

GYMCATS Team Handbook

Gym Rules and Policies

A. General Rules and Policies For Gymnasts

1. Respect your physical self. All your efforts should go into building up your abilities. Fuel your body with nutritious food, get plenty of sleep, protect your body by being safe in the gym, listen to your body when it tells you to stop because of illness or injury, and make your body strong, powerful and flexible enough to do the wonderful things expected of it in this sport.
2. Respect your mental self. Gymnastics is the most demanding and difficult of all sports. You will suffer setbacks, frustration, fear, and defeat. Expect these things, learn from them, face them and feel empowered to overcome them. Maintain a positive attitude when facing your fears and frustrations because it is your attitude which will help you to defeat them.
3. Respect your teammates. They have their own goals and dreams, but they are there to support and help you. You should cheer for them when they attempt new skills, make skills that are difficult for them, or when they are competing.
4. No team member is allowed to use alcohol, drugs, or smoke.
5. Attend practices, competitions and special events that you are supposed to partake in. All gymnasts are expected to participate in all meets. We will assume that your child is planning on entering every meet that Gymcats attends and we will hold you financially responsible for the entry fees unless you let us know.
6. Work hard and try your best. This is all that we expect of you and this is what you should demand of yourself.
7. Treat other gymnasts with respect, be especially kind to those younger than you. There is no hierarchy at Gymcats -- all gymnasts have their strengths and weaknesses and no one should hold themselves out as better than other gymnasts.
8. Ask permission to leave the gym. This applies to leaving practice early, going to the restroom, or calling home. Please inform your coach at the beginning of practice if you need to leave early so they can plan an appropriate workout for the day.
9. Be honest. Cheating is an ugly form of disrespect. Stealing is even lower than low. If you cheat on assignments you are showing disrespect to your coaches, your parents, and most importantly, to yourself. Stealing will not be tolerated and will result in removal from Gymcats.
10. Tell your coach when your body is telling you to stop or slow down. This shows respect for yourself and your body. Pain is your body's way of telling you to stop or slow down. In addition, alert your coach if you have engaged in any strenuous activity prior to the start of practice.
11. Show respect for your safety and the safety of your coaches by maintaining a weight appropriate for the sport of gymnastics. While obsessing about weight can be a very real problem, overweight gymnasts are a danger to themselves and the coaches who spot them.
12. Stay off equipment without specific permission and supervision of a coach.
13. Always wait inside for your ride.
14. Concentrate on what you are trying to accomplish during practice. Personal phone calls and cell phones are not allowed during practice unless it is an emergency.
15. Workout attire: Gymnasts are expected to come in attire that is not a hindrance to their workout. No jewelry is permitted and hair should be pulled back if necessary. Piercings are also not permitted due to the safety concerns.
16. Clean up duties: Gymcats team gymnasts are expected to help clean up during and at the end of each practice.
17. Emergency procedures: In the unlikely event of a medical emergency involving your son/daughter, the following procedures will be followed.
 - a. Emergency first aid will be administered, including requesting emergency medical personnel and an ambulance if needed.
 - b. You will be contacted using the emergency contact information you provided on your child's registration form. If any special instructions are given by you, they will be followed.
 - c. If you cannot be reached, we will contact the person you list as a backup contact. We will continue to try to contact you.

18. Disciplinary actions: In the event that there is an ongoing pattern of disruption or there are major infractions, there may be meetings scheduled with the child and the parent. If these issues cannot be resolved in a meeting, it may result in removal from the team.
19. Eligibility for Competition and Travel:
 - a. Gymnasts must be current on all gym and competition fees.
 - b. A gymnast may not compete if he/she has not mastered the skills required.
 - c. Attendance -- missed practices can mean missed competitions.

B. Attendance Policy For Levels 4-8

1. A minimum attendance percentage of 60% at the end of each month must be met. This is an extremely low standard that must be met. If your attendance drops below this extreme minimum the following steps will be taken.
 - a. A meeting will be held with the parents, child, and coaches to discuss the circumstance.
 - b. If the attendance is still below 60% after this meeting, in order to stay on the team you must have a minimum attendance of 80% the following month.
 - c. If you can't maintain an attendance percentage of 80% the second month you will be given 1 final month to get your attendance back up to 80%. If this can't be achieved you will be asked to leave the Gymcats team.
2. Call the gym to alert the coaches if you will be absent and give the reason. Dial 566-1414 and follow the instructions on the phone to leave a message about the reason you are missing.
3. Arrive on time and stay until the end of practice.
4. Come to gym only on the days and times you are scheduled for. If you want to make up missed gym on days or during times that you are not scheduled for you must approve it with a coach 1 day in advance. If no gymnasts in your level are scheduled for that day or time you wish to make up on, you must write your own assignment for that workout and have it signed off by a coach before you come in.
5. Arrive at gym ready to participate with the proper attire, hair, jewelry, no gum, well rested, and ready to go. Stay out of the gym until it is time to start.
6. The week before major competitions gymnasts are expected to attend every practice or risk being pulled from that competition. It is a matter of safety and of respect for our team to attend all practices before any major competition.

