

2024 **Rhythmic Gymnastics** Whānau Guide

A guide to the national
competitive programme.



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Introduction

This manual covers the competitive rhythmic gymnastics levels and grades offered throughout New Zealand. Rhythmic is defined as a form of gymnastics emphasizing dance-like routines to music, accentuated by the use of rope, clubs, balls, ribbons, or hoops.

Gymnastics New Zealand

As an International Gymnastics Federation member, Gymnastics NZ is the national governing body for gymnastics in New Zealand. We look after the sport across all codes from grassroots, through to high-performance athletes.

Our codes include both men's and women's artistic gymnastics, rhythmic, aerobics, trampoline, and GNZ parkour, and work with technical committees to outline the New Zealand rules and regulations for each one of these codes.

Gymnastics NZ staff support clubs in the operational and technical delivery of the sport, through relationship managers, education, international tours, and head office.

Clubs are required to be a member of Gymnastics NZ to compete in the national competitive programmes.

Strategic Plan 2024-2030

This is the road map outlining what our priorities will be and why.

Our Vision – To be New Zealand's First Choice Sport.

This is a vision that we can measure and be inspired by. Gymnastics is a core foundational sport, whether we are your first sport, or your forever sport. And we believe that gymnastics sets you up for life.

Our Purpose – To Enable Positive Gymnastics Experiences for Everybody.

This purpose both guides and motivates us. Our athletes, volunteers, clubs, officials, and people are the reason we are here. We believe that everybody involved in our sport deserves a positive, enjoyable, fun, experience at every level of sport.

Our Values

These are the key behaviours we believe the organisation needs in order to achieve success for our sport, and should underpin everything that we do. They were designed by our team, based on community feedback and interactions.



Our Strategic Priorities

These are the key outcomes we are looking to achieve by 2030. These outcomes were set by the Board after careful consideration, and feedback from the community through our club hui.

- Growth in participation.
- Thriving club communities.
- Established performance pathways.

We believe these are the three areas of focus that will deliver on our vision to be New Zealand's first choice sport.

[You can find the full strategic plan on our website.](#)



Safe Sport

Gymnastics NZ is committed to creating a positive culture within the sport of gymnastics that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all involved, with particular emphasis on children and young people. This includes both the prevention of harm within gymnastics as well as recognising and responding to concerns, disclosures, and allegations both within and outside of the sport.

It is important that any concerns regarding child safety and wellbeing are raised as soon as possible. This could involve contacting your club safeguarding lead, or by completing a safe sport form on the Gymnastics NZ website. Identifying and addressing concerns early and at the appropriate level is an important part of creating a safe and positive culture within the sport of gymnastics.

Please refer to the [Gymnastics NZ website](#) for more information on how concerns and complaints are handled and for the Gymnastics NZ Complaints Policy, and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Gymnastics NZ Code of Behaviour

The [Gymnastics NZ Code of Behaviour](#) applies to anyone involved in the sport of gymnastics in New Zealand, whether they are an athlete or in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity with Gymnastics NZ or an affiliated club or organisation.

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every individual athlete as a human being.

Treat everyone equally regardless of sex, disability, ethnic origin or religion. Respect the talent, development stage and goals of each athlete to reach their desired potential.

Protect athletes from all forms of abuse.

Refrain from any form of verbal, physical, or emotional abuse towards athletes. Refrain from any form of sexual or racial harassment, whether verbal or physical. Do not harass, abuse, or discriminate against athletes based on their sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religious or ethical beliefs, race, colour, ethnic origins, employment status, disability, or distinguishing characteristics. Any physical contact with athletes should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the athlete's skill development. Be alert to any forms of abuse directed towards athletes from other sources while in your care. You must raise any concerns you have regarding the treatment of any athlete by another coach, volunteer, parent etc. in accordance with this code or any other relevant policies and procedures e.g. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Provide a safe environment for training and competition.

