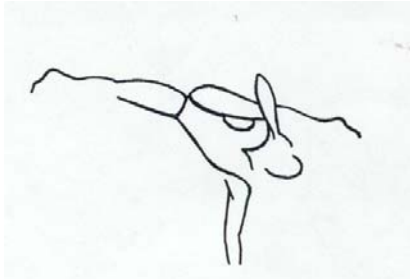


Gymnastics Ontario



AEROBIC GYMNASTICS

An Information Guide



AEROBIC GYMNASTICS BACKGROUND

Aerobic exercise programs have been available for many years, bringing health benefits to millions of people. They are offered at a low cost, need little or no equipment and are practiced in schools, community centers and fitness clubs worldwide.

Aerobics dates back to 1968. Aerobic Gymnastics, born in the United States in 1988 and Japan in the same year, is a unique combination of aerobic dance choreography and gymnastics elements. It creates an opportunity for children, adolescents and adults to participate and/or compete in a low risk sport while keeping the artistic quality and fun of aerobics.

Still in its maturing phase Aerobic Gymnastics has been practiced within the Federation of International Gymnasts (FIG) for demonstration purposes for many years. In 1994 at the Geneva Congress, seeing the potential of this growing sport, the General Assembly of FIG decided to adopt it as yet another discipline, to have complete recognition by the world's top sporting bodies, including the General Association of International Sports Federations and the International Olympic Committee. In conjunction with FIG the sport continues to grow and develop. The Aerobic Gymnastics World Championships have been held annually since 1995.

The Gymnastics Ontario Aerobic Gymnastics Committee wishes to promote Aerobic Gymnastics in Ontario and to play a leadership role in the progression of this popular sport. We invite you to embark on this new and expanding discipline of gymnastics and fitness and be part of this important phase in the history of Aerobic Gymnastics.

AEROBIC GYMNASTICS - WHAT IS IT?

Aerobic Gymnastics is a recreational and competitive activity that utilizes a unique combination of aerobic dance choreography and gymnastic elements. According to the definition in the FIG Code of Points, Aerobic Gymnastics is the ability to perform continuously with high intensity movement patterns to music which originates from traditional aerobics. The routine must demonstrate creativity with the perfect integration of all movements, music and expression.

The routine must use the seven basic steps of aerobics, variations of dance moves and at least four gymnastics elements to a maximum of 9 elements for a competitive routine. The routines can be very simple or complex depending on the level of the participants. There are 6 different categories in FIG Aerobic Gymnastics that if a participant wants to compete can select a category that suits them. The categories are as follows:

1. Individual Women, Individual Men
2. Mixed Pairs
3. Trio (any combination of males/females)
4. Group of 5 (any combination of males/females)
5. Aerobic Dance (8 – any combination)
6. Aerobic Step (8 – any combination)

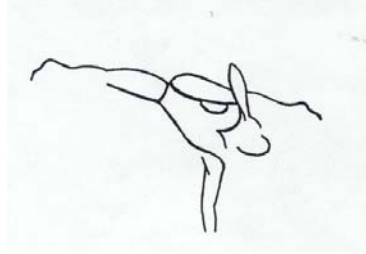
Aerobic Gymnastics is another exciting and dynamic discipline of the sport of gymnastics. Its popularity is world-wide with programs operating from recreational, school-based programs to Provincial, National, and International competitive programs. With today's focus on fitness and the growing need for people of all ages to be physically active, Aerobic Gymnastics offers a unique opportunity to satisfy both.

Aerobic Gymnastics is a creative combination of aerobic and dance choreography with fitness and gymnastic elements. It involves high-energy/cardio routines that maximize development of core strength, flexibility and power.

Aerobic Gymnastics appeals to a wide range of participants from young children, teenagers, adults, to dancers, ex-gymnasts/athletes and fitness buffs. It is an excellent activity of fun and fitness for gymnastics clubs seeking to provide new, innovative programming or to enhance existing programs.

Aerobic Dance is the newest competitive event category of FIG Aerobic Gymnastics that was introduced in 2011. FIG Aerobic Dance is designed for a group of 8 (any combination of males/females) that incorporates greater segments of dance choreography with aerobic content. Most often it is referred to as **Aerodance** in competitive programs that offer Aerobic Dance in the Individual, Pairs, Trios & Group (non FIG) categories. Many clubs or school programs refer to the recreational modified version as **Gym Dance** (small or large groups of 4 or more) in order to distinguish it from the competitive version.

