

CHAPTER 6 - XCEL COMPETITIVE PROGRAM

I. Overview

The USA Gymnastics Xcel program was developed as an alternative competitive program offering individual flexibility to coaches and gymnasts. The goal of Xcel is to provide gymnasts of varying abilities and commitment levels the opportunity for a rewarding gymnastics experience.

ATHLETES MUST HAVE A USA GYMNASTICS ATHLETE MEMBERSHIP TO COMPETE AT A SANCTIONED EVENT.

- A. If a gymnast has never competed in the USA Gymnastics Development Program (DP) Levels 1-10 and wishes to compete in any Division of the Xcel Program, she will need to register as an Athlete Member to participate.
- B. If a gymnast already has an Athlete Membership she is not required to change or purchase a new membership for Xcel. However, she must change to her appropriate Xcel division. This can be done on the athlete profile online through USA Gymnastics.
- C. Athletes competing in both Xcel and the DP Program in the same competition year must have the appropriate Xcel division OR DP level box checked on their athlete profile before participating in a sanctioned USA Gymnastics competition.

A gymnast may compete in a maximum of two (2) State Championships per competitive year (one per season), either at the same or higher division.

A gymnast is not required to compete in the All-Around. If she chooses not to compete in the AA, she must touch the event(s) she is NOT competing. Her scores may count towards team scores.

The Xcel program includes five competitive Divisions – Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, and Diamond.

Xcel competitions are conducted throughout the United States and are organized by the USA Gymnastics State and Regional Administrative Committees. Each state has the jurisdiction to determine its state calendar, according to the needs of its members. An Xcel COMPETITIVE YEAR is defined as the period from August 1 through July 31. A COMPETITIVE SEASON is defined as that period from the first designated qualifying competition through the culminating Championships at each division.

II. Age Requirements, Entry Divisions, and Mobility Scores

- A. In the spirit of good sportsmanship, fairness to all athletes and competitive balance, the mobility system within the Xcel Program should be followed in the manner that it was intended:
 1. Before moving up a competitive division, every athlete should show proficiency at her current competitive division.
 2. Once a high level of proficiency is achieved at the athlete's current competitive division, she should strive to move up to the next competitive division, as long as it is done safely.
 3. For athletes to repeat a competitive division with the intent to gain an advantage over other competitors or teams IS NOT in the spirit of the Xcel Program or youth sports in general.
 4. No mandate scores are permitted at any competitive division.
 5. The Xcel program's purpose is to provide competitive opportunities for all athletes, regardless of their age, ability level, or training commitment in terms of hours and/or finances.
- B. Age Determination and Regulations
 1. All gymnasts must reach the minimum age for the division before competing in any USA Gymnastics sanctioned competition (see chart on the next page).

Example: Bronze State Championships date is Dec. 1; the last Bronze State Qualifier is November 17; the gymnast will turn the minimum age for Bronze (5 yrs. old) on November 28th. She is ineligible to compete in the qualifying meet, and therefore does not have the opportunity to qualify to the Bronze State Championships that season.
 2. For invitationals and qualifying meets below the State Championships, the Meet Director may determine the age divisions and must publish such information in the pre-meet information.
 3. For all meets under the jurisdiction of the State or Regional Administrative Committees, the respective committee may determine the method of determining age divisions. There are two options:
 - a. Age groups for the season: established by specific ages (i.e., 8-10 yr. olds, 11-12, etc.).
 - 1) In this case, the age divisions should be determined and published PRIOR to the competitive SEASON and the only adjustments that may be made during the season are sub-divisions of the age groups.
 - 2) The gymnast's age for the competitive season is determined by the date of the final day of competition at the culminating championship meet for that level. Exception: The gymnast must have reached the minimum age for her level prior to entering any qualifying competition.
 - 3) The gymnast must compete with the age division as designated for the entire season.
 - 4) Published results MAY NOT include the gymnast's date of birth.

