

# GYMNASTICS

## WHAT IS GYMNASTICS FOR ALL?

*Gymnastics for All* is one of the eight gymnastics sport disciplines officially recognized by the International Gymnastics Federation. This diverse sport program has the largest gymnastics membership worldwide and provides opportunities and activities for all ages and levels of abilities. *Gymnastics for All* activities contribute to the development of general sport skills, fitness, health, important movement patterns and daily life skills.

Today, well over 30 million participants of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds are taking part in *Gymnastics for All* activities across the world. These figures support the fact

that *Gymnastics for All* is the sport for all elements of gymnastics and provides something for everyone.

Many clubs across the United States regularly participate in *Gymnastics for All* by hosting exhibitions, performing at local festivals, and end of year shows. Clubs also have the opportunity to participate in *Gymnastics for All* with USA Gymnastics through local, national and international events. Each year, USA Gymnastics hosts the *Gymnastics for All* National Championships and GymFest. USA Gymnastics also organizes delegations to the World Gymnaestrada and World Gym For Life Challenge.

The diverse range of activities and opportunities available within *Gymnastics for All* is what sets it apart from other disciplines and sports. Regardless of age, the opportunity to actively participate in *Gymnastics for All* is available. This includes children (5 years & under), adults (18–49 years) and seniors (50+ years). All ability and skill levels can participate.

*Gymnastics for All* is a dynamic sport with new forms of movement and/or adaptations of current movement forms being seen continually across the world, reflecting unique national cultures and trends.

## GYMNASTICS FOR ALL INCLUDES THREE TRACKS:

### 1) NON-COMPETITIVE

### 2) COMPETITIVE

3) **HUGS** (Hope Unites Gymnastics with Special Athletes) which is a program for Special Needs athletes.

### 1) NON-COMPETITIVE

The following activity is included in non-competitive *Gymnastics for All*:

- **GROUP PERFORMANCE**

Group Performance is non-competitive and fun! It

The West Bend Dance Tumbling Troupe attended all 5 World Gymnaestradas since 1999 including performances in Sweden, Portugal, Austria, Switzerland and Finland. Jackie Maynard said, "The experience of a WG is like no other in the sporting world. Tens of thousands of athletes from around the world gather to perform their sport. Uninhibited by the 'almighty race for a medal,' the athletes genuinely support, encourage,

tensive lighting, utilizing props, and unusual themes or music."

"The majority of our club athlete/performers remain a part of the Troupe into their early 20s. The ability of coaches and choreographers to modify skills and performance requirements for all body types and ages permit participant longevity in the physically demanding sport of gymnastics."

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# CS FOR ALL

consists of groups of gymnasts performing to music. Often costumes, themes, props and apparatus are used to enhance the performance. Routines are typically three to 15 minutes in length, depending on the event in which they are being performed. All types of gymnastics can be used to create the choreography with all ages and ability levels participating. Group Performances can be seen in recitals, performances at festivals, local GymFests, the *Gymnastics for All* National Championships and Gymfest and at the World Gymnaestrada.

share and relate to one another in a way that is unseen in a similar competitive arena. All of my athletes return from a World Gymnaestrada as a 'citizen of the world,' and I believe that these positive experiences open their eyes, and change them forever."

"Group Performance requires athletes to work together as a team. They must execute skills of tumbling, acro, dance & cheer while presenting it in precision to music, and in an interesting way that keeps an audience's attention for up to 15 minutes. That may include lavish costumes, ex-



## 2) COMPETITIVE

The following four activities are included in competitive *Gymnastics for All*:

### • POWER TEAMGYM

Power TeamGym squads of athletes perform together in two events — Group Floor Exercise and Group Jump (tumbling, vault and mini tramp). Currently, there are 10 difficulty levels. Squads are made up of 6 to 14 gymnasts and are judged as a team based on difficulty requirements and execution. Power TeamGym can be competed at local invitationals, at the *Gymnastics for All* National Championships and Gymfest and international invitationals.