Adopt appropriate risk management strategies to ensure the training and/or competition environment is safe. Ensure equipment and facilities meet safety standards. Ensure equipment, rules, training, and the environment are appropriate for the age, physical and emotional maturity, experience, and ability of athletes. Show concern and caution toward

sick and injured athletes. Allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate. Encourage athletes to seek medical advice when required. Provide a modified training programme where appropriate. Maintain the same interest and support toward sick and injured athletes as you would the healthy athletes.

Make a commitment to providing a quality service for all athletes.

Seek continual improvement through ongoing education, and other personal and professional development opportunities. Provide athletes with planned and structured input appropriate to their needs and goals. Seek advice and assistance from professionals when additional expertise is required. Maintain appropriate records.

Maintain a high standard of integrity.

Operate within the rules of the sport and in the spirit of fair play, while encouraging athletes to do the same. Advocate a sporting environment free of drugs and other performance enhancing substances with the guidelines of the Drug Free Sport New Zealand and World Anti-Doping Code. Do not disclose any confidential information relating to athletes without their prior written consent.

Be a positive role model for the sport and athletes and act in a way that projects a positive image.

All athletes are deserving of equal attention and opportunities. Ensure the athlete's time spent with you is a positive experience. Be fair, considerate, and honest with athletes. Encourage and promote a healthy lifestyle – refrain from smoking and drinking alcohol around athletes.

Professional responsibilities.

Display high standards in your language, manner, punctuality, preparation, and presentation. Display control, courtesy, respect, honesty, dignity and professionalism to all involved within the sphere of sport – this includes opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, media, parents, and spectators. Encourage athletes to demonstrate the same qualities. Be professional and accept responsibility for your actions. You should not only refrain from initiating a sexual relationship with an athlete but should also discourage any attempt by an athlete to initiate a sexual relationship with you, explaining the ethical basis of your refusal. Accurately represent personal qualifications, experience, competence, and affiliation.

Rhythmic Gymnastics Pathway in New Zealand

Levels Grades

The Levels grades are designed to be ability-based, as opposed to age-based, so there are no age restrictions. It is suggested that every gymnast wanting to compete starts at Level 1; however, gymnasts starting the sport at 10 years or older may already have the basic skills to begin at a higher level.

Once a gymnast has competed in a particular Level at an endorsed event, they cannot compete in a lower level without applying for dispensation.

The Rhythmic Technical Committee (TC) reserves the right to regrade a gymnast due to extenuating circumstances.

The Gymnastics NZ Levels programme is closely aligned with the FIG Code of Points in that the gymnasts have a choice of what difficulties they perform. They can therefore perform difficulties that best suit and can be rewarded for performing more complex apparatus handling.

- **Levels 1 and 2** – offered at a club and regional level only (not offered at the New Zealand Gymnastics Championships). These Levels are designed to give gymnasts an introduction into competitive rhythmic gymnastics and the focus should be on introducing fundamental moves with correct posture and basic apparatus technique, so as to give a good grounding for more difficult movements to be introduced at the higher levels.
- **Levels 3 and 4** – offered at a club and regional level with a club based National Level 3 and 4 event. In bodywork, both flexibility and strength should be introduced to a greater extent in a progressive way. The emphasis in apparatus handling should still be on basic technique: apparatus technique should be well formed, without statism and should show variety amongst technical groups.
- **Levels 5, 6 and 7** – by now gymnasts should have a good foundation in rhythmic gymnastics. Gymnasts should be in a position of coordinating body difficulties with more complex apparatus handling, and thus more scope is given to show a variety of apparatus handling.
- **Levels 8, 9 and 10** – these grades are based on FIG junior and senior international requirements. Gymnasts in these grades are likely to focus on their individual strengths, and emphasis should be on giving a well-rounded performance with moves that complement the gymnast's music and individual style.

Stages and International Grades

These grades are designed to prepare gymnasts to compete at an international level.

