

ACROBATIC CONDITIONING



**Master Crazy Acrobatic Moves while
Developing Super Control and Agility
in Your Body and Mind**

by Logan Christopher

DISCLAIMER

The exercises and advice contained within this report is for educational and entertainment purposes only. Please consult professional help if you want to practice the moves described herein. The exercises described may be too strenuous or dangerous for some people, and the reader should consult with a physician before engaging in any of them.

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"Why Can't I Do That?"

I think we're a lot alike. If you've ever dreamed of being able to do crazy acrobatic moves with ease than this could be the most important report you read.

Let me tell you a bit about my story.

No kid grows up without fantasies of superheroes. And I wasn't any different.

But within the realm of reality, cast your mind to real people with genuine super powers of strength and agility. People like martial artists, gymnasts, circus performers, strongmen and more. People that can do things that rival the abilities of the comic book superheroes.

One seed was planted in my mind by watching the video Shaolin: Wheel of Life. The first time I watched it, I sat in awe at the jaw-dropping feats of acrobatics. If you haven't seen this video do yourself a favor and get it now. Its really cheap on Amazon. You can find a link at www.lostartofhandbalancing.com/resources.html.

But the second time around something was different. In my mind the monks were not automatically elevated to superhero status. They were human beings just like you and me. I saw what they did as possibilities anyone could reach.

"I wish I could do that, but its just impossible."

Is that the thought running through your head? It's not true, unless you want it to be. Replace that false belief with this true one. One of my favorite quotes ever from Dr. Maxwell Maltz, author of Psycho-Cybernetics.

"Once impossible, now easy."

The idea here is you take something you can't do and start working toward it. At some point you'll not only reach it but surpass it to the point where you can do it in your sleep. The impossible becomes easy.

These Shaolin monks make what they do look easy. This of course is brought on by years and years of practice. However, I KNOW you don't need to dedicate your life or spend years to start reaping the rewards and benefits that comes with acrobatic training.

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But you won't achieve one ounce of acrobatic skill or anything else without setting the goal then actually taking action toward it.

For a long time now I have wanted to not only master acrobatic moves myself, but to help others do the same.

I don't think its right that gymnasts, circus performers and the like should have a monopoly on these moves. They should be available to anyone who wants them and is willing to put in the work.

Many of you who have been on my site for a while may know that I use to attend a Gymnastics class.

But I didn't start off there. The class that I ended up attending was technically for former gymnasts. Basically you needed to have some level of skill before you went in there. I don't know if this is true of every place but it was the case here.

So I practice my basic skills, like rolls, handstand, cartwheels, roundoffs, etc. at the park until I felt confident enough in my abilities to show up and not look like a complete jackass at what I was doing.

The truth is anyone can learn. Many people think they cannot get into acrobatics when they can. You can start off just like I did and I'll show you how.

It is up to you and now is the time to do it!

All About Control

What was stopping me from fulfilling my dreams? I was holding myself back. There is no other reason. If you want to do this stuff you have to train for it. But it is within the grasp of anyone willing to do just that.

It is really about control. That is a good thing in the sense I am talking about. You only have limited control over all outside factors. The only thing you do possess completely is you mind and your body.

I think you'll agree that these are amazing things to possess and have control over.

The ideal is anything I ask the body to do, it would be willing.

I realized long ago all my goals are an effort to reach perfection. Reaching it is one thing that will never happen, but striving for it is the

real reason to have it as a goal.

The Fear

Think about it. What does it take to do a backflip?

A life-long dream of mine was to be able to pull off a standing backflip anywhere, anytime. When I began I couldn't have been further from that goal. I couldn't even do a backflip on a trampoline much less the ground. An impossibility for me.

My mind wouldn't let me. I would pause in fear and do a weird twisting motion if I flipped at all. In fact, I can still recall some of my friends laughing at my inability to do it on the trampoline.

What was stopping me? Mental blocks and an inability to have my body do exactly as I wanted it to. Lack of control. The fear of hurting myself.

