

# Recommended Competition Format

(See also 'Alternative approaches to competition format' describing various adaptations that could be considered)

## AGE GROUPS

- 1st Step Competition - Key Stage 1 (National Curriculum Years 1 & 2)
- 2nd Step Competition - Lower Key Stage 2 (National Curriculum Years 3 & 4)
- 3rd Step Competition - Upper Key Stage 2 (National Curriculum Years 5 & 6)

## RULES

### For individuals or teams

- Three disciplines (the core), floor, vault and body management to be completed by each competitor
- Participants should have no previous experience in gymnastics competitions, other than 'Key Step' gymnastics
- Music optional for floor exercise in 3rd Step. This sequence to last no longer than one minute
- Pupils who gain an advanced badge at any level, (3 stars), must move up at least one level in subsequent years if the competition involves the same disciplines
- Pupils must not compete in more than one team on the same day

# Section One

## AWARDS

- Cloth badges for individuals are available at three levels: foundation (one star), intermediate (2 star), and advanced (3 star) for each competition
- Certificates for individuals are available for each competition level in each discipline
- A Trophy/Shield for the winning school team in each competition level at the discretion of the Competition Organiser

(See order form in pocket at back of pack for details to purchase badges and certificates)

## SAFETY

Before attempting any of the routines pupils should have been taught the various skills in a safe and progressive way

## Step 1 - Body Management (Key Stage 1 - Years 1 & 2)



# Step 1 - How to improve Body Management

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
1	Rebound jumps x 10	Try to get a rhythm going. Do not bend knees too much or you will not be able to rebound immediately from the floor and this will result in 10 separate jumps rather than continuous rebound jumps. Keep feet together and do not travel forwards.
2	Tucked dish	Keep lower back pressed firmly into the floor, squeeze stomach muscles and keep chin on chest.
3	Back support	Push hips up and squeeze bottom tightly. Keep fingers facing your toes and head in a neutral position.
4	Straddle sit	Back straight, toes pointed, knees pressed into the floor. Aim your little toes towards the floor not your big toes. Keep your knees facing up towards the ceiling.
5	Arch	Keep legs together and arms shoulder width apart. Squeeze bottom and keep head in a neutral position.
6	Front support	Try to make a straight line from head to toes. Ensure arms are supporting the body vertically under shoulders, fingers facing forwards. Keep head in a neutral position. Squeeze stomach and bottom muscles.
7	Splits x 3	In right and left leg splits ensure hips and shoulders are square and level, keep front leg straight. Keep both legs straight in side (box) splits.
8	Shoulder flexibility	Maintain good body posture with straight back whilst taking arms up to ears. See how far behind your ears you can take your arms keeping them shoulder width apart.
9	Broad jump	Take arms back behind you before take off to enable them to swing through giving extra length to your jump. Keep feet shoulder width apart. Push through feet and extend legs fully. See how far you can jump. Bend knees on landing (no more than 90 degrees).

Further information on penalties for poor technique, style etc. can be found in Section 4 on Judging and in appendices H, L, J and K.

Key Step  
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Schools



## Step 2 - Body Management (Lower Key Stage 2 - Years 3 & 4)



1  
Single bounce skips with rope x 5



2  
Dish with one leg out at a time



3  
Towards half lever

4  
Towards japsani



5  
Arch

6  
Front support lower to floor



7  
Right splits



7  
Box splits



7  
Left splits



8  
Shoulder flexibility



9  
Broad jump

## Step 2 - How to Improve Body Management

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
1	Single bounce skips with rope x 5	Try to get a rhythm going. Do not bend knees too much as you will not be able to rebound immediately from the floor. Try to keep the feet flat.
2	Dish with one leg out at a time	Keep lower back pressed firmly into the floor, square stomach muscles and keep chest on chest. Keep the straight leg about 30cm from the floor.
3	Towards half lever	Push feet up and square bottom right. Keep fingers facing your toes and head in a neutral position.
4	Towards Japana	Back straight, toes pointed, knees pressed into the floor. Kick your little toes towards the floor, not your big toes. Keep your knees facing up towards the ceiling. Push your tumbling button towards the floor not your shoulders. Kick the legs to be approximately 90 degrees apart.
5	Ach	Keep legs together and arms shoulder width apart. Square bottom and keep head in a neutral position.
6	Front support lower to floor	Try to make a straight line from head to toes. Front arms are supporting vertically under shoulders, fingers facing forwards. Keep head in a neutral position. Maintain straight body line as you lower to the floor all body parts should touch the floor at the same time.
7	Splits x 3	In right and left leg splits ensure hips and shoulders are square and level. Keep both legs straight, support body weight with arms and move down into splits as far as you can get.
8	Shoulder flexibility	Keep knees just at 90 degrees. Keep arms shoulder width apart. Push arms pits down towards the floor. Try not to arch the back.
9	Broad jump	Take arms back behind your bottom take off to ensure flow to swing through giving extra length to your jump. Keep feet shoulder width apart. Push through feet and extend legs fully. See how far you can jump. Bend knees on landing (no more than 90 degrees).

