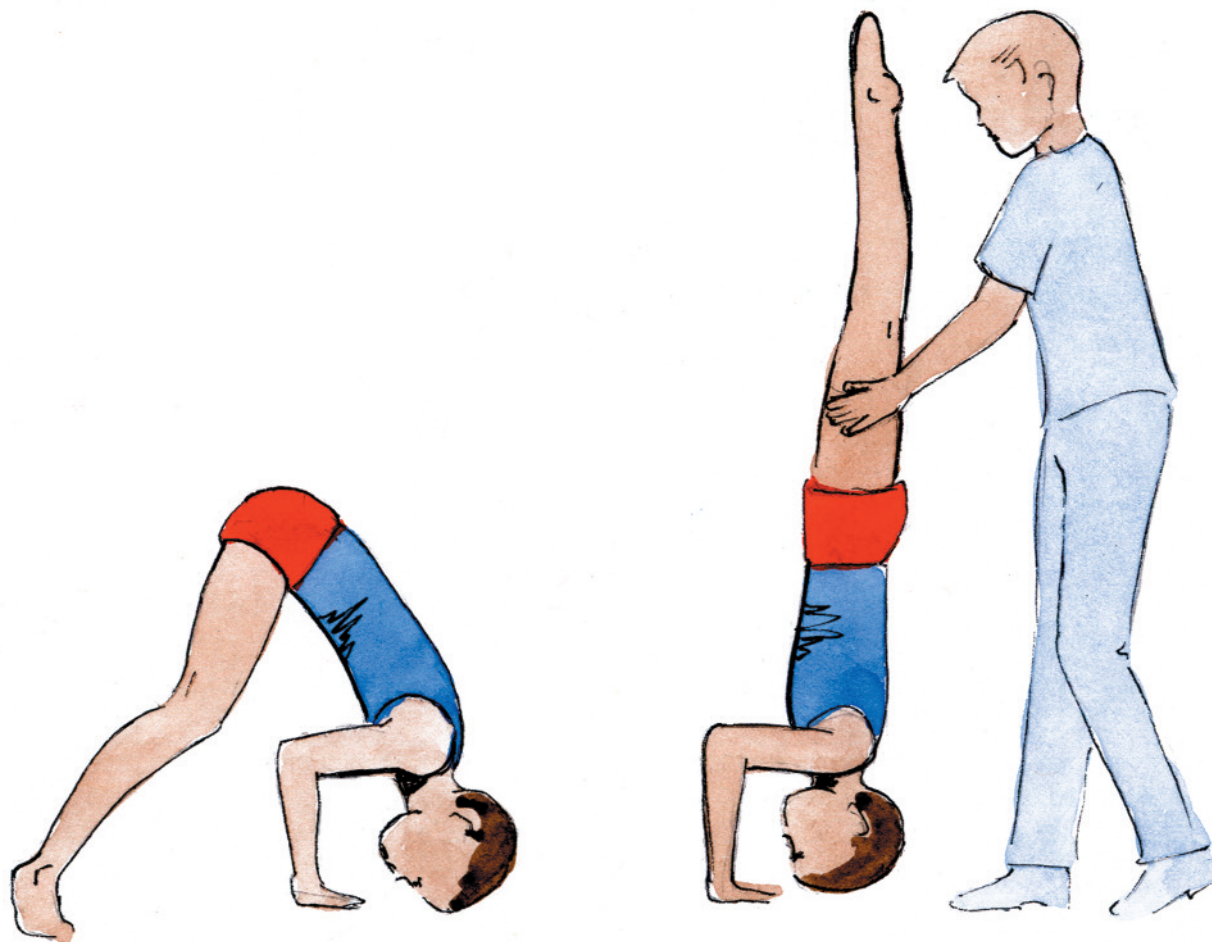


5.1

Headstand straight legs (supported)

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 1



5.1

Headstand straight legs (supported)

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 1

Guidance Notes

1. The straight leg headstand must now be performed with the aid of a supporter, and held still for 3 seconds.
2. The hands and head form a triangular base of support within which the centre of gravity must remain in order to stay balanced. Good whole body tension is also required to keep the centre of gravity constant, and to protect the neck in this weight bearing position.
3. Put the top of the head on the floor forwards of the hands to form a triangular shape. Once the support points have been established walk feet up to take the hips directly above head and shoulders. From here the knees are tucked in to the chest creating the correct curl in the lower back, the legs are then slowly extended upwards until straight with feet pointing to the roof.

Teaching Points

Body

Tight body, top of head on floor, head, shoulders, hips and legs in one straight line

Legs

Legs tight together, straight legs, feet pointed

Arms

Flat hands shoulder width, push through arms to keep body up, angle at elbows is 90°

Timing

Hold for 3 seconds

Common Faults

Legs apart

Hands pointing outwards

Forehead on floor

Falling over onto back

Arched back

Cannot get hips up high enough

Possible Cause

No leg tension

Incorrect hand placement

Lack of understanding of correct head placement.