C. Attendance Policy For Levels 9/10

(To work out in this group you must be a Level 9 or 10 or you may attend this group if you are a Level 8 attending high school)

1. You must maintain an attendance percentage of 80% at the end of each month to remain working out with this group. If this attendance percentage isn't met the following steps will be taken:
2. The first time your attendance is under 80% we will hold a meeting to discuss the reasons your attendance has dropped.
3. The 2nd time your attendance is under 80% you will be asked to work out from 5:00-9:00 for a two week period—if your attendance is up to 80% after this two week period you will be allowed to come back to the 3:00 group.
4. The 3rd time your attendance is under 80% you will be asked to work out from 5:00-9:00 for a full month. After this month long period we will have another meeting to discuss whether or not you will be re admitted to the 3:00-7:00 time.
5. If at any time your attendance falls below 60% you will be asked to leave the team.
6. Gymnasts working out at the early time must come to gym at exactly 3:00—absolutely no later. If being late becomes a regular occurrence (if you are late once a week or more) we will need to discuss actions that will need to be taken such as working out from 5:00-9:00. If you are going to be late please call us to let us know you will be late and what the reason is.
7. Gymnasts working out from 3:00-7:00 MUST call in every time they are missing gym. Gymnasts in this group are often given individual assignments and it is important for the coaches to know if you will not be attending work out. If there are three times that a gymnast does not call in missing you will be asked to work out from 5:00-9:00 for one week following.
8. If gymnasts are missing workouts the week directly before a meet is will be at the discretion of the staff to decide if it is safe for gymnasts to attend the meet.

D. Parental behavior

Parents play a **huge** role in the development of a successful gymnast. Your role is every bit as important as that of the gym or of the coaches. It is every bit as difficult as well. We want your input and your support because we want your child to succeed. Here is what you can do to help your child achieve their dreams.

1. On the physical side it is your job to insure that your child gets enough sleep, gets the proper kinds of food and drink, gets to and from the gym on time, has the proper clothing and equipment, and receives the proper instruction from their coaches.
2. The emotional side is just as important. It is role as a parent to be a supportive force through unconditional love and encouragement. Your love should not be based on your child's performance, placing or score.
3. Please come to the coaches if you have a problem or concern. Your thoughts are important to us. Please limit your comments to us only and gear these comments or concerns towards making positive changes **with us and your child** not making accusatory statements against our coaches alone.
4. Parents perform their role at home and outside of the gym and the coaches perform their roles inside the gym. Please do not coach your child. Your comments can detract from what the coaches objectives are and it gives another thing for the gymnast to think about. It can also interfere with the coach/athlete relationship which is crucial to long term success of any athlete.
5. Parents are not allowed on the gym floor. They can create a danger to themselves and the athletes. If you need to get word to your child please have the office staff, a coach or another gymnast go to your child to relay the information.
6. Please have your child phone the gym to let us know if there is a problem due to illness, injury or family emergency.
7. Because of the large recreational program at Gymcats, team viewing times are before 4:00 and after 7:30 on Monday-Friday.

E. Rules and Policies for Competitions: Gymnasts

1. Obtain a USAG number from the USAG office and be prepared to show their membership card at all USAG competitions. The athlete number is for a calendar year and begins August 1st and ends July 31st.
2. To arrive at least 1/2 hour early for all competitions and report directly to the coach. Make sure you have a coach's cell phone number if for some unexpected reason you are running late. If we do not receive a phone call and your child has not reported to a coach at the report time, your child may be pulled from the meet.
3. Obey all regulations and procedures regarding the competition.
4. Have the proper attire.
5. Jewelry should be limited, hair should be pulled back if necessary and the gymnast should be well groomed.
6. All gymnasts should accept their order in the line- up, their scores and the awards they receive with dignity and without comment or criticism.
7. Double check all board and bar settings and assist the coaches when necessary.
8. Be courteous, respectful, and polite to all meet officials, hosts and hostesses, competitors and coaches.
9. Stay with the team until the competition is over and the coach has released you. Once the gymnast has entered the competition area there should be no contact between the gymnast and her parents.
10. Stay for all awards dressed in your warm-up suits. Most meets will have a formal system for presenting awards.

