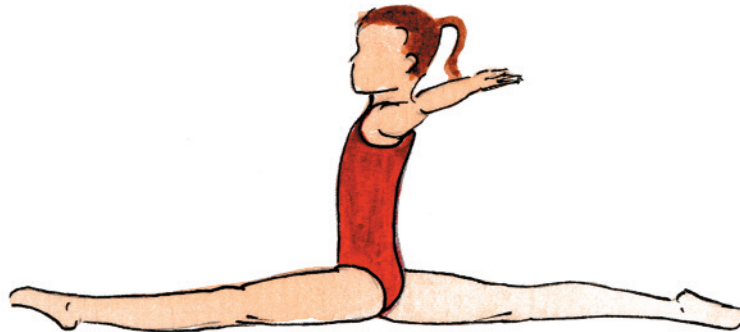


3.1

Splits

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 1



Guidance Notes

1. **Front Splits** Gymnast should take a large step forward and lower into the splits position by sliding the rear leg backwards, the hands may be used to balance but once in the splits position the arms should be extended out to the side. The position of the front leg is, heel on floor and toes pointed, the heel of the rear leg points upwards with knee pointing down to floor. Hips should remain 'square' in line with shoulders and not 'opened', legs should be straight.
2. **Side Splits** The gymnast should open legs into a straddle position and then slowly walk feet outwards lowering into side splits. Once again the gymnast may use their hands to steady themselves in the final stages. However, to show the position, the gymnast should extend their arms out to the side and show the splits position. The gymnast's heels point downwards to floor, the knees point directly upwards. Legs are in line with hips. The back of the legs should touch the floor. Again the legs should be straight and at 180° to each other.

For both front and side splits the muscles in the trunk (stomach and back) should be held tight with the chest and upper body held upright to maintain postural alignment. Head lifted with eyes focused forward and slightly upwards. Arms should be extended sideways (stretched) to help balance. Full extension of legs, ankles and toes will show amplitude in execution.

NB; gymnasts should warm up by stretching the legs before attempting to show splits.

Teaching Points

Body

Held tight with elevation in chest and upper body

Legs

Extended

Arms

Extended out to sides (stretched)

Timing

The splits position should be held for 3 seconds

Common Faults

A common fault is gymnast unable to reach the splits position, particularly in side splits

