



# Pre-Coach-in-Training Workbook



**GYM** **nastics**  
**nastique**

**CANADA**

## **Pre-Coach-in-Training Workbook**

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# PRE-COACH IN TRAINING WORKBOOK

Welcome to Gymnastics Canada's Pre-Coach-in-Training (Pre-CIT) Program!

You have received this workbook because you have shown the desire to become a coach in one of the family of gymnastics sports. You probably have some experience as a gymnast – perhaps in recreational classes, maybe in demonstration or Canadian and World Gymnaestradas, or even possibly as a competitive gymnast. Whatever your background, you must love your gymnastic sport, because now you want to become a coach!

This workbook will be your companion and guide as you start learning how to become a coach. As you work through the various components of the Pre-CIT program, you will learn how to work with children, and gain confidence in your coaching abilities. The skills you develop as a Pre-CIT will stay with you throughout your life, whether you continue to coach gymnastics or move into other areas of interest.

Many high level coaches in Canada began their coaching careers at age 13 or 14 by helping out in their gym club. Coaching is a wonderful profession that brings with it the rewards of helping others learn and succeed.

We hope you enjoy your Pre-CIT experience and wish you success as you start your journey on the road to becoming a great coach.



Jean Paul Caron 2013  
President and CEO  
Gymnastics Canada Gymnastique

### **What is the Pre-CIT Program?**

The Pre-CIT program is a one or two-year program that will introduce you to various aspects of coaching a gymnastic sport. The Pre-CIT program will also prepare you for the Gymnastics Foundations component of Gymnastics Canada's National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), which you can start when you reach the age of 15 if you have completed the Pre-CIT program. The Pre-CIT program includes individual study, mentorship, and hands-on coaching tasks, all done under the supervision of your Mentor Coach.

With the help of your Mentor Coach, you will complete 10 tutorials that guide you through several supervised coaching, officiating, and administration activities. In your capacity as a Pre-CIT, you will assist your Mentor Coach during classes for children between the ages of 3 and 10. You will never be given sole responsibility for a group of children, and you will never be left alone with a group of children.

In your first year, you are expected to complete 5 hours of tutorials, covering 10 different topics, and to assist in the gym for a minimum of 10 hours. In your second year, you are expected to complete an additional 10 hours of activities related to coaching, officiating and administration. Over the two-year period you are expected to be active as a gymnast and to complete at least 15 hours of "gymming" time.

*If you are 13, you SHOULD complete the program over a two-year period. If you are 14, you may complete the program over a one-year OR a two-year period.*

Each club may use its own discretion regarding the 'employment versus volunteer' status of its Pre-CITs. In either case, you and your Mentor Coach must enter into a written agreement that explains everyone's roles and responsibilities. A copy of this generic agreement is included in this Workbook and in your Mentor's Guide.

### **Who can be a PRE-CIT?**

If you are 13 to 15 years old, enthusiastic, energetic, and interested in learning how to coach gymnastics, you can become a Pre-CIT. Some experience as a gymnast, either at a recreational or competitive level is beneficial. Other than that you just need to be a registered member of the club and provincial/territorial (P/T) Gymnastics Association.

### **Who can be a PRE-CIT Mentor Coach?**

Your Mentor Coach must be a NCCP Certified Coach, at least 18 years old, and must also be a registered member of the club and P/T Gymnastics Association. Your Mentor Coach will have a sound knowledge of the club and of recreational or preschool gymnastics. Your Mentor Coach will work closely with you during the tutorials and while you help out in the gym. Depending on your club's structure, you may work with more than one Mentor Coach, which is great since each Mentor Coach will have different experiences and knowledge to share with you.

## What is a PRE-CIT trained to do?

At the end of the program, you will be able to:

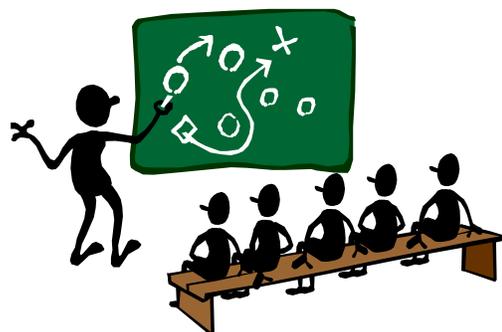
- ✓ Demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the club, its policies, structure and programs.
- ✓ Demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of basic ethical principles as they apply to gymnastics.
- ✓ Demonstrate your knowledge of safety rules and procedures used in the gym, and perform a basic safety inspection of the gym.
- ✓ Understand and apply basic principles of Fun-Fitness-Fundamentals when leading activities with children.
- ✓ Teach and run a game in a recreational or preschool class.
- ✓ Understand the *CANGYM/PRISM/CANJUMP* program and be able to assist in teaching beginner *CANGYM/PRISM/CANJUMP* skills.
- ✓ Demonstrate how to help participants while learning basic gymnastics skills.
- ✓ Plan, set up and lead an activity station or small circuit.
- ✓ Act as a minor official at a club event.
- ✓ Assist in the organization and administration of a club event or activity.

There are 4 components to the PRE-CIT program:



The PRE-CIT Tutorials focus on 10 themes:

1. Introduction to the Pre-CIT program and Gymnastics history
2. Getting to know your club
3. Introduction to basic safety and risk management
4. Introduction to basic leadership and teaching skills
5. Introduction to basic gymnastics skills
6. Introduction to helping gymnasts
7. Introduction to games
8. Introduction to a badge program
9. Introduction to ethics in gymnastics
10. Next Steps (where do you go from here?)



# TUTORIAL 1 – Introduction to the Pre-CIT program & gymnastics history

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Club name: \_\_\_\_\_ Club phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Head Coach/Program Director's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Coach's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Coach's phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the other Pre-CITs that I am working with?

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Why do I want to be a Pre-CIT and what are my goals in coaching?

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What strengths do I think I can bring to coaching?

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What areas of coaching do I want to know more about?

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## Purpose of the PRE-CIT Program

- To provide you with the tools and skills required to become an effective Pre-CIT and later on a great coach.

## Your role as a PRE-CIT

- To be a role model for the gymnasts in your club.
- To help your Mentor Coach during his/her gymnastics class.
- To actively participate in the group activities including warm-up, cool-down, games and flexibility.
- To follow the instructions given by your Mentor Coach.
- To ask questions when you are unsure about your role or responsibilities.

## Expectations

- You are expected to attend all scheduled Pre-CIT training sessions and tutorials, and to be on time.
- You are responsible for calling in if you are unable to attend a scheduled Pre-CIT training session or tutorial.
- If you are unable to attend a scheduled Pre-CIT training sessions and tutorials, a make-up session must be scheduled.
- You are expected to take your job as a Pre-CIT seriously and to be aware that your performance will be evaluated.

## PRE-CIT Program Description

Part 1/Year 1: 10 Tutorials (total 5 hours) distributed over the training year  
10 hours of in-gym coaching time with your Mentor Coach  
Minimum of 8 hours "gymming"

Part 2/Year 2: 5 hours of in-gym coaching time with your Mentor Coach  
10 hours of officiating and/or administration tasks under the guidance of your Mentor Coach  
Minimum 7 hours of "gymming"

The above coaching, gymming, and officiating/administration hours are the minimum required to meet Gymnastics Canada's standard for the Pre-CIT program. We encourage you to complete additional hours if you want to.

**If you are 13 years old,  
you MUST complete the program over two full training years.**

**If you are 14 or 15 years old,  
you have the option of completing the program in one or two training years.**

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Club, Mentor Coach and Pre-CIT:

### The Club (Supervisor)

- The club must identify an overall supervisor for the Pre-CIT program. This person must ensure that the Pre-CIT program is integrated into the club programming, and that sufficient resources and time are allocated for to the Pre-CIT program.
- The club supervisor must select Mentor Coaches who are responsible and capable of providing the support that is required for the Pre-CIT coach.
- The club supervisor must review Pre-CIT applications and select suitable candidates.
- The club supervisor must debrief with the Mentor Coach(es) at least once a year (every 4 to 6 months is ideal).
- The club must formally recognize Pre-CITs that have completed the program.

### The Mentor Coach

- The Mentor Coach provides leadership, support, and guidance to the Pre-CIT throughout the training program.
- The Mentor Coach is expected to represent the club, and be a strong, positive role model for young coaches.
- The Mentor Coach must commit to:
  - leading 5 hours of tutorial sessions
  - supervising the Pre-CIT during his/her 10 hours of hands-on coaching
  - ensuring that all Pre-CIT program requirements are met and signed off as needed
- The Mentor Coach must work closely with the club supervisor and, if applicable, with other Mentor Coaches to ensure consistent and effective Pre-CIT development.

### The Pre-Coach in Training (This is YOU!)

- You must commit to full attendance and participation at all tutorials, and to completing all required tasks and assignments.
- You must commit to full attendance and participation at all scheduled coaching sessions. Coaching tasks may include assisting the Mentor Coach with:
  - Circuit and equipment set-up and take down
  - Ensuring a safe gym environment
  - Class management (e.g. taking a child to the bathroom, keeping children in their group)
  - Leading games or other activities
  - Skill demonstration and basic skill instruction or assistance
- You must maintain a complete record of all his/her coaching, gymming, officiating and administration activities, and have them verified by his/her Mentor Coach.
- You must adhere to all club policies regarding coach behaviour.



