

GYMNASTICS LEVELS GUIDE

Here is an overview of the different women's gymnastics levels in the **USA Gymnastics** Program. The main gymnastics levels, or program, is the Junior Olympic (abbreviated JO) Program levels. There is another program run by USA gymnastics, the Xcel Program, with its own set of levels. These are two separate programs with two sets of levels. If you complete all JO levels, you move on to the Elite program. The Elite level is basically gymnastics' version of going pro.

GYMNASTICS LEVELS 1-3:

USA Gymnastics states that they created levels 1-3 to prepare gymnasts for competition. Most gymnasts don't compete gymnastics levels 1-3, however the Massachusetts USAG Committee has adopted to compete these levels through their State Cup competitive program. Many clubs have gymnasts in recreational classes while they learn these skills. These classes are designed for girls between the ages 5-10 years old and emphasizing teaching gymnastics elements and routines based on USA Gymnastic compulsory level 2&3 of the J.O. Program with the goal that some will make the Competitive Team for future competitions

GYMNASTICS LEVEL 4:

Level 4 is the first required competitive level. So, to advance to level 5 from level 4 the gymnast must meet minimum standards and earn a minimum "mobility score". Level 4 is a compulsory level. This means that to compete this level, the gymnast must learn a specific routine for each event. At level 4 meets a gymnast is judged based on how well she does the skill, in addition to how well she performs the routine exactly how it is supposed to be done.

GYMNASTICS LEVEL 5:

Level 5 is also a compulsory level. Some gymnastics clubs choose not to stress compulsory gymnastics, and in general don't compete in compulsory meets. Instead some clubs might choose to compete using the Xcel program. These are optional rules that can be used while the gymnast is learning levels 4-6 skills. However, before gymnasts compete in level 6, they must compete in at least one meet to pass levels 5 and 6

GYMNASTICS LEVEL 6:

Level 6 is the entry level for optional competition. Optional levels are levels where each gymnast has a different routine, so they aren't judged on the specifics of the routine. They are instead judged based on the skills they perform and the overall level and performance of the routine. Optional levels have routine requirements for each event, so when the coach or choreographer is choreographing the routine, they will need to include these requirements or the gymnast will earn deductions. The emphasis in level 6 is on execution of basic optional skills.

GYMNASTICS LEVEL 7:

Level 7 is a mix of both compulsory and optional. In Level 7, it is a mix of compulsory and optional because the requirements are more specific but each gymnast still has a unique routine. The requirements are more specific in that for example, instead of on floor saying that one of the tumbling passes needs a salto element, in level 7 the rules state that the gymnast must perform a back layout in one of her passes.

GYMNASTICS LEVELS 8-10:

Gymnastics levels 8-10 are optional levels. Each gymnast has a unique routine on each event, and she chooses which skills to use to fulfill the requirements. The requirements for Level 9 get more complex. Level 10 is the last level in the JO program. Once a gymnast can perform all the skills required at level 10 she may choose to try out for the Elite program. The Elite program is

similar to going "Pro" in other sports, because once in this program a gymnast can compete in Olympic Trials or other professional events. I hope the gymnastics levels make more sense now!



The Xcel Program is a USA Gymnastics sanctioned program designed to offer a broad-based, competitive alternative to the traditional USA Gymnastics Junior Olympic competitive programs. The purpose of the Xcel Program is to present recreational gymnasts the opportunity to participate in competition and/or provide Junior Olympic competitive gymnasts the opportunity to continue competition without the intense time commitment.

The interest in this program has grown throughout the country as well as locally in gyms throughout Massachusetts. As our gymnastics program here at McKeons has expanded in the last several years, we have re-organized our classes to reflect the needs of our students as they progress. We feel that offering the Xcel Program option for our students will help them to continue developing and improving their skills.

There are five levels in the USAG Xcel Program; Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Diamond. The Xcel Program at the McKeon's is not meant to be a path to the Junior Olympic program, it is rather an entity of its' own. However, as this program expands, we may include those gymnasts who have competed in the Junior Olympic program at the compulsory level and would like to experience a basic optional program during their "off" season while they train skills to move up in the Junior Olympic program if they wish. Xcel gymnasts will have the opportunity to work their way up the levels within the Xcel program. The criteria to become a part of this program will be by recommendation and evaluation of the head Xcel coach

XCEL PROGRAM DIVISIONS:

Bronze: The minimum age requirement for the Bronze division is 5 years old. (This means the gymnast must be 5 before she competes in her first meet.) The Bronze division is similar in skill requirements to the JO Program's levels 1-2.

Silver: The minimum age requirement for the Silver division is 6 years old. (This means the gymnast must be 6 before she competes in her first meet.) The silver division is similar in skill requirements to the JO Program's level 3.

Gold: The minimum age requirement for the Gold division is 7 years old. (This means the gymnast must be 6 before she competes in her first meet.) The silver division is similar in skill requirements to the JO Program's level 4. The gymnast must score a 31 AA in Gold before advancing to the Platinum level or an 8.0 on an individual event to move forward as an Individual Event Specialist (IES).

Platinum: The minimum age requirement for the Platinum division is 8 years old. (This means the gymnast must be 6 before she competes in her first meet.) The platinum division is similar in skill requirements to the JO program's level 4-5. The gymnast must score a 31 AA in Platinum before advancing to the Diamond level or an 8.0 on an individual event to move forward as an Individual Event Specialist (IES).

Diamond: The minimum age requirement for the Diamond division is 9 years old. (This means the gymnast must be 6 before she competes in her first meet.) The diamond division is similar in skill requirements to the JO program's levels 6-7.