Inward rotation of knees and feet

Possible Cause

The gymnast is not supple

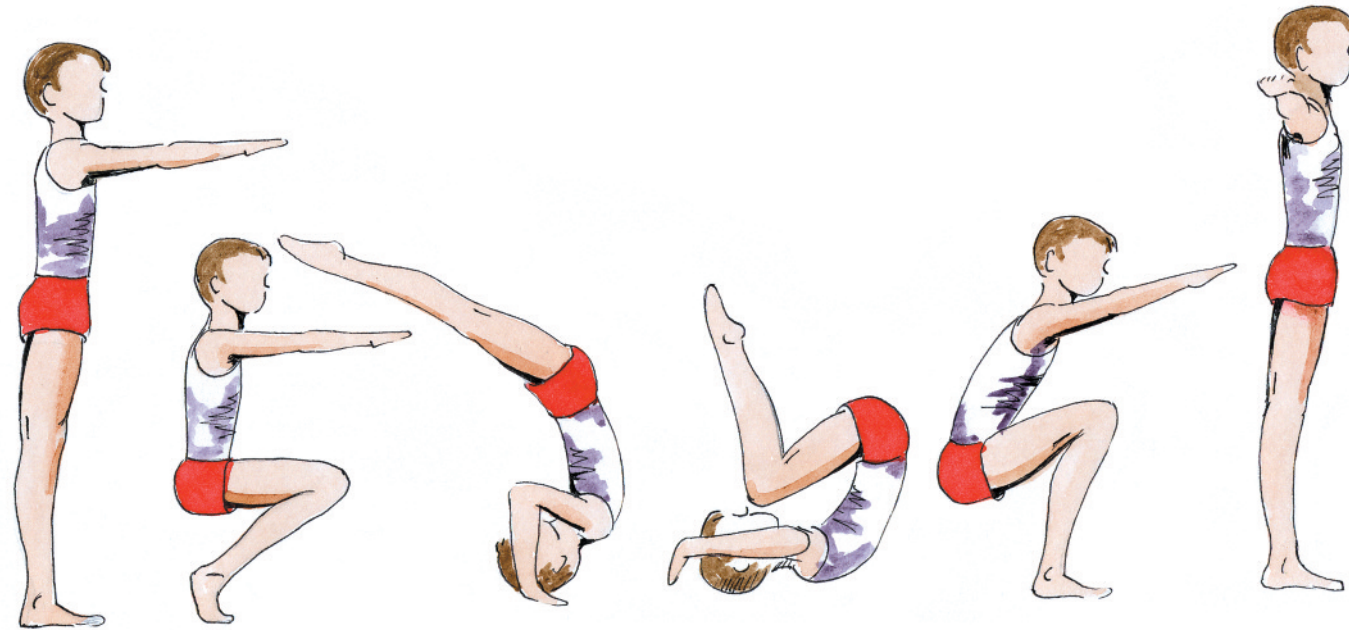
Lack of flexibility in hips

'Turn out' must be maintained in hip joint to allow knees to point upwards

3.2

Forward Roll to Stand

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 2



3.2

Forward Roll to Stand

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 2

Guidance Notes

1. The forward roll is one of the basic skills in gymnastics. It is also important to learn this skill to avoid injury when landing forwards and over-rotating.
2. From standing tall with arms stretched up by ears, chin up but eyes looking forward and down, legs straight and feet together. Bend knees half way (knee angle 90°) also lower arms to horizontal, creating a slight curl in the spine with shoulders in front of hips, feel weight on balls of feet.
3. Take off by driving legs straight and pointing toes, giving a little flight to the roll. Arms reach forward and down, hands flat and shoulder width on the floor. The gymnast should curl the body, starting from the arms bending at the elbows, head tucked in (back of head may touch the floor), round the back but keep legs straight at this point showing the pike position.
4. Approximately half way through the roll the gymnast should tuck the heels in quickly to the seat to accelerate the rolling action. Arms reach forward and upward, staying close to the ears, and continue reaching upward on recovery to feet.
5. On completion of the roll the gymnast will show the same shape as described in the starting position.

Teaching Points

Body

Keep tight, tuck chin in, rounded back

Legs

Drive legs straight, legs together, feet pointed, show pike shape upside down, quickly tuck heel in to bottom, feet together throughout

Arms

Flat hands, shoulder width apart, absorb weight at start, reach forward and up

Timing

Tuck heels in half way

Common Faults

- Rolling off top of head
- No pike shape shown
- Not tucking heels in
- Falling off to side
- Unable to stand