#### **Under no circumstance must you:**

- Be left alone with a group of children
- Be solely responsible for developing, or delivering, an activity (your Mentor Coach must guide and supervise you at all times)
- Be responsible for communicating with a gymnast's parent(s)
- Be responsible for disciplining a child

# PRE-CIT PROGRAM AGREEMENT

Name of Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Club Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Mentor Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Coach-in-Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Start date of Pre-CIT program: \_\_\_\_\_

End date of Pre-CIT program: \_\_\_\_\_

*We agree that the Pre-Coach in Training (Pre-CIT) will:*

- Attend and actively participate in all 10 tutorials
- Assist the Mentor Coach with the following class: \_\_\_\_\_

Held on: \_\_\_\_\_ from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_  
(day) (time) (time)

Beginning: \_\_\_\_\_ until: \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) (date)

- Provide in-class coaching assistance in the following areas:
  - Assisting with set-up and take down of equipment.
  - Managing the group.
  - Ensuring a safe environment.
  - Demonstrating and facilitating basic skill learning.
  - Assisting with warm-up, cool down and games activities.
  - Assisting with skill instruction.
- Complete the required tasks in officiating and administration.
- Participate in 15 hours of gymnastics activity.
- Abide by the policies and regulations of the Club.

*We agree that the Mentor Coach will provide support and leadership to the Pre-CIT by:*

- Leading 10 tutorial sessions over the course of the program.
- Supporting and guiding the Pre-CIT during the designated coaching activities.
- Providing feedback throughout the program.
- Maintaining regular (weekly/monthly) contact with the Pre-CIT to ensure ongoing progress.

*We agree that the Club will allocate sufficient time and resources to allow the Mentor Coach to uphold the Pre-CIT program minimum requirements.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Club Supervisor or Designate

\_\_\_\_\_ Mentor Coach

\_\_\_\_\_ Pre-CIT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Where did gymnastics come from?

Gymnastics is one of the world's oldest physical activities.

As early as 2000 BC, the Chinese developed activities that resembled gymnastics. These exercises were designed to develop the muscular system and promote general good health.



We also know that in ancient Egypt, **acrobatic** movements were included in their dances. Pictures carved in stone dating from 1500 BC show Egyptians participating in balancing activities including “group pyramids”.

The word gymnastics comes from the Greek word *gymnazien*, meaning “to train naked”. Gymnastics for the ancient Greeks included activities like wrestling, javelin throwing, foot racing, dancing and jumping. The Greeks placed a lot of emphasis on gymnastics as an educational experience. Greek students spent as much time doing gymnastics as they did on art and music combined.

Many of the original gymnastics apparatus were designed for a specific educational or military purpose and only developed into competitive apparatus much later. For example, clubs (Indian clubs) were originally designed to train soldiers how to use a sabre before being modified into a Rhythmic Gymnastics hand apparatus. The “horse” (vault or pommel!) was also originally designed to train soldiers how to mount and dismount from a real horse. In fact, the first **vaulting** horses actually had a head, a tail and four legs, and the **pommel horse** still shows the remnants of a saddle.

**Johann Christoph Friedrich Guts Muths**, a German educator who is known as the Great Grandfather of Gymnastics, wrote the first modern book on gymnastics in 1793. His book, *Gymnastics for Youth*, describes the use of sloping beams, climbing ropes, rope ladders, and climbing poles.

At about the same time, another German, **Freidrich Ludwig Jahn**, designed the first **balance beam** – a slender straight pine tree without knots, not less than 40 feet long and 10 inches thick at the large end, secured between two pairs of iron posts. Jahn also developed the prototype for the **horizontal bar** - a single wooden bar that was sometimes covered in leather. When Jahn discovered that his gymnasts were not strong enough to support themselves on the pommel horse, he developed the **parallel bars** as a training apparatus to develop upper body strength.

In the early 1800's in Sweden, **Pehr Henrik Ling** designed and refined other pieces of apparatus. He is best known for developing the Swedish box horse, which has sloping sides. The British later adapted the box horse to have straight sides.

The most recent pieces of apparatus include the **uneven bars, trampoline, double mini-trampoline, and tumble tracks**. The uneven, or asymmetric, bars were first used as a competitive event for women in the 1934 World Championships in Budapest. These original uneven bars were simply men's parallel bars with a longer, tubular sleeve inserted into the posts to allow one bar to be raised above the other. With this somewhat unstable modification, uneven bars routines during these early years were full of poses and stops.

The **trampoline** came out of circus-type acts that used a "bouncing bed" on a stage. In 1936 **George Nissen**, an American tumbler, developed a portable trampoline and became one of the first competitors on this apparatus. During World War 2, the United States Navy Flight School used trampolines for space orientation training for their pilots and navigators, and later, it was also used to train astronauts!

Many 'Gymnastics' disciplines no longer exist as competitive events, such as rope climbing, club swinging, group parallel bar exercises for men and, for women, team drill exercises with and without hand apparatus, exercises on the parallel bars, side horse, spring board vaulting / jumping and flying rings.

The team drill ensemble with hand apparatus, such as clubs, ribbons, balls and hoops, which were part of the Women's Artistic Gymnastic program until the 1956 Olympic Games, has since evolved into the current sport of **Rhythmic Gymnastics**. Today, mass team drills with and without hand apparatus, are seen in the FIG World Gymnaestrada and other "Gymnastics for All" events.

The most recent addition to the family of Gymnastics sports is **Aerobic Gymnastics**, which developed in the late 1980's. Aerobic gymnastics presents dynamic moves, strength, flexibility, co-ordination and musicality in a routine that lasts less than two minutes. While it is still a new sport in Canada, it is estimated that in Brazil over half a million people participate in Aerobic Gymnastics!

## Gymnastics in the Olympics

The first Olympic Games were held in Greece in 776 BC. The Spartans, from Sparta (a city in ancient Greece) dominated these games because of their physical conditioning and gymnastics training. The gymnastics exercises at these games consisted of various tumbling, dancing, running, leaping, rope climbing and balancing activities.

The Olympic Games were so important to the Greeks that they were held every four years for over 1000 years. Major wars were often interrupted to allow time for the Games to take place.

The first Olympic Games of the modern era were held in Athens, Greece in 1896. Gymnastics was one of the nine sports included in these first games; men competed on horizontal bar, parallel bars, pommel horse, rings, and vault.

Women events were added in the 1928 Olympics and, in those days, women competed individually, earning team points, showing both a compulsory and an optional exercise on parallel bars, balance beam, side horse vault, as well as in 2 optional team drills - one free hand and one with hand apparatus. In 1948, women even competed on the rings! The 1952 Olympics were the first in which the women were allowed to compete as individuals in the 4 apparatus program - vault, uneven bars, beam and floor.

Rhythmic Gymnastics was added to the Olympic program in 1984, and Trampoline Gymnastics became an Olympic sport in 2000.



In recent years, Canadians have emerged as strong contenders in Olympic gymnastics competition. The first ever Olympic Champion in Rhythmic Gymnastics was Canadian Lori Fung in 1984 and in 2004, Canada's Kyle Shewfelt was the gold medallist in Men's Artistic Gymnastics Floor exercise. Trampoline Gymnastics has been the most successful Canadian program to date with Karen Cockburn and Mathieu Turgeon each winning a bronze medal when Trampoline Gymnastics made its Olympic debut in 2000. Karen went on to win another bronze and a silver medal at the 2004 and 2008 Olympic Games respectively. Jason Burnett won a silver medal at the 2008 Olympic Games and Rosie MacLennan become Olympic Champion in 2012.

## The Family of Gymnastics

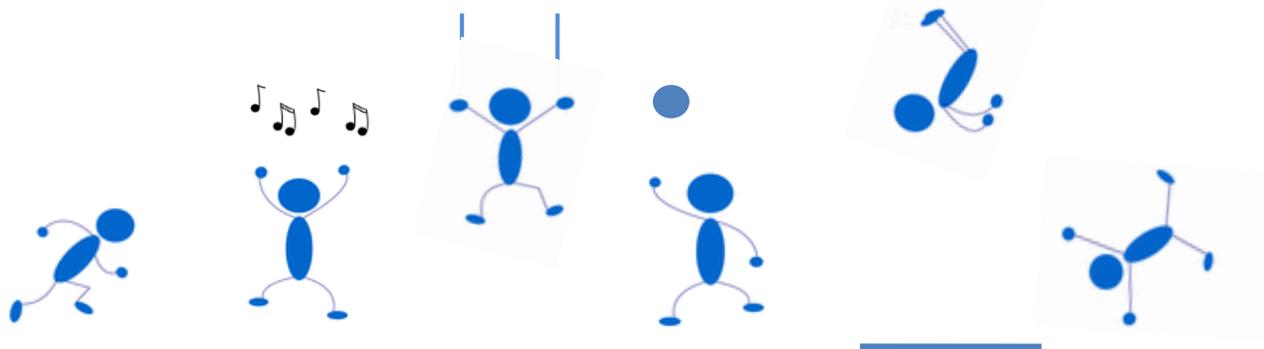
There are many different ways that people can participate in gymnastics. First, there are 6 different competitive Gymnastics sports. Within each sport there are numerous opportunities for participation at any level and any age group. Gymnastics truly offers something for everyone.

In Canada, Gymnastics clubs offer programs in Acrobatic Gymnastics (AcG), Aerobic Gymnastics (AeG), Men's Artistic Gymnastics (MAG), Rhythmic Gymnastics (RG), Trampoline Gymnastics (TG), and Women's Artistic Gymnastics (WAG).

Often, a child's first introduction to gymnastics takes place in a multi-movement pre-school gymnastics program. Children 5 years and under can explore and develop movement in a gymnastics environment using apparatus that is modified for their smaller size. The great thing about preschool gymnastics is that children can learn how to move on (or with) all the artistic, rhythmic and trampoline apparatus!