Hands and head placement in line

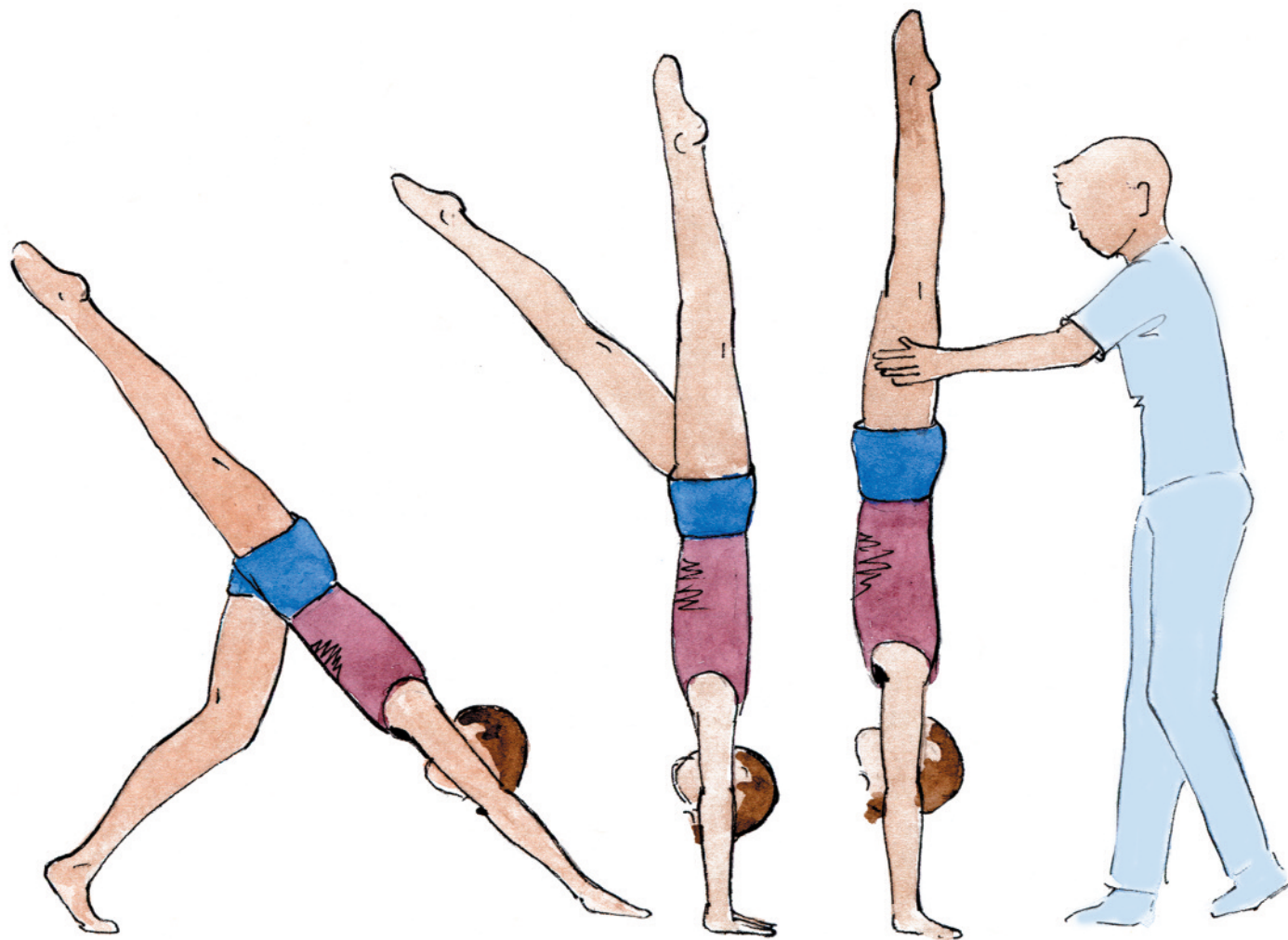
Knees raised too high

No push through arms

5.2

Supported handstand

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 2



5.2

Supported handstand

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 2

Guidance Notes

1. From standing straight with arms up and foot pointed in front, lift the lead leg and step forward into a deep lunge. Simultaneously reach forward and down with the arms, placing hands, fingertips first then palms flat, with wide fingers firmly gripping the floor, shoulder width apart with index finger pointing forward.
2. Swing the rear leg up and push off the lead leg. The swing and push of the legs create the required momentum to lift the hips above the hands. To bare the weight on the hands, the arms must straighten and push into the floor to extend the shoulders. As the hips arrive above the hands there should be a deceleration by pushing firmly from the hands up through the body. The whole body should be held in extension, eyes looking down to see fingers. Fine controlled movements in balance are made through sensitive adjustments in pressure on the hand/ fingertip area.
3. From the inverted position, there should be a gradual release of tension in the abdominal muscles to allow the legs to be lowered to the floor. The landing foot is placed close to the hands, with the second foot landing further back to take the lunge position, as the body passes through to finish stretched.
4. The supporter must stand to the side of the gymnast preferably the side of the pushing leg. The supporter can support the thigh of the pushing leg, with the other hand under the gymnast's shoulder. Later as ability improves the supporter may hold the front and back of the thigh.

