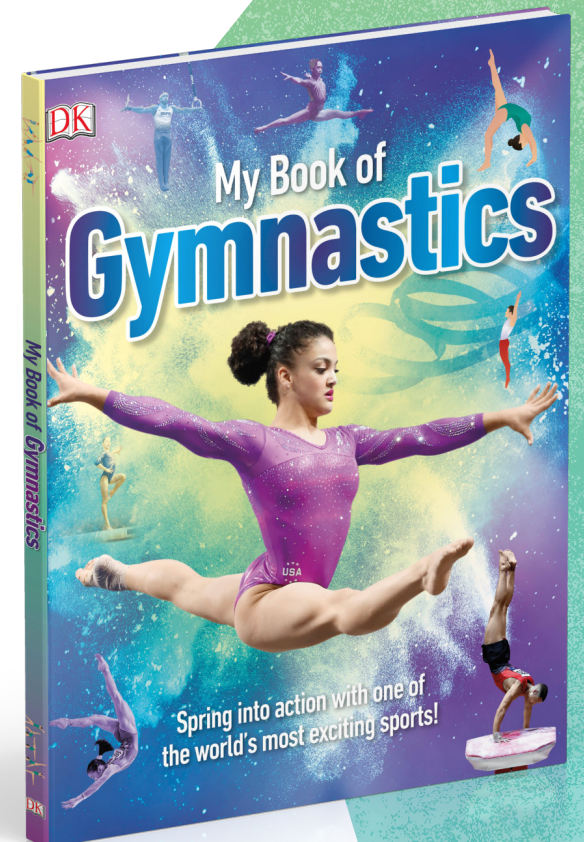




# My Book of Gymnastics

Junior Gymnastics  
Starter Pack





# What is gymnastics?

Gymnastics covers a variety of sports, or disciplines. The most popular are **artistic gymnastics**, **rhythmic gymnastics**, and **trampolining**. All disciplines involve great skill, strength, flexibility, balance, and dance movements.



## Artistic gymnastics

Artistic gymnasts perform breathtaking routines on pieces of apparatus, such as the pommel horse and balance beam. They dazzle the world at the Summer Olympics every four years.



## Aerobic gymnastics

This fast-paced sport developed out of the aerobics exercise craze. It requires speed and energy—and gives the heart and lungs a great workout.

## Trampolining

Trampolinists perform acrobatic movements in the air, including twists and turns, while bouncing up to 16 feet (5 m) high on a spring-bound bed. Along with artistic gymnastics and rhythmic gymnastics, trampolining is an Olympic sport.



## Acrobatic gymnastics

In this sport, two or more gymnasts showcase their strength, balancing, and acrobatic skills, especially when creating spectacular human pyramids.



## Did you know?

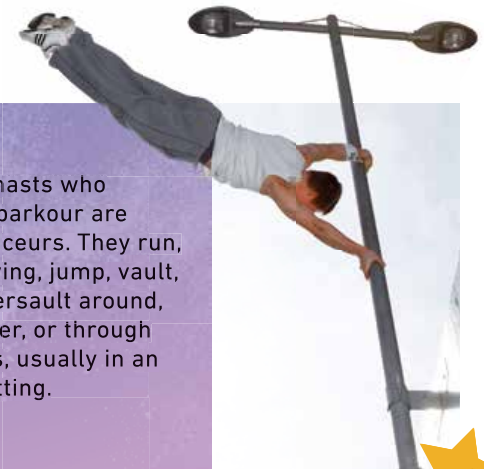
Many sports scientists believe that gymnastics is the most difficult sport to master.

## Rhythmic gymnastics

Highly skilled gymnasts perform a mixture of artistic gymnastics and ballet moves, while keeping a piece of apparatus, such as a ball or hoop, constantly moving.

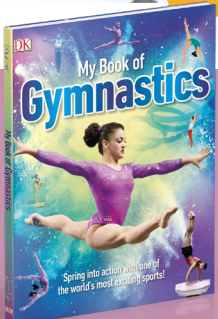
## Parkour

The gymnasts who perform parkour are called traceurs. They run, climb, swing, jump, vault, and somersault around, under, over, or through obstacles, usually in an urban setting.