It certainly wasn't for lack of strength. The body is capable of this feat from the beginning most of the time. In reality it doesn't take very much jumping power at all to get enough height for any flip. Sure extra height helps, giving you more time to do the flip, but you don't need to have a basketball player's vertical to do one.

In fact, it is this fear that holds you back the most. It's certainly a good thing to have in one sense. You don't want to recklessly destroy yourself. You need self-preservation.

But this fear is what holds you back. If you could let go, relax and do as you wanted you would easily pull off this kind of feat.

The problem is its not so easy to let go of the fear. Only through basic remedial skills and progressive training was I finally able to do this feat. I wouldn't say I have gotten to the realm of 'easy' yet but it is closer to that than 'impossible'.

Now in most cases it'll take time and effort to learn that control. Some people more than others.

To remove the fear in yourself you need to do a couple things.

Most importantly the safer you feel the more you can let go. Practice in the best environment and use padding where you need it. Get a spotter to make sure you complete the move.

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If you feel like you are going to hurt yourself than the fear will build up to the point where you become immobilized by it.

Although I can do the backflip on level ground sometimes my mind will play tricks on me, making me think I'll not be able to pull it off. Thinking you won't be able to do it will stop you from doing it. Other times all I have to do is just do the move. Doing it successfully goes a long way in destroying any fear.

Secondly work progressively toward your goal. You've got to take away the fear piece by piece. In the same way you progressively take away the spotter, padding, extra height, etc.

Only by going step by step can you reach the impossible.

Master Yourself First

If you take a good acrobat he can pull off a move having never done it before. Their body responds exactly to what they want to do. Can you say the same thing for yourself? If not, wouldn't you like to?

Now all my training in one way or another has been toward this end. Control.

To a good degree I believe you have to master yourself before trying to master anything else. This is the beauty of the simplicity in bodyweight movements in their many guises. Its nothing but YOU.

There are many other ways to train, with a wide variety of tools, and I do not aim to knock any of them. But you must have some level of expertise with your body before adding these things in.

I don't care if you can bench press 500 pounds or squat a 1000, if you can't do a regular somersault on the floor, you don't know how to move! I'm not saying that you have to master complex flips and springs, but you've got to have the basics down.

Different people have different goals. The higher level acrobatic feats aren't for everyone, nor are the power lifts.

Still the handspring is within the ability of just about everyone.

It is up to you to decide how you spend your time. No matter what though, you need to have proficiency in basics. But from there you are

allowed to take it in any direction you want.

If you want complete control of your body and mind, and I believe this kind of training is the best to help you gain that control, than read on.

Who Can Train Like This

The short answer is just about everyone. There really is nothing that can stop you if you want to go after it. I'll get into some of the specifics a little later on but understand you are about the only one who would be stopping you.

Too old? Perhaps you'll need to keep a little closer eye on how your body feels and with your experience you'll know not to go all out. Something young people like myself seem to never learn.

The truth is the basics are good for you. It should build up a more resilient body, more strength and flexibility. If you do it right you won't be suffering injury but making your body more injury proof.

The important thing for everyone but especially older trainees is to lessen the impact forces. You can do this in your training environment but also but making sure you do moves correctly to distribute the load across the body and not force it upon a single joint.

Even so, many tumbling moves don't even involve defying gravity or pushing limits. If you want you can certainly keep some part of your body in contact with the ground at all times. There are many skills you can work on either way.

Too young? I think not. Kids take to this kind of exercise with ease. In fact its not even exercise. It is fun and play. Many different games can be played using various tumbling moves.

If you have kids the possibilities are limitless in what you can do with them, getting exercise for yourself, having a good time and bonding.

Too big? This is very similar to hand balancing which I've talked about before. You have large men like Bert Assirati and Doug Hepburn doing amazing hand balancing stunts. Just the same you can do acrobatics.

I'm not going to say its just as easy as it is for the smaller guy because its not. Most gymnasts are small for a reason after all. But being smaller is advantageous, not a necessity.

