

Being a 'good' gymnast

Expectations

A 'good' gymnast will display the following qualities:



1. **Be respectful to coaches.** Coaches will usually have spent a long time learning how to coach, either as a gymnast or on courses or both. They have to do additional training every year to learn new techniques and to keep up-to-date. They are in the gym because want to be. They are trying to impart all of their knowledge in order to help you, the gymnast, improve and achieve your aims.

2. **Be prepared to work hard.** Time in the gym is limited and time on an apparatus is even more limited. It can take up to 1,500 repetitions to learn the elements of a high level skill and to actually do that completed skill on an apparatus in a routine at a major competition. If 10 repetitions are done in a training session, and there are three sessions on that apparatus each week, it could take some 50 weeks before that skill can be competed in front of the judges.



3. **Be honest.** Telling lies (fibs) undermines the trust between a coach and a gymnast. Mostly the only person who is hurt when lies are told is the person who actually tells the lies. A gymnast who tells lies will not be trusted or respected by *anyone*, least of all by the coach. This could lead to the coach ignoring the gymnast because they can't be bothered talking to someone who lies.

4. **Be focused and motivated.** Entry through the door of the gym when coming to training should be like shutting out the outside world. Coming through the door means that the gymnast is ready to train and put in a full effort. All the worries and concerns generated at home, school and socially must be forgotten until training is complete. Listening to the coach, thinking about what is required and then trying to fix what went wrong the next time the apparatus is touched is what must be done.



5. **Remember the Aim.** Gymnasts must keep their mind on what they are doing and why they are in the gym. Time in the gym is not for socializing. It is the same as going to school, it is for learning gymnastics. Coaches can't teach anything, they can only help gymnasts to learn.

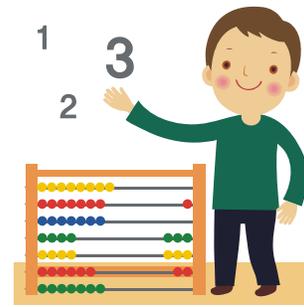
Cheating Yourself



Cheating is not all about 'someone' doing the wrong thing at competitions.

Cheating occurs in every gym, every day. Cheating is done by gymnasts at training.

Cheating while training in gymnastics is relatively easy. Coaches will normally have a set series of exercises for gymnasts to do or they will tell the gymnast what series of exercises to do when they are warming up, stretching, warming down, or doing strength. Normally, senior gymnasts will be expected to be able to do his or her stretching or strength mostly unsupervised. However, in a large number of cases they will not do the exercises properly, they will reduce the number or they will not do an exercise at all. *This is cheating.*



Cheating also occurs when they are using an apparatus. Not everyone can be on the apparatus at the one time, so there will be gymnasts waiting for their go. Because they are senior gymnasts and the skills are often difficult and complex, they would not normally have a circuit of skills to complete while they wait for their next turn on the apparatus. They will sit and talk, not stretching as they we have been told nor spending the time thinking about what changes they have been told to make in their next go. *This is cheating.*

Both instances imply that the senior gymnast is *trusted* and is *honest* enough to be able to complete the exercises by themselves. They are cheating themselves and their team mates by not doing what they have been told and thereby reduce the effect of their training.

Coaches find it very hard to deal with the constant dishonesty and blatant cheating on gym assignments from some of their integrity thin athletes. Coaches end up frustrated and get angry when senior gymnasts constantly cheat on their assignments.

Conclusion

There are a few lines that should *never* be crossed by an athlete. Being dishonest (which include deception and lying) is right at the top of the list with being disrespectful and lazy. The 'Cheater' usually displays all three of these undesirable traits and rarely achieves his or her aims.