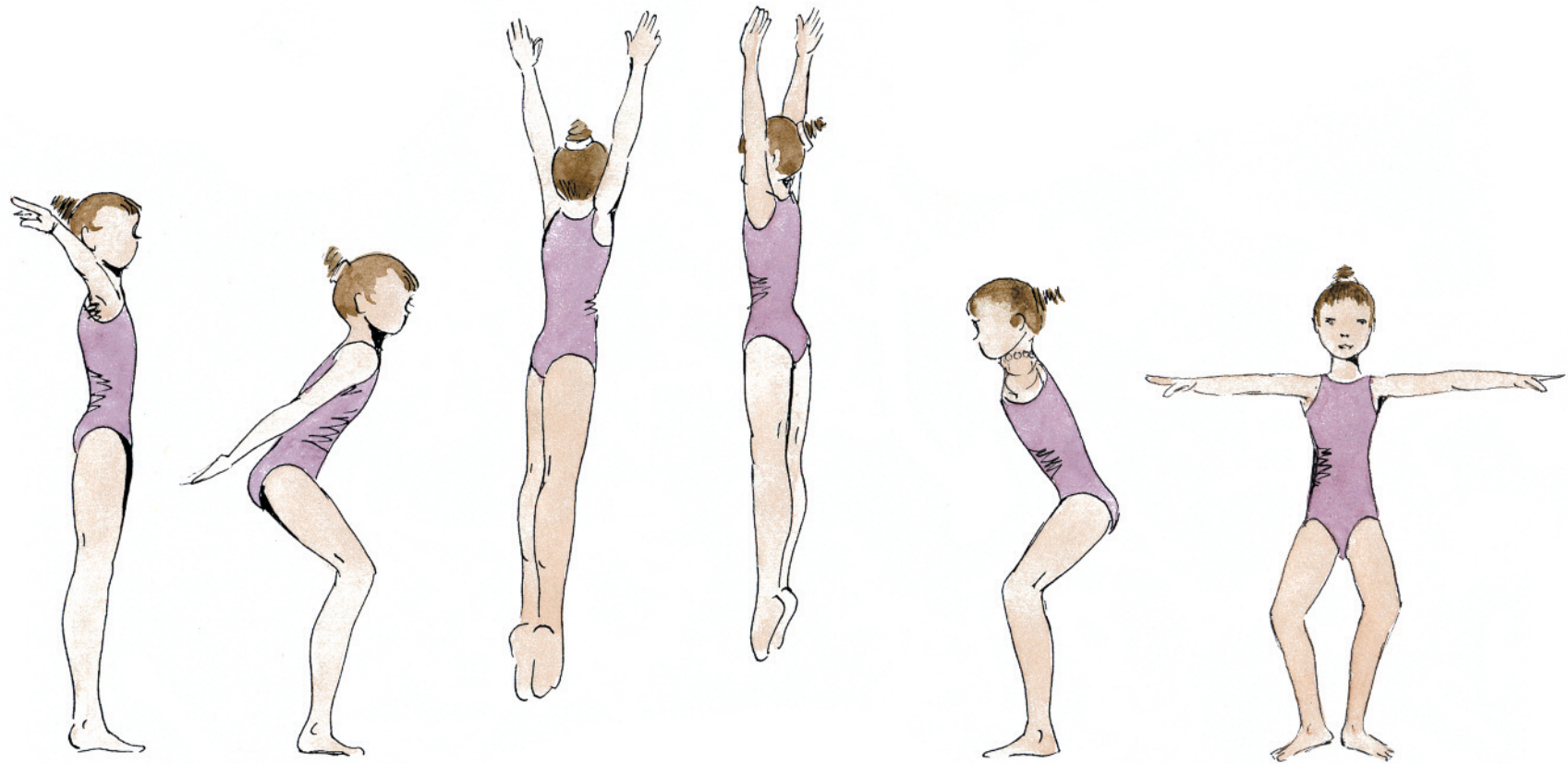
Possible Cause

- Hips not high enough / head not tucked in
- Lack of drive off legs, in-correct leg action
- Roll too slow
- Lack of momentum or straightening of legs (not maintaining tuck shape through roll)

3.3

Jump Half Turn

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 3



Guidance Notes

1. This is an important skill to learn to avoid injuries when landing from twisting skills. It is known as a 'Direct Twist' as it is created by pushing directly against the floor.
2. Keep the back flat and straight throughout by using the 'suck and tuck' shape. There will be a slight bending at the waist to prepare the jump, and once again on landing. Head remains naturally in line with the body, eyes look forward and down.
3. Start with legs straight feet slightly apart (about 15cm), flat and parallel. To prepare, bend knees half way (angle at knees and ankles is 45 degrees), knees over the toes showing 45° hip angle.
4. Drive legs straight at knees, and press balls of feet into floor in the opposite direction of desired twist, causing the heels to leave floor. The toes are the last part of the foot to leave the floor in the jumping action. Keep body tight in the air, with arms stretched by the ears. It is important to remain straight throughout to facilitate the twist. Turn head and shoulders in direction of twist.
5. Land toes first, balls of feet, heels and bend knees under control to land safely. Straighten legs to stand.
6. The arms begin from sideways shoulder level position, and circles backward and downward in preparation. The jump action of the legs is complimented by the forward and upward arm swing, which stops by the ears to allow the body to be totally straight. Arms drop sideways to shoulder level to control balance on landing.

