

DGA WAG PARENT HANDBOOK



Welcome to the Dunedin Gymnastics Academy, Womens Artistic Gymnastics (WAG) competitive programme. In New Zealand, the national programme is the STEPs programme. This parent handbook will give you all the insight and information into the STEP programme that we offer at DGA. Please take some time to have a good read of this document, as it provides important details to help you understand and support your daughter in gymnastics. This document will be updated at the beginning of every competition season with new information and dates to expect for the following season.

If you have any questions regarding the WAG programme please contact Hayley Storey - hayley@dunedingymnastics.co.nz

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1. Understanding Competitive Gymnastics

WAG = WOMENS ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

STEP = STRIVING TOWARDS EXCELLENCE in PERFORMANCE

The competitive programme at DGA is an invitation only programme. Gymnasts will be selected to enter the programme through their current classes and testing days which will take place in term two.

In competitive gymnastics, gymnasts will learn;

- Skills and routines for their current level - this will include basics, routine construction and choreography
- Upgraded skills for the following STEP
- Physical preparation and stretching
- Overcoming fears and barriers
- Time management and goal setting
- Teamwork, problem solving, and supporting others

The Junior STEPs (1-3) compete compulsory routines and skills. The Intermediate STEPs (4-6) compete optional routines with mostly compulsory skills. The Senior STEPs (7+) have optional routines and can build their routines around their strengths. Gymnasts from STEP 1-8 compete in age divisions (Unders and Overs), so they are only competing against other gymnasts in a similar age group.

2. Uniforms

At competitions, gymnasts will need to purchase our compulsory uniform. The Uniform committee will be in contact with families in term four to size the gymnasts for leotards and tracksuits. Uniforms are not to be worn to training please

For competitions, our WAG programme will all wear a leotard, a DGA jacket, purchased through the club, and any plain black leggings that you will purchase yourself. Tracksuits are worn to competitions and in prize givings.

Hairstyles for each competition will be up to each group coach, so the girls all look the same at competitions. A ponytail for short hair, or a bun are examples of simple hairstyles the girls may use. Some girls add a braid/ plait going into this hairstyle too.

Hand guards are required from the start of the STEP 4 season. Please ask your coach or Hayley for help with where to purchase these and for your measurements.

Straps are provided in the gym, however it is easier to have your own set. Please ask your coach or Hayley if you would like to order your own set.



STEP 1 - 3 Leotard



STEP 4 - 6 Leotard



STEP 7+ Leotard



WAG Tracksuit Jacket with Black Leggings

3. Competitions 2022

Competition Calendar WAG

Mock/ Practice comp -	DGA	Week March 7
March 19 - 20	Affinity (CHCH)	STEP 4 / 5 Ruth
March 26 - 27	IGC (Invercargill)	STEP 2+
April 9 -10	DGA	ALL
April 30-MAY 1	CSG (CHCH)	STEP 3+
April 30- MAY 1	ST Bernadettes (Dunedin)	STEP 1-3
May 21-22	IGC (Invercargill)	ALL
June 4-5	Canterbury Champs	STEP 4+ (optional STEP 4)
June 18 - 19	College St (Dunedin)	STEP 1-3
July 2-3	South Islands (Timaru)	STEP 1-4
Nationals Mock comp	Week of July 4th	
Nationals	July 11 - 16	STEP 5+

4. Important Dates 2022

The weeks with ** are not included in term fees and require additional costs.

January 1 - 9	Holiday Break - no training
January 10 - 16	Strength and conditioning Week**
January 17 - 20	Holiday Training** - normal hours
January 21st	DGA Summer Session + SNR Sleepover
January 22nd	No training
January 24th	Start Term 1
April 14	End Term 1 (training continues throughout holidays)
April 15	Good Friday - no training
April 18	Easter Monday - no training
April 25	ANZAC Day - no training
May 2	Start Term 2
June 6	Queens Birthday - no training
June 24	Matariki - No training
July 9	End Term 2
July 11 - 16	Nationals STEP 5+, no training STEP 1-4
July 18 - 24	No training for any groups
July 25	Start Term 3 in new training groups
October 3 - 8	Term three holidays - no training
October 10 - 15	STEP 1 - 4 artistry workshops (STEP 5+ normal training)
October 17	Start Term Four
October 24	Labour Day - no training
December 18	Start of Summer Holidays

5. Nationals Selection

Once your gymnast gets to STEP 5 they are eligible to attend the Gymnastics New Zealand National Championships. Nationals are held in different regions, that are often announced in the year prior to the event.