Teaching Points

Body

Stretched tight body, head tilted slightly to see hands, suck and tuck

Legs

High lead leg lift, lunge step, swing and push, legs tight together in air, feet pointed

Arms

Flat hands shoulder width apart, place fingers first, then palms

Timing

Balance held for 3 seconds

Common Faults

Arched back
Bent legs, legs apart
Unable to reach vertical

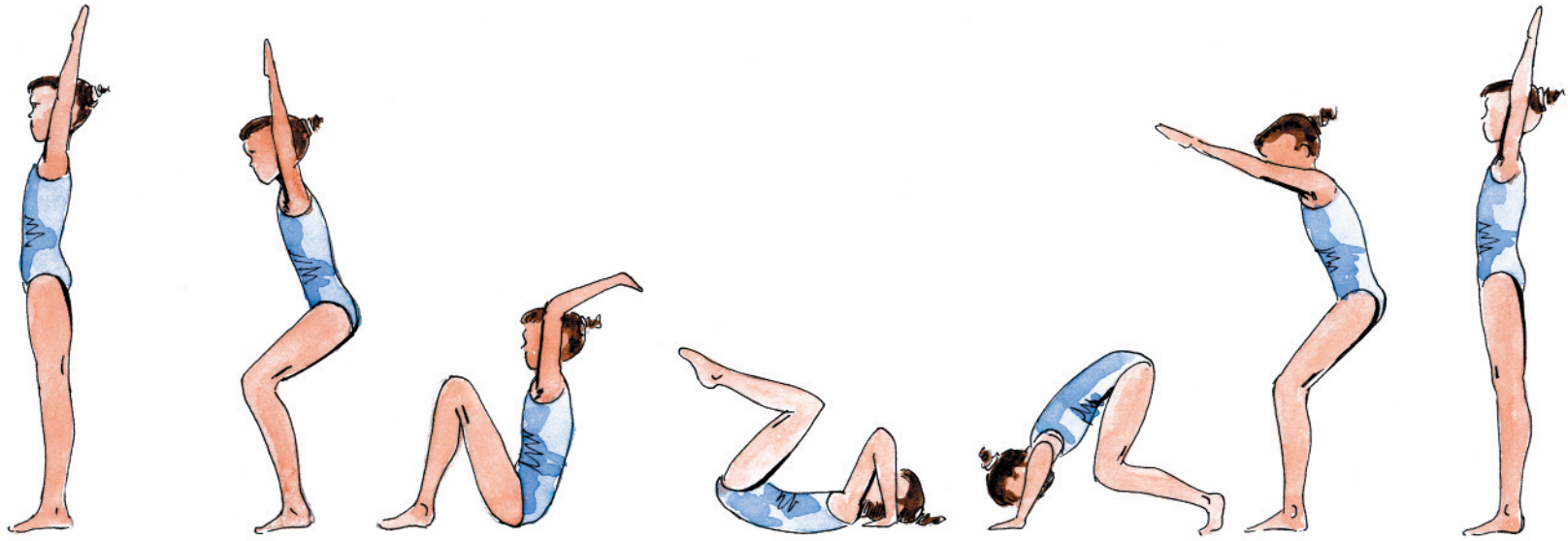
Possible Cause

No suck and tuck shape used
Lack of leg tension
Not moving shoulders over wrists

5.3

Backward roll

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 3



5.3

Backward roll

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 3

Guidance Notes

1. The backward roll is one of the basic skills. It is also important to learn this skill to avoid injury when landing backwards and over-rotating.
2. Stand tall with arms stretched up by ears, chin up but eyes looking forward and down, legs straight and feet together. Bend knees all the way down and lower arms to place thumbs close to ears. Elbows should point forwards creating a slight curl in the spine with shoulders falling behind hips, weight on heels.
3. Take off by pushing through the legs, fingers tucking under shoulders placing hands flat and shoulder width apart on floor. The gymnast should keep the body curled, head tucked into chest throughout the roll.
4. When hands are on the floor the gymnast should push strongly through the arms to clear the head off the floor as the body rotates to place feet together on the floor.
5. On completion of the roll the gymnast will stand to show the same shape as described in the starting position.

Teaching Points

Body

Keep tight, tuck chin in, rounded back

Legs

Push with legs into roll, legs tight together, feet pointed, show tuck shape upside down, knees to chest, feet together throughout

Arms

Flat hands, thumbs close to ears, tuck fingers under shoulders, shoulder width apart, push to clear head off floor

Timing

Push with arms when hands touch the floor

Common Faults

- Getting stuck upside down
- Kicking out in roll
- Not remaining tucked throughout
- Falling off to side