Teaching Points

Body

Totally straight and tight, head and shoulders turn in direction of twist

Legs

Straighten legs quickly. Absorb landing, land toes, heels, knee bend forward over toes, land feet in demi plié

Arms

Swing up by ears, arms sideways to control landing

Timing

Co-ordination of arms swing with leg thrust

Common Faults

Over - rotation
Loss of balance
Arms not by ears

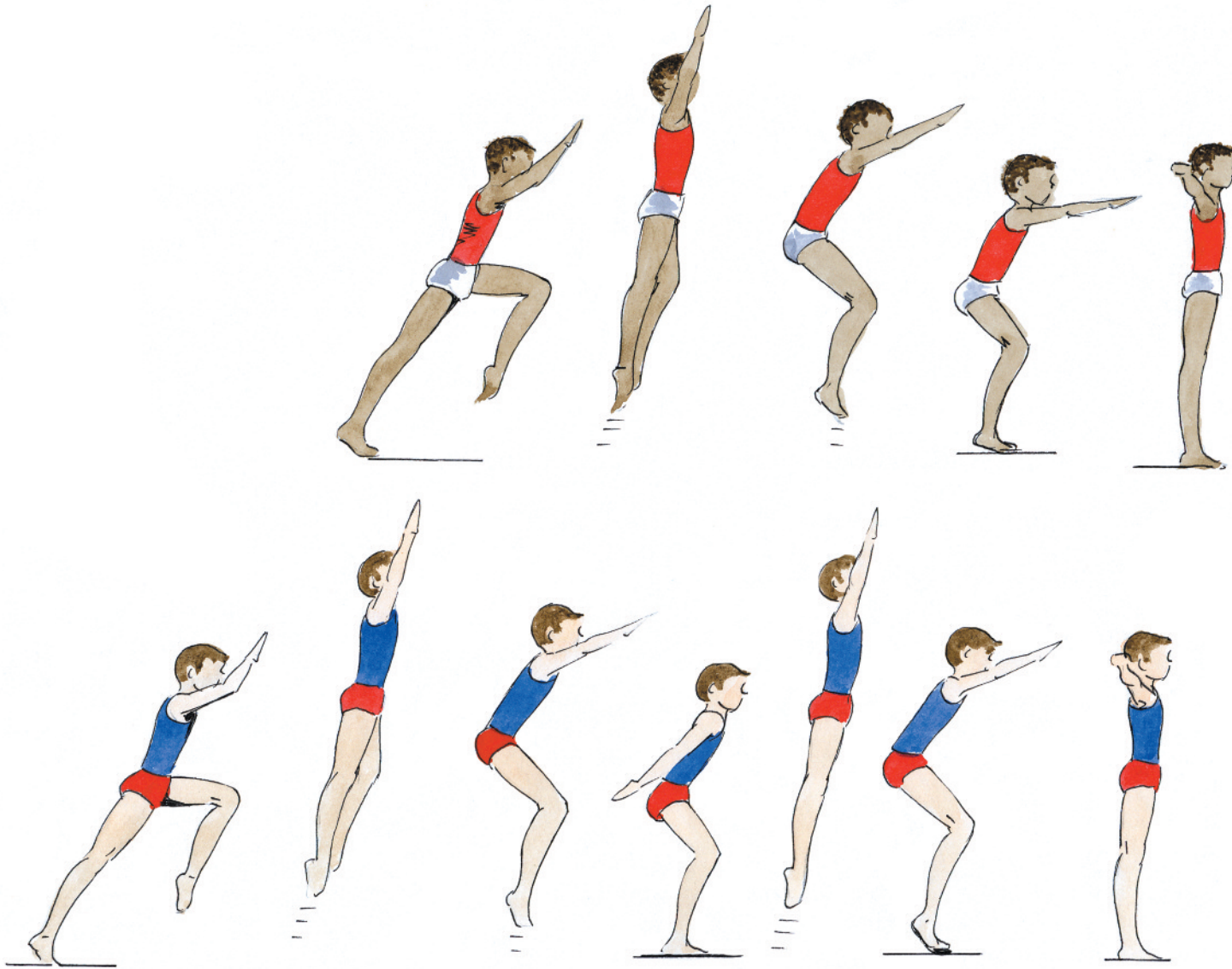
Possible Cause

Trying too hard
Poor body alignment
Lack of flexibility in shoulders

3.4

Hurdle Step

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 4



3.4

Hurdle Step

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 4

Guidance Notes

1. This is an important skill to learn to enable take off from two feet. It is known as a 'Hurdle Step' and is used in take off, particularly on the springboard during vaulting.
2. The first requirement is to take off from one foot to land on two feet, landing with feet slightly apart, facing forwards and parallel, and taking a landing position to complete this movement phase.
3. Once the basic take off action has been learned the sequence should build to one foot to two to two, so that the gymnast takes off one foot to bounce on two feet together then lands steadily on two feet showing the landing position for 2 -3 seconds.