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- b. Age groups for each competition: established by dividing the athletes by actual birth date into approximately equal groups according to a pre-determined number of age divisions or by a pre-determined maximum number of athletes per age division.
 - 1) Meet Directors must publish or post online the meet schedule with age divisions as soon as possible after the entry deadline.
 - 2) Published results MAY NOT include the gymnast's date of birth.
4. If a gymnast competes in the wrong age division, her scores are invalid for the meet (may not be used for All-Around, Individual Events or Team awards); however, the score achieved may be used for division mobility.
 - If, due to valid unforeseen circumstances, a gymnast is unable to compete with her designated age group, she may compete on another day (or in another session) with the approval of the SACC. She will not be eligible for ANY awards. Her score may be used for mobility or qualification purposes (if qualification is by score, not placement or percentage in a given age group) to the next meet.

XCEL AGE/ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND MOBILITY SCORES OVERVIEW CHART

Division	Minimum Age Requirement	Pre-requisite Scores	Entry Division from the DP Program
Bronze	Reached 5 th birthday	None	DP Levels 1,2
Silver	Reached 6 th birthday	None	DP Levels 1,2,3
Gold	Reached 7 th birthday	31.00 AA at Silver Division or 8.0 IES	DP Levels 3,4
Platinum	Reached 8 th birthday	31.00 AA at Gold Division or 8.0 IES	DP Levels 5,6,7
Diamond	Reached 9 th birthday	31.00 AA at Platinum Division or 8.0 IES	DP Levels 7,8,9,10

* See for specifics of dropping back in the next section

C. Entry into Xcel Divisions

1. Gymnasts who have no previous competitive experience may enter at Bronze or Silver, at their coach's discretion. The Gold Division is NOT an entry division. The Mobility Score from Silver to Gold is 31.00 AA or 8.0 IES.
2. Gymnasts currently competing in the Xcel program must follow the chart above for mobility.
3. Any athlete who has previously competed in the Xcel Program, but has been inactive for one or more years, must contact their State Administrative Committee Chairman for proper entry regulations. The options are:
 - a. Remain at the Division at which they last competed.
 - b. Move up one Division if they achieved the mobility score during their last season.
 - c. Move down one Division without petitioning.
4. Any gymnast who has had previous competitive experience in programs outside of USA Gymnastics must petition to enter at Gold and above by submitting a formal written request to the State Administrative Committee.
5. Any gymnast who has had previous competitive experience in USA Gymnastics and who is a minimum of 12 years of age is eligible to petition by submitting a formal written request to the State Administrative Committee for entry into Platinum or Diamond. The petition must be accompanied by a video that demonstrates her skill level.
 - Athletes (US citizens or Non-US Citizens) who have resided outside the US, have competitive experience outside the US, and now reside in the US, are eligible to petition by submitting a formal written request to the Regional Xcel Chairman for entry into the Xcel Program at Platinum or Diamond. The petition must be accompanied by a video that demonstrates the skill level for which she is submitting the petition and proof of residency outside the US. For additional information on foreign athlete participation, please refer to Chapter 2, page 26.
6. Since the Xcel program is an alternative/separate program, IT CANNOT BE USED TO SATISFY MOBILITY REQUIREMENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (DP).

D. Dropping Back through the Divisions

1. The State Administrative Committee must determine, prior to the beginning of the competitive year, a designated "declaration" date for each division. The highest division in which the athlete competes in a sanctioned competition after the "declaration" date designates her division for the remainder of the current season.
2. If the athlete competed at an Xcel State Championships (or higher) and wishes to drop back through the divisions, her coach must submit a "reason for change" letter.
 - a. For Bronze, Silver, and Gold Divisions, the "reason for change" letter is sent to the State Administrative Committee Chairman to be considered by the State Administrative Committee.
 - b. For Platinum and Diamond Divisions, the "reason for change" letter is sent to the Regional Technical Committee Chairman to be considered by the Regional Administrative Committee.

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- E. If a DP Level 8 or below athlete wishes to enter the Xcel Program in a Division below the allowable Division, her coach may submit a “reason for change” letter to the State Administrative Committee Chairman for approval. If a DP Level 9 or 10 athlete wishes to enter the Xcel Program in a Division below the allowable Division, her coach may submit a “reason for change” letter to the Regional Technical Committee Chairman for approval.
- Valid reasons would include injury, illness, or other extenuating circumstances that would have prevented the athlete from continuing to train at the level at which they previously competed.