- **Senior International** – must be turning 16 years of age or older in the year of competition. FIG senior international requirements are as per the FIG Code of Points.
- **Junior International** – must be turning 13, 14, or 15 years of age in the year of competition. FIG junior international requirements are as per the FIG Code of Points.
- **Stage 4** – must be turning 10, 11, or 12 years of age in the year of competition.
- **Stage 3** – must be turning 9, 10, or 11 years of age in the year of competition.
- **Stage 2** – must be turning 7, 8, or 9 years of age in the year of competition. Offered at a club and regional level only (not offered at the New Zealand Gymnastics Championships).
- **Stage 1** – must be turning 7 years of age in the year of competition. Offered at a club and regional level only (not offered at the New Zealand Gymnastics Championships).

Groups

There are seven multiples (group) grades as follows:

- **Grade 1** – for Levels 1–4 and Stages 1–2 gymnasts under 10 years of age. Offered at a club and regional level only (not offered at the New Zealand Gymnastics Championships).
- **Grade 2** – for Levels 1–4 and Stages 1–2 gymnasts, no age restriction. Offered at a club and regional level with a club based National Level event.
- **Grade 3** – for Levels and/or stages gymnasts turning 9, 10, 11 or 12 years of age in the year of competition.
- **Grade 4** – for Levels 5–7 gymnasts. A maximum of two Stages 3 or 4 or Level 3 or 4 gymnasts may participate in this grade.
- **Grade 5** – for Levels 5–10 gymnasts. A maximum of two international grade gymnasts may also participate in this grade.
- **Grade 6** – the Junior International group grade, with FIG junior group requirements. Gymnasts must be turning 13, 14, or 15 years of age in the year of competition, unless they are a current Stage 4 gymnast.
- **Grade 7** – the Senior International group grade, with FIG senior group requirements. Gymnasts must be turning 16 years of age or older in the year of competition.

For Groups 1- 5 the group can be composed of 4 or 5 gymnasts per showing. Groups 6 and 7 must be composed of 5 gymnasts per showing. For all Groups the group is awarded for the combined total of showing 1 and 2.

Pairs and Trios

Gymnastics NZ does not offer Pairs or Trios at the National Level. Regions/clubs are welcome to offer Pairs and Trios at a local level and GymClub Challenge (The National GfA Programme) it is suggested that the same requirements are used as for the equivalent group grade.

Progressing Through a Level

The idea of the Levels system is that gymnasts can systematically progress through the levels, starting at 1 and finishing at 10. A gymnast 'passes' a Level when she achieves a certain standard. This can be done by: Achieving an all-around total pass mark

Once a gymnast achieves the pass mark in any of the ways outlined above, that gymnast must progress to the next Level in the following year of competition. The only exceptions to this are:

- Gymnasts in Levels 8–9 may remain in their Level for 2 years regardless of the marks achieved in the first year.
- In extenuating circumstances, the RG TC can request that a gymnast must progress to the next level at the end of the first year **OR** A coach can apply to have a gymnast remain in Levels 8–9 for longer than 2 years using an Application for Regrade form.
- Level 10 gymnasts may stay in Level 10 indefinitely.

Level Pass Marks	
Level	Overall
1	14.00
2	16.00
3	24.00
4	25.00
5	45.00
6	40.00
7	42.00
8	58.00
9	60.00
10	63.00

- If a gymnast has a significant break from competitive gymnastics, an application can be made to GYMNASTICS NZ for consideration to recommence competition at an appropriate Level, using an application for Regrade form.
- If a coach would like a gymnast to remain in a particular Level despite achieving the pass mark or would like a gymnast to skip a Level can apply to GNZ to request a gymnast stays in a particular level, using an Application for Regrade form.

Note: A gymnast may progress through more than one Level in a season.

If a coach would like to progress a gymnast within a season, when it is considered that a gymnast has achieved the standard to advance to the next level, her competition results must be sent for verification along with a re-grade application.

Gymnasts can pass a Level at an endorsed or qualifying event if the minimum judging panel requirements have been met. Gymnasts can only qualify for the New Zealand Gymnastics Championships at a qualifying event.