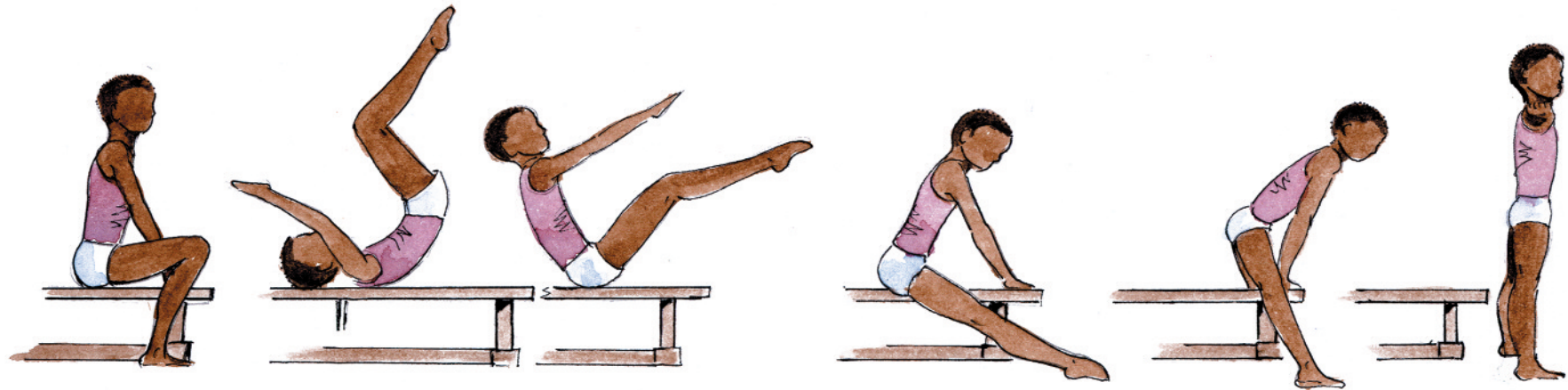
Possible Cause

- No push with arms to clear head
- Trying to generate speed
- Weak abdominal muscles
- Roll too slow

5.4

Straddle roll on bench

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 4



5.4

Straddle roll on bench

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 4

Guidance Notes

1. Here the gymnast must rock backwards along a bench, then forwards along the bench to pass through straddle sitting to push and stand up. To do this the back must be rounded and a tight body shape held, chin on chest and feet together in air, legs begin to straighten out and straddle on the forward rolling action, hands reach through legs onto bench.
2. Arms remain straight as hands contact the bench, with effort being made to push down and back as the shoulders pass forwards in front of the hands and continue as the feet are placed either side of the bench, to allow the body to stand up in straddle.
3. On the backward rolling action ensure weight remains on the shoulders and the gymnast does not roll so far back that the weight is on the neck on the bench. The knees should not pass over the head, but the body is partly open to prepare to straighten the legs out on the forward rolling action to land on feet.

Teaching Points

Body

Rounded back, chin tucked in, tight body

Legs

Straddle legs, straight tight legs, feet pointed

Arms

Reach forward and through for bench, pushing down when shoulders are in front of hands

Timing

Smooth roll, late straddle of legs

Common Faults

Bent legs in straddle

Pushing off with bent arms

Rolling off bench

Possible Cause

Weak leg tension

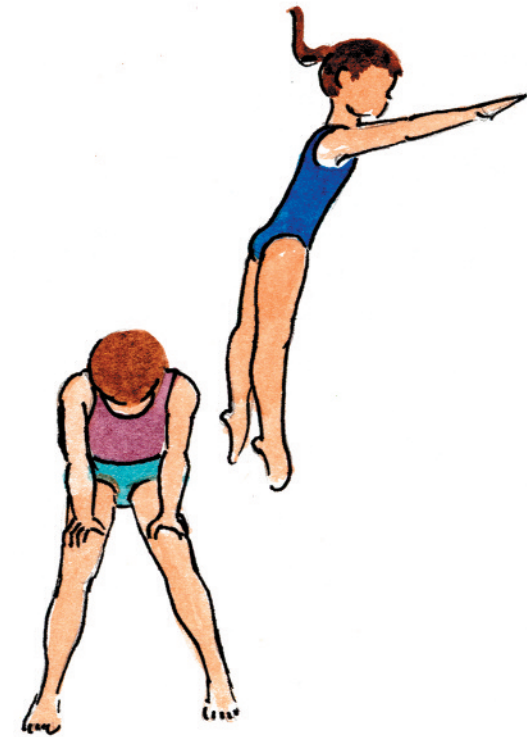
Incorrect thrust

Unequal action on take off

5.5

Leap frog

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 5



Guidance Notes

1. From short run towards a partner, use the hurdle step as previously learned in level 3 to bounce from two feet, place both hands onto the partners back, and straddle the legs round the sides of partner to land safely on the floor.
2. To perform the leap frog action the hips must be raised high enough to allow the body to clear the partner. The arms push strongly thrusting through the shoulders to counter act the over rotation caused by the hip lift.
3. The arms thrust and reach forward horizontally as legs gather to land together on the floor.
4. Drive legs straight into the take off, pressing the balls of the feet into the floor. The gymnast leans forward slightly on take off in order to travel upward, along and off the partner. The legs straddle wide to clear the partner then gather together in the air just prior to landing. Keep the body tight in the air.
5. The partner should maintain a strong stance with one leg forward, slight bend in the legs, slight arm bend with hands on the front knee, head tucked in.

NB: This skill should be performed on mats.

Teaching Points

Body

Held tight, head in line with body throughout, high hips

Legs

Straight, feet pointed, wide straddle, high hips

Arms

Hands slightly apart on partners back.