Mandy Lister of Fliptastic! in Carmichael, Calif., said, “We love and support Power TeamGym because it emphasizes teamwork. It’s a great program and every club should embrace it — it is untapped potential right in your own gym. Clubs can recruit athletes out of their recreational program to start new teams.”

“Our program has athletes from age 5 to high school. In our gym, the time commitment is only two days a week

for a few hours. Many of our athletes participate in other areas of gymnastics or other sports.”

“My tips for starting a program — Contact other coaches who already coach Power TeamGym. Attend a meet or watch videos online to see how a meet works. The Power TeamGym community is

to start at a level that athletes can do the skills with great form and execution. Athletes should be competing skills that they can do great, not skills that they are still trying to master. Fliptastic! started a YouTube channel that helps other clubs see routines and give them information on how to get started. Here is the link:



very helpful. You can start with a performance team or a single team of eight athletes. Don’t be afraid to reach out and ask questions. My advice when starting a team is

<https://www.youtube.com/user/cwiseweis>”

“I love coaching Power TeamGym because you get to pick your own instrumental music each year and create new choreography. The kids love learning new routines and skills each year. Competitions are exciting to watch. You don’t miss anything. You get to see each club compete their jump routine and floor routine. All the routines are back-to-back so the competition runs quickly. As a coach it is re-

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warding to see that TeamGym athletes now have opportunities for college scholarships through NCATA Acrobatic and Tumbling.”

Cheryl Cupples of Showcase Gymnastics in Katy, Texas, says, “Power TeamGym is a great sport for gymnasts who still want the thrill of competition without requiring a huge time commitment. It provides a great foundation for beginner gymnasts, as it requires attention to detail and learning routines, and teaches confidence in presentation. Power TeamGym teams can begin at the most basic level and increase to higher levels including boys and HUGS athletes!”

“The program builds camaraderie and a unique atmosphere of team spirit. Many gymnasts stay longer because they are a part of a team, the time commitment is doable even with a busy high school schedule and it is fun!”

## • ACROBATICS AND TUMBLING

Team A&T is broken into three divisions; Novice, Junior and Senior. All divisions are designed for the competitive athlete to develop the skill set needed to pursue advancement into NCATA (National Collegiate Acrobatics and Tumbling). Currently, 13 collegiate teams sponsor an Acrobatics and Tumbling team and scholarships are available. Teams compete in a head-to-head format in Acro, Pyramid, Toss, Tumbling and Team Routine categories.

Team A&T can be competed at local invitationals and the *Gymnastics for All* National Championships and Gymfest.

To learn more go to <https://usagym.org/at>

## • USA GYM FOR LIFE CHALLENGE

Groups participate in the contest with a routine of a maximum of 5 minutes, incorporating any gymnastics element with or without apparatus and accompanied by music. These performances are evaluated on entertainment value, overall impression, innovation, originality, variety and technique (quality & skill safety). All groups participating in the contest are awarded either a gold, silver or bronze ranking. A Best in Show is named at the USA Gymnastics GfA Championships and GymFest by a vote of the other participating groups.

## • RHYTHMIC XPRESS

Rhythmic Xpress is an achievement-based program for individuals and groups. It provides easy access to rhythmic gymnastics for new students. It is an alternative program for recreationally competitive athletes and coaches. Achievement awards are given based on the score. This program is meant to introduce a wider audience to Rhythmic Gymnastics. The Rhythmic Xpress program allows kids who want to play without high-level competitive aspirations the opportu-

nity to do so in an official USA Gymnastics setting.

Rhythmic Xpress is similar to the Artistic Xcel program in that it allows an option for athletes to participate in gymnastics while also being active in school and outside activities.