Ribbon Award Scheme

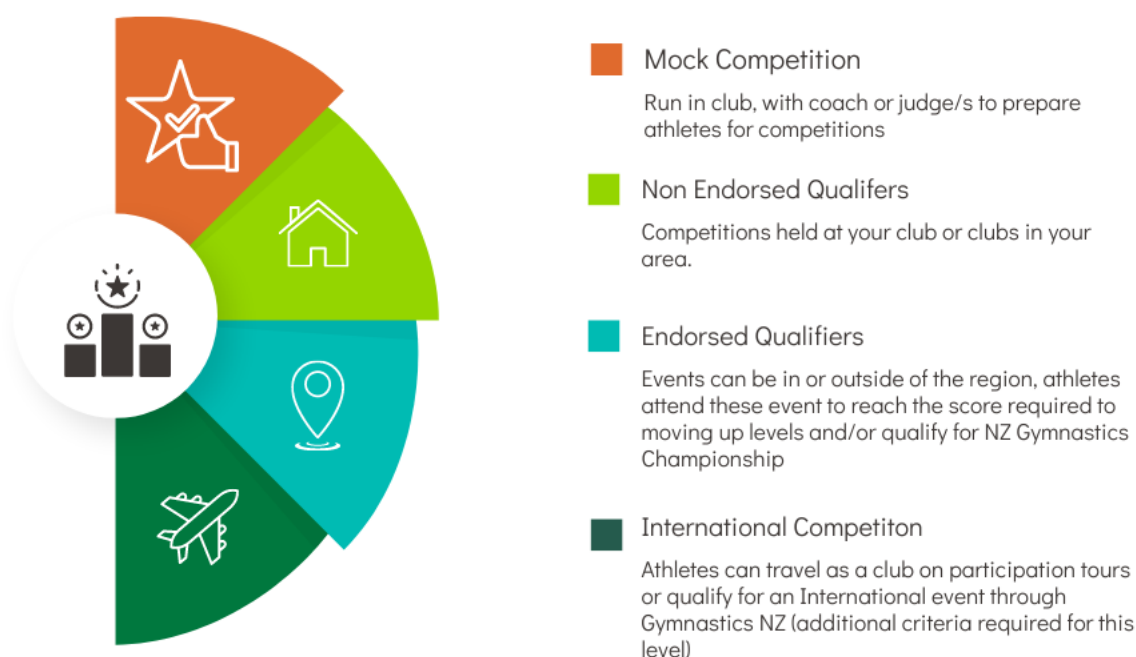
	Levels 1–2 & Stages 1–2	Levels 3–4	Levels 5–7 & Stage 3	Levels 8–10
Gold	9.5+	10+	16.5+	18+
Red	8.5 -9.499	9 -9.999	15 -16.499	16.5 -17.999
Blue	7-8.499	7.5 -8.999	14 -14.999	15 -16.499
Green	6.999 and Under	7.499 and Under	13.999 and Under	14.999 and Under

Please note: This is up to the event organisers if they offer these awards, Ribbons are purchased by the club through GYMNASTICS NZ Club Portal

Level Badges

Following qualification at a particular level, a gymnast is eligible to purchase the corresponding Levels badge through your club who can purchase from Gymnastics NZ.