To sum it up, I've seen a thirty-something year old, 200 pound woman do front flips. What's your excuse?

How To Train These Abilities

I'd like to introduce to you a brand new way of training. I call it Acrobatic Conditioning.

The definition of acrobat is someone who engages in feats of balance and tumbling. The idea of acrobatic conditioning is to build strength, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility and of course control by the specific training in these feats.

Almost anyone, whether beginning or advanced, can get the benefits of this type of training.

What is Acrobat Conditioning?

The basis of this training is to use the various tumbling skills you have obtained and string them together. The ultimate goal is to seamlessly go from one move to the next without rest or pause.

Improvement can be had through three methods.

First increase the difficulty of the move. This doesn't have to be such a big jump as going from a backward roll to a back flip. There are small incremental steps you can take and nearly endless variation.

Secondly, make the transition seamless and flow through the drills. It is one thing to pull a single skill off well, but quite another to move in and out of each different skill without pause, making it look choreographed when it is not.

And the final method is adding speed. This is called conditioning for a reason. Anyone who has a little experience with tumbling will know that some moves can leave you huffing and puffing just like you had done a full on sprint. To move from skill to skill non stop is going to take excellent conditioning on top of the muscular skill and endurance.

Why train acrobatics this way?

It's freeing to train in this manner.

In the past I have attended a Gymnastics class. If you can afford it and have one nearby I would highly recommend that you join. You can't beat the environment as far as safety. And most places will have competent if not excellent coaching.

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But I had a few problems with it. One, doing the tumbling on that floor is unnatural. It helps and gives you more spring which is fine, but my end goal was always to do these moves outside without additional help.

Now if you are a competitive gymnast and are pushing the levels of what you can do on that floor than go for it. I just didn't want to have to rely on a crutch to do any move. If it couldn't be done without a spring floor I wanted no part in it.

Primarily I wanted to prove it can be done on your own. Sure I built up a good foundation taking gymnastics and I am glad I did. I don't know how long it would have taken to master back tumbling at all doing it without a spotter or the right facilities. In fact, I would recommend not doing back tumbling and other difficult movements without professional help.

If you want to get good fast it's hard to beat. But remember I didn't start there.

Again I wanted to be on my own and do my own thing. You CAN get better at these skills on your own. Athleticism in my mind is about being able to move. Acrobatics is just about the highest form of that.

I believe all people should have the basics down regardless of what else they do. But for other athletes, especially martial artists I think further acrobatic training could directly help you in your sport.

Why should you train acrobatics? Well the truth is you are likely already doing some.

Balancing is one aspect. Whether on your head or hands. But rolling and tumbling can seamlessly be added to the mix.

Roll into and handstand and roll out. Backwards extension roll into a handstand. Handstand Snap-Down Back Handspring.

Back bends and bridging is another. Can you fall into a gymnastic bridge? And how about kicking out of it? Can you imagine doing that with just one hand? It can be done.

What about the floor kip? From lying on your back can you spring up to you feet instantly? That's another move I've always wanted to do and

now can. How about you?

Adding in rolls, springs, flips in just another piece.

The thing you have to ask yourself is do you want to do this? If yes, then you need to start training for it. And I'll be glad to help you.

For whatever reason you train, Acrobatic Conditioning will make you better. It will give you more control, and a tighter mind-muscle connection.

If you want muscle control this is it!

Plus its fun and will give you skills you can't obtain by any other means. For the personal challenge or to impress others its hard to beat acrobatics.

Is it safe?

Is any form of training? You always hear about people getting injured doing this or that. Is tumbling any different? No.

There is potential for injury. No doubt about that. However I would add that it is correlated with how stupid you are in your actions.

Push the limits too hard and too fast and eventually you will suffer for it. Just like weightlifting or anything else.

Flips and other aerial moves are more high-risk than anything that keeps you on the ground. Obviously gravity will bring you down and if you don't land right it can be a bad thing.

Now hopefully I haven't scared you off permanently. The thing is it CAN be safe. In order to keep it safe you have to progress slowly.