School aged children often participate in a recreational gymnastics program. Larger clubs sometimes offer recreational programs where children can learn skills from several of the Gymnastics sports; smaller clubs may specialize in only one or two Gymnastics sports. As children get older, they have an even greater variety of options – they can continue in more advanced recreational programs, enter a competitive program or move into demonstration or performance groups.

The focus of the PRE-CIT program is on developing young coaches who are able to assist in gymnastics programs for children up to the age of 10. The emphasis of these programs is on having fun, becoming physically fit and learning the fundamentals of gymnastics.





# PRE-CIT "GYMMING" AGREEMENT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Background in gymnastics:

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Highest level attained: \_\_\_\_\_ Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

**Goals for "Gymming"** *(check off goals that you have selected)*

To participate in 15 hours of gym training time during the Pre-CIT program

To complete the \_\_\_\_\_ level in \_\_\_\_\_

To learn the following skills *(list)*:

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Other *(describe)*:

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I will achieve these goals by the end of the PRE-CIT program.

Signature of Pre-CIT: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Mentor Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

## Verification of Goal Attainment

I attest that \_\_\_\_\_ has completed a minimum of 15 hours of gym training time in the Pre-CIT program, and has attained the goals as described above.

Name of Mentor Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Mentor Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

## TUTORIAL 2 – Getting to know your club

In this tutorial you will become familiar with the workings of your Gymnastics club, and with the expectations that your Gymnastics club has of you as a Pre-CIT.

Your Mentor Coach will give you copies of several documents, which might include:

- A structure diagram of your club
- The history of your club
- A description of the programs offered by the club and the names of coaches
- The club's gym rules
- The club's policies for coaches
- The club's employee information/manual
- Other special club forms (e.g. time sheets, accident report forms, etc.)

Gymnastics clubs in Canada can take several forms, including:

- A not-for-profit organization that is run by a volunteer Board of Directors
- An owner-operated (for-profit) business
- A gymnastics-specific division of a larger corporation such as a university, a city recreation program, a YMCA program

1. Based on the information your Mentor Coach has provided, does your club fit into any of these categories? If not, describe the organization:

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Usually a Gymnastics club has several people who are responsible for managing and running the club. Some of these people may be volunteers (usually a parent), sometimes they are staff (e.g. General Manager, Recreation Program Director, Competitive Head Coach, etc.) and sometimes they are owners of the club.

Many clubs will have a committee that makes the financial decisions (for example, fundraising, running events, setting registration fees, etc.), and a Head Coach or Program/Technical Director who makes the decisions about what goes on in the gym (for example, the programs, training schedule and coaching staff). If everything is to run smoothly, it is really important that everyone communicates regularly and works together when making important decisions.

2. Who are the people at the top of your club's organization? What do they do?

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3. If you had to phone into the gym with an important message, and your Mentor Coach was not there, who would you ask to speak to?

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4. What is the name of the program in which you will be coaching?

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5. Create a "top five" list of the most important things a Pre-CIT or coach must do.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Now compare your list to the club's policies for coaches. How close a match were they? Do you want to adjust your list?

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7. Are there any club policies that you don't understand? Make sure that you ask your Mentor Coach to explain them.

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8. Your next door neighbour has three children, aged 4, 7 and 10 years. They want to register in a program at your club and are asking you for information about the programs available for each child. In your own words, describe the opportunities that your club has available for each child.

The 4 year old:

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The 7 year old:

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The 10 year old:

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9. If someone asked you what makes your club special, what would you tell them?

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As a Pre-CIT, you will be expected to adhere to all the club's policies for coach behaviour. Most clubs believe that a great Pre-CIT will make a great coach!

Being a great Pre-CIT requires more than just knowing about gymnastics. Here are some reminders as you start your time in the gym with the children.

**Dress:**

- You must look like a coach.
- Parents want to be assured that their child is in good hands, and your appearance is their first impression.
- If your club provides a uniform, be sure to wear it and make sure it is clean.
- If you have long hair, tie it up. Wearing a hat is not an option!
- Take off your jewellery or cover it with a Band-Aid!

**Language:**

- Always remember that you are in the presence of many young ears and eyes and act appropriately whenever you are in the gym (even if you are not teaching a class).
- Avoid swearing, and keep all discussions of private topics and personal matters out of the gym.
- Use grammatically correct language when speaking to the children.
- Speak a little more slowly than usual, and articulate clearly. In a gym, sounds are often distorted and muffled.

**Always remember that you are a role model for the children.  
Your gymnasts will go home and tell their parents all about you ...  
... make sure whatever they says shows you at your best!**



## Safety Walk

There is tremendous diversity between Gymnastics clubs across Canada. Some clubs operate out of large full-time facilities where the equipment is set up on a permanent basis. Other clubs rent or borrow space from schools, churches or community centres and must set up their gym space for every training session. Each setting has its own particular safety issues. For example, if you are in a full-time gym facility, it is important that the equipment be inspected daily, and that the gym is kept clean and tidy. In a set-up/take-down situation, the equipment is normally checked each time it is set up, however, care must be taken to ensure that people do not compromise safety by cutting corners for the sake of a faster set up.

You and your Mentor Coach will complete a 'safety' walk through the gym. Use the next two pages to keep track of your observations and comments.

| Area                             | Observations | Why is it important? |
|----------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Floor/equipment pathways         |              |                      |
| Large equipment and mats/carpets |              |                      |
| Small equipment                  |              |                      |
| Change area or locker room       |              |                      |

| Area                                 | Observations | Why is it important? |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Walls in gym                         |              |                      |
| Ceiling and hanging items            |              |                      |
| Entrance/exits interior and exterior |              |                      |
| Other safety issues (list)           |              |                      |

After you have completed your safety walk, review your observations with your Mentor Coach.

What will your responsibilities be for ensuring safety in the gym?

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## Emergency Response

Sometimes, despite our best efforts, an emergency occurs. When this happens, you must be able to react quickly, calmly and appropriately. As a Pre-CIT you will not be responsible for the emergency response, however, you are still part of the team and may be called upon to assist in an emergency.

Emergencies can take several forms including:

- Injuries or illnesses to gymnasts or other people in the club (this includes coaches!)
- Anaphylactic allergic reactions (e.g. to food, insect stings)
- Mechanical failures (e.g. power outages, gas leaks)
- Fires, storms, earthquakes, etc.

The good news is that by having some basic information at your fingertips, you can be prepared to deal with these emergencies. So let's get prepared.....

1. What is the address of the gym?

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2. What is the phone number of the gym?

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3. Where are the phones located in the gym?

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4. Who carries a cell phone, and is it always charged up?

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5. How many exits are there, and where are they located?

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6. What do you do if the fire alarm goes off?

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7. What do you do if the power goes off?

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8. Where is the first aid kit located? Who is in charge of restocking the first aid kit?

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9. Where do you get ice?

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10. Who is the gym supervisor on your night(s) in the gym?

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11. What is the emergency response phone number for your area?

**911** or \_\_\_\_\_



## A few last words on safety....

If you plan for emergencies, you will be better able to deal with emergencies. Here are some additional suggestions to help you be prepared.

- **Keep a small gym bag with you at all times.**

Keep in your bag:

- Coaching Binder that contains:
    - Class list with phone numbers and medical information
    - Gym club basic information (address, phone number, directions to gym)
    - Change for a pay phone
    - Pencil or pen and blank paper
  - Small flashlight (useful in power outages)
  - Cell phone if you have one (be sure it is charged up)
  - Extra hair elastics
  - Plastic zip-lock bags for ice (or snow in winter)
- **Remember that the club phone system might not work in a power outage, so a cell phone is very helpful.**
  - **Take a first aid course!**
  - **Basic gym safety rules for all Gymnastics club:**
    - No gum or food in the gym
    - Unbreakable water bottles only - no sharing!
    - Clean up all garbage and water spills immediately
    - Hair tied back securely
    - No jewellery
    - Gym slippers or bare feet only
    - Clothing, gym bags, and small equipment always kept out of activity areas and traffic pathways
    - Look around and be aware of everything around you (people and equipment)
    - Avoid standing or walking on small apparatus such as hoops, beanbags, scarves
    - Children do not leave the gym until a parent is present
    - After class, stay with the children until a parent arrives



## TUTORIAL 4 – Introduction to basic leadership and teaching skills

By now you will have had some time in the gym working with children. This tutorial will focus on:

- What is a coach?
- Tips for becoming a great coach
- Class management
- Coaching methods

1. Think about the classes you have worked in so far. What did you enjoy most about these classes?

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2. What was the most difficult thing to deal with? Why was it difficult?

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3. Why do you want to be a coach?

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4. Think of a teacher or coach that you have known and admired. What do/did you like and respect most about that person?

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5. What personal qualities do you possess that will make you a good coach?

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6. What areas of your coaching would you like to improve?

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## Tips for Becoming a Great Coach

Being a great coach is much more than just knowing a lot about your sport. Here are a few tips that will get you going in the right direction, regardless of your technical knowledge.....



### **Aim for Excellence!**

- Strive to be the best person and coach you can possibly be.
- Take advantage of every educational opportunity.
- Be willing to learn and grow, both as an individual and as a leader of children.



### **Lead by Example!**

- Be a great role model for young children and adults.
- Teach and practice cooperation, self-discipline, patience, and respect for participants, leaders and peers.
- Display proper attitudes in language, dress and behaviour.



### **Participate!**

- Participate enthusiastically in all that you do.
- Make your classes as enjoyable as possible for those that you coach.
- Show how much you love your sport – others will love it too!
- Be energetic and active at all times during class.
- Provide individual attention – each child has unique needs and abilities.