For the curious

Content taken from *My Book of Gymnastics*





# Floor

The spectacle of the floor exercise makes it the showpiece event of artistic gymnastics. Routines include jaw-dropping tumbles and inventive skills within the confines of a square, springy floor. Women perform to music for up to 90 seconds, and men perform without music for up to 70 seconds.

## Women's floor

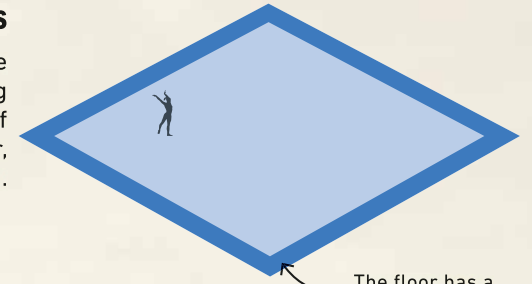
The women's floor routine must include dance and acrobatics, including three to four complex tumbles. Captain of the Chinese women's team, **Liu Tingting** shows grace and elegance in this leap.

## High-scoring skills

- 🏆 **Biles II** Double back somersault with three twists
- 🏆 **Shirai** Back somersault with four twists
- 🏆 **Podkopyayeva** Double front somersault with half twist

## Apparatus

The performance area of the square floor has sides measuring 39 ft (12 m). The floor is made of plywood covered in foam rubber, and may contain springs too.



The floor has a safety border of 3.3 ft (1 m).

## Did you know?

One hundred years ago, the floor area was sometimes made of woven coconut fibers!

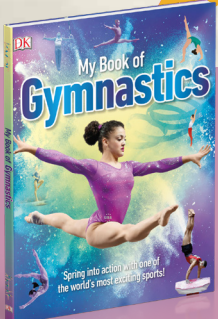


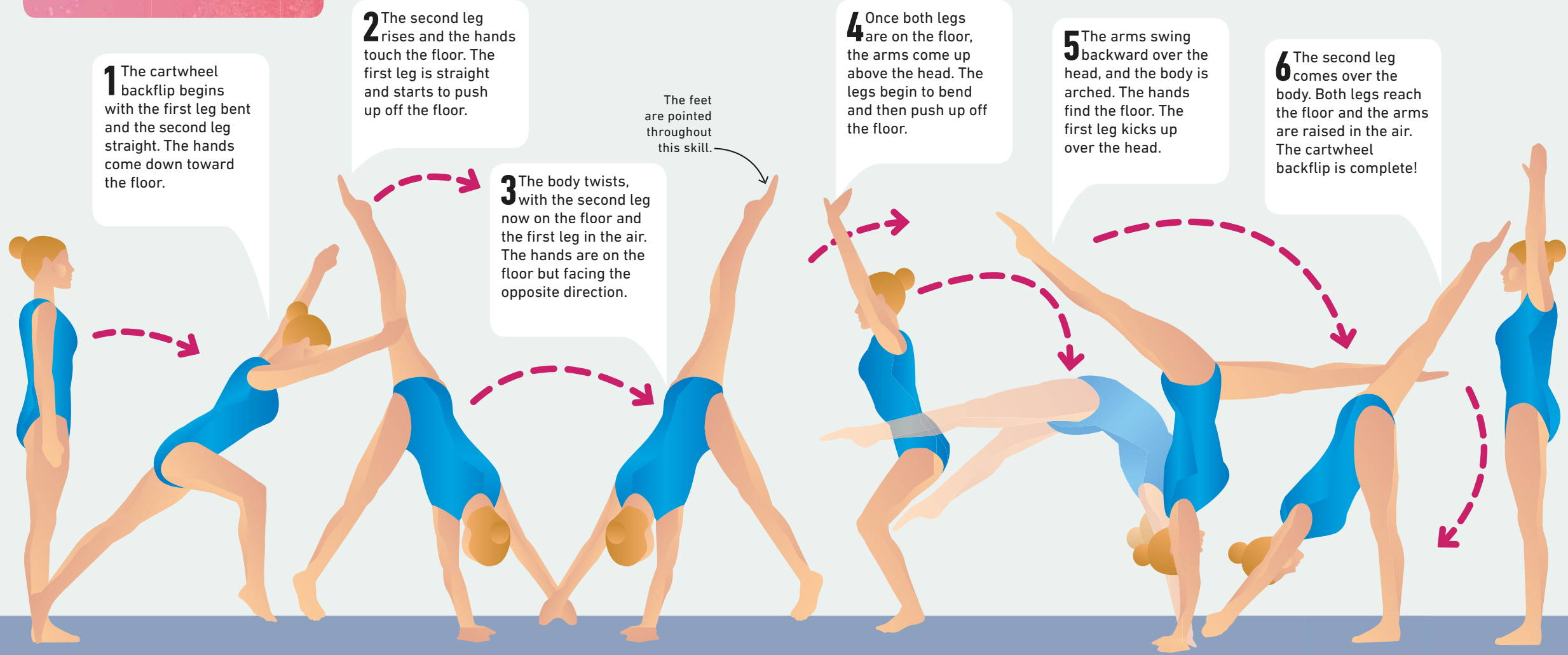
Pointed toes are required when holding a position or in flight.