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## Step 3 - Body Management (Upper Key Stage 2 - Years 5 & 6)



1  
Single bounce skips  
with ropes x 10



2  
Roll



3  
Roll to arch and back  
to flat



4  
Towards half lever



5  
kipara



6  
Press up



7  
Left splits

7  
Box splits

7  
Right splits



8  
Bridge



9  
Broad jump





## Step 3 - How to Improve Body Management

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
1	Single bounce skips with rope x 10	Try to get a rhythm going. Do not bend knees too much or you will not be able to rebound immediately from the floor. Try to keep the rope low.
2	Dish	Keep feet pressed firmly into the floor, squeeze stomach muscles and keep chin up (head, keep legs almost flat) from the floor. Hold for 2 seconds.
3	Roll to arch and back to dish	Keep arms and legs off the floor throughout the move. Tension stomach in Dish and bottom in the arch phase.
4	Towards half lever	Keep arms level with your thighs, push your bottom off the floor. Keep fingers facing your feet, hands flat on the floor and head in a neutral position. Lift each leg off the floor at once slowly.
5	Japana	Back straight, toes pointed, knees pressed into the floor. Aim your ankle back towards the floor not your leg then. Keep your knees facing up towards the ceiling. Push your tummy button towards the floor not your shoulders. Look at your fingers.
6	Press up	Try to make a straight line from head to toes. Elbows arms are supporting vertically under shoulders, fingers facing forward. Keep head in a neutral position. Maintain weight body low as you lower to the floor and push up.
7	Splits x 3	In left and right leg splits ensure hips and shoulders are square and level. Keep both legs straight. If you are all the way down in splits, take some off the floor and stretch them.
8	Bridge	Keep arms shoulder width apart. A good bridge is achieved with good shoulder flexibility not by over arching the back, as push through the shoulders and try to press your legs straight with feet flat on the floor.
9	Broad jump	Take arms back behind you before take off to enable them to swing through, giving extra length to your jump. Keep feet shoulder width apart. Push through feet and extend legs fully. See if you can go further than you did last time. Bend knees on landing no more than 90 degrees.

