **Cost:**
 - \$20-\$150 per apparatus.

Where to Find Required Items

- **Specialized Stores:** <https://rhythmicgymnastics.com/>
- **Online Retailers:** Websites like Amazon, Sasaki, and Pastorelli offer a wide range of rhythmic gymnastics items.
- **Local Clubs:** Some clubs may have partnerships with suppliers or sell items directly to their athletes.

Parent Acknowledgment and Signature Page

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received, read, and understood the Rhythmic Gymnastics Handbook provided by Atlas Gymnastics. I agree to abide by the policies, rules, and guidelines outlined in the handbook, including but not limited to:

1. **Code of Conduct:** I will ensure that my child and I maintain respectful behavior toward coaches, staff, and other participants.
2. **Attendance and Participation:** Committing to the attendance and participation requirements for the program my child is enrolled in.
3. **Financial Obligations:** Fulfill all payment requirements and understand the costs associated with the program, competitions, and attire.
4. **Competition Rules:** Adhering to all competition-related rules and deadlines as outlined in the handbook.
5. **Safety and Health:** Ensuring my child meets the health and safety requirements for participation in rhythmic gymnastics.

By signing below, I confirm that I understand the responsibilities and expectations set forth by Atlas Gymnastics and will support my child in adhering to them.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____