4. When the above sequence improves, a short run should be used to enter this skill.
5. It is important for teachers, and gymnasts, to be aware of the difference between a jump, a leap and a bounce (or rebound), as two of these skills are involved in this particular move.
6. The hurdle step is made up of a leap (a one foot take off), to gather the feet together in the air, a bounce on two feet (a rebound, where heels do not touch the floor) and a landing on two feet putting heels down. Jumping is an action two feet to two feet where the heels go down between each jump.

Teaching Points

Body

Tight body, shoulders directly above hips on take off, head up

Legs

Join legs together in air, bounce on balls of feet, reach forward with toes for landing

Arms

Swing forwards and up to just in front of ears, lower to horizontal forward on landing

Timing

1 - 2 - 2

Common Faults

- Heels down on rebound
- Breakdown of sequence
- Not reaching forwards with toes

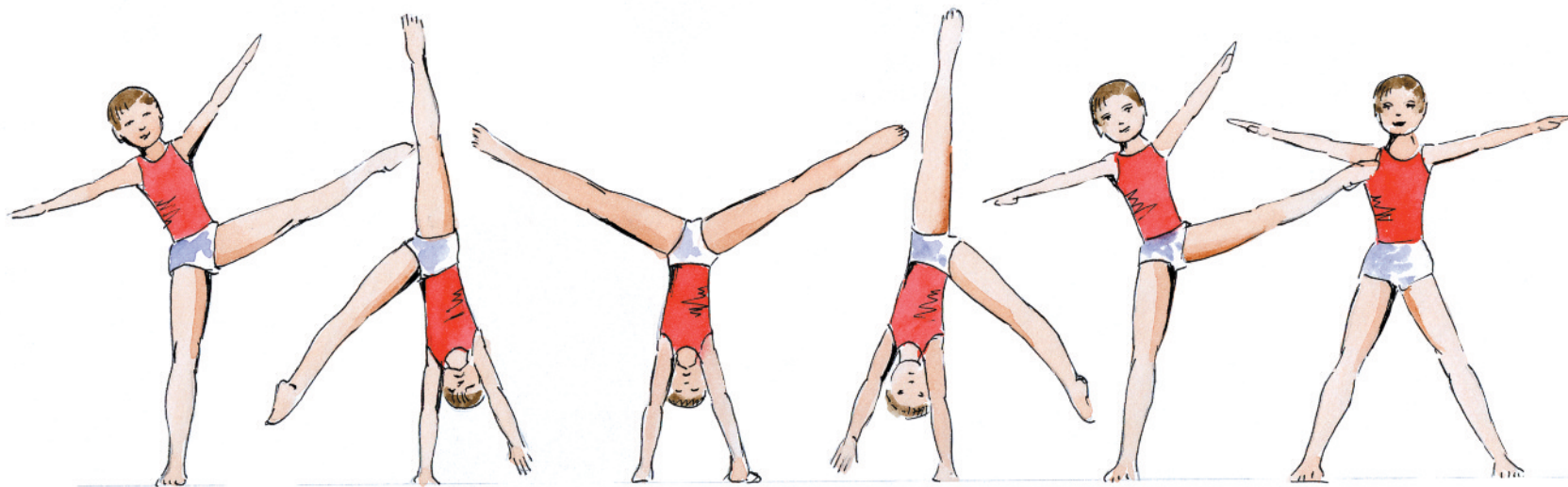
Possible Cause

- Lack of appreciation of rebound action
- Lack of understanding of steps
- Misconception that the gymnast needs to lean forward to move forward