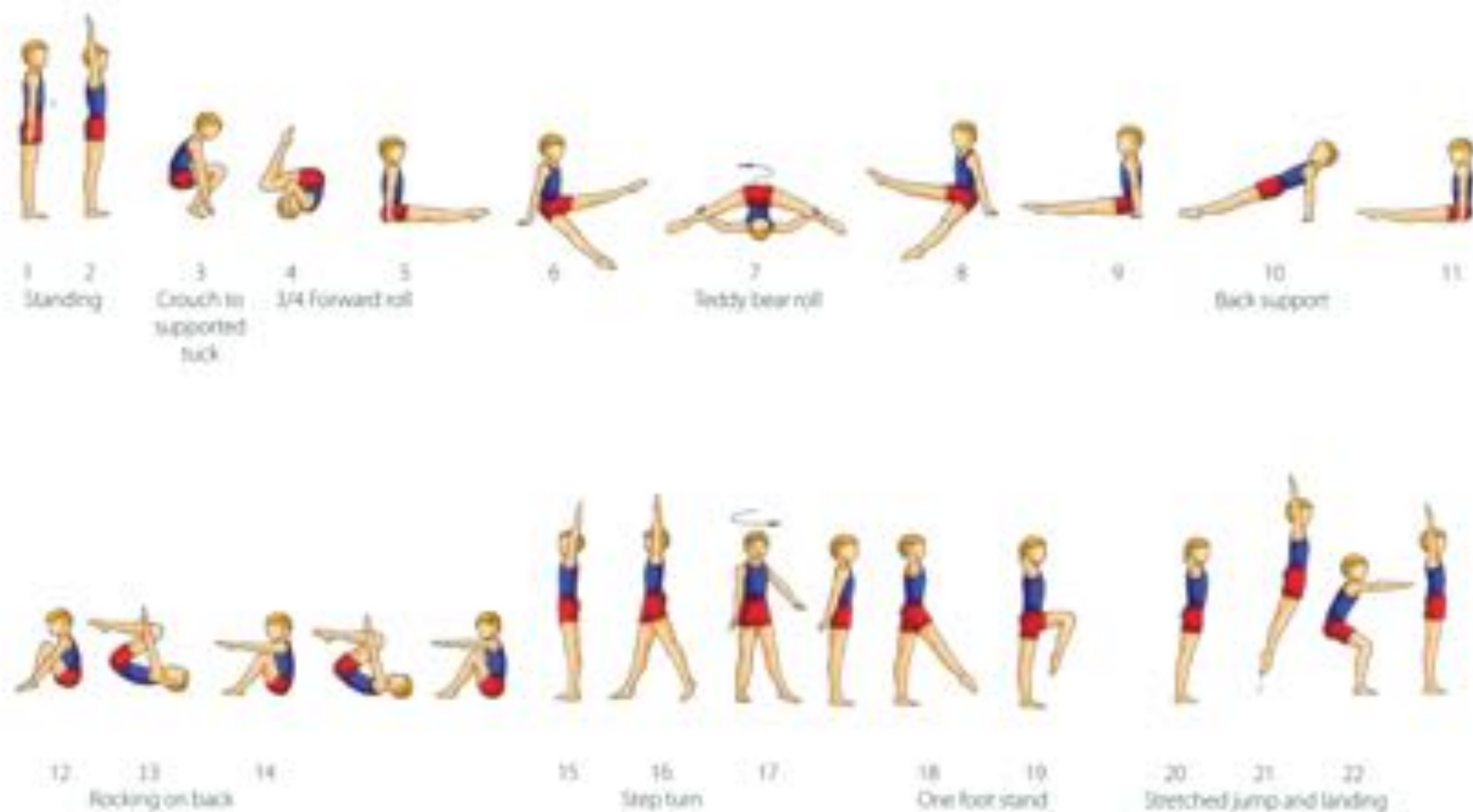
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Key Step  
Gymnastics



## Step 1 - Floor Exercise (Key Stage 1 - Years 1 & 2)

(Sequence performed on a strip of mats approximately 3 x 2 metres)





## Step 1 - How to improve the Floor Exercise

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
1,2	Standing	Shore good posture, abdomen tight, ribs cage flat, legs straight and together
3	Crouch to supported tuck	Knees legs together, weight equally on hands and feet, back rounded
4,5	34 Forward roll	Bring chin to chest and round spine, use hands to support the body, lift legs up by straightening the legs to begin the forward motion. Make floor contact with shoulders/top of the back, not the head/neck, roll progressively through the spine
6,7,8	Teddy bear roll	Legs straight and apart, reach forward, hands may grasp others, feet turned out and pointed, tuck low, round the floor, not sideways into one shoulder, then roll across back and onto the other shoulder and return to identical sitting position facing the opposite direction with straight back
9,10,11	Back support	Arms straight with apart, fingers facing forward towards feet, push legs up and tighten bottom, create upward diagonal line from feet to head, keep arms perpendicular to floor, square, straight legs together
12,13,14	Rocking on back	Tuck in tight, hands can be used to hold knees to chest when learning rolling skill, keep back rounded. Take arms forward and up when rolling to hand without putting them on the floor
15,16,17	Step turn	Keep body vertical, step back in air and bring arms down simultaneously. Maintain good posture
18,19	One foot stand	Transfer weight onto supporting leg before lifting the other leg up, keep weight over front of supporting foot, toes of lifted leg level with knee to that upper legs at foot horizontal and feet pointed, keep arms straight at shoulder height and parallel to floor, maintain upper body posture with head up, neck in line
20,21,22	Stretched jump and landing	swing arms forward and upwards overhead, push through feet as extend entire body in air, land on both feet to give with a bend to cushion landing, keep the chest held high and relax shoulders, hold the landing position still before standing up again