The Aero-Gym Fitness Manual is an excellent resource that provides a variety of activities that introduce the basic components of Aerobic Gymnastics to teachers/coaches, clubs and schools seeking to provide new, innovative programming or to incorporate and enhance existing recreational/curriculum programs.



Aerobic Gymnastics

An Aerobic Gymnastics routine is a creative combination of “Basic Steps” and “Elements”. It interprets a piece of fast paced, upbeat music through movement.

The 7 Basic Steps

An Aerobic Gymnastics routine must include all of the **7 Basic Steps** listed below:

- ★ March
- ★ Jog
- ★ Skip
- ★ Lunge
- ★ Jack
- ★ Knee lift
- ★ Kick

March	toe-ball-heel locomotion (eg: v-step, grapevine, step touch, heel dig)
Jog	knee flexion (eg: circular, backward)
Skip	knee flexion to extension (eg: front, side, traveling)
Lunge	extension of one hip, flexion of the other with a knee flexion (eg: front, side, traveling)
Jack	abduction of the hips (eg: cross jack, sideways moving)
Knee lift	flexion of the hip to at least 90 degrees with knee flexion (eg: cross, front, side)
Kick	flexion or abduction of the hip to at least 90 degrees (eg: side, front, moving backwards)

All steps can be done as **high or low impact**, (bounce or no-bounce) with infinite options for arm movements. The movements should be on-beat and interpret the music. It is easiest to group basic step combinations into 8 count sequences.

A routine may also include **optional dance steps** like:

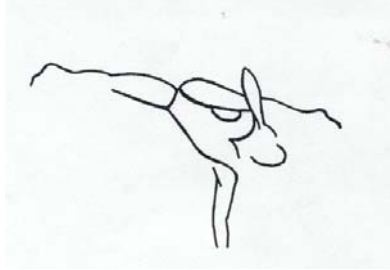
- Chasse
- Charleston
- Mambo
- Pendulum
- Pony etc.

Difficulty Elements

A proper Aerobic routine must also include “Difficulty Elements” which are the gymnastics-based skills. Please note that Aerobic Gymnastics also allows tumbling or acrobatic elements; however, it prohibits held inversions or any hyper-extension of the back (ie. bridges, ring leaps/jumps). For safety and to maintain the Aerobic style, the back should be in a “neutral spine” position at all times during the Elements and dance of the routine.

There are **four Aerobic Element Groups** and a routine must include at least one Element from each group. The Element Groups are:

- ★ **GROUP A (Dynamic Strength):** pushup, straddle pushups, triceps pushups, hinge pushups, leg circles
- ★ **GROUP B (Static Strength):** supports held for 2 seconds (V support, straddle support, L support, Planche)
- ★ **GROUP C (Jumps and Leaps):** Split Leap, tuck, straddle, pike, jump full turn
- ★ **GROUP D (Flexibility and Various):** vertical splits, frontal splits, pancake, full pirouette, illusions



Aerobic Gymnastics – Routine Composition

Aside from Elements linked with combinations of the 7 Basic Steps and dance, there are other composition requirements unique to Aerobic Gymnastics. Combined, they create the “Aerobic Gymnastics Style” of movement.

- ◆ Athletes are judged on **presentation**. They must smile naturally, make eye contact with the judges or audience, and look confident.
- ◆ Transitions should be smooth at all times-going from the floor to surface, from an Element to a basic step, etc. There should be **no obvious pauses** in the routine. Each beat of music should be accounted for.
- ◆ Athletes should make **full use of the floor space** – all corners and centre.
- ◆ Athletes should **travel in all directions** – forward, backward, sideways, diagonally and in a circle.
- ◆ A routine should have a balance of **floor, surface and airborne content**.
- ◆ As a group, athletes should make a **variety of formations**. For example, the whole group is arranged in a line, v-shape, circle or square.
- ◆ Arm and leg movements are strong and with a definite shape. (**sharp and crisp, not graceful**). Hand positions include fist, open fan, or closed razor.
- ◆ **Correct posture** – neutral alignment without hyperextension of joints. Alignment of leg (knee over top of foot) with aerobic steps.
- ◆ Routines should include **interactions** (touching and occasional eye contact) between group members and project a “team effort”. Routines may also include lifts without inversions or propelling.
- ◆ Athletes performing in a group should **synchronize** their movements and timing.
- ◆ **No prohibited moves** – bridge, cartwheel, rolls, walk-overs, flips, karate kicks, etc.

For further information on Aerobic Gymnastics or Workshops and Resource Information contact:

www.gymnasticsontario.ca

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