3.5

Cartwheel

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 5



Guidance Notes

1. The cartwheel is a very important skill to learn as it turns the gymnast backwards as they are moving forwards whilst creating an accelerating effect.
2. In this sideways facing cartwheel, start with the lead leg raised sideways and arms raised upwards and out to side. Reach down with the near hand placing the raised foot first then the near hand on the floor, followed by the far away hand as it reaches over the top of the head. Drive off the first leg and swing the other leg over the top. The legs continue passing over the body to land on the first foot then the second. The cartwheel action should be smooth and demonstrate the hand - hand - foot - foot sequence.
3. As the near hand reaches down the chest drops sideways, forwards and down. This also facilitates a more powerful swing with the rear leg, coupled with the drive off the first leg.
4. The hands are placed flat and shoulder width apart and as the body passes through a 'hips over hands' shape, the gymnast should see the hand placement on the floor.
5. Strong straight arms are required to bear the weight of the body as it passes over the top. A slight push through the arms will aid the recovery to feet.

Teaching Points

Body

Tight body, head back slightly to see hand placement

Legs

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

Arms

Strong and straight, place first hand then second hand, shoulder width apart, flat hands, fingers spread

Timing

Hand - hand - foot - foot

Common Faults

Bent legs
Fingers pointing outward
Swinging legs round the side
Arched back
Cartwheel off line
Bent arms

Possible Cause

No leg tension
Fear of going upside down
Head too far back
No arm tension
No mid body tension

3.6

Tuck Headstand (Initially Supported)

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 6



3.6

Tuck Headstand (Initially Supported)

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 6

Guidance Notes

1. The crouch headstand should be performed with a supporter until the gymnast is competent to perform the skill unaided.
2. The hands and head form a triangle. Once the support points have been established, walk the feet up to take the hips directly above the head and shoulders. From here the knees are tucked into the chest creating the correct curl in the lower back, and feet point to the roof.
3. The supporter may support the hips of the gymnast, or alternatively place one hand under the gymnast's shoulder to ease the weight on the neck in the early stages.

Teaching Points

Body

Tight body, top of head on floor (where hairline meets forehead), head and shoulders hips in one straight line

Legs

Legs together, knees bent tucked into chest, feet pointed

Arms

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

Timing

Held steady 3 seconds

Common Faults

- Knees apart
- Hands pointing outward
- Falling over onto back
- Arched back
- Can't get hips up high enough