Timing

Bounce, straddle, join, land

Common Faults

- Not wide enough straddle
- Take off one foot
- Partner collapses
- Unable to clear partner

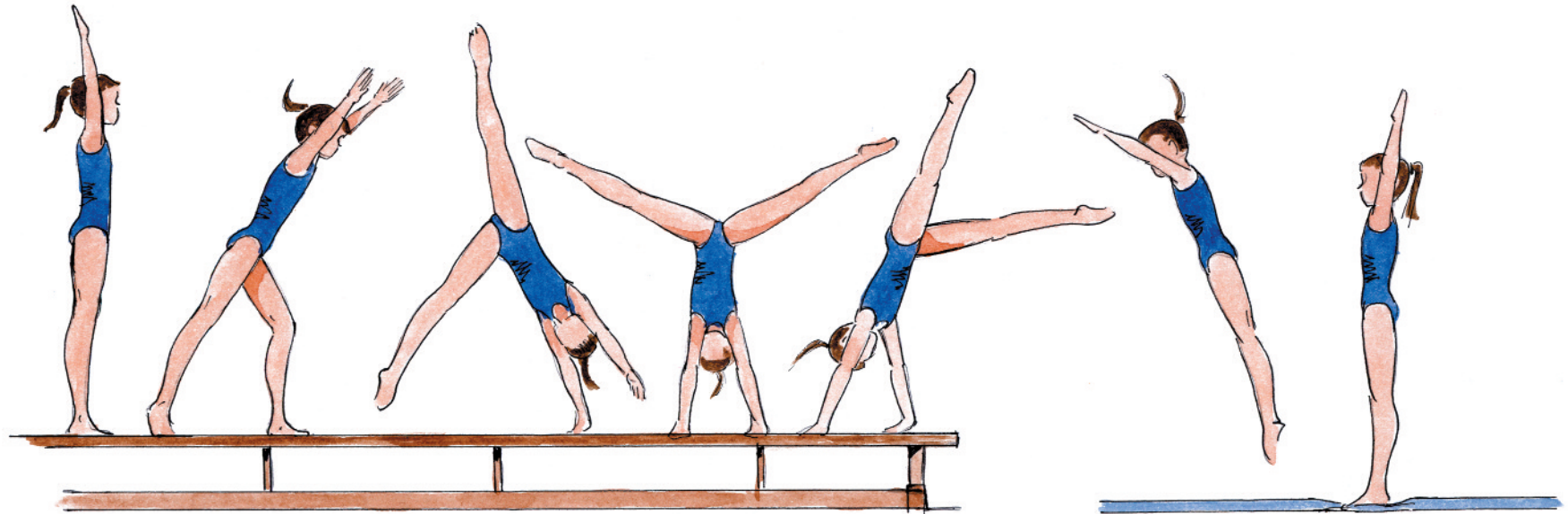
Possible Cause

- Lack of flexibility
- Incorrect hurdle step action
- Weak support base
- Supporter standing too high

5.6

Cartwheel dismount

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 6



5.6

Cartwheel dismount

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 6

Guidance Notes

1. The 'front to back' cartwheel can now be used as a dismount from a bench. It is very important to use this particular technique as it changes the direction of the gymnast from forwards to backwards creating an accelerating effect.
2. Start facing forwards along the bench, one foot pointed out in front, showing slight turnout of the knee. The arms are raised up by the ears, chin up.
3. Lift the lead foot forwards and up to between knee and waist level and then step forward into a lunge along the bench. Lean forward and make a quarter turn with the body to place the near hand on the bench, followed by the far away hand as it reaches over the top to finish near the end of the bench. Drive off the first leg and swing the other leg over the top. The legs continue to pass over the top of the body and begin to join together in the air with a further quarter rotation so that both feet land at the same time on the floor. The cartwheel action should be smooth with the feet reaching up and away from the bench for landing.
4. As the chest drops forwards and down it should look as though the gymnast is about to enter a handstand on the bench, however the body turns late to place the near hand on the bench, fingers pointing sideways. The second hand rotates inward to point the fingers at the first hand, which gives the natural wrist alignment in order to push more efficiently through the arm.
5. During the flight off the bench, the gymnast should use the donkey kick action as learned in level 4 to snap both legs down together for landing.

Teaching Points

Body

Tight body, quarter turn in, quarter turn out.
Head back slightly to see hand placement on bench

Legs

Strong swing with the back leg, and drive off the front leg, legs straight throughout, join legs in air, feet pointed

Arms

Strong and straight, turn far hand inward, hands shoulder width apart

Timing

Legs joined together just after vertical. Flight from hands to feet

Common Faults

- Near hand turned inwards
- Landing deviating from straight line
- No push off far hand
- Bent legs
- Falling backwards on landing
- Large pike down