### **Communicate!**

- Smile and offer personal greetings to all children, parents and staff.
- Find out about all aspects of the program, schedule, themes etc.
- Ask questions!
- Offer your ideas!
- Be honest and consistent.
- Give positive feedback, praise, and support for achievement and effort.

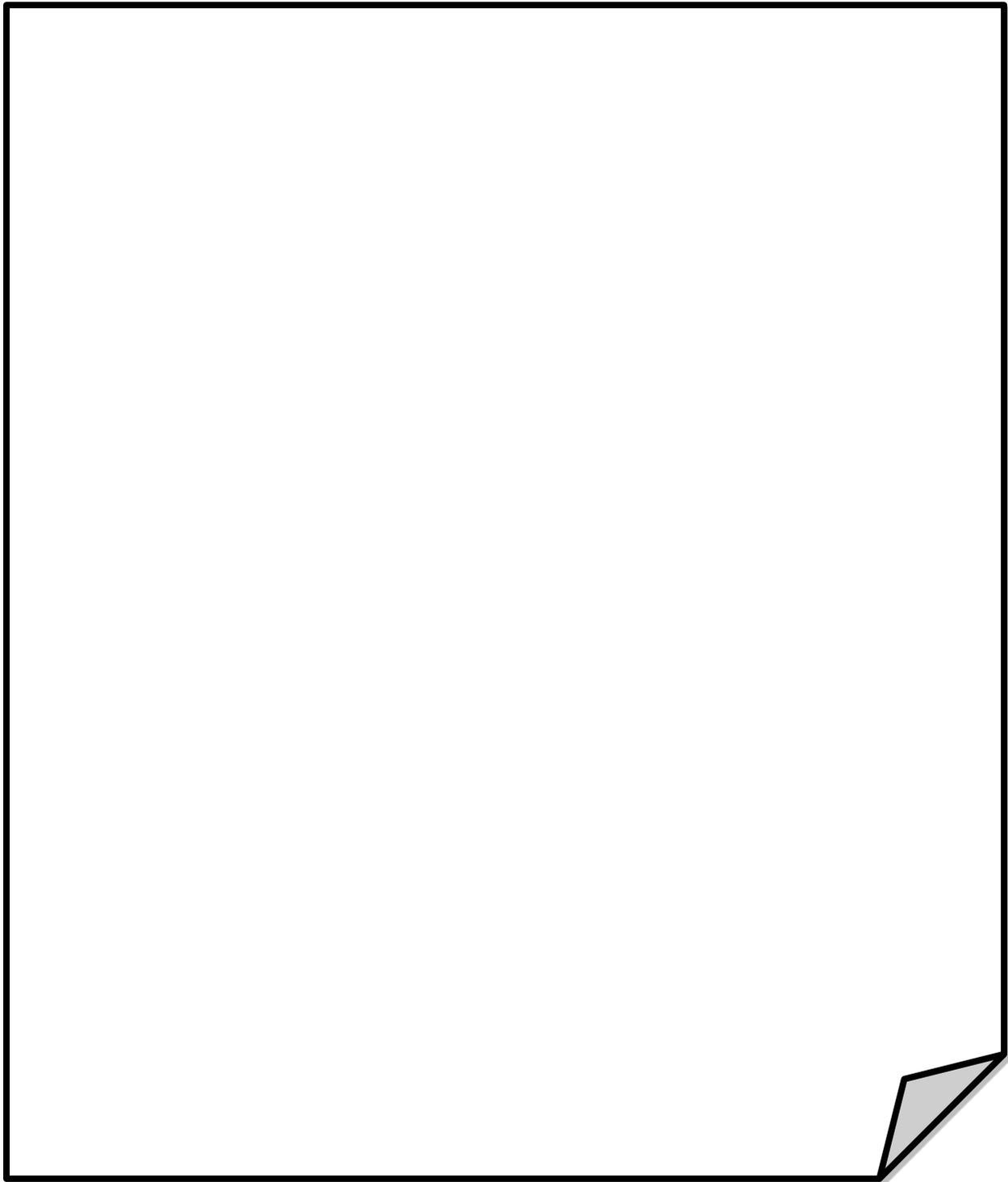


## The Ideal Coach

Working alone or in a group, draw and label a picture showing the qualities of the ideal coach. Here are some ideas to get you started:

.....has a big heart ..... has strong arms ..... has a big, happy smile.....

Now put all your ideas together and draw this coach! When you are done, hang your picture up in the gym.



## Working with Children

Even though coaching is fun, it is still challenging to organize a group of young children. As you spend more time in the gym and observe other coaches, you will develop a coaching style that works for you.

As a Pre-CIT, you will be leading some warm-up activities and games, helping to teach skills, assisting participants while they attempt new skills, and supporting your Mentor Coach with group management. All these tasks require that you, eventually, be able to organize your group.

There are many different methods for organizing groups. How and when they are used depends on the age and ability of the group you are working with. For example:

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Whole Class Instruction</b>     | This can be used during warm-up or when teaching simple skills. Gymnasts are placed in lines, rows or other patterns while the coach provides instruction to the entire class at the same time.   |
| <b>Half and Half</b>               | The class is divided into two groups, each with a different task. One group could review a skill, while the other group is introduced to a new skill. The coach moves back and forth between the two groups. The groups later switch tasks.   |
| <b>Stations</b>                    | Students rotate through 2 or 3 stations during the class. Each station has a different set-up or type of apparatus, which allows more children to be active at once. Normally, it is best to designate one station as the new skill station, where children are taught directly by the coach.   |
| <b>Partner and Group Work</b>      | This method develops positive social interaction between gymnasts as they work together to build sequences or routines, or to consolidate skills. Gymnasts learn from each other; the coach supports and intervenes when necessary.   |
| <b>Student Led</b>                 | You will discover that your gymnasts have many talents. A gymnast could be selected to demonstrate and/or explain a new skill to the others. Over time, a good coach will make sure that all the students have had the opportunity to be "the teacher".   |
| <b>Individual Student Progress</b> | Gymnasts use individual progress checklists to record the skills they have completed. This method works well for slightly older gymnasts who are self motivated and goal oriented. It is also useful in warm-ups and for skill review.  |
| <b>Circuits</b>                    | A variety of related activities are arranged in a 'circular' pattern that the gymnasts travel through. Circuits can be used for warm-up, for skill development, for strength development, for mini competitions, etc. Gymnasts start at various points; the coach must make sure that there are enough stations and equipment to avoid line-ups. A good rule of thumb is to have 2 to 3 participants per station if doing partner work, or to have the same number of stations as gymnasts if they are working alone. |

After you have organized how your group will practice, you will need to decide the coaching method(s) you will use. As you gain more coaching experience, you will develop your own individual coaching style, which may be a blending of several different coaching methods.

Here are some of the most common coaching methods. When you are in the gym, observe other coaches to see how they use these methods in their coaching.

For each method, identify how you could use it with your own group of gymnasts.

**Method: Exploration and Discovery**

The coach creates the environment and the children explore it and make discoveries. The coach must set guidelines for safety in the environment. For example, “when you are on the climbing structure, you must always be right-side-up”.

**How I Could Use It:**

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**Method: Guided Exploration and Discovery**

Similar to above, but the coach also provides some key words to help gymnasts expand their own movement potential. For example, “listen to the music and try to make your body follow the music. Move lightly, like you are floating”.

**How I Could Use It:**

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**Method: Problem Solving**

The coach presents a problem that needs to be solved. For example, “can you spell your name by making your body into different shapes?”

**How I Could Use It:**

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**Method: Direct Teaching with Progressions**

The coach teaches the skill using progressions, the children practice the progressions and/or skill, and the coach provides feedback. This method focuses on technical accuracy and safety as the teacher controls the activity.

**How I Could Use It:**

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You are explaining a tag game to a group of 10 gymnasts. Using the space below, show 2 different ways you could arrange the children so that they can all see you and hear your instructions. Use "C" for the coach, and an "X" for each gymnast.

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The instructions that you provide to your gymnasts will determine how successful they will be at playing the game. What must you remember to do when you are giving instructions to children?

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Ten seconds after you start your game, the children are running all over the gym, screaming and yelling. What do you do?