Here I truly think slow and steady wins the race. The more in tune you become with yourself the more you will know what you are capable of, what you are ready to do and what you are not.

Can you do simple moves yourself without problem? Absolutely.

Should you go after the back flip on your own? No.

Could it be done safely and effectively? Probably.

Are people going to do it regardless? Yep.

That all being said here's my biggest advice for avoiding injury.

ACROBATIC CONDITIONING

1. Train in a safe environment.
2. Push your limits little by little.
3. When and where necessary absolutely have a spotter or other professional help.

Where to practice

This is going to take room. The more the better. You will be unable to do Acrobatic Conditioning cooped up in a small room.

Optimally is a large gym with matted or padded floors. Many gyms should have facilities like this. Plus any martial arts studio or arena would work wonderfully.

If you are unable to locate and use one of those facilities the next best option is the great outdoors. Even if you live in a major city there should be open parks for which you can practice. Grass, while not as soft as a padded floor, is certainly better than concrete. Besides the fresh air you'll have plenty of room to practice as you please.

One caveat is that grass tends to be fairly hard. A bad landing can place lots of stress on your body. It is still very much doable but be aware of this fact.

If you have the luxury of a beach then you are in luck. Although sand has a tendency to get everywhere including in your mouth at times, you hard pressed to injure yourself here. One major thing to pay attention to is that sand gives, which will lessen any spring you get. As long as you recognize this fact it shouldn't be a problem. In fact, it should help you out when you move of to a stiffer surface.

Of course, even without the beach you can find sand pits at many parks and playgrounds as well, in volleyball courts and what not.

I'd imagine snow would work too. Can't test this one out myself though I imagine it'd be similar to sand in many respects. Except for the freezing cold of course.

Different training areas have different advantages and disadvantages. In my opinion, it is good to mix up where you train for this reason.

How to practice

Once you have the area you are ready to begin.

Combine all movements together. Rolls, somersaults, back-bending,

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cartwheels, balancing, hand springs, flips, going forwards, twisting, backwards and to the sides. In addition you can add in other natural movements like running, animal crawls, jumping of all sorts, shadowboxing or martial arts moves. Anything you like.

Set a timer and go at it. In my experiments there are a couple ways to do this.

There are many times when you want to work specifically on a difficult skill. Trying to learn and master a specific move while tired and out of breath is not going to work. Oftentimes when I arrive at the park or beach I will spend 10 minutes or so 'practicing' these skills before moving on to the conditioning periods. This gives you the ability to concentrate and improve on those skills and abilities you want.

Acrobatic CONDITIONING

The following methods are great for actually building your conditioning. Once you have a good base of skills to work from, even if that is a beginner's base, these are my main methods to get the most out of a short amount of time.

That is not to say the following won't actually make you more skilled. Far from it. It's just the super difficult or risky skills, whatever that is for you, you may want to leave out for now.

First, go for a long period of time. You might be surprised just how difficult this is. Since almost all of these movements engage the full body and are often times maximally explosive you will get out of breath very quickly. Add in the fact that most moves will require holding breath to keep tight at certain points and you have a mix that is devastating.

If you really wanted to last 10 minutes you will have to learn how to relax your body as much as possible at all times. Only using as much tension to do what you are going for. Even as little as one or two minutes can leave you gassed.

Even so you are likely to do a few more difficult moves than back off into easier tricks to catch your breath a bit and cycling like this through the entire time.

The second method of training is to go between bursts of activity and rest. You can play with the timing of these as you see fit. One I have enjoyed doing is just 30 seconds on, 30 seconds off. Go for 10 to 20

rounds.

Although spontaneity is good with this method you can try to plan ahead your next string of moves. If you want to, try to perfect the same string of moves. Or make it more complex as you go.

Alternatively, in your rest period just think of some moves you haven't done in the last couple sets and be sure to include them in your next one.

A third and definitely great method of training is to combine it with more traditional forms of exercise. Though to many this would be anything but traditional. Bodyweight exercises like pushups, squats, and sit-ups among many others are great.

