

Flexibility training

Key recommendations



The proportion of training spent on flexibility should be in line with the level of gymnast and discipline requirement.



A flexibility programme should account for individual abilities and anatomical differences, be progressive, and achievable. Any flexibility training should not exacerbate any injuries. The gymnast must have the ability to stop at any point.



Flexibility is likely to decrease during growth spurts. Emphasis should be on the maintenance rather than the improvement of flexibility.



Flexibility training should take place in an open environment, where adults are present including one appropriately qualified coach.



The gymnast's joints and muscles should be thoroughly warmed-up before participating in flexibility training.



There are a variety of different methods that can be used during flexibility training. These can be gymnast led or coach/peer assisted. Coaches should only apply the techniques which they have formally learnt through education courses.

Wherever possible, a hands-off approach is recommended. Peer assisted flexibility training should be guided and or supervised by an appropriately qualified coach.



Facilitation of flexibility training must be done with an awareness of proximity to the gymnast (i.e., positioning and handling). The gymnast should not feel vulnerable or have their dignity compromised.



An open and honest dialogue (e.g., pain threshold) should be encouraged during flexibility training.



Clubs should endeavour to educate gymnasts and parents on the importance of flexibility training.

Further details can be found in the British Gymnastics Flexibility Training position statement