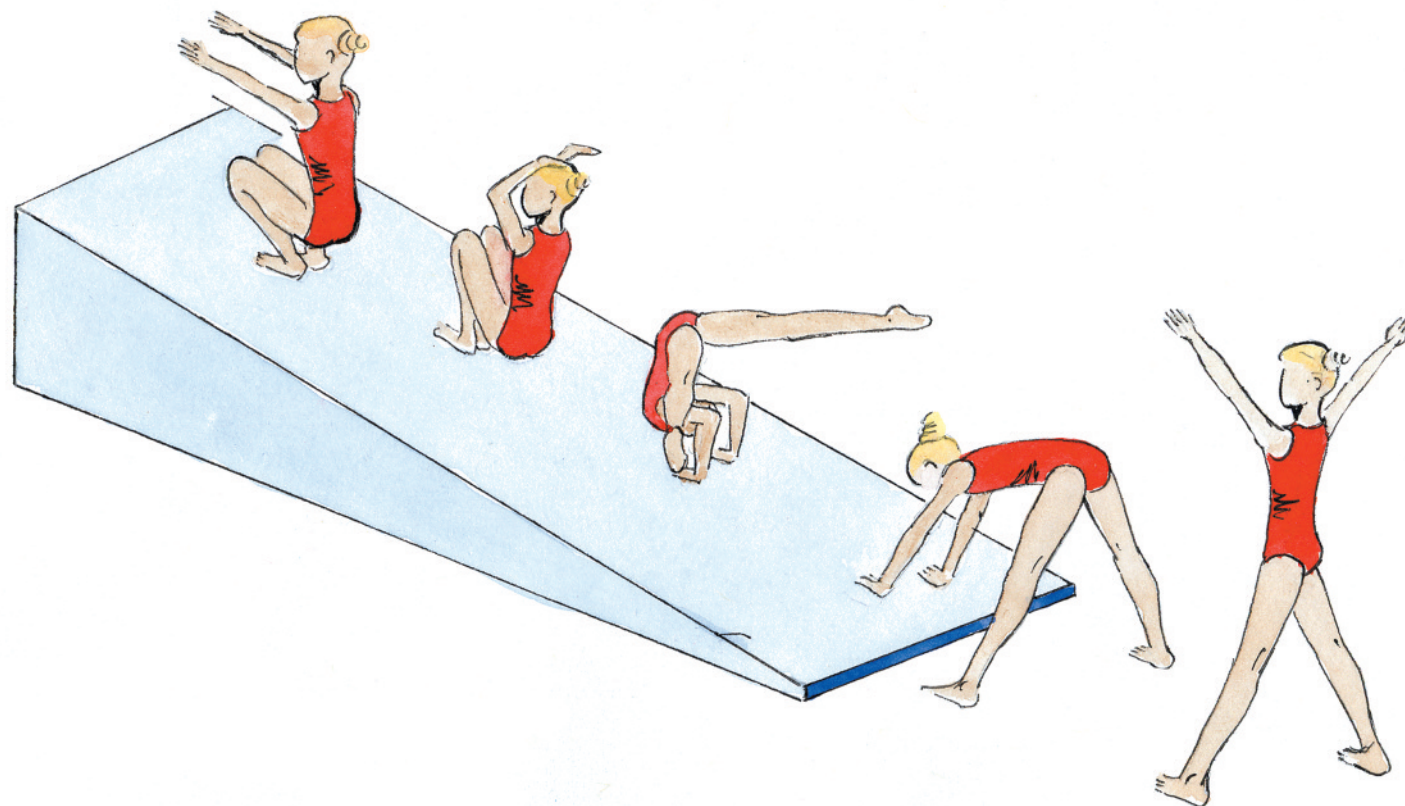
Possible Cause

- No leg tension
- Incorrect hand placement
- Hands and head placement in line
- Knees raised too high
- No push through arms

3.7

Backward Roll Down Slope to Straddle

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 7



Guidance Notes

1. From a squat position, with arms held in front, roll backwards by first pushing from feet placing bottom on floor and then rolling smoothly onto back, maintaining a tucked shape.
2. As the gymnast rolls onto back, hands are quickly positioned under the shoulders with palms up and elbows pointing forwards, shoulder width apart.
3. As the weight is taken on the hands the legs straddle and the gymnast pushes strongly to land in a straight leg straddle stand position.

NB: Change of shape to straddle is made in the pushing phase of the roll.

Teaching Points

Body

Tight in squat position knees together head tucked, with chin in during roll. Body tension to maintain stand at end

Legs

Move from tucked position to straight leg position to straight leg straddle. Extended legs knees straight

Arms

Strong push as hands contact floor to facilitate hips rolling over head and to 'lift' body to straddle stand