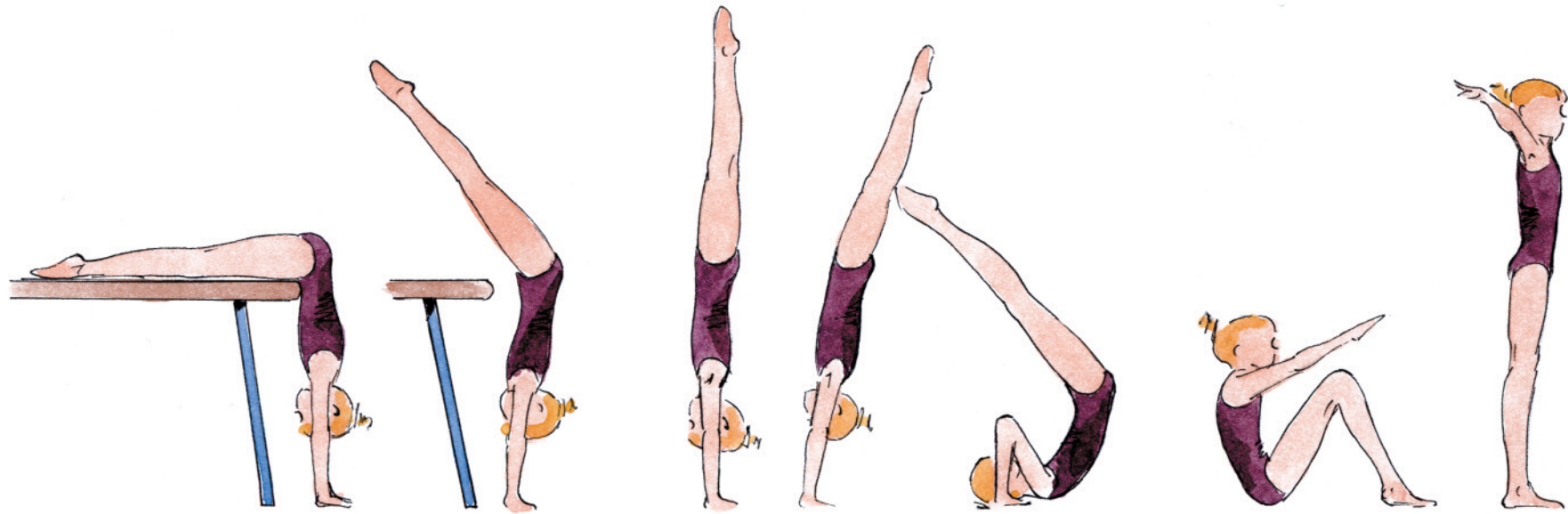
Possible Cause

- Incorrect hand placement
- Arched back or legs round the side
- lunge forwards too small
- Twisted wrist
- Feet flexed for landing
- Hips falling behind feet
- No push

5.7

Handstand forward roll preparation

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 7



Guidance Notes

1. In this progression, the gymnast lies over over a table /box, to place hands on floor, raise the body to handstand shape, overbalance and forward roll to stand. Keep the body straight leading into the fall, then tuck chin in, bend arms and curl body, and lastly tuck the knees and heels in to forward roll and to stand.
2. Hands are placed on floor, flat and shoulder width apart. Head tilted slightly to see hands. Keep arms and body straight and lead with the heels into the overbalance. Tight body and legs, showing a slight arch in the body. As momentum is gathered, the body curls and rolls down with sufficient speed to recover to feet.
3. At approximately 40° past the handstand the gymnast tucks and rolls. The head should not touch the floor but it is acceptable if the back of the head brushes lightly on the floor. Strong weight bearing through the arms and shoulders is necessary before the arms lower the body under control.

Teaching Points

Body

Head straight and tight for as long as possible prior to roll

Legs

Straight, lead with the heels, tuck knees and heels in for roll

Arms

Hands flat, shoulder width, straight arms

Timing

Common Faults

- Rolling before handstand is achieved
- Not passing through handstand
- Skidding along on roll

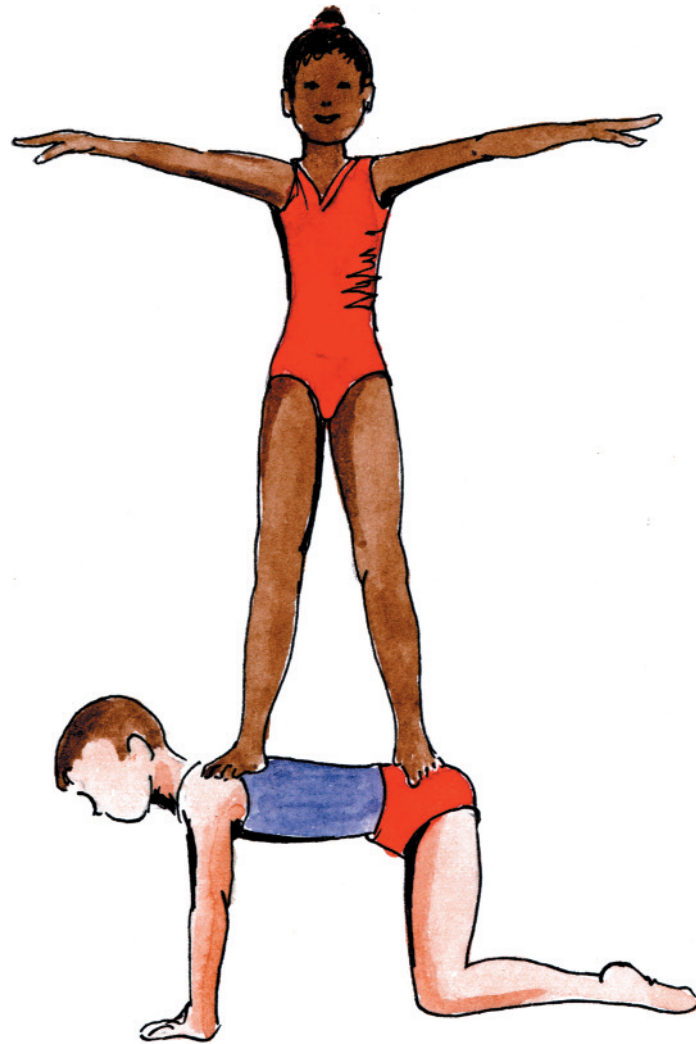
Possible Cause

- Lack of strength to raise legs to vertical
- Weak handstand shape, lack of tension
- Staying straight too long