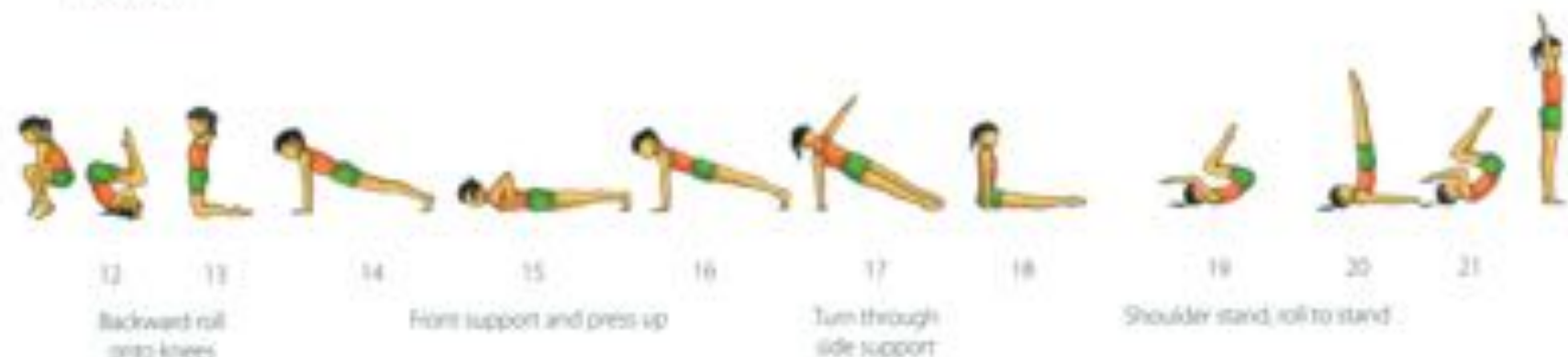
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Key Step  
Gymnastics



## Step 2 - Floor Exercise (Lower Key Stage 2 - Years 3 & 4)

(Sequence performed on a strip of mats approximately 6 x 1 metres)





## Step 2 - How to Improve the Floor Exercise

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
1,2,3	Starting position & step forward	Create attractive starting position by varying use of arms, head, legs etc. Show straight and extended body with arms straight and shoulder width apart above head when stepping forward. Stretch feet when off the floor.
4,5	Forward roll	Bend knees into supported tuck placing hands shoulder width apart. Keep back rounded, lift hips push with legs and put top of back, shoulders on mat between hands. Initially the roll can remain tucked throughout movement, however, work towards extending the legs in the middle of the roll (see DVD). Finish forward coming out of the roll to arrive in standing position with feet and knees together.
6,7,8	Three travelling steps	Even steps or skips. Interest can be added by varying use of arms. Dresser flow.
9	Arabesque	Trunk vertical, back straight. Extended back leg with pointed foot as high as possible before lowering the shoulders. Move arms down to sides at shoulder height to help control the balance (arm positions are optional). Hold for 2 seconds.
10,11	1/2 jump turn	Keep body vertical, swing arms up and slightly in the direction of the turn, land on balls of feet first and then heels, bend knees on landing.
12,13	Backward roll onto knees	Hands pointing towards the direction of the roll close to shoulders, take weight on hands not on head or neck. To do this push with arms. Chin on chest to round the back. Finish kneeling with straight back & arms to sides at shoulder height.
14,15,16	Front support & press up	Lower & raise body almost to floor by bending at elbows. Head still, muscles tight in abdomen and buttocks. Whole body should remain straight throughout the move.
17	Turn through side support	Rotate hand before turning to side. Hold side position with straight and tight body forming a downward diagonal from head to feet. Body forms T position.
18,19,20,21	Shoulder stand, roll to stand	From strong shift weight back through tucked position, extend legs and legs vertical with feet pointing to ceiling and hip angle straight. Press on arms to show 'candle' position and then rock forward to stand.
22,23,24,25,26	Pivot and cartwheel	Pivot and lift leg to perform surge and leg smooth straight cartwheel. Trying to be round, hand, hand, feet, feet. Finish facing sideways.

Further information on penalties for poor technique, style etc. can be found in Section 4 on Judging and in appendices H, L, J and K.

Key Step  
Gymnastics





## Step 3 - Floor Exercise (Upper Key Stage 2 - Years 5 & 6)

(Sequence performed on a rectangle of mats approximately 8 x 6 metres if possible) - PERFORM 6 SKILLS ONLY IN ANY ORDER



1. Round off  
2. Side scale towards 1 balance  
3. Backward roll straddle  
(include each of these elements in any order in your sequence)