I'm also a big fan of kettlebells. Any explosive move like swing, snatch, or clean. Complexes like clean-squat-press would work too. But my favorite has to be kettlebell juggling. It goes along well with the flowing of the tumbling and its fun. If your outside you're free to drop it without worry.

The ways you can mix these are almost limitless. A minute of this, a minute of that, rest for a minute.

Thirty seconds of acrobatic conditioning, followed by 25 pushups. Another thirty seconds followed by 50 squats. Repeat this cycle 5 or 10 times resting between each round.

Use your creativity and you're sure to come up with tons of ideas.

Breathing

A word or two on breathing. As much as possible you want to try breathing naturally when you do the moves. Anytime your chest collapses down would be breathing out. Anytime it opens up and expands you breathe in. This is natural breathing.

When you are doing other moves you will have to use your breath to help you pressurize to keep tight. Whether it is right before an explosion of energy or to keep you stabilized when doing a walkover breathing is an art form in and of itself. It is something to specifically focus on and work with.

In the past I've been able to pull off moves that I couldn't otherwise by paying attention to and manipulating the way I breathe.

Flexibility

Many moves will take flexibility especially in the back, legs and shoulders. Various moves like back bends, aerials and walkovers are impossible without good flexibility.

Consistent work on the moves themselves will build it. Alternatively, you may find that you should supplement your training with direct flexibility work, whether that is working on the splits, your bridge, or other stretches.

If your flexibility is what's stopping you from doing a move than take the time to work specifically on the problem. Simple as that.

The great thing is that tumbling moves are dynamic rather than static. It is not only useable flexibility but is backed by strength.

Where flexibility is lacking, strength can sometimes be used to 'muscle' it and still complete the move, although not so gracefully. In the end you want both strength, flexibility and the skill to pull off any move you want.

How often should you train?

For this training I would recommend a minimum of two days per week. Anything less and you are likely to not make much progress. Though I have to admit these skills come back quickly with practice.

You can mix it with any sort of other training. In fact tumbling is a great form of active rest if done on a light level. How hard you make your practice and how long is up to you.

Personally I just go to the park or the beach and train as I feel. Nothing set in stone most of the time. Just get out there and have fun.

Play around with it to find what works well for you. Obviously to build your skills quickly, daily practice on a few skills at a time, even spread throughout the day would be best just like hand balancing.

Simple Progression

This is the biggest question. How do you progress from a front roll to a front handspring and a front flip or something along those lines?

Like I said earlier you want to make it as gradual a shift as possible.

I can't list all the possible moves and how to get from one to the next.

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Not here in this report. But I am a big fan of the old books. Don't know why exactly. Just something about them. So if my search for the perfect teachings on acrobatics and tumbling I amassed a decent library. Here it is.

Around ten books on gymnastics and tumbling alone. That doesn't even include the ones that are mainly or only on hand balancing.



Now I realize no one book is going to cover the perfect teachings of tumbling. But I wanted something that could **give you exercises to aspire to and exercises**

that you can do right now, no matter you ability level. And a whole bunch of variation to keep you having fun and help you progress quickly.

You see with any move there are many things you can do to make it harder and easier. Some of the videos I've shown you the past weeks show that.

By working on something like a difficult variation of the head spring your hand spring will become easy. Many moves carry over directly to others.

Tumbling Illustrated

Because I don't want to leave you empty handed I've included the first chapter to give you a taste. This chapter is on forward rolls. But with it you'll see the progression it takes you from one move to another that is only slightly harder.

The second number after the name is its difficulty rating on a scale of 1 to 15. As you can see this group doesn't go past 5. Nothing terribly difficult in this first series.

It is one of 21 chapters in the complete book. In total 248 moves for you to master.

