

Here are some flexibility stretches which will help with your **shoulders**. You need flexible shoulders for skills like bridges, handsprings and flics!!



Message for Grown-ups "Think Safety First!"

You are responsible for your children's safety therefore please:-

- choose appropriate clothing for them to wear
- create as much open space as possible
- remind your child(ren) to be careful of family, pets and furniture!!

Your child's British Gymnastics insurance will cover them for home activities which are fitness, conditioning or flexibility related, therefore only practise what we have suggested. They must NOT try more advanced skills.

All activities are optional and we recommend spending the same amount of time on them as they would in their normal gymnastics session. If they wish to do more then ensure they listen to their bodies and give themselves days off if their muscles are achy, stiff or tired.

TGC is not responsible for anything that gets broken, including china mugs!!

Activity

Kneel down with hips high above your knees. Reach your hands forward and push your shoulders towards the floor.

Cat Stretch



Hold for 10 seconds and repeat!

Technique

- Keep your bottom high (no sitting on heels!)
- Hands shoulder width apart
- Chin on floor, eyes looking at hands and arms straight
- You could ask someone to push gently on your shoulders

Activity

Lie on your front, hold the rope above your head and take the rope over your head and back again. *No rope? Use a belt or an old tie - ask permission first!*

Rope Stretch



Repeat x 20

Technique

- Forehead on the floor
- Arms straight throughout
- Take both arms backwards at the same time
- **Too hard:** move your hands further apart
- **Too easy:** bring your hands closer together

Activity

In straddle stand, rest your hands on a table or chair with your back flat. Try and push your shoulders lower than your hands. Hold for 10 seconds. Then try and push a bit further.

Flat Back Stretch



Repeat x 3

Technique

- Hands shoulder width apart
- Wide, straight legs
- Straight back
- Head neutral
- If you can't feel the stretch ask a family member to push down gently on your shoulder blades

Activity

Sit in pike with your hands flat on the floor behind you. Gently move your bottom away from your hands until you feel a stretch in your shoulders.

Shoulder Splits



Hold for 10 seconds Repeat 3 times

Technique

- Try and keep your hands as close together as you can - the aim is for both your little fingers to touch
- Gentle, slow movement
- **Too easy** - try lifting your legs up (1) bent (2) straight



Here are some flexibility stretches which will help with your **hips, tummy and back**.

Make sure you rock backwards and forwards in tuck after each exercise to give your back a rest!



Activity

Lie on your front with your legs together, put your hands flat on the floor under your shoulders and push your chest and shoulders up and backwards.

Seal Stretch



Hold for 20 seconds rest and repeat x 3

Technique

- Hands close to hips
- Legs together
- Long neck, look up and backwards
- **Too hard** - open your legs
- **Too easy** - put your toes on your head (1) knees apart (2) knees together

Activity

Kneel up tall and reach back to hold onto your ankles. Push your hips forward and look up at the ceiling.

"D" Stretch



Hold for 10 seconds rest and repeat x 3

Technique

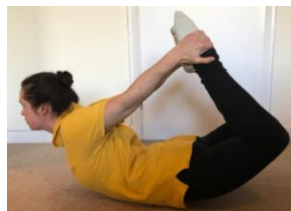
- Kneel up - no bottoms on heels
- Push your hips forwards
- **Too hard** - knees apart
- **Too easy** - bring them closer together as you improve

Activity

Lie on your tummy, bend your knees and grab hold of your ankles. Pump yourself up like a tyre by lifting your joined hands and ankles.

Hold as high as you can for 10 seconds.

Tyre Stretch



Repeat x 3

Technique

- Lift your hands/ankles as high as you can without letting go, keep legs together
- Lift your head and shoulders
- **Too hard** - start with your legs apart
- **Too easy** - try rocking but mind your chin on the floor!

Bridges Preps and Progressions

- ! Bridges are a prohibited skill for Preschool gymnasts.
- Do NOT attempt these with children 5yrs or younger!

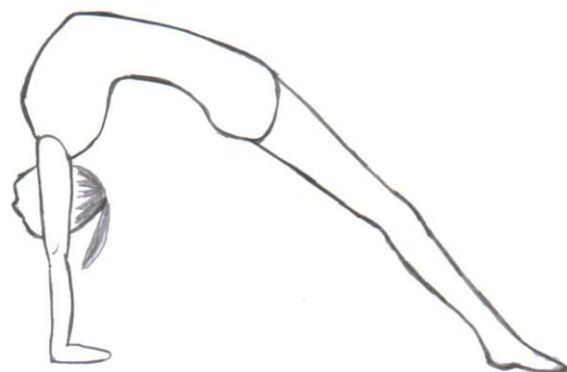
Think Safety!

BEFORE your child(ren) attempt(s) any of the following activities, please ensure you read through the information below with them - thank you.

- NEVER put your weight on your head and neck
- Tuck your chin to your chest as you come down
- If you have not done crab or bridge by yourself before, ask a grown up to help you by lifting and holding your hips
- Only try by yourself when they think you can stay there for 3 seconds and make sure a grown up watches your first attempt
- Rock in a tuck shape in between attempts to bend your body back the other way
- Make sure you can hold the previous level for 10 seconds before trying the next one



This is what you might look like when you first start practising



This is what you are aiming to look like. Can you see the difference in the shoulders and legs?

Don't forget to rock backwards and forwards in tuck after each exercise to give your back a rest!



Level 1 Crab

Lie on your back with hands under shoulders, feet close to your bottom and legs apart. Push up into crab.

Build up to holding for 10 seconds

Technique

- Straight arms
- Hands shoulder width apart or as close as you can
- Shoulders above your hands
- Head neutral/looking at the floor
- Feet and legs slightly apart
- Fingers always facing your feet

Level 2 Elevated Crab

As above but have your feet elevated on a platform. This can be done either before you push up or when you have pushed up.

Build up to holding for 10 seconds.

Technique

- As above
- Focus on pushing your shoulders over your hands

Level 3 Bridge

Lie on your back with bent knees (heels near to bottom), feet together, hands under shoulders. Push with your arms and legs, lifting your hips and tummy towards the ceiling.

Build up to holding for 10 seconds.

Technique

- Straight arms and legs
- Legs together
- Hands shoulder width apart
- Shoulders above hands or past hands
- Keep your feet still

*Well done, you are doing really well!
Keep trying and you will improve!*



Level 4 Bridge leg lifts

Push up to bridge as above.
Raise your leg as high as you can
and then lower it.
Do 5 leg lifts on each leg with a
rest in between

*Build up to doing 10 leg lifts of
each leg without a rest*

Level 5 Bridge leg holds

Push up to bridge as above. Raise
your leg as high as you can and
hold it for 5 seconds. Rest then
repeat on the other leg.

Build up to holding for 10 seconds

Level 6 Hyper-extension

Push up to bridge with your hands
about 10 cm from the bottom of
the wall. Bring your feet closer to
your hands and push your
shoulders past your hands so your
chest/armpit touches the wall.

Look at the floor!

Technique

- Straight arms
- Hands shoulder width apart or
as close as you can
- Lift your leg as high as you can
- Leg straight and toe/ankles
pointed
- Keep shoulders over hands

Technique

- As above

Technique

- Straight arms and legs
- Knees/legs together
- Hands shoulder width apart
- Shoulders above hands or
past hands