III. Other Competition Experiences

Competition Experience Policies

- A. Individual Event Specialists: the mobility score for advancement to the next division for Individual Event Specialists at Gold is 8.0 per event to move to Platinum, and at Platinum is 8.0 per event to move to Diamond.
- B. Athletes who are limited in the number of events in which they can perform due to a permanent physical handicap (verified by a physician) may petition to qualify to higher division by achieving an average score equal to the average of the All-Around qualifying score for that division.
- C. Status for competing as an IES to qualify to the next higher meet must be declared at the time of entry to the qualifying meet, not during or after the conclusion of the competition.

IV. General Procedures for Petitions for USA Gymnastics Xcel Competitions

- A. Petitions may be considered for the following reasons:
- Injury, illness or family tragedy (e.g., death, natural disaster)
- B. If an athlete is injured prior to a qualifying meet, but is capable of competing in one, two or three events, she may compete in the qualifying meet without jeopardizing her right to petition to the next competition.
- C. The coach (or club administrator) is responsible for submitting all necessary documentation for the petition on behalf of the petitioning athlete.
- D. Entry fees for petitioned athletes should be submitted by the entry deadline. If the petition is denied, the Meet Director must refund the entry fee within three weeks.
- E. Injury Petition Forms are posted on the USA Gymnastics website under Women’s Program – Forms – Petition Forms: <https://usagym.org/PDFs/Forms/Women/injury2021.pdf>
- F. Specific procedures for State and Regional competitions are in the sections for those events.

Competition

I. Types of Competition

Overview of types of competition available to the divisions and the qualifying scores to enter:

Division	Local	State Championships	Regional Championships
Bronze	X	To be determined by the State Administrative Committee	To be determined by the Regional Administrative Committee
Silver	X	To be determined by the State Administrative Committee	To be determined by the Regional Administrative Committee
Gold	X	To be determined by the State Administrative Committee	To be determined by the Regional Administrative Committee
Platinum	X	To be determined by the State Administrative Committee	To be determined by the Regional Administrative Committee
Diamond	X	To be determined by the State Administrative Committee	To be determined by the Regional Administrative Committee

II. General Regulations

A. The State Administrative Committee determines:

1. If State Championships for all Xcel divisions will be conducted.
2. If sub-divisions within Divisions will be offered, such as first year competitors and veterans, or if a team competition will be conducted separately from the State individual competition.
3. The qualifying requirements for State Championships.
4. The competitive schedule for State Championships.
 - a. It is recommended that a reasonable period of preparation be provided between seasons.
 - b. May conduct one annual State Championships, or one Fall and one Spring State Championships.
5. Number of Judges used for USA Gymnastics Sanctioned Competitions.
6. Qualified Judges: all Xcel Divisions may be judged by an optional rated judge member. Compulsory rated judge members may judge Bronze, Silver and Gold divisions, and non-rated competitive coach members may judge Bronze and Silver divisions. The State Administrative Committee determines if any additional criteria will be used for State qualifying competitions and State Championships.
 - a. A minimum of Level 9 rating is recommended for Diamond division.
 - b. If there is a lack of qualified judges, the assignor must contact the RTCC for permission to assign a lower rated judge, if necessary.
7. Entry Fees for State Championships:
 - a. Maximum being \$85.00 (Bronze, Silver, Gold)
 - b. Maximum being \$95.00 (Platinum and Diamond).
 - c. Unless approved change by the Regional Administrative Committee Chairman.
8. Individual Awards for State Championships: with a minimum of 40% for individual awards.
9. Team Awards for each Division: (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, Diamond). Divisions should NOT be combined for Team Awards.
 - If a state does not have enough gymnasts in one or more Divisions to have a team competition, Divisions may then be combined for team awards. In order to do this, the State Administrative Committee Chair must request permission from the Regional Administrative Committee Chair.

B. The Regional Administrative Committee determines:

1. If Regional Championships will be conducted and which divisions will participate.
2. The qualifying procedures/requirements, format and schedule of the Regional Championships.
3. Individual and team awards for the Regional Championships.
4. Number, rating, and selection procedure for judges for the Regional Championships.