Michele Zapple, Carolina Gymnastics Academy says, “My team has participated in both the Junior Olympic and Festival Rhythmic, now called Rhythmic Xpress, over the past 16 years. Rhythmic Xpress fits my families’ lifestyle the best. The families in my program have multiple children, who also do competitive sports. We live in a beach community with lots of things for children to do. Our practice schedule is a twice a week commitment, which works well for my families. Rhythmic Xpress is very easy to understand and implement in any gymnastics school. For new coaches, or coaches with kids who love rhythmic but can’t commit to a heavy practice schedule, Rhythmic Xpress is perfect. It provides easy to understand judging forms and score sheets, and promotes a healthy environment!”

## 3) HUGS

*HUGS’, Hope Unites Gymnastics with Special Athletes*, goal is to encompass all special needs competitive programs, which at this time include, Women’s Artistic, Festival Rhythmic, and Power TeamGym.

## • HUGS WOMEN’S ARTISTIC

The HUGS women’s artistic program for athletes with

special needs was unveiled as a pilot program in the 2014–15 competitive season in the women’s Xcel Ruby division at three invitationals. Because of its success, USA Gymnastics is now offering the program for nationwide use and the HUGS program has moved to the *Gymnastics for All* discipline. If you want to add a women’s artistic HUGS event to your women’s invitational, there is no additional sanction needed, simply check women’s meet and HUGS women for one sanction.

### • HUGS RHYTHMIC XPRESS

There is also a Rhythmic Xpress category for athletes with special needs. If you want to hold a Rhythmic Xpress event along with your rhythmic or GfA event, there is only one sanction fee required.

### • HUGS POWER TEAMGYM

The Power TeamGym category for athletes with special needs. If you are running a GfA competition, this is the sanction you will need to run a HUGS TeamGym competition.

Cindy Bickman, Coach, Chattanooga Gymnastics & Cobb

County Special Olympics said, “My team competed in all three of the HUGS pilot meets this year. At every competition, I would find myself looking around, my eyes tearing up, thinking, ‘Look at this! The gymnasts with disabilities are out there on the floor with everybody else. Gymnastics has brought us all together.’”

## GYMNASTICS FOR ALL EVENTS

### GFA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AND GYM FEST

Each year, USA Gymnastics hosts the *Gymnastics for All* Championships and GymFest. The event typically occurs over a three-day period and includes an Opening Ceremonies, Group Performances, Power TeamGym Competition, A&T Competition and the Gym for Life Challenge. This event has been held annually since 1993 in various cities throughout the United States. The 2016 event will be held in Sevierville, Tenn., June 23–26.

### WORLD GYMNAESTRADA

The World Gymnaestrada, hosted by the FIG, is the world’s largest display of gymnastics and is held every four years. There is no competition and the main focus is participation. Groups perform with 10 to 1000s of participants in indoor and outdoor venues. The event is filled with culture from the more than 20,000 participants from more than 50 countries. The age range of the participants is 2 years old to 90. USA Gymnastics has prepared official del-

egations to World Gymnaestradas in 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, and 2015. In 2019, Gymnaestrada will take place in Dornbirn, Austria.

### WORLD GYM FOR LIFE CHALLENGE

The World Gym for Life Challenge is a contest for performance groups of all ages and genders. The Challenge compliments the FIG’s World Gymnaestrada by being held every four years in between the World Gymnaestradas. The groups participate in the contest with routine of a maximum of 5 minutes, incorporating any gymnastics element with or without apparatus, and the routine can be accompanied by music. Group Performances are evaluated on entertainment value, overall impression, innovation, originality, variety and technique (quality & skill safety). All groups participating in the Contest are awarded either a gold, silver or bronze ranking. Groups who achieve a gold placing in the Contest participate in the Gym for Life Gala. USA Gymnastics has sent participants to both Gym For Life Challenges held to date in Austria and South Africa. The USA will send a delegation to the Gym for Life Challenge in Vestfold, Norway, July 26–30, 2017.

## WHY PARTICIPATE IN GYMNASTICS FOR ALL?

A *Gymnastics for All* program is truly something for everyone. A GfA program can add students to your gym, expand opportunities for your current students, and retain students who are ready to move on from competitive gymnastics. All family members can all be involved with GfA, one stop shopping for family activity.