F. Rules and Policies for Competitions: Parents

1. Cheer loud and often, but do so in a courteous manner.
2. Cheer for all members of Gymcats team. Please show respect for all the competitors-- you never know whose mother is sitting near you.
3. Promote Gymcats in any way you feel is appropriate: t-shirts, signs and cheers, but never in a negative way about another club, coach, gymnast or judge.
4. Please do not recruit gymnasts from another gym to Gymcats.
5. Parents are not allowed in the competitive area according to USAG rules and policies.
6. Under no circumstances, is a parent to approach a judge or meet official before, during or after a competition to comment, complain or even ask about a score.
7. Please take care to cover the following details:
 - a. know the name and phone number of the facility in which the competition is being held.
 - b. communicate clearly with your child who is taking her and picking her up.
 - c. provide your child with an emergency number if you are not there.
 - d. get the cell phone number (if possible) of the coach(es) that are attending the competition.
 - e. send your child with enough money to cover meals and calls if you are not attending.
8. We expect that every gymnast will be in every competition. If you are unable to attend please notify us as soon as possible. If you have paid for the competition and then are unable to attend you will not receive a refund -- even if for an emergency or injury.
9. Please do not contact or talk to your gymnast once they are on the competitive floor. Coaches ask them to focus all their energy on the competition and we do not want them distracted. A simple comment to the gymnast of "smile" might take their focus off something the coach has asked them to concentrate on.
10. Parents should never approach a meet director from another club unless it is to compliment them on a job well done. If you have a problem or complaint please bring it to the attention of a coach.

G. Other competitive team notes

1. There is no discount for missed practices including long periods of time due to injury.
2. Gymnast/coach ratio. Our goal is to keep the ratio as close to 8/9: 1 as possible. There are times when the groups will be a lot smaller and also times when they will be a lot larger if we are short coaches due to competitions, sick days etc.
3. Injured gymnasts are expected to workout -- we will modify injured gymnasts workouts to keep strong the uninjured areas so when they return to 100% they will have an easier time.
4. Tuition is due the 1st day of each month. If your tuition is paid before the 1st of the month you can take a \$10 discount. If it is after the 10th of the month there is a \$15 late charge. If your tuition is not paid by the 20th of the month your child may not participate in practice.
5. Grips: Dowel grips are recommended for girls level 5 and higher and for competitive boys Class 6 and higher. It is very important to keep a back up pair of grips for the higher levels in case there is a grip failure at an in-opportune time.
6. All team gymnasts are required to take ballet and the cost of ballet is figured into your monthly tuition.
7. Pick up for gymnasts who leave at 7:00 or 7:30 should be picked up in the back of the building to alleviate congestion in the front parking lot and lobby.
8. If practice for your child ends at gym closing time, please be sure to pick your child up on time. Habitually late pick ups will be notified and charged to their account for Gymcats staff staying additional hours.
9. Please see the team agreement for additional information.

Signature Page

We will need this page back initialed by _____ in order for your child to attend team. It is very important that you read the whole team handbook with your child and understand all the points that are illustrated. The following sections need to be read carefully and initialed on the line, as these are points that are extremely important for both parent and gymnast to understand. By signing this you and your child are understanding and are agreeing to follow the guidelines of our team and if any of these guidelines are violated your child could be removed from Gymcats Team.

1. _____ Page 1, # 2. My child and I understand that in gymnastics there will be setbacks, frustrations, fear and defeat. We will do our best to learn from them and feel powered to over come them.
2. _____ Page 1, # 5. My child and I understand that we are expected to take part in all competitions and special events involved with team. We understand that we will be held responsible for all meet entry fees unless the gym is notified.
3. _____ Page 1, # 8. My child and I understand that they do not leave gym without asking permission, and must communicate to the coach at the START of workout if they plan on leaving early that day.
4. _____ Page 1, # 9. My child and I understand that Gymcats has a no-tolerance policy when it comes to stealing and stealing will result in removal from our gym.
5. _____ Page 1, #16. I understand that my child will stay and help straighten the gym at the end of each practice.
6. _____ Page 2, #19. I understand that for my child to participate in meets, my account must be current.
7. _____ Page 2 Attendance Policies. I understand the attendance policy for my child depending on the times she is attending workout and I agree that my child will be held to these expectations.
8. _____ Page 3, #3. I understand that if I have any concerns I will come directly to the coach to try and work them out *with* the coaches.
9. _____ Page 3, #4. I understand that it is not my job to coach my child.
10. _____ Page 3, #7. I understand the viewing times that are listed and I agree to adhere to them.
11. _____ Page 3. Rules for Competitions #2: I understand that my child is expected to report to their coach at report time and failure to do so may result in removal from the competition.
12. _____ Page 4, Guidelines for competitions: Parents. I understand all the rules and policies regarding competitions and I agree to adhere to these policies.
13. _____ Page 4, G. #1, #4. I have gone over expectations regarding tuition and injuries and I agree to follow these procedures.
14. _____ Page 4, G. #5. I understand that tuition is due at the 1st day of each month and that a late fee will be added if not paid by the 10th. I understand that if tuition is not paid by the 20th of the month my child will not be able to participate in any team activity including meets and workouts. For Level 3 gymnasts session due dates are relevant rather than monthly payments.
15. _____ Page 4, G. #8. I understand that if I habitually pick my child up later than gym closing hours my account may be charged.

I have gone over the entire handbook and I understand and agree to adhere to all the guidelines set forth.

(signature)