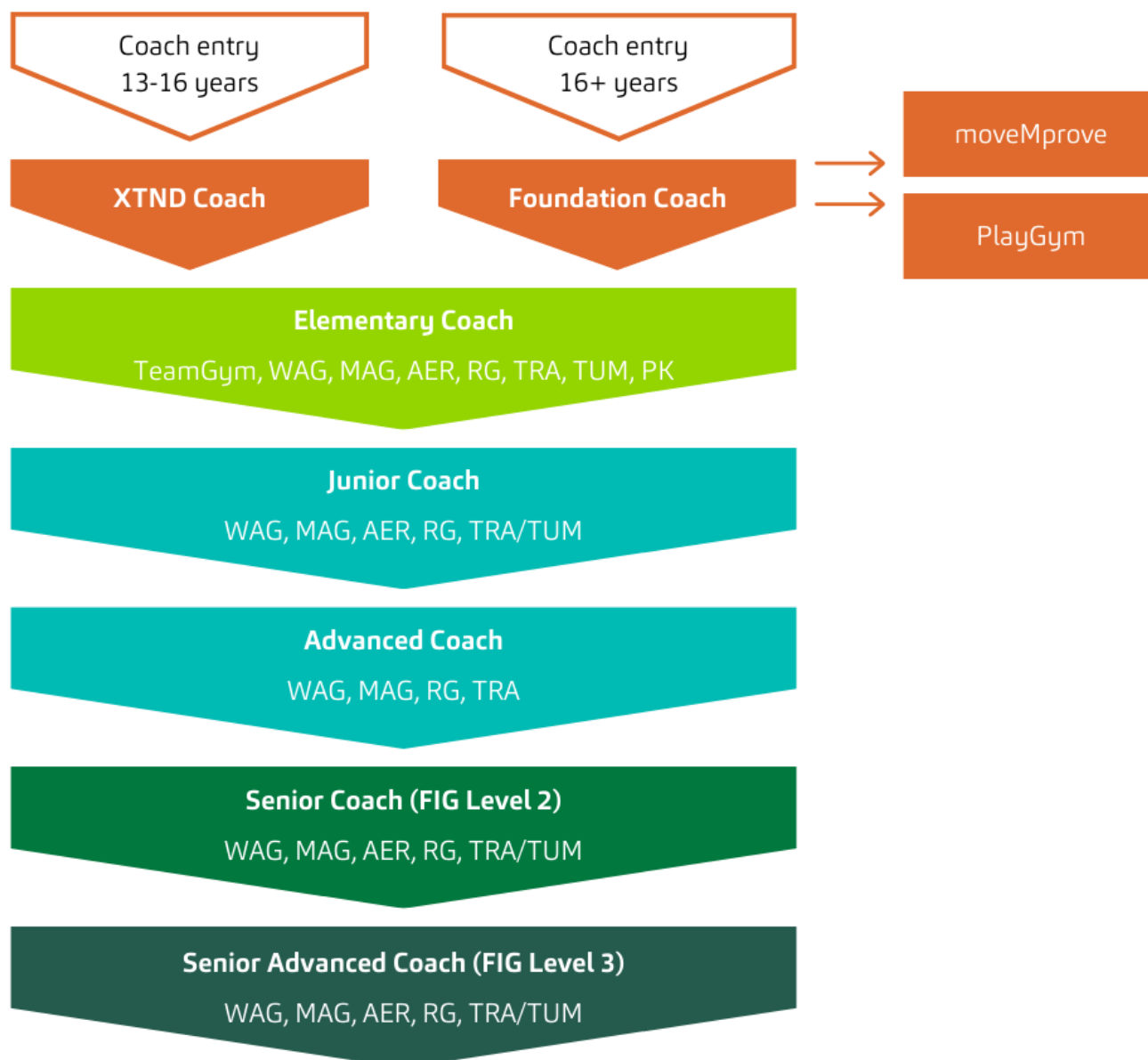
Levels of Competition



New Zealand Gymnastics Championships

Athletes who have reached the qualification mark at an endorsed event and in the top 20 athletes for each Level/ Group, are then invited to attend at the annual NZ Gymnastics Championships.

Gymnastics NZ Coach Qualification Pathway



Gymnastics NZ aims to meet the professional development needs of gymnastics coaches and judges by providing theoretical and practical programmes. Courses are offered throughout the country with some being online. Above is the diagram of this pathway; alongside these courses there are other opportunities to engage in workshops, coach developer opportunities, guest speakers and a bi-annual coach connect conferences. All registrations for these courses are through the member clubs.