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- Forward Rolls
- Backward Rolls
- Diving
- Head and Hand Balancing
- Hand Balancing
- Forearm Balancing
- Cartwheels
- Roundoffs
- Head and Hand Springs
- Hand Springs
- Backward Hand Springs
- Back Bends
- Upstarts (Kips)
- Somersaults (Flips)
- Combination Rolls
- Combination Hand Springs
- Combination Hand Springs and Somersaults
- Combination Hand Springs and Rolls
- Combination Balancing and Rolls
- Miscellaneous Combinations
- Novelties

You may be a bit surprised at the pictures but once you get past the initial shock you'll realize that they, along with the text, give you exactly what you need to copy most of the tumbling moves.

And don't dismiss all of the moves right away. You might be surprised at something like #8 the Forward Roll while Grasping Toes. Rolling is not the hard part, standing up is. But that ability to compress and use your abdominals is essential for something like the front flip. This move will teach you that ability in an easy to do, low risk movement.

So give them all a try and play around with the ideas in this report. I hope you got a lot out of this and it opened your eyes a bit to the possibilities of what you can do.

Good Luck and Good Tumbling,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Logan Christopher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Logan Christopher

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You can find the full details on the Tumbling Illustrated at www.lostartofhandbalancing.com/tumbling.html.

(a) FORWARD ROLLS

(1) From Full Knee Bend—(1)



Take full knee bend position with knees together, hands placed forward on mat, shoulder width apart. Straighten legs, at the same time bending elbows, ducking head so that roll is made on back of head, neck and then to shoulders, after which grasp shins, keeping well tucked until up on feet.

Stress bending arms gradually as head is ducked so that a smooth roll will result. Do not come to stand by pushing off from mat with the hands. Show control by coming to a stand and holding it without stepping forward or backward.

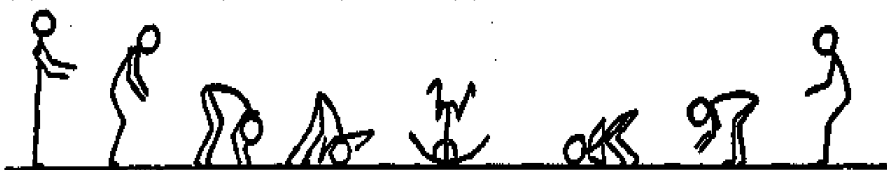
Next, take full knee bend position but instead of placing hands on mat, reach forward to mat as legs are extended and head is ducked doing a roll for distance.

The method described above is given because in attempting a roll from a stand, a partial forward somersault, making little or no use of the hands, is made landing with a thud on shoulder or back. Another fault is diving on to the head caused by not ducking the head as the arms are bent. A few jars at the beginning may be enough for a new tumbler to make up his mind that he does not like tumbling. This is especially true of the non-athletic type who would derive the greatest value from it.

(2) From Stand—(1)

From this position, the beginner usually will make the mistake of getting a little of the forward somersault action which is caused by not using hands, by ducking head too soon or by not bending knees enough. The order should be in quick succession as follows—bend the knees, place hands on the mat keeping the head up, extend the legs and as the weight is thrown forward, bend arms gradually, ducking head just in time to allow it to pass through the arms; as the roll is continued on the back of the head, neck and shoulders, flex the thigh and knees and take a hook grasp on your ankles, pulling them up close to thighs, making your body in as near a ball as possible. Finish as described in No. 1 above.

(3) Football (Shoulder) Roll—(1)



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This exercise is a roll sideways. Take a one-eighth turn left on the mat, bend legs, placing hands on mat to the right, duck right shoulder rolling from it on to the back and up on feet and hands on the other side.

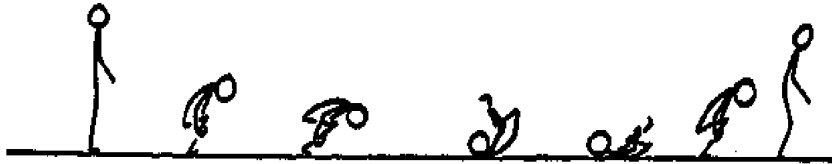
(4) From Standing to Lying on Back—(1)



Start the roll as No. 1 above.