OR



4.5. Full or 1/2 turn jump (choose one between these 2 elements)



OR



6. Two cartwheels consecutively or  
7. Handstand forward roll



OR



OR



8.9.10 Bridge or splits or 12 lever  
(choose one between these 3 elements)

## Step 3 - How to improve the Floor Exercise

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
	Start/End	You could start and end standing, kneeling, lying, etc. Select positions that are imaginative and that you think will appeal to the judge and lead easily into the first move.
	Content	Make sure you have included only the six required moves. Where there is a choice, select the activities you perform well and show your best strength or flexibility.
	Linking	The sequence should cover as much of the floor area as possible. Perform the moves exactly as shown. Include the moves in any order and link them together in interesting ways using travelling, spins and leaps. Perform activities using different speeds and move around in different directions.
1	Round off	The Round off is useful to start backward movements. Stretch arms forward and low going into the round off, turn shoulders and then feet and bring legs together as quickly as possible. Aim to show flight from hands and snap down of legs as confidence grows.
2	Side scale towards Y balance	Stand in straight body position. Keep standing leg straight and lift one leg to the side as high as possible, transferring weight over the supporting leg. Keep hips square and arms out to side. Keep both legs equally turned out. Hold for two seconds.
3	Backward roll straddle	Roll backwards pushing on floor with hands & straighten arms. Open legs from tucked position to straddle position half way through the roll. Finish in straddle stand.
4,5	Full or 1/2 turn jump	Swing arms down and back with slight bend of legs before takeoff, then swing arms forwards and upwards, avoid throwing shoulders backwards, keep body straight and maintain good posture. Fix your eyes on something still and try and get your eyes back to this object quickly when performing a full turn. Turn shoulders as feet leave the floor.
6,7	Two cartwheels consecutively or handstand roll	Perform large and long smooth cartwheel, finish on one leg and continue straight into second cartwheel. Show deep lunge between cartwheels to ensure fluidity of sequence. Keep body straight when inverted, no arching so that both cartwheels go along a straight line. For Handstand forward roll mount the body this off balance in a straight position before tucking to roll out. Keep arms straight and chin on chest.
8,9,10	Bridge or splits or 1/2 lever	Show still position for 2 seconds. Bridge should start and return to floor. Forward splits or side back splits may be performed. Ensure legs are in line with hips and knees are on top in side splits. When performing right or left leg splits ensure the heel of the front leg and knee of the back leg are on the mat. Legs in the half lever should be at least parallel to the floor.

Further information on penalties for poor technique, style etc. can be found in Section 4 on Judging and in appendices H, I, J and K.

Key Step  
Gymnastics

English  
Gymnastics  
Schools

## Step 1 - Vault (Key Stage 1 - Years 1 & 2)

Performer allowed 2 attempts at either (A) or (B) or one of each – (Option (B) provided for schools without a springboard). - Best score to count.

(A) Two or three step approach, take off springboard, straight jump to land with control

(B) Two or three step approach, squat onto bench. Walk along bench and with feet together at end of bench perform a straight jump off

(A)



(B)





# Step 1 - How to improve the Vault

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
1 & 2	Vault A Approach and hurdle step onto springboard	Step on one foot and push strongly off floor with the take-off foot. Bring feet together in front of body to land with slightly bent knees and feet level, slightly in front of vertical trunk. Keep landing on springboard light. Aim to land with arms behind trunk. In simple terms, step off one foot and land on springboard on two feet ready for the jump. Ensure two feet land in the area of the board which will give the greatest assistance to flight.
	Vault B Approach and hurdle step to squat onto bench	Controlled slow approach from two or three steps. Hurdle step feet together as above. Hands placed forward on bench and jump to squat on bench. Stand and walk towards end of bench keeping good posture and stretching feet.
3	Take Off	Rebound for jump from springboard must happen immediately. Punch (Hbour) with arm swing forward and upward. At same time legs straighten pushing through both feet.
4	Flight	Jump is up and forward making a tall stretched shape, arms and legs straight, body leaning forwards slightly and back straight. Head in neutral position, eyes fixed on point immediately in front. Keep chest up and torso straight ahead. Allow the arm swing to pull you up into the air. Show good tension throughout the body.
5	Landing	Land on both feet with hip and knee flexed but not more than 20 degrees at knee, keep chest up, lower arms forward and downward. Stick the landing keeping the heels down – no additional steps to gain control. Adjust arms to maintain balance.
6	Finish	Stand straight, step to the side and present to the judge.
		<b>Common Mistakes:</b> Leg push weak, body loose, arms not used quickly enough to create momentum, full body not stretched, jump not completed before landing, jump directed forward instead of up, weight on landing not absorbed, finish off balance and extra steps taken, take off springboard or floor is not immediate rebound, both feet are not level on take off. Back is arched in stretch jump.