Coaching Requirements

Coach Qualifications for Endorsed Events

Coaches should have coaching qualifications at the same level that their gymnasts are working. Gymnastics New Zealand has taken a stepped approach to bring coaches up to the required coaching levels over the next three years. All coaches are required to have a current Safeguarding Child qualification and be Police Vetted by their club.

Athlete Level	Competition Level	Qualification Required – Endorsed and Qualifying Events 2024
Elementary	Levels 1-4, Stages 1-2, Grades 1-2 Group.	Elementary Coach *
Junior	Levels 5-7, Stages 3-4, Grade 3-4 Group	Junior Coach **
Senior	Levels 8-10, Junior & Senior International, Grades 5-7 Group	Advanced Coach**

Note:

* The qualification may be in progress. A second coach for a group at Foundation/XTND may be permitted

** May be in progress

Required qualifications will be reviewed on an annual basis. Coaches who are not qualified at the required level will need to apply for dispensation.

Coach Qualifications for the NZ Gymnastics Championships

Qualification of Coach	Level/ Stage or Grade Group they are able to coach on the floor
Rhythmic Junior Coach	Levels 5-7 Stages 3-4 Grades 3–4 group
Rhythmic Advanced Coach	Levels 8-10 Grade 5 Group
Rhythmic Senior Coach	Junior & Senior international Grades 6–7 group

Coaches who are not qualified at the required level will need to apply for dispensation.

2024 NZ Apparatus Rotations

Levels	2024
Level 1	Free, Hoop
Level 2	Free, Ball
Level 3	Free, Rope, Hoop
Level 4	Free, Rope, Ball
Level 5	Free, Hoop, Clubs
Level 6	Hoop, Ball, Ribbon
Level 7	Rope, Ball, Clubs
Level 8	Hoop, Ball, Clubs, Ribbon
Level 9	Hoop, Ball, Clubs, Ribbon
Level 10	Hoop, Ball, Clubs, Ribbon

International

Stage 1	Free, Ball
Stage 2	Free, Hoop, Ball
Stage 3	Free, Hoop, 2 optional
Stage 4	Free, Hoop, 2 optional
Junior International	Hoop Ball, Clubs, Ribbon
Senior International	Hoop, Ball, Clubs, Ribbon

Groups

Grade 1	Free
Grade 2	Hoop or Ball
Grade 3	Ball
Grade 4	Same
Grade 5	Mixed
Grade 6	5 (Pairs of) Clubs, 5 Hoops
Grade 7	5 Hoops, 3 Ribbons & 2 Balls

Note: Grade 5 groups may choose to perform two showings of the same (mixed apparatus) routine or one showing of each (mixed apparatus and same apparatus) routine. In this case they can use any apparatus for their same apparatus routine, it could be one of the same apparatus as they have used in their mixed routine.

Note: Grades 6 and 7 groups may compete either the current or the following years' prescribed apparatus.

Apparatus Requirements

Please check with your coach before purchasing any equipment.

Rope

- Hemp or similar suitable material
- Length proportionate to size of gymnast i.e. no specific length requirement
- No handles except for one or two knots at each end
- Ends may be wrapped with a thin non-slip material in a length corresponding to the width of a hand

Hoop

- Wood or synthetic
- Interior diameter of 80–90cm
- Minimum weight of 300g
- Can be taped in any colour

Ball

- Rubber or soft plastic, antistatic
- Diameter of 18–20cm
- Minimum weight of 400g
- Any colour

Clubs

- Wood or synthetic
- Length of 40–50cm
- Diameter of head 3cm max
- Minimum weight of 150g per club
- Can be taped in any colour

Ribbon

- Satin or similar material
- Width 4–6cm
- Doubled at stick end for a maximum of 1 metre
- Total length minimum of 6m and a minimum weight of 35g
- Any colour

Ribbon – stick

- Wood, bamboo, synthetic or fibreglass
- Length of 50–60cm
- Diameter maximum of 1cm at thickest point
- Any colour

- Bottom end may be covered by a thin antli-slip material for maximum length of 10cm
fixture connecting stick to ribbon may be cord nylon thread or a moveable ring with a swivel that is no longer than 7cm (not counting the ring at the end of the stick)

Competition Attire

Gymnastics NZ Regulations – All Codes

- Gymnasts may choose to wear gymnastics shorts or leggings over their leotard.
- Hair can be worn in any style, provided it is securely fastened.
- Bandages, strapping and braces – where available these should be skin-coloured or beige, white or black.
- There are no deductions given for underwear showing during a routine.