Place the head down on the mat, slowly extending at the thighs and knees to position on back. Do not let the head bob up or the legs drop loosely.

(5) Hands on Shins—(1)



Take full knee bend position and hook grasp ankles. Duck head and slightly extend legs retaining grasp on shins. Tuck legs in close then rolling on the back, releasing grasp on the ankles after coming up on the feet, straightening up to a stand.

(6) Clasping Hands Under Thighs—(1)



Same idea as Rolls described above which are done without the use of the hands. Do not keep arms in the bend of knees, as this prevents tucking feet well under. Keep them back under buttocks.

(7) Arms Folded—(2)



Full knee bend and lunge forward, ducking head and extending legs. The only difference in this roll from those above is that there must be a stronger extension of the legs and ducking the head sooner. Be sure to draw the legs well under when rolling on back in order to be able to come to a stand.

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- (8) Grasping Toes—(2)



This limits the action. The most difficult part of it is to regain the feet after the roll without releasing the grasp on the toes.

- (9) Crossing Legs, Grasping Toes—(2)



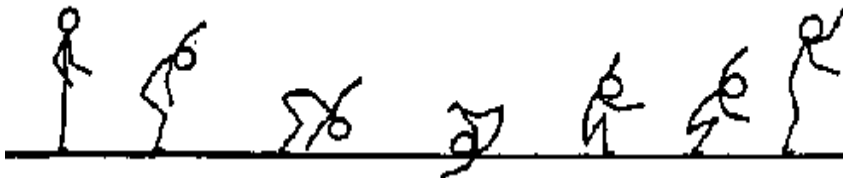
These variations are valuable in developing a large number of controls of the body. Keep the knees out of the eyes on this one.

- (10) Arms Between Legs, Hands Outside Ankles—(2)



Take full knee bend with knees spread, reach inside the thighs and outside the ankles taking a hook grasp. The difficulty is in coming to a stand after the roll.

- (11) Arms at Side Horizontal—(2)



Keeping arms at side horizontal through the entire exercise. This exercise is pleasing—allowing greater freedom of action than some of those above.

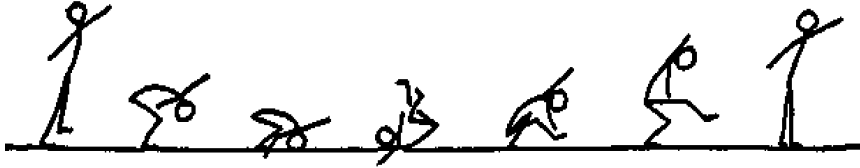
- (12) Legs Spread, Arms Side Horizontal—(2)



It is harder to come to a stand when the legs are spread.

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- (13) Arms at Side Horizontal, Coming Up on One Foot—(2)



Another pleasing exercise requiring a fair amount of balance.

- (14) Using One Foot Only—(2)

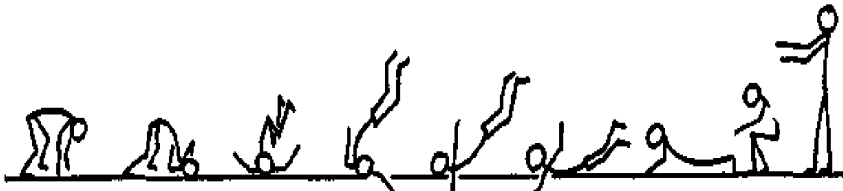


This type of exercise has a minimum of danger or discomfort in it with a fair amount of balance required. These simple, pleasing exercises will hold a pupil's interest.

- (15) Using One Foot Only, Without Hands—(3)



- (16) Shoulder Roll, One Half Twist, Chest Roll Down—(5)



Roll on the right shoulder to the neck, swinging the feet over head. Start rolling on the far shoulder making a half turn, extending legs and body to a temporary stand on the shoulder and side of the head arching the back rolling down on the chest, stomach and knees coming to a stand.

You can find the full details on the Tumbling Illustrated at www.lostartofhandbalancing.com/tumbling.html.