

Introduction to Imagery in Gymnastics



TEAM USA

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Imagery

Creating a pictures in
your mind's eye

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Imagery Basics

- *Vividness* –make it real
 - → use all 5 senses: sight, sound, feel, taste, hear
- *Controllability*- learn to manipulate your images so they do what you want them to do





When Do We Use Imagery?

- Before and after practice
- Before and after a meet
- Between events and/or days of competition
- During your own time away from the gym
- When recovering from an injury

Why Do We Use Imagery?


- Relaxation
- Activation management
- Stress management
- Goal-setting
- Self-confidence
- Attentional focusing
- Recovery from injury
- Practice of skills/techniques
- Correcting mistakes



1. Use all of your Senses



- See in vivid color
- Hear the sounds during competition and training
- Smell where you train and compete
- Feel the air around you and how your body feels as you move
- Taste

A female gymnast in a light purple leotard is performing a handstand on a wooden floor. She is positioned on the left side of the frame, with her body arched and her right leg extended horizontally to the right. Her left arm is extended downwards, and her right arm is extended horizontally to the right, supporting her weight. The background is black with several bright spotlights creating starburst effects. A large white oval with a grey border is on the right side of the image, containing text.

2. Develop control of your imagery and visualize positive outcomes

Requires consistent practice

3. Use internal and external imagery



- Internal: you see what you would see if you were looking OUT of your eyes
- External: what you would see if you were watching yourself on a video monitor



4. Practice imagery regularly

Practice makes
permanent!

5. Practice imagery in a relaxed state

- Start with relaxation
- Then challenge yourself when in a more distracted state





6. Develop coping strategies through imagery

In your mind, practice dealing positively with the unexpected before it happens



7. Use cues or triggers to help your imagery rehearsal

You can use cue words or other reminders (music, count) when you are using imagery

8. Practice kinesthetic imagery



Kinesthetic means actually feeling the movements when you are using imagery

9. Image in “real time”

- Take the same amount of time to do imagery as it takes to actually do the skill you are imaging
- Exception: If you are having difficulty seeing your desired outcome in your image. Then you can try imagery in slow motion or see the image frame-by-frame until everything looks right
- Then gradually speed up to real time

10. Use imagery logs

Example:

Date	Time	Description	Practice Time	Success
4/28	4:30	Practiced floor routine	10 minutes	Imagined skill, but outcome isn't always positive

One more thing...

Let's Try It!



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Questions?