Rhythmic Gymnastics Competition Attire Regulations

International Representative Athletes

Please note that FIG competition attire regulations may differ and will apply to all gymnasts when competing at selection events for, and when representing New Zealand at FIG competitions. These regulations can be found in the [RG Code of Points](#). Athletes competing overseas at non-FIG competitions should check the rules of the event before travelling.

Athletes At Domestic Competitions

The following regulations apply to all competitive gymnasts at domestic competitions in New Zealand.

- Gymnasts must wear a 1-piece leotard or unitard. Leotard/unitard must be in non-transparent material. Parts in lace (from the trunk to the chest) must be lined. For the pelvic/crotch area (with or without a skirt):
 - This should be covered with non-transparent, non-skin-coloured material up to the hip bones.
 - A solid, coloured connection between the front and the back of the leotard is required.
 - The connection may be from fabric or applications but must give the impression of a whole material (not separate pieces).
 - The connection must appear at the hip bones or lower.
- The style of neckline of the front and back of the leotard is at the athlete's discretion.
- Leotards may be with or without sleeves; leotards with narrow straps also allowed.
- The cut of the leotard at the top of the legs must not go beyond the fold of the crotch (maximum).
- The leotard must be fitted to enable the judges to evaluate the correct position of every part of the body, this also includes fitted sleeves.
- The leotard must be all in one piece and with no additional socks, gloves, leg warmers, belts etc. With the exception of toe shoes.

- For gymnasts wearing leggings or a unitard, the length and colours(s) must be identical on both legs, only the style (cut or decorations) may be different.
- Gymnasts may wear a skirt provided that it does not fall further than the pelvic area over the leotard, tights, or the unitard.
- The style of the skirt (cut or decorations) is free, but the look of a ballet “tutu” not permitted.
- Gymnasts may perform their exercises with bare feet or toe shoes.

Decorative Appliques or Details on the Leotard

Decorative details should not jeopardize the safety of the gymnast. It is not allowed to decorate leotard with light-emitting diodes (LED).

Other

- For safety, loose jewellery (bracelets or necklaces) must not be worn, but small stud-type earrings are permitted.
- Make-up is not required but can be worn if wished.