5.8

Partner 'A' balance

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 8



Guidance Notes

1. With a partner it is possible to obtain and maintain a balance position which is created by one partner bearing the weight of the other.
2. The supporter or base person positions themselves on hands and knees with legs slightly apart, knees directly under hips. The arms are straight, hands placed flat and shoulder width apart directly under the shoulders. The back must remain flat and strong for the top gymnast to stand on.
3. The partner or top person, to be supported, stands across partner's back, one foot placed on hips and the other foot on shoulder blades. The top gymnast stands upright with straight legs slightly apart, head up and arms held out to side hands slightly higher than shoulder level.
4. The top gymnast's centre of gravity must remain above the base of support provided by the partner's back. This is achieved by the good body tension of the base gymnast.

NB: Safety. Special care must be taken to place foot on hips and shoulder blades and **not** on middle of back.

Teaching Points

Body

Head tight and strong, head in line with body

Legs

Tight and strong in support

Arms

Strong straight arms for weight bearing

Timing

Enter position carefully, hold still for 3 seconds

Common Faults

Falling out of position
Unable to hold support

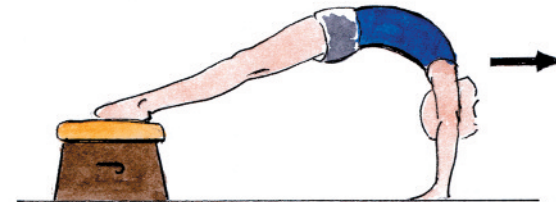
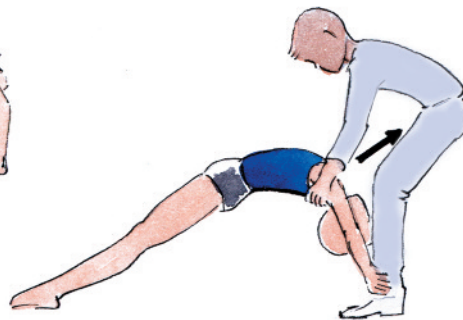
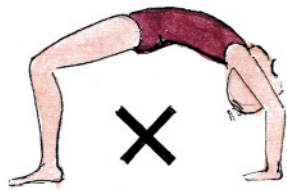
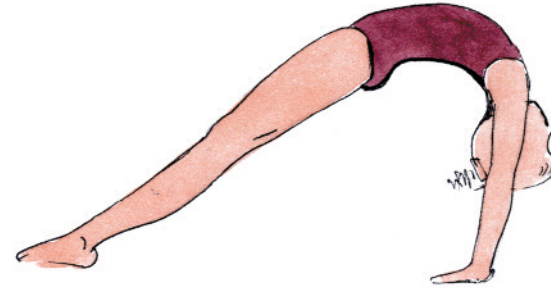
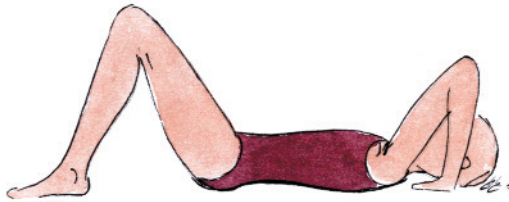
Possible Cause

Unstable support balance position
Uncomfortable foot placement

5.9

Bridge

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 9



Guidance Notes

1. The bridge position on the floor should be held steady for 3 seconds.
2. Place the hands flat on the floor and shoulder width apart, tuck fingers under shoulders, bend at the elbows, push through the arms to straighten them, bearing the inverted body weight on the arms. The knees are bent up with feet together on the floor in order to push up.
3. Once the body has been raised, the legs straighten pushing the shoulders forwards over the wrists, the head is naturally in line with the body, but eyes looking at hands .
4. The legs are straight and together, feet together.

NB: The diagrams showing supporter assisting them are a good introduction to all gymnasts, helping them in achieving the correct shape.