Each region is allocated 4 spots for STEP 5 and 6, to be in the team. These gymnasts must have all achieved a minimum qualifying score to be in the team, and each region has their own qualifying criteria. All other STEP 5 and 6 gymnasts not in the team, will be applied for as individuals. The individual gymnasts get entered into a document and sent through to GNZ, who then rank the gymnasts based on their top scores.

Gymnastics New Zealand will then accept individual entries based on the number of spots they have available after all the teams have been entered.

Gymnasts often don't find out if they have made nationals until closer to the event, so may be required to purchase uniforms and fundraise, prior to knowing if they have been accepted.

For Nationals, the girls are no longer competing for DGA, and will be required to purchase an Otago leotard and tracksuit.

The Otago qualifying criteria for STEP 5 + 6 is;

Gymnasts in STEP 5 and 6 must count scores from:

Canterbury Champs (Day one results only) and Southern Champs (Day one results only)

Gymnasts must also count one score from any of the following competitions:

DGA Interclub, CSG Classic, IGC Interclub

The three scores are averaged, and the gymnasts with the top four average scores will be named in the Otago Team. There are special circumstances for illness, bereavement and injury.

6. New Group Selection Criteria

At DGA, we would like to see all gymnasts placed in a level that is the most suitable for them to succeed and improve their gymnastics. We will be making informed decisions about the best group and STEP for gymnasts based on a range of information. This will include;

Strength and Flexibility Testing, Skill Testing, Competition Results, Attendance, Attitude and Work Ethic, Coach Feedback and Discretion

As we would like to see gymnasts in a group that is most suitable to their abilities, we unfortunately will not be able to move gymnasts if they are unable to attend one of the days, in most circumstances.

We will ensure to have the competition squads sent out a month prior to them starting in Term Three, so families have time to organise logistics and plan ahead. We will endeavour to keep groups on the same training days and hours from Term Three through to the following year in Term Two. At times, this may change due to coach availability, but we will do our best to keep it the same where possible.

If your gymnast is not planning on returning for the following season, we would like to meet for an informal chat with you and your daughter, to discuss, prior to a final decision being made. Please organise this with your coach, or through Hayley, if this is the case.

7. Training Information

In training, the girls are expected to arrive at training early so they are ready to start at their start time. Please email Hayley, or your coach if a gymnast is not going to be at the gym, or arriving late.

Gymnasts are expected to wear leotards to training, which can be worn with shorts or leggings. Gymnasts are also allowed to wear thermals during the colder months, but please ensure these are more tight fitting for health and safety. Any loose fitted clothes will be asked to be taken off for safety reasons. Please make sure that your gymnast comes with her hair tied back, so it doesn't go in her face.

Gymnasts are encouraged to eat afternoon tea on the way to gym so they have fuel for training. Gymnasts training for 3+ hours will have a snack during training and should have a healthy snack prepared. The coach will let the group know whether they will be given a quick couple of minutes between every apparatus to have a snack, or given a small mini break in the middle of training. Please ensure that all snacks are bite sized snacks that will give the gymnasts energy for training, rather than a full meal or more sugary snacks. Fruit, muesli bars, crackers and veggies such as carrot sticks are the ideal snacks for training. Please ensure all gymnasts have water bottles at training as well.

8. Understanding the Score System

A gymnast is given two scores at a competition.

* The first is their D Score (difficulty).

In STEP 1-6 the gymnasts have compulsory routines and elements that they need to try and achieve within their routines. Each of these elements has a criteria that it needs to meet for that skill to be counted.

For example, it might be holding a skill for 2 seconds, getting a cast to a certain height on bar, or leaps showing a certain degree of split.

Each of these elements add up to a 5.0 D score. This means that their compulsory routines are all out of 15.0

For every element that does not meet the requirement, the gymnast will lose marks off the D score. For example - not connecting two jumps on beam will lose 0.3 and not holding the handstand will lose 0.5 - this means that the D score for the athlete will now be 4.2, meaning the routine will now be judged out of 14.2

* The Second score is the E score (execution).

This is judged based on how well the gymnasts perform their routines. Every bent knee, flexed foot, wrong shape will result in deductions which can range from 0.1-1.0

* Working out the total score

The Judges will use the D score as the starting point and deduct the Execution deductions from this. For example - a gymnast with a 4.5 D score will start with a 14.5 and then have 3.0 in deductions taken off - which will give them a total score of 11.5.