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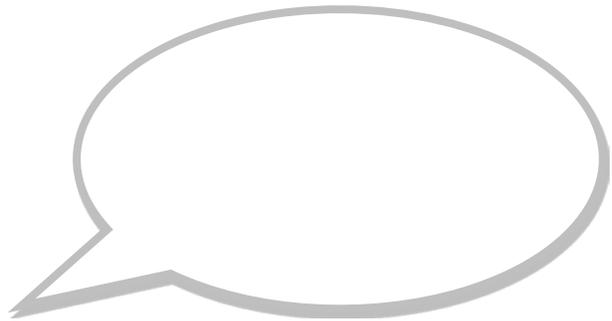
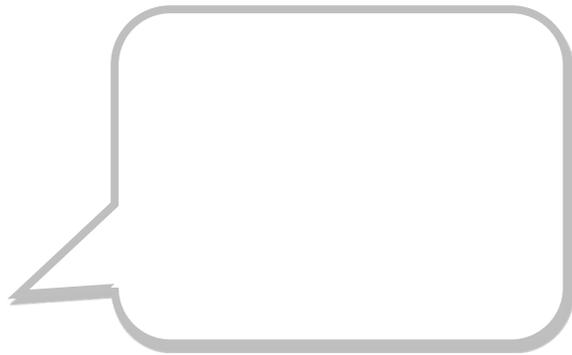
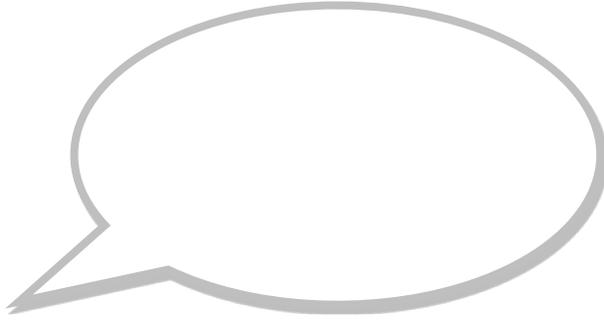
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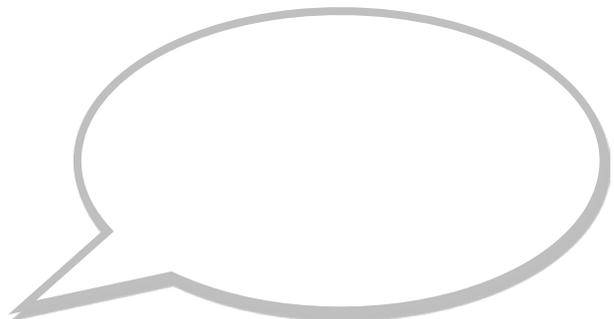
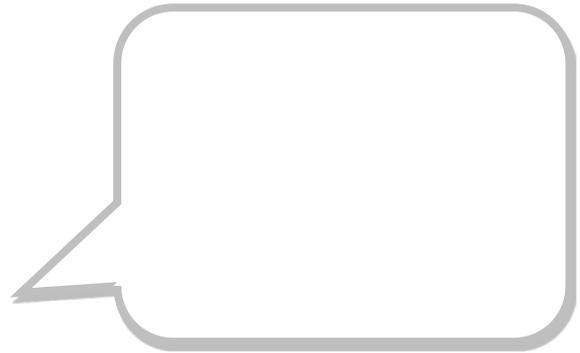
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How many different ways can you find to say "Very Good" to the gymnasts?



**WOW!**



What would you do if.....

A child in your group is always pushing other children?

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A child always wants to be first?

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A child does not want to participate?

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One of the children falls down and is hurt?

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A child pees on the mats in the middle of the class? *(and yes, it happens!)*

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You have probably realized by now that being a great coach is a lot more than just knowing a lot about gymnastics skills. Here are some final quick tips to help you keep a positive approach to class management:

### **Know the limits of your gymnasts**

Physical and emotional limitations may cause a child to act up to avoid an activity. If a child is too nervous to attempt a skill, encourage him/her to try something similar, but less difficult. Highly imaginative children can get scared in some game situations (*think about "what time is it Mr Wolf? Dinner time!!!"*). Learn to modify games and activities to allow children of various abilities and temperaments to be equally challenged.

### **Use praise**

Children love to get your attention, and they will misbehave if they don't get it for good behaviour! Learn the children's names and use their names often as you praise their efforts and accomplishments. Praise efforts in behaviour as well as for skill acquisition (*"Ryan, you are really listening well today!"*) as other children will imitate the action to earn praise as well.

### **Be positive**

All feedback given to participants should be given positively. Instead of saying, *"NO, your legs are bent"* try saying *"next time try to keep your legs really straight all the way through the skill"*. If a child tries to go backwards through a circuit, ask him/her to go the other direction instead of saying they are going the wrong way.

### **Recognize participants as individuals**

Avoid comparing participants. Encourage participants to do their personal best instead of asking them to do better than another participant. Similarly, avoid games where there is one winner, where children pick teams, or where children are eliminated. Praise individual achievement, and recognize when a child has shown an improvement, even if it is well below the group average.

### **Be flexible and adaptable**

Sometimes, things just don't work! Stay positive, and keep your mind open to alternate ways of running an activity. Be prepared to modify or move to another activity right away. Accept that children may be harder to control on the days surrounding major holidays (Christmas and Halloween in particular), and be prepared with a repertoire of high-energy games that you can pull out when you need them.

### **Keep a sense of humour, enjoy the children, and smile!**

Children will tell you stories and jokes, and one story will lead to another. If you listen and respond to their stories, they will listen and respond to you. Cultivate that 6 year old sense of humour, and learn to groan at their jokes, all the while smiling as you lead them off to the next activity....Your smile is your best coaching tool.



## TUTORIAL 5 – Introduction to basic gymnastics activities

This tutorial will focus on:

- Concepts of the warm-up and cool-down.
- Introduction to the Fun, Fitness, Fundamentals philosophy.
- Introduction to the Fundamental Movement Patterns of gymnastics.
- Knowing the proper gymnastics movement terminology.

### Warm-up and Cool-down

As a Pre-CIT, you will be assisting with warm-up and warm-down activities.

Why is a warm-up important?

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What types of activities should you include in a warm-up?

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Why do you do a cool-down?

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What types of activities should you include in a cool-down?

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Ensure:

- Continuous Activity
- Success
- Challenge / Discovery

Use:

- A variety of teaching styles



Include:

- Endurance
- Strength & Power
- Flexibility
- Agility
- Balance
- Coordination
- Spatial Orientation



Teach, Explore, Repeat:

- Landings
- Stationary Positions
- Locomotions
- Swings
- Rotations
- Springs
- Object manipulation

## Recreational Gymnastics Terminology

Make sure you know and can either demonstrate or describe each of these common terms in gymnastics. Your own sport will have additional terms that you should know.

- Motorcycle landing
- Tuck and roll/ Rock and roll
- Pizza hands
- Birdie fingers
- Cartwheel kickovers/bench cartwheels
- Tight body
- Skin the cat (Thread the needle in some P/T)
- Donkey kick
- Cat springs
- Spider walk up wall
- Timber fall
- Names of all the equipment - Olympic apparatus, plus other pieces such as the incline/wedge/cheese, donut, marshmallow mat, French fries, trapezoid.

### Positions:

- Tucked
- Piked
- Straddled
- Straight
- Push-up (mad cat)
- Presentation
- Bridge
- Side split
- Left or right splits
- Hollow body position – banana boat, canoe, rocky boat
- Arched body position – mermaid, super kid

It is important to use and teach correct, consistent terminology to your gymnasts. Even preschoolers will remember 'names', provided you reinforce them in every class.

## TUTORIAL 6 – Introduction to helping gymnasts

This week's tutorial will focus on:

- Purposes of assisting
- Responsibilities of assisting

Think back to when you were learning a new gymnastics skill. Most likely you would have received some kind of help from your coach.

1. Why did your coach help you when you were learning the skill?

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2. Did the type or amount of help change as you became more proficient with the skill? How did it change?

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3. How and when did you decide that you no longer needed help on that skill?

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## Guidelines

As a Pre-CIT, you may be asked to help a participant who is learning a skill. There are several different **reasons for helping** a child:

- To help develop spatial orientation for a skill.
- To help develop how a certain position 'feels'.
- To ensure that the child performs the skill correctly.
- To provide a sense of security for the child.
- To ensure a safe landing in case the child slips or falls.
- Etc.

Helping a child can take several forms:

- Lowering competitive equipment if your club does not have child sized equipment.
- Using piles of mats to 'raise' the floor so it is the right height.
- Helping a child get on/off a piece of equipment – it is even better if you can figure out how the child can climb up/down on his/her own.
- Using non-competitive equipment (e.g. incline mats, trapezoids, yoga mats, etc.).
- Using a 'tool' to help a child perform the skill properly. For example, asking a child to keep a foam sponge tucked between his/her chin and chest will help him/her keep his/her back round while doing a forward roll.
- Asking the child to do an easier version of the activity.
- Etc.

If you choose to physically help a child, you have several **responsibilities**:

- You must be strong enough to support the gymnast throughout the entire skill.
- You must be able to put your hands on the right body part (at the right time).
- You must give your full attention to the gymnast. Being distracted is a hazard.
- You must be able to anticipate the gymnast's next movement and be ready to save him/her in any situation (including a complete wipe-out).
- You are responsible for the full safety of the gymnast. Always save the gymnast first, and yourself second.
- Before physically helping a gymnast, you should have used many of the above-mentioned forms of 'assistance'.
- **And remember:**
  - If a child is truly not capable of doing the progression/skill without physical assistance, have them do an easier progression or an alternative skill instead.
  - Not all children are comfortable being touched. Always ask if you can help, and explain how you will be helping (e.g. "Would you like me to hold your hand while you walk on the beam?" or "I will hold your waist while you try this turn").
  - If, by mistake, you do touch the gymnast in a private area, acknowledge it and apologize right away. This should only happen in an 'emergency' situation – for example if the gymnast is falling out of control and you grab whatever you can to make the save.
  - If your Mentor Coach asks you to physically help a child, he/she must first show you how to provide assistance and then make sure you can perform this coaching skill before allowing you to assist on your own.

## TUTORIAL 7 – Introduction to using games

In this tutorial you will focus on:

- Using games in your class
- Running games with a group
- Modifying games according to the needs of your group



There are zillions of games that you can incorporate into your lessons. When combined with stretching, games serve as good warm-up and can be used to end the class on a happy note.

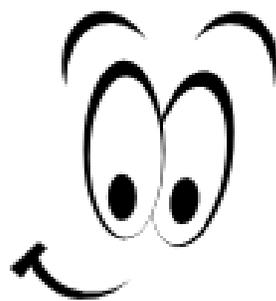
Always plan more games than you expect to use and be prepared to stop and change a game that is not working. Keep your games exciting, active and challenging! Also, stop the game while the children are still involved and they will want to play it again and again.

Often, you will find that you may have to alter the rules, change the focus, add or subtract parts of the game to suit your group. Know their abilities!