## Men's floor

Japan's **Wataru Tanigawa** performs a V-sit skill on the floor. Gymnasts should use the whole area during their routines. Men, however, mostly use the long diagonal lengths of the floor to get the most speed and height in their tumbles.

Wrists sometimes need supports to strengthen them because a lot of force is placed on them.





**1** The cartwheel backflip begins with the first leg bent and the second leg straight. The hands come down toward the floor.

**2** The second leg rises and the hands touch the floor. The first leg is straight and starts to push up off the floor.

**3** The body twists, with the second leg now on the floor and the first leg in the air. The hands are on the floor but facing the opposite direction.

The feet are pointed throughout this skill.

**4** Once both legs are on the floor, the arms come up above the head. The legs begin to bend and then push up off the floor.

**5** The arms swing backward over the head, and the body is arched. The hands find the floor. The first leg kicks up over the head.

**6** The second leg comes over the body. Both legs reach the floor and the arms are raised in the air. The cartwheel backflip is complete!

### Double skill

The cartwheel backflip combines two commonly used moves in gymnastics: a cartwheel and a backflip. Top gymnasts can perform this effortlessly and with such speed that it is hard to tell where the cartwheel ends and the backflip begins!

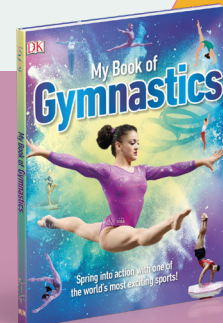
# Cartwheel backflip

In a floor routine, gymnasts can use a skill called a cartwheel backflip as part of one of their tumblers. This move begins facing one way and finishes facing the opposite direction. It requires leg and arm strength.



**MEDAL WINNER**

Japanese gymnast Mai Murakami won gold in the floor event at the 2017 World Championships in Montréal, Canada.





# Rhythmic gymnastics

In rhythmic gymnastics, competitors use dance and pieces of apparatus, such as a ribbon or hoop, to create dazzling routines. Rhythmic gymnastics events have been a part of the Summer Olympic Games since 1984.

## Ribbon routine

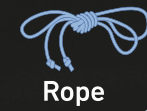
Kazakhstan's **Alina Adilkanova** performs her ribbon routine. During this event, the ribbon must always be moving.

### Did you know?

Clubs are the most difficult apparatus to perform with because gymnasts need to use both hands constantly to hold them.



Rhythmic gymnastics includes dance moves, especially from ballet. Gymnasts must be flexible and have excellent balance.



## Apparatus

The five types of apparatus used in rhythmic gymnastics are the rope, ribbon, ball, hoop, and clubs. The ceiling must be at least 26 ft (8 m) above the floor, so gymnasts can throw the apparatus as high as possible.

Ribbon

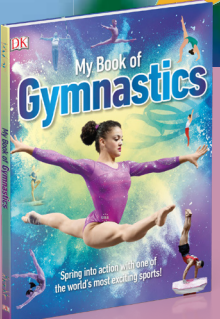
The performance area is 42.7 x 42.7 ft (13 x 13 m).

## Key facts

- For both men and women, but only women compete in the Olympics
- Each competition uses four out of the five pieces of apparatus
- The four pieces of apparatus used vary from competition to competition



For the curious



Content taken from *My Book of Gymnastics*