New Zealand Gymnastics Championships

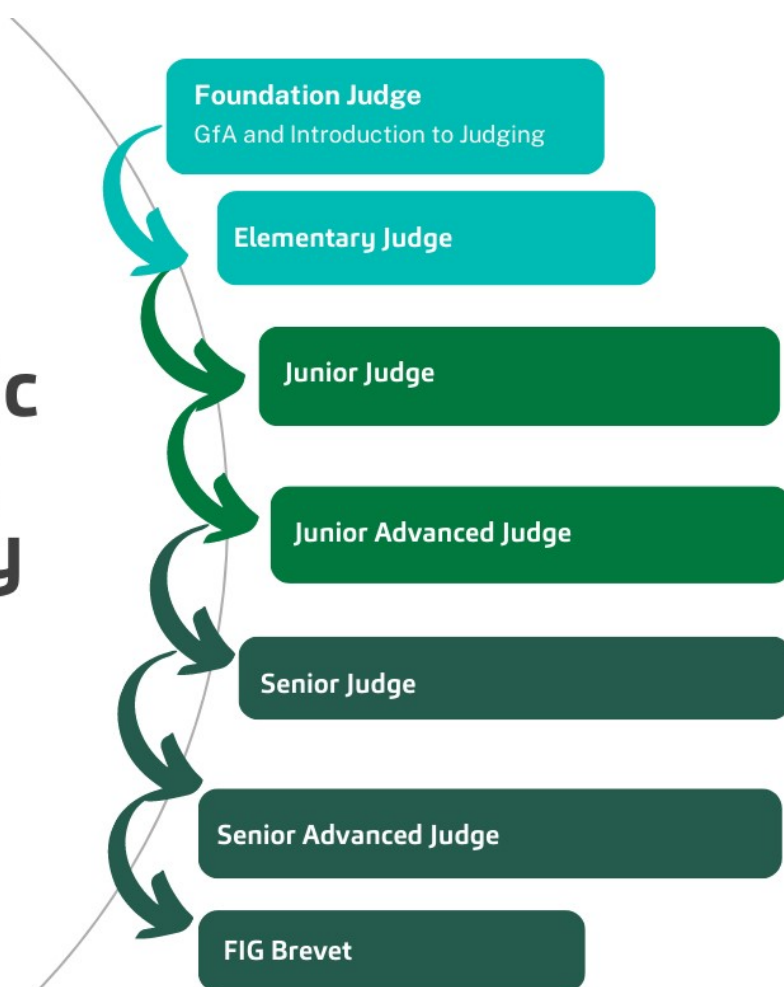
- For the New Zealand Gymnastics Championship, gymnasts must wear track suits, including track pants or leggings (provincial colours or black), for march on and prize-givings.
- International athletes may march on in their leotard for finals.

Deductions

- Violation of these rules may result in a penalty of 0.3 points applied by the control judge, which will be deducted from the total score of any of routine in which the violation occurs.
- Before a deduction is applied, judges will speak with the athlete and give them the opportunity to resolve the violation.

Gymnastics NZ Judge Education Pathway

Rhythmic Judging Pathway



Foundation Judge Qualification

Online introduction to judging to be completed prior to attending the Elementary judge's course.

Elementary Judge Qualification (1 Year)

Judges must complete a full season of judging Execution all individual grades, execution – Grades 1 and 2 Group and Assess Incentive Awards Levels 1-4 and recreation/school competitions/festivals. and have their judging log book signed off by the RG Judging Advisor. Once the log book has been signed off the judge can sit the Junior Judge Course.

Junior Judge Qualification (12 Sessions)

Judges must complete minimum of 12 sessions at Junior level and be competent in judging Junior Judge entitles you to judge all Individual grades execution, Grade 1-7 groups execution, DB for all individual grades, assess Incentive Awards Levels 1-7 and judge recreation/school competitions/festivals.

Junior Advanced Judge Qualification (12 Sessions)

Judges must complete minimum of 12 sessions Junior Advance level and be competent in judging, Junior Advance entitles you to judge execution for all grades, DB for all grades, artistry for all grades, assess Incentive Awards Levels 1-7 and judge recreation/school competitions/festivals.

Senior Judge Qualification – Judge (12 Sessions)

Senior Judges must complete minimum of 12 sessions Senior level and be competent in judging Senior Judge entitles you to judge execution for all grades, DB for all grades, artistry for all grades, DA for all grades, assess Incentive Awards Levels 1-7 and judge recreation/school competitions/festivals.

Senior Advanced Judge Qualification (12 Sessions)

Senior Advanced Judge must complete minimum of 12 sessions Senior level and competent in judging Senior Advance entitles you to judge execution for all grades, DB for all grades, artistry for all grades, DA for all grades, and be a control judge, assess Incentive Awards Levels 1-7 and judge recreation/school competitions/festivals.

International Judging Qualification (F.I.G Brevet)

As per Senior Judge and Senior Advance, as well as being able to judge overseas.

Volunteers

Volunteers are appointed to various tasks on the competition floor to aid the smooth running of the event, e.g. as score inputters, floor manager, music, or announcers.