Timing

Execution of straddle shape as hands push against floor

Common Faults

Unable to initiate roll

Unable to get over to feet

Possible Cause

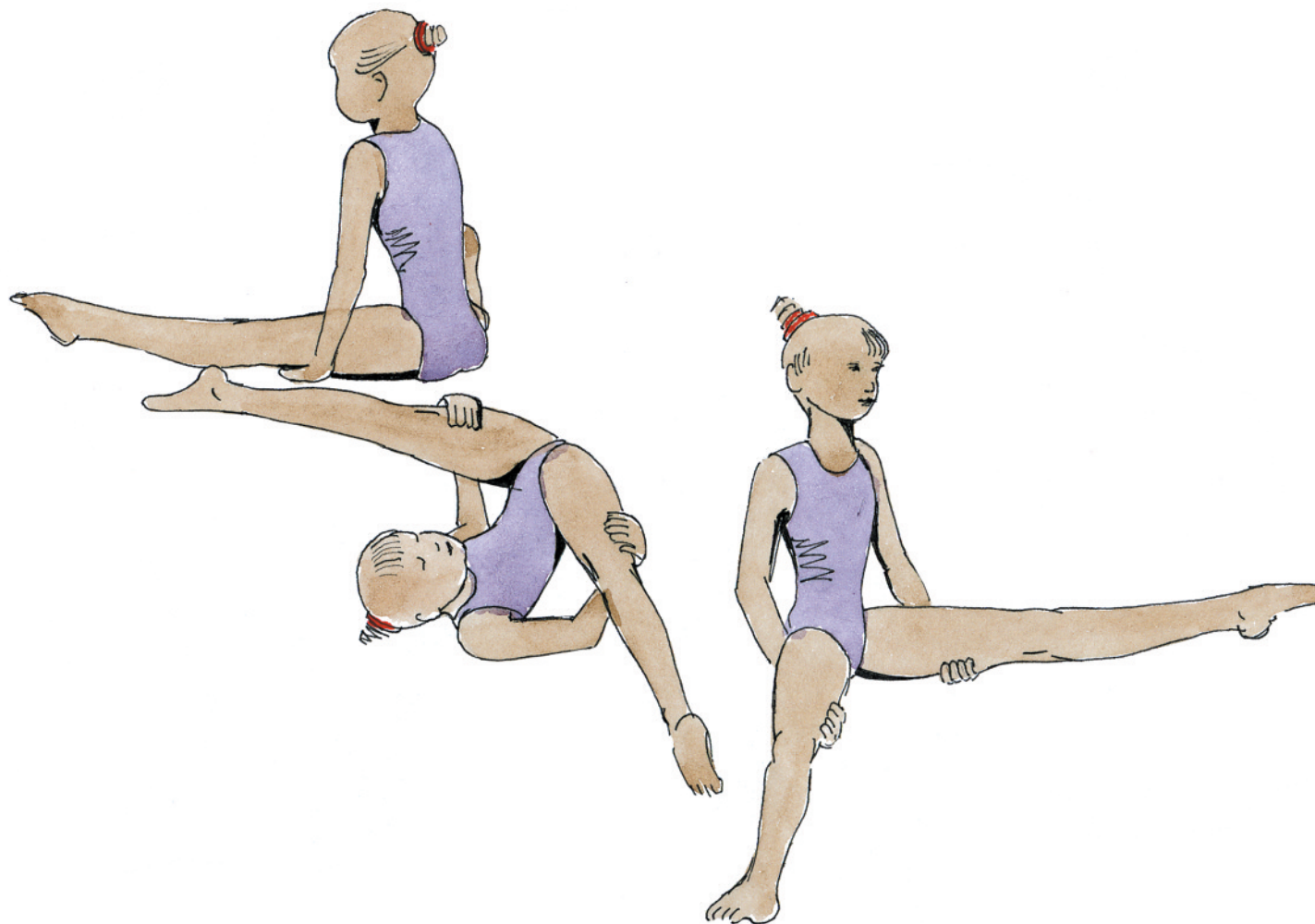
Falling backwards in straight rather than tucked shape

Straddle shape done too early, pushing from hands too early

3.8

Circle Roll

LEVEL 3 • SKILL CARD 8



Guidance Notes

1. From sitting, straddle legs to 90°, flat straight back and head up. Place hands outside the legs and hold the back of the legs tightly with the hands.
2. Fall sideways to land on the shoulder; continue rolling over the shoulder blades to the opposite shoulder and sit up. It is important to keep good whole body tension in order to perform this skill and maintain the straddle shape.
3. As skill develops the circle roll (teddy roll) should show a complete half turn, so the gymnast starts facing one direction and recovers facing the opposite direction.

Teaching Points

Body

Very tight body, slightly rounded back and head tucked in during roll

Legs

Straddle to 90°, straight, knees pointing to the roof, feet pointed

Arms

Hold back of legs, slight bend in elbows to facilitate sideways fall

Timing

Smooth roll

Common Faults

Unable to roll

Complete breakdown of roll

Unable to sit up at end

Possible Cause

Falling backwards rather than sideways to initiate roll

Trying to roll over front rather than shoulders

Weak abdominal muscles