There are several types of games used commonly in gymnastics:

1. Tag Games
2. Group Games
  - a) Combative
  - b) Co-operative / Quiet
3. Parachute Activities
4. Animal Walks

Every coach needs a good repertoire of games. The next few pages describe enough games to keep your gymnasts playing for a long time!



## Tag Games

1. **Everybody's It!** – this one actually works! Everyone is "it" trying to tag everyone else, no one is out. VARIATIONS: Call out certain tag spots, i.e. behind the knee, elbows, belly buttons, etc.
2. **Blob Tag** – one, two or more children are chosen as a "Blob". Other children that are tagged hold on to the hand of the Blob until all kids are part of a Blob.
3. **Partner Tag** (has many variations) – the group is divided into partners, as various skills are called out, each partner tries to catch their partner while walking, hopping, slow running, crab walking, etc.
4. **Couple's Tag** - Have 4 or 5 pairs that are "it", as one person in the pair tags someone that person becomes part of the pair and the "tagger" is now free.
5. **Poison Tag** – one or two people are "it", where you are tagged is where you must hold on with your hand until you've used both hands (i.e. holding onto your shoulder and a knee). When both hands are on poison spots, the child performs a skill before re-joining the game.
6. **Crumple Tag** – each person gets two "crumples" of scrunched up paper. The object is to collect as many crumples in the time frame by hitting others with your crumples. When hit, you must drop all your crumples for the other person, and begin collecting again (off the floor, etc.)
7. **Hugger Tag** – same as regular tag, but can avoid being tagged by hugging one, two, or more players (instructor can specify). Can only hug for five seconds, and the "tagger" cannot wait.
8. **Frozen Tag** – an excellent way of incorporating your "skill of the day". When tagged, the person must perform a skill and is frozen until another player rescues him/her. There are a thousand varieties to this game – rather than simply running under the legs of a person frozen in a straddle position, get the kids to run around each leg; in a front or rear support the kids can climb over and under to free their classmates.
9. **Tail Tag** – all players have a tail hanging from the back of their shorts. Use ripped rags, socks, etc. Each player has to grab as many tails as possible in a pre-determined time limit, each time adding new tails to their own. Vary the "animal" and you can change the movement:
  - Catch a bunny's tail – hopping
  - Catch a tiger's tail – running
  - Catch a lion's tail – on all fours
  - Catch a dragon's tail – with a partner, the person in the rear wears the tail

Tag games don't need to have an "ending" or a "winner". Let the game run for a couple of minutes, then stop the game while the kids are having the most fun. They will beg you to play it again another day.

## Group Games

### Competitive Games

These are good activities for older children age 6 and up, especially boys!!!

1. **Knee Touching** – Find a partner that is about the same size as you. Facing each other, try to touch behind the knees of your partner as many times as you can. Vary the body parts.
2. **Push-up Pull-down** – Face your partner in a front support position. Try to knock your partner's hands out so that he or she falls out of the front support. Try one-arm side supports for the stronger kids.
3. **Bulldozer** – Face your partner with arms extended in front of you, hands pressed against your partner's hands. Try to push yourself across the line onto your partner's side.
4. **Tug-of-War** – Stand in a straddle position facing your partner, but place your right foot beside your partner's right foot. Clasp hands and try to pull your partner to your side. Or, stand on either side of a line and try to catch your partner and pull him across your line.
5. **Rooster Fight** – Partners stand on one leg, holding the ankle behind the body with the opposite hand, other hand behind the back holding the elbow. Try to knock your partner off balance by bumping shoulders.
6. **Kwik-Sit** – Facing partner, sit on floor with feet flat in front, legs bent, holding hands. Without moving your feet, stand up and sit down as many times as you can in \_\_\_\_ seconds. Or, sit back to back with your partner with arms linked, knees bent and feet flat in front of you. Try to stand up/sit down without moving your feet.
7. **Wring the Dishcloth** – Hold hands with your partner, both partners turn around in the same direction all the way to the starting position. Do as many as possible in \_\_\_\_ seconds.
8. **Crab Fight** – In crab position, hands and feet on floor, belly button up, try to make your partner's seat touch the floor. Or, place an object (like a beanbag) on your tummy, try to make your partner drop theirs.
9. **Roly Poly** – In a tight tuck position, face your partner and try to roll them over using only your toes.
10. **Starfish** – One partner lies on back in shape of an X. The other partner tries to turn him over onto his stomach, while the other resists by keeping arms and legs stiff.

## Co-operative / Quiet Games

These games are good ending activities, or can be used as a break for when the children need a rest. They have minimal rules, no score and no competition.

1. **Lap Sit** – the group stands in a tight circle and turns to put their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. On command, everyone sits down on the lap of the person behind them. It takes some practice, but it's worth it!
2. **Sticky Popcorn** - Begin by talking about kernels of corn and how they gradually heat up before they pop. Turn on the stove and watch the kids pop! Ask them to stop so you can pour on the stick syrup and as they bump into each other, they become stuck until you have one big popcorn ball!
3. **Human Tangles** – Standing in a circle, each person reaches across and holds onto two different hands. Once everyone has a hand, they must “un-tangle” themselves without letting go.
4. **Push ‘em into Balance** – Standing again in a tight circle, each member gets a turn at standing in the middle, arms crossing their chest, feet not moving and falling into the outstretched hands of the group. The group must prevent the middle person from falling out of the circle – not by shoving.
5. **Floating Along** – Form two lines, lying on their backs head to head, arms stretched up to the ceiling. One person lies on their back (in a very tight body position) on the hands of the group and together they shuffle him along to the end.
6. **Rattlesnake** – The group forms a circle around two players who are blindfolded in the middle, each carrying a pop can with pennies (or small objects or shaker). One person is designated “it” and shakes the can, the other player shakes in response. “it” has three tries to find the location of the other and tag them – yes, blind!
7. **Killer Handshake** – The group sits on floor with eyes closed while the instructor secretly chooses one or two “killers” by tapping them on the back. Everyone stands up and shakes hands with a greeting – e.g. “Hi, thanks for coming to gymnastics”. The killers give a little scratch on the palm as they shake. If you've been hit, you must count to ten (so not to give away the identity of the killer) then gracefully fall dead. Game is over when one of the remaining live players correctly guesses who the killer is.

## Parachute Games

The parachute is an excellent source of warm-up and ending activities, and is also an excellent form of cooperative play. Used properly, the parachute will provide a quick cardio-vascular warm-up, and it is lots of fun for all ages.

A few tips to ensure the success of your leadership during parachute games can save you from raising your voice to maintain control and allow you to have fun too!

1. Before you pull the parachute ("P") out of the bag, tell the kids you have a special warm-up planned for the day.
2. After the parachute has been unrolled, ask the kids to put it on the floor and show them the correct hand placement (fingers on the top, thumb underneath, make a tight fist).
3. Ask the kids to tell you how many parachutes they see. "One". And how many kids do you see? "Lots"! Well, because we only have one parachute, we all have to play the same game. It won't work if we all play a different game, so please help us to all have fun by listening carefully to your teacher. Remember the parachute works best when there are no wrinkles in it – keep pulling it tight.

The following games are arranged in order of difficulty:

1. **Air conditioning** – Standing, grasp the "P" firmly and wave arms up and down vigorously.
2. **Popcorn** – While making air conditioning, throw balls onto the moving "P" and watch them fly!
3. **Walking on Waves** – While half of the children do Air Conditioning squatting down, the other children walk over the top. Make up a story about the waves growing stronger, into a hurricane, etc.
4. **Ring Around the Rosie** – or any other game that requires children to walk in a circle (e.g. Motor Boat). Holding tightly, you can increase the speed if the kids learn to lean back and pull as they run.
5. **Silk House** – Children crawl under "P" and tuck "P" under their seats. Where are we? In the tummy of a whale? In an igloo on a sunny day? A caterpillar in a cocoon? Rock the house by gently leaning in one direction; the "P" will move back and forth rocking side to side.
6. **Revolving Sit-ups** – sitting down with legs under the "P", toes pointed to the middle, lie back and use the taut "P" to pull yourself up again.
7. **Tricks under the Big Tent** – children sit on floor with the "P" pulled up to their waist and legs straight in front of them underneath. On signal, everyone lifts the "P" up overhead and performs a skill, e.g. show me a tuck sit or a v-sit.

8. **Bubbles** – Begin with the “P” pulled tight on the floor. On the count of 3, (or try an original; on the word SPAGHETTI) everyone stand up and lift your arms high above your head and quickly pull “P” back to the floor
9. **Funny Faces** – After the kids have mastered Bubbles, they can now lift the “P” over their heads, and when you pull it down to the floor, lie on your tummy and put just your head inside – with the “P” wrapped around your head like a scarf – and make silly faces at each other!
10. **Inside a mushroom** – Make a Bubble, take three steps into the middle of the “P”, pull your arms over your head and behind you and sit down on the “P” while still holding on with your hands. This one does take a few practises.
11. **Umbrella** – All stand around the “P” holding tightly. Ask kids to look at what colours are on their clothes – LOTS of one colour. On a 3 count, kids stand up arms stretched over head, the coach calls out a colour, if you are wearing LOTS of that colour, let go of the “P” and run under to the other side before the Umbrella comes down!
12. **Drifting Cloud** – Get the kids to demo how loud they can yell, “Let Go”! Explain that you are all going to make a cloud float up in the air like magic, but that they must help you by yelling, “Let Go” and by releasing the “P” when their arms are stretched way above their heads. On the count of \_\_\_\_\_, we will all stand up and lift our arms above our heads, yell, “Let Go” and release the “P” into the air – it’s floating! (This takes a little bit of practice. If there are young kids, make sure they have an older child beside them to remind them when to let go).
13. **Tail Swing / Surf-ride** – A great game for the stronger kids, but as it is an individual “ride”, it is not recommended for large groups – there is too much waiting time between turns. Get the surfer to remove their shoes before standing at one end of the “P” with the rest of the group at the other end holding on to the edge. The surfer stands in lunge position, arms out like an airplane and the group pulls the surfer across the floor. Start on the signal of the surfer and begin slowly.
14. **Cat and Mouse** – Works well with a larger group. Children sit holding the “P” tightly. Select one child to be the cat, he goes on hands and knees on top of the “P”. Select three or four children to be the mice, they go on hands and knees under the “P”. While everyone else keeps the “P” moving in waves, the cat has to crawl around and tag the mice that are scurrying around, hidden under the “P”. Change the cat and mice frequently and enforce the “hands and knees only” rule.