Further information on penalties for poor technique, style etc. can be found in Section 4 on Judging and in appendices H, I, J and K.



## Step 2 - Vault (Lower Key Stage 2 - Years 3 & 4)

Performer allowed 2 attempts at either (A) or (B) or one of each – (Option (B) provided for schools without a springboard or box) - Best score to count.

(A) A few short running steps to take off springboard and jump to squat on box placed lengthways. (Height optional to suit performers) Stand, walk to end of apparatus and perform straight or tucked jump to land on floor mats.

(B) As above but without springboard and using a movement table lengthways instead of box. NB: Do not use a springboard to vault over a movement table.



## Step 2 - How to improve the Vault

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
1	Approach to vault	Start slowly and build up the speed, keep eyes fixed on target. On last running stride, hurdle step with two feet landing. When running arms should be bent and move in opposition to legs. Teach good running technique before including springboard and vault. Important that arms do a quick semicircle so that they are in position to swing forward and upwards on take off
2	Take off (1)	Legs are slightly bent, feet under the body, arms back and chest up, head in neutral position. Immediately push off (quick rebound) with the arms swinging forwards. Push through both feet equally
3	Flight onto apparatus	Avoid looking down, swing arms up and forward towards apparatus keeping legs together and lifting the hips. Land in a crouch position with arms straight. Avoid. Stand alongside vault and support upper arm if needed
4	Travel on apparatus	Stand and walk to end of bar or table, legs straight feet stretched, shoulders back, arms out to sides
5	Take off (2)	From two feet, swing arms forwards and upwards
6	Stretched or tucked shape in air	Direction should be up from the bar not down onto bar. Stretch or tuck shape, head in neutral position, eyes fixed on point immediately in front. Keep chest up and focus straight ahead. Allow the arm swing to pull you up into the air. Show good body tension throughout the flight
7,8	Landing	Land on both feet with hip and knee flexion but not more than 90 degrees at knee, keep chest up. Lower arms forward and downward. 'Stick' the landing keeping the feet down - no additional steps to gain control
		<b>Common Mistakes:</b> Hips not lifted sufficiently going onto the apparatus, arms bent on contact with vault, arms are not behind body and in position to swing forward at time of take off

Further information on penalties for poor technique, style etc. can be found in Section 4 on Judging and in appendices H, L, J and K.



## Step 3 - Vault (Upper Key Stage 2 - Years 5 & 6)

Performer allowed 2 attempts at either (A) or (B) or one of each - Best score to count. It is possible to complete Option A without a springboard and using a low movement table. However, the teacher must be satisfied that (i) the base of support provided by the table is sufficient to ensure stability and (ii), the top of the table provides a surface area large enough for a pupil to land comfortably in a crouch position.

(A) A few short running steps to take off floor and jump into a squat position on apparatus (height optional to suit performer) followed by an immediate take off into a straight jump to land with control on floor mats. (Mark out of 9:0)

(B) Through vault. (Mark out of 10)

(A)

1. Approach
2. Take off
3. Flight onto apparatus
- 4.5. Rebound and flight off
- 6.7. Landing



(B)



## Step 3 - How to improve the Vault

Numbers	Skill	Coaching Points
1	Approach	Start slowly and build up the speed, keep eyes fixed on target. On last running stride, hurdle step with feet landing. When running arms should be bent and move in opposition to legs. Teach good running technique before introducing springboard and vault. Important that arms do quick semicircle so that they are in position to swing forward and upwards on take-off
2	Take off	Legs are slightly bent, feet under the body, arms back and chest up, head in neutral position. Immediately push off and swing arms forward back returned. Push through both feet equally
3	Flight onto apparatus	Place hands shoulder width apart and straight on top of vault. Aim to stretch legs back to achieve a 'lay-out' position before bringing knees in quickly under body to squat on top or to clear vault for 'through vault'. Position should be rehearsed on floor. Short support jump to crouch. Assist: Upper arm support to prevent forward rotation
4 & 5	Rebound & Flight off	Push down and forwards with arms, feel feet stretched. Lift body and arms up/out of back and feel push away with hands from bar
6 & 7	Landing	Straighten legs before landing and aim to land well in line of the apparatus. Stick the landing - no additional steps to gain control
		<b>Common Mistakes:</b> Shoulders and weight move forward causing rotation & full arm push weak, rotation is weak, legs not stretched backwards on take off. Head looking down not forward

Further information on penalties for poor technique, style etc. can be found in Section 4 on Judging and in appendices H, L J and K.