C. Local Meets

1. Local Meets are not under the organizational responsibilities of the State Administrative Committee; i.e., Meet Directors may set dates, entry fee and gate fee, may contract their officials (using the USA Gymnastics Contract) or by requesting the services of the state's judging contractor, and may conduct team competition.
 - Includes dual/triangular meets between clubs, inter-squads, and invitationals.
2. May be used for:
 - a. mobility only, or
 - b. qualification to the State Championships, at the discretion of the State Administrative Committee.

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3. May have only one club (team) competing to obtain a Sanction.
 4. Any non-rated competitive coach member is only allowed to judge Bronze and Silver Divisions. All other Divisions must be judged by a judge member (see chart on page 45). The State Administrative Committee determines if any additional criteria will be used for State qualifying competitions and State Championships.
 - a. For any competition using only a one-judge panel, it is recommended to have a floating Meet Referee, if possible.
 - b. For all Divisions, one-judge panels are allowed for mobility purposes.
 5. Results from local meets need to be mailed or e-mailed to the State Administrative Committee Chairman or designated State Administrative Committee representative and the Meet Director of the State Championships.
- D. State Championships
1. Are under the **total** jurisdiction of the State Administrative Committee and State Administrative Committee Chairman.
 - The format and number of athletes must be approved by the RXCC and RTCC.
 - The Meet Director must utilize the USA Gymnastics Meet Reservation System for registration (not to accept payments) and utilize the pre-printed Coaches' sign-in sheets during the competition.
 2. May be conducted for all divisions, at the discretion of the State Administrative Committee.
 3. May be conducted in the fall and/or spring for all divisions, at the discretion of the State Administrative Committee.
 - For those divisions that have a Regional competition, the respective State Meet must be scheduled a minimum of three weeks prior to the Regional meet. Any deviation to that guideline must be approved by the Regional Administrative Committee Chairman.
 4. The State Administrative Committee determines the number of judges per panel, selects the judges and Meet Referee, and may determine the event assignments. It is recommended that the State Administrative Chairman ask the Meet Referee to make the event assignments.
 5. A current Xcel gymnast who competed in the same division the previous year and competed in the previous year's Regional Championships (and fulfilled the qualification requirements or achieved a score equal to or greater than the current year's respective State Championships qualifying score) may directly enter the current year's State Championships in her respective division.
 6. Entry forms and fees for Xcel Regional meets must be filed and paid (with a club/company check), unless an electronic entry system is in place, to the USA Gymnastics designated official at the qualifying meet, who will forward them to the Meet Director of the next meet. Entries for Regional meets must be submitted to the designated USA Gymnastics personnel at the respective State Championships. Each club must be prepared to pay for all their qualifiers with one company check per level.
 7. PETITIONS TO STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS (ALSO SEE GENERAL RULES FOR PETITIONS - CHAPTER 6 PAGE 49)
 - a. NO petitions are allowed if the qualification to the State Championships is by a percent of a percent or a designated number of each age division and not by score.
 - b. If a gymnast is unable to compete at the Sectional or any local State-qualifying meet (or cannot compete in the All-Around at State Championships due to injury or illness prior to or during the State Championships), her coach may petition the State Administrative Committee Chairman to allow the athlete to directly enter the State Championships, if the following requirements are met and documentation is included with the petition form:
 - 1) If there is a qualifying score: A photocopy of the results of one sanctioned meet from the current season showing a score, which is equal to or greater than the State qualifying score.
 - If the gymnast competed in the same division in the previous season and qualified to the State Championships or above, she may petition with the previous year scores from State or above meets.
 - 2) Written request from the coach.
 - 3) A Licensed Medical Professional's written verification of the illness or injury and date of release for return to gymnastics activity.
 - c. If an athlete who is unable to compete at any Sectional or local State-qualifying meets in the current season (or cannot compete AA at such events) due to injury or illness and is also lacking scores from last year's season due to injuries but has previously qualified to and competed in the State or above division competitions at the same level, an injury petition may be considered under special circumstances by the State Administrative Committee Chairman. If necessary, the Regional Technical Committee Chairman and the Regional Xcel Committee Chairman will be consulted. The petition must include:
 - 1) A copy of meet results from the previous State or Regional competition with scores, which are at least one point higher than the current State qualifying score.
 - 2) A current video.
 - 3) Written request from the coach or parent.
 - 4) A Licensed Medical Professional's written verification of the illness or injury and date of release for return to gymnastics activity.
 - d. Petition Deadlines: petitions to the State Championships must be received no later than the Wednesday after the last qualifying meet is held. Petitions must be sent to the State Administrative Committee Chairman by e-mail, Express Mail or FAX.