## Animal Walks

Here are some animal walks that can be used in your recreational program to instill a fun activity, while also developing many of the qualities that are needed in gymnastics. Animal walks are great for:

- Warm-up relays.
- Moving from one apparatus or station to another.
- During a circuit or series of activities to help delay the return to line.
- As an exercise to help increase one or more of the athletic abilities listed below:

**STRENGTH – S    POWER – P    ENDURANCE – E    BALANCE – B    FLEXIBILITY – F**

| ANIMAL WALK       | ATHLETIC ABILITY | DESCRIPTION  |
|-------------------|------------------|--|
| Rabbit            | P, B             | Hopping on 2 feet, holding hands up for ears   |
| Chicken           | B, E             | Hold onto your heels while walking   |
| Duck              | E                | Keep arms flexed while walking in a squat position   |
| Seal              | S                | With palms and toes turned in, drag legs behind  |
| Inch Worm         | P, F             | Start standing with hands and feet on the ground, walk hands out to prone position, then walk feet forward to meet hands |
| Running Cat       | P                | Dive onto hands then bring feet up outside hands; repeat   |
| Frog leaps        | P, S             | From squat to extended hop to squat  |
| Lame dog          | B                | Running on 2 hands and 1 foot  |
| Kangaroo          | P                | High hops using legs only (arms can form a pouch across belly)   |
| Bear              | B, E             | Walking on all fours, swing alternate limbs out to the side  |
| Crab              | S, E             | Holding body in rear support on the floor, run sideways  |
| Cricket           | S, E             | In a crab position, run moving feet first, then hands  |
| Praying Mantis    | P, B             | Hop, landing in a praying position   |
| Sneaky Snake      | S, F, E          | Flat out on floor, wriggle along with no arms or legs  |
| Elephant          | B, E             | Walking on all fours, keeping arms and legs straight   |
| Double frog leaps | P                | Frog leaps over each other   |

Pick any game from the previous pages, be sure you understand how it works, then write out the words you would use to explain it to your group. Keep your description short and clear, and use demonstrations if necessary.

Game: \_\_\_\_\_

My explanation:

*(Use pictures for demo if needed)*

Now, working with a group of other coaches, explain your game and get the coaches playing it. Some things to remember:

- Instructions must be short and clear.
- Ask for questions or get kids to reiterate some of the rules to be sure they understand.
- Game should be underway within 1 minute, and can be completed or modified within 2-3 minutes.

How did the coaches respond to your explanation? Did they understand the rules? Were they able to get the game going right away? Did anyone seem completely lost? If coaches had problems with the game, chances are good that the gymnasts will too. Take a good look at your explanation and demo, make adjustments in the box below, and then teach it to the coaches again.

## TUTORIAL 8 – Introduction to a badge program

This week's tutorial will focus on:

- Introduction of badge programs and resources
- The badge skills

Badge programs are usually set up as several progressive levels that take the gymnast from a beginner to an intermediate or advanced level of skill development. Upon successful completion of a level, the gymnast receives a badge, a pin, a sticker, or a ribbon, etc. Badge programs focus on making sure gymnasts master the basic skills that are the building blocks for their sport.

With beginners, it is quite possible that they will be able to complete the first badge within one 10 week session. As the gymnasts move into more advanced badge levels, however, they will need two or more sessions to master the required skills.

As a Pre-CIT, you will be helping to teach skills in the early levels of your club's badge program. Each of these skills relates to one or more of the fundamental movement patterns of gymnastics (landings, stationary positions, locomotions, swings, rotations, springs, and object manipulation). It is important that your gymnasts master these fundamental movement patterns as all other gymnastic skills are built on these basics.

Your Mentor Coach will review the badge program with you, and discuss how the program is implemented in your club.

Which badge program are you using in your coaching?

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How many levels are in the program?

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What level are your gymnasts at?

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How will you know that your gymnasts have met the standard to complete this badge level?

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# The Coaching Code of Ethics

*This Code of Ethics has been adapted from the CAC Coaching Code of Ethics*

## 1. Respect for participants

- Treat all gymnasts with respect at all times
- Provide feedback in a caring and sensitive manner
- Build mutual support amongst all – parents, gymnasts and coaches
- Use language that respects the dignity of all

## 2. Responsible coaching

- Act in the best interest of the gymnast's whole development
- Present a program that is safe and respectful of gymnasts' limitations
- Keep yourself informed of advancements in your sport through workshops, clinics and by observing other coaches in action
- Strive to be fully attentive, physically and mentally when performing coaching duties. Present yourself in a professional and positive manner reflecting the title of coach

## 3. Integrity in relationships

- Be honest, sincere and honourable in relationships with others
- Take credit and give credit where due with accuracy and honesty
- Treat others as you would like to be treated

## 4. Honour sport

- Bring honour to the coaching profession through your integrity
- Show high regard for your sport and promote the value of sport
- Project yourself in a favourable manner, reflecting a positive image of sport to other coaches, officials, media, families and the general public



Part of your job as a Pre-CIT or coach is to set expectations for behaviour in the gym, to model this behaviour in your coaching, and to ensure that the gymnasts also behave appropriately.

Here are some situations you may face in the gym. How would you deal with them?

One child in the group is very shy and won't talk at all, to the other children or to the coaches. Even though she participates in all the activities, the other children sometimes make fun of her and try to tease her to make her talk.

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One child in the group is very bright, likeable, and quite good at gym, but extremely loud and busy. He always seems to be getting into something or roughing it up with another child. It is very disruptive and the other children complain that he is bothering them.

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You have noticed that one girl in the class often criticizes the other girls behind their backs and excludes certain children from being in "her" group for games. When challenged on her behaviour, she bursts into tears and claims that the other child did something mean to her.

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## Promoting Positive Self-Esteem

In Tutorial #4, we looked at finding many ways to say “Very Good”. It is important that your gymnasts be praised for a good performance, but there are many other actions that you can do to make your gymnasts feel good about themselves and confident in their abilities. The positive self-image that you promote and model in the gym will remain with that child in many other parts of their lives.

Here are some of the things you can do to promote self esteem.

| <b>Ways to develop self-esteem</b>  | <b>What it might look/sound like</b>   |
|---|--|
| Greet each gymnast at the beginning of class by using their name. Use their name when talking to them.              | “Sarah, your cartwheels are really improving.”   |
| Encourage active participation from everyone.   | “Please come and join the group. We need you to play this game.”   |
| Show confidence in their ability to learn.  | “I know this skill seems difficult, but if we really work at it, I know we can do it.”                                   |
| Encourage effort without always focusing on results.  | “Everyone really worked hard today!”   |
| Ensure that activities suit their level of development.   | “When you are at this station you can choose from these three skills.”   |
| Be specific when providing feedback about their effort or performance.  | “Keep your arms really straight when you do this skill.”   |
| Use non-verbal actions to communicate approval and acceptance.  | Smile, thumbs up, eye contact etc.   |
| Give each gymnast a chance to be a leader or have some part in decision making. Invite questions and ask for input. | “Let’s pick which game we are going to play tonight.” <u>OR</u> “Who has a favourite stretch that we can do in warm-up?” |
| Communicate to your gymnasts that you value their involvement and that they have an important place in the group.   | “I am really glad that you are back this week, Marie. The group missed you while you were away.”                         |
| Avoid elimination games and other activities that can add unnecessary pressure on the gymnast.                      | “When you get tagged, hold a balance for 5 seconds, and then get back in the game.”                                      |

When you are in the gym, observe other coaches to see what tricks they use to build self-esteem and confidence in their gymnasts!

## TUTORIAL 10 – Next steps...

This is your last tutorial, although it is not necessarily the end of the Pre-CIT program.

You have likely completed, or are near completion of your required hours of assistant coaching. In this tutorial we will look at:

- Reflecting on your coaching experience so far
- Setting goals for the remainder of the Pre-CIT program

What have you completed so far in the program?

| Task   | Done ✓ | Mentor Coach signature |
|--|--------|------------------------|
| <b>PART 1</b>                                |        |                        |
| Attendance and participation at 10 tutorials |        |                        |
| 10 hours of assistant coaching               |        |                        |
| 8 hours of "gymming"                         |        |                        |
| <b>PART 2</b>                                |        |                        |
| *Up to 10 hours of officiating duties        |        |                        |
| *Up to 10 hours of administration duties     |        |                        |
| 7 hours of "gymming"                         |        |                        |
| Attainment of "gymming" goals                |        |                        |

*\* a total of 10 hours of officiating and/or administration duties are required*

- To be recognized as a Pre-CIT, you must complete all the items in both Part 1 and Part 2.
- The forms for officiating and administration tasks are contained at the end of this workbook.
- When you have completed all the required tasks, ensure that your Mentor Coach has signed off all forms, and completed the Pre-CIT evaluation form.
- Complete your Goal Setting Chart and the Pre-CIT Program Evaluation Form and give a copy to your Mentor Coach. Keep a copy of each in your coaching binder.
- Your Mentor Coach should inform the Club Supervisor that you are now a Pre-CIT.