Teaching Points

Body

Tight body, head naturally in line with body, see hands

Legs

Straight and together, feet together

Arms

Shoulders over wrists, Strong push through arms, flat hands shoulder width apart

Timing

Slowly enter position, hold for 3 seconds

Common Faults

Legs bent. Feet apart

Wrists forward of shoulders

Head on floor

Sore lower back

Possible Cause

Lack of flexibility in thighs

Lack of flexibility in shoulders

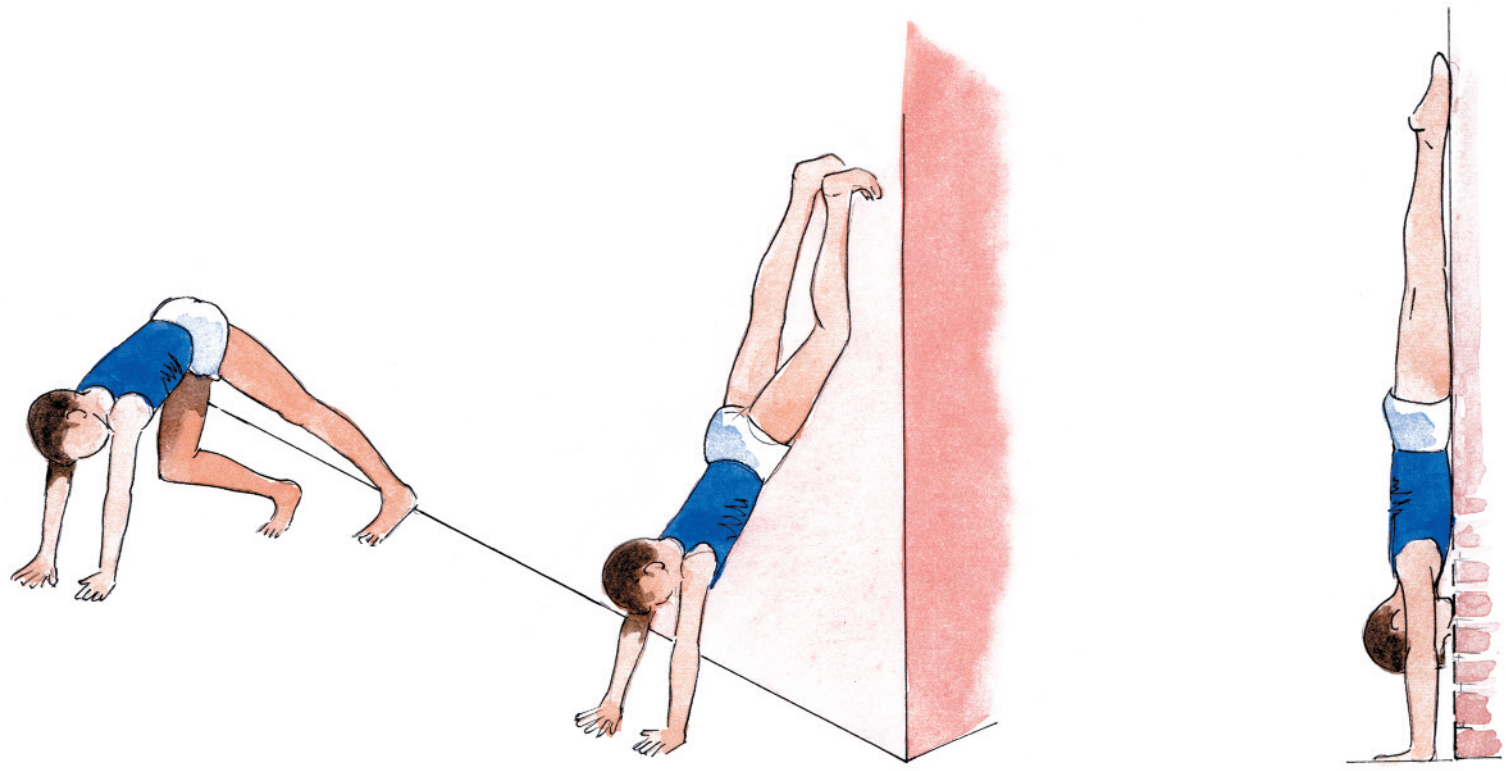
Weak arms

Lower back is doing all the work, lack of flexibility in the shoulders

5.10

Static handstand against wall

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 10



5.10

Static handstand against wall

LEVEL 5 • SKILL CARD 10

Guidance Notes

1. In this progression, the gymnast walks the feet up a wall to show a good body shape in handstand facing wall. With hands flat on floor, walk the hands in to allow the body to get closer to the wall for the handstand shape, forward roll out to land. Allow the body to relax into the fall, tuck chin in, bending arms and curling body, and lastly tuck the knees and heels in to forward roll out to tuck sit, or stand. Alternatively walk the hands out and step down the wall to stand.
2. Hands are placed on floor, flat and shoulder width apart. Head tilted slightly to see hands. Keep the arms and legs strong and straight, with tight body showing the “suck and tuck”.
3. It is important in the handstand shape that the gymnast pushes up through the shoulders, and that the head is tucked in, yet tilted to see the hands. The body is tight with only the toes in contact with the wall, thus requiring good whole body tension.

NB: SAFETY - A safety mat may be placed against wall and another mat used on floor.

Teaching Points

Body

Held straight and tight, see hand placement

Legs

Straight, squeeze heels together, point feet

Arms

Flat hands shoulder width, strong push up through arms, index fingers pointing forward

Timing

Hold for 5 seconds

Common Faults

Collapsing in handstand

Falling to side

Body lying against wall

Possible Cause

Weak handstand shape, lack of strength in arms, or arms too wide apart

Hands too close together

Lack of body tension