For STEP 7+ the gymnasts will have optional routine requirements, meaning that their D scores will all be different based on the skills they are competing and the bonuses they are getting. Each skill has a different letter in the Code Of Points, corresponding to how much that skill is worth. Certain elements connected or performed can also give a difficulty bonus that will be added to the D score. Meeting the Core Requirements of a skill is important in the senior levels. A clean simple routine with a low D score can score just as high as a more difficult routine that is not executed as well.

9. Parent Expectations

While our focus is on coaching the athletes, your support is vital to creating a positive training experience for the gymnasts.

We do ask that parents play a supporting role in their child's gymnastics by celebrating their successes with them and encouraging them to work hard. While we encourage gymnasts to practice their floor dance for memory at home, and to work on strength and flexibility, we do strongly discourage parents teaching skills at home. Gymnastics skills are very complex and should only be taught with the safety of the gym equipment, coaches and correct techniques. Progressions to learning a skill are just as important as the skill itself, and learning a skill at home can mean months of fixing techniques in the gym. Coaches will teach the skills in the gym when the gymnast is physically and mentally ready, so please understand the process and not try to rush it at home.

As a parent, please keep communication open, either with Hayley, or your daughter's coach. If something is worrying you, or you have any questions regarding their training, it is important you can recognise this and bring it to our attention. We do our best to make training a positive experience, and your support and positivity is key to this. We also ask that you use WhatsApp groups and emails only to contact the coaches, and when possible, only during normal working hours. A lot of our coaches are extremely busy, and it is important we encourage them to have work life balance as well.

Competitions are a very big fundraiser for our club, and to make these successful, we do require the support of volunteers to help the competitions run smoothly. Nearly all of the jobs can be done with little, to no gymnastics knowledge, and all jobs are explained before you start. It is expected that parents of our WAG programme put their hand up to volunteer, because without this, the competitions cannot run.

10. Injuries

The health and wellbeing of our gymnasts is paramount. We encourage our gymnasts to discuss with their coach if they're feeling unwell, are anxious about something and/or have something that is worrying them. We also encourage them to share their positive stories and celebrate their successes both in and outside the gym.

Injuries are part of being a sports person. Whether they are growth related or are caused by an accident we need to know. If your gymnast has an injury, please email Hayley and her coach to let them know.

Hayley will work with the coach and the parents to ensure the gymnast can still come in to training and work on areas that won't affect the injury. The benefit of gymnastics being such a diverse sport, is that for most injuries, there are still aspects that can be done. We can work together to come up with an altered training plan and hours, to avoid using the injury or causing further pain to those areas.

For minor injuries, we do encourage gymnasts to speak to their coaches about these, rather than parents coming in to let the coaches know. It is good for younger children to be able to speak up when they are sore, so they know that if something gets hurt during training, they have the confidence to speak up and let their coaches know.

Please also make sure that gymnasts have their own strapping tape in case they get blisters on bar. We do supply plasters/ bandages, however, not always strapping tape.

11. Private Lessons

The purpose of a private lesson is to correct a technical problem, work on choreography, routine memory or help a gymnast with a specific issue. Private lessons are not designed to be a regular occurrence and should not exceed one private lesson per fortnight. This ensures availability for other gymnasts.

Private lessons are booked through the Finance Administrator, Mandy;
accounts@dunedingymnastics.co.nz

Costs:

60-minutes - \$50

90-minutes - \$75

If gymnasts share a private slot, the cost is broken down accordingly. For example three gymnasts in a 90-minute private would pay \$25 each.

Payment: After the lesson has occurred, we invoice you the normal way.

If a gymnast has outstanding term fees, private lessons cannot be booked until this debt is clear.

12. Sickness

If your gymnast is sick, we do ask if they please stay home until they are feeling better.

In the meantime, due to new rules from the Government and Sport NZ, we will be requiring anyone 12 years and three months, or older (December 2021), to show proof of vaccination. This will include any parents watching or entering the building.

You can upload your Covid Record to your profile and your gymnasts profiles, through your DGA account. These will show up on the attendance register which will be taken for each class.

If you are sick, please contact your gymnasts' coach to let them know you will not be able to attend training.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to be in touch.

hayley@dunedingymnastics.co.nz

If you would like me to call, please send an email and I will get back to you during my admin hours. I would appreciate that any messages (WhatsApp/ Text) outside of these times be emailed to me instead please. I will get back to you promptly on my next admin day.

My Admin Hours;

10 - 11am, 2 - 3.30pm * Monday-Friday only.

Thank you for your support, help and positivity throughout 2021, and I look forward to a great 2022 for WAG at DGA!

Hayley Storey and the DGA WAG Coaches