**\* Upon successful completion of this program, please complete the Pre-CIT Recognition of Completion Form (found on page 61) with your Supervisor/Mentor Coach and submit it to your Provincial/Territorial Gymnastics Office.**

**Take a few minutes and reflect back on your coaching experience.**

1. What was the best thing about being a Pre-CIT?

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2. What did you enjoy the most in your coaching?

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3. What was the most challenging thing about coaching?

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4. What was the most important thing you learned in your coaching?

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5. What would you like to learn more about?

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## Goal Setting for PRE-CITs

For each area, identify your goals, what you will do to reach these goals, and when you will achieve them. Give one copy to your Mentor Coach, and put a copy in your coaching binder.

| Goal Area                                    | My goals are.... | Actions to achieve: | Date to achieve by: |
|--|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Communicating with children                  |                  |                     |                     |
| Teaching Games                               |                  |                     |                     |
| Supervising and managing a group of children |                  |                     |                     |
| Motivating children to participate           |                  |                     |                     |
| Knowledge of Fundamental Movement Skills     |                  |                     |                     |
| Knowledge of Badge program skills            |                  |                     |                     |
| Creating activities that are age-appropriate |                  |                     |                     |

## Pre-CIT Program Evaluation

This is your chance to provide feedback about your Pre-CIT experience. Please answer the following questions honestly. When you are finished, hand in the form to your Mentor Coach.

Did you find the program beneficial?                      Yes      No

What was most beneficial to you?

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Are there any topics we did not cover?                      Yes      No

If yes, what?

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Could anything have been left out?

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What could we have spent more time on?

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Did you find the tutorials helpful?                      Yes      No

Did you find the in-gym work helpful?                      Yes      No

Would you like MORE / LESS feedback from your Mentor Coach?

Would you like MORE / LESS feedback from the Supervisor?

Comments:

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**Thank you for being part of the PRE-CIT program!  
Good luck in your coaching!**

## Officiating and Administration

You must complete a total of ten hours of officiating and/or administration tasks. How you choose to complete these hours is up to you, and will depend on the type of club you are coaching in, and the types of activities that it runs during the year.

This section will describe some of the possible tasks that could be used to fulfill your officiating and administration requirement. Talk to your Mentor Coach about the opportunities that are available to you in the club. At the end of this section are forms that you can complete to describe and document your completion of these tasks.

### Officiating

When you go to a competition, it is usually to watch the gymnasts! But have you ever stopped to wonder how many people have helped to make the competition run successfully?

Regardless of the sport, any competition requires an organizing committee, and many volunteers. Large competitions like Canadian or World Championships may have volunteers working for months or even years to organize the event, and hundreds of additional people volunteering during the event itself. Even a small invitational meet requires an organizing committee and volunteers.

In addition to the people running the event, there is a large number of Officials responsible for judging routines, and keeping the event running smoothly and on time.

Here are some of the main people (apart from gymnasts) that you will notice at a competition:

**Organizing Committee:** this is the group of people who do all the preparations for the competition. They oversee scheduling, registration, hospitality, scoring, judging, equipment and facilities.

**Competition Director:** Often the chairman of the organizing committee is also the competition director. He or she is on the floor of the competition and oversees the running of the meet. Any problems are directed to the Competition Director, who must work with volunteers and officials and coaches to find solutions.

**Scorers:** Usually the scorers are located near the judges table and are behind an array of computers, printers and a lot of paper. They receive all the scores from the judges and then must verify the scores, enter the information on the computer and tabulate the results.

**Judges:** Usually there is a Head Judge who is responsible for the organization and work of all the judges at the competition, or at a particular event. The other judges are responsible for providing fair evaluation of the performance of all gymnasts. They must work quickly to produce their scores. Usually judges are responsible for judging a portion of the performance, which could be execution, or verification of skills, or artistic value. Line judges have a different role, which is to identify if the gymnast steps out-of-bounds during a routine. When this happens, the line judge makes not on a judging chit, which is then taken to the Head Judge, where a deduction is applied.

## Minor Officials:

The **Head Judge's Secretary** sits at the judging table beside the Head Judge and ensures that all the gymnast's names are in the proper order, and that scores are recorded correctly on the tabulation sheet. This is a job that requires quick, accurate work, some math skills and good focus!

**Runners** are usually younger gymnasts who sit near the judges, with the responsibility of carrying the judging chits back to the head judge. They must move quickly, but avoid walking in front of the judges (who may be judging another routine) and avoid getting in the way of the gymnast.

The **Timer** sits at the Head Judge's table and uses a stopwatch to time those routines that have a time limit (i.e. all RG routines, Men's and Women's Floor, Women's Beam and all Acrobatic and Aerobic routines). The timer records the duration of the routine and if it is over or under the required time limits, completes a timer form which is sent back to the Head Judge, where a deduction is applied to the final score.

If your club regularly runs events, there is usually ample opportunity to get some practice with officiating. Depending on the sport, and on the size/profile of the meet, you could be asked to be a line judge, timer or runner. A large meet like provincial championships, usually requires that minor officials have some special training but smaller invitationals, or in-club events may not require this training. At in-club meets, you might even find yourself being recruited into judging!

If you are interested in becoming a judge, talk to your Mentor Coach. Judge Training Programs are open to those aged 16 years and older.

## Administration

The word "administration" describes the duties of a person who is involved in the organizing and/or running of an activity.

Every event requires administration – you could become involved in organizing such events as:

- Demonstrations
- Club Gymnaestrada
- GymFest
- National Gymnastics Week activities
- Special events such as an end-of-the-year party
- Coach training workshops
- In-club competitions

Planning and running of these events often requires a committee of several people, each of whom is responsible for a small sub-committee. These subcommittees could look after such areas as facilities and equipment, hospitality and social events, publicity, officials, and decorating. The type of event will determine the tasks that need to be done, and therefore the subcommittees that are needed.

The most important thing about being an administrative volunteer is that you must be reliable! Every task has a deadline, and once the date of the event is confirmed, everything must happen according to a schedule.

Some of the other skills that are helpful to have include:

**Writing skills** – for putting together media releases and promotional materials

**Communication skills** – because you provide information to a lot of people

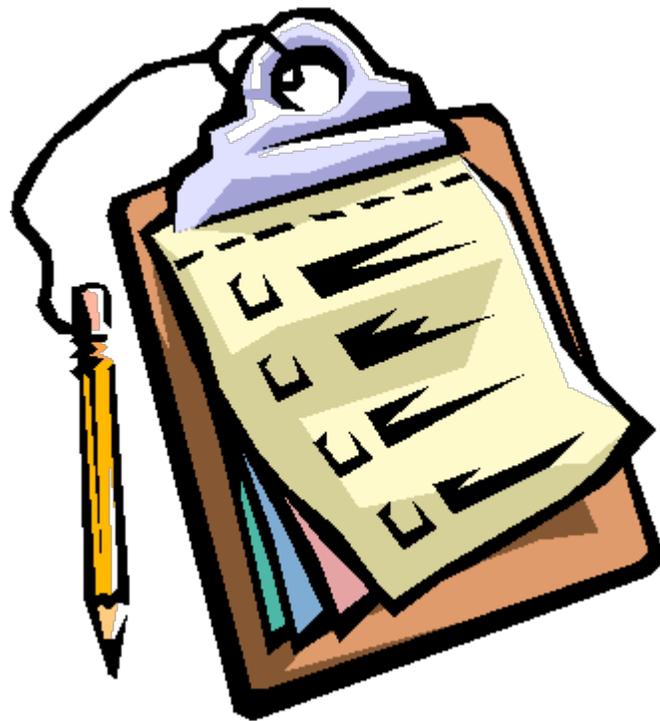
**Computer skills** – for making up programs and posters

**Technical sport knowledge** – to ensure that equipment and facilities are safe

**People skills** – because you are working with a team of people towards a common goal.

As a PRE-CIT, if you indicate that you are interested in helping out with running an event, you will likely receive an enthusiastic response, and a job to do! Go for it, and enjoy being part of making things happen.

The forms on the next page will help you organize your administrative and officiating tasks.



**OFFICIATING AND ADMINISTRATION TASKS VALIDATION FORM**

*The PRE-CIT Program requires completion of 10 hours of officiating and/or administration tasks.*

Name of Pre-CIT: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Mentor Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICIATING**

Describe the task(s) you will be doing.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who will supervise you in the completion of the task(s)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When/where will you complete the task(s)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This will verify that \_\_\_\_\_ completed \_\_\_\_\_  
hours in fulfillment of the officiating task described above.

Supervisor/Mentor Coach name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor/Mentor Coach signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ADMINISTRATION**

Describe the task(s) you will be doing.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who will supervise you in the completion of the task(s)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When/where will you complete the task(s)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This will verify that \_\_\_\_\_ completed \_\_\_\_\_  
hours in fulfillment of the officiating task described above.

Supervisor/Mentor Coach name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor/Mentor Coach signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# PRE-CIT PROGRAM RECOGNITION OF COMPLETION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

has completed the requirements for the Pre-CIT program.

Date of completion: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
city/town province/territory

Supervisor/Mentor Coach name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor/Mentor Coach signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please complete and submit this form to your  
Provincial/Territorial Gymnastics Office.***

***Please keep a copy of this form  
in your personal files.***