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- 1) The petitioner will be notified of the approval or denial of the petition by the State Administrative Committee Chairman no later than one week before the competition.
 - 2) The State Administrative Committee Chairman will notify the Meet Director of the approval or denial of the petition no later than one week before the competition.
 - 3) If a petition is accepted but the gymnast is unable to compete, the coach **MUST** notify the Meet Director and the State Administrative Committee Chairman.
8. USA Gymnastics Xcel Awards for State Championships must be ordered from the national medal company by the State Administrative Committee Chairman, or designee. Awards should be ordered a minimum four (4) weeks before the competition.
9. Results from State Championships need to be mailed or e-mailed to the Regional Administrative and Regional Technical Committee Chairmen, Regional Meet Director, and the State Chairman of the respective state within 72 hours.
10. The State Championships Director must send a Financial Report to the State Administrative Committee Chairman within 60 days of the completion of the meet.
- E. Regional Championships
1. Are under the **total** jurisdiction of the Regional Administrative Committee.
 - a. The format and number of athletes must be approved by the Regional Xcel Committee Chairman and Regional Technical Committee Chairman.
 - b. Entry fees for Xcel Regional Championships are determined by the Regional Administrative Committee and must be approved by the National Administrative Committee Chairman.
 - c. The Meet Director must utilize the USA Gymnastics Meet Reservation System for registration (not to accept payments) and utilize the pre-printed Coaches' sign-in sheets during the competition.
 2. May be conducted for all Xcel divisions.
 3. State team competition may be conducted as a separate competition (with a designated number of athletes qualifying by rank order) or as part of the individual competition in which each state designates which individual's scores will count toward the State team score.
 4. If a state has no qualifiers in a particular division to Regionals, the gymnast with the highest AA from the State Championships (from any of the age divisions) will be invited to compete at the Regional meet, regardless of the score.
 5. The Regional Administrative Committee may guarantee up to 120 gymnasts to Regional Championships if there is an insufficient number of athletes who achieved the qualifying score.
 6. The Regional Administrative Committee selects the judges and determines the number of judges per panel.
 7. If the number of athletes in one age division requires that two sessions of competition be conducted, the Meet Director shall conduct a random draw by team to fill the sessions.
 8. Regional Meet Directors must send regional meet information to the State Championships Director, with copies to the Regional Xcel Committee Chairman, Regional Technical Committee Chairman and Regional Administrative Committee Chairman at least one week prior to the State Championships.
 9. Entry forms and fees for Regional Championships will be collected by the USA Gymnastics designated official at the State Championships and sent to the Regional Meet Director, unless an electronic entry system is in place.
 10. Petitions to Regional Championships (Also See General Rules for Petitions Chapter 6, page 49)
 - a. There are NO petitions to Regional Championships if qualification is by a percentage or by specific number.
 - b. If a gymnast is unable to compete at the State Championships (or cannot compete in the All-Around at State Championships) due to injury or illness prior to or during the State Championships, her coach may petition the Regional Technical Committee Chairman (or Regional Technical Assistant, if so designated) to allow the athlete to directly enter the Regional Championships, if the following requirements are met and documentation is included with the petition form:
 - 1) A photocopy of at least one pre-State, sanctioned meet results from the current season (at the division to which they are petitioning) showing a score at least one point (1.00) greater than the regional qualifying score OR
 - If the gymnast competed in the same division in the previous year's Xcel Regional Championships and her AA score was at least one point (1.00) greater than the current Regional qualifying score, she may submit her last year's Regional score as her pre-State meet score.
 - 2) A Licensed Medical Professional's written verification of the illness or injury and date of release for return to gymnastics activity.
 - 3) Written request from the coach.
 - c. If an athlete who is unable to compete at the State Championships (or cannot compete AA at State Championships) due to injury or illness is also lacking scores from both the current and last year's season due to injuries but has previously qualified to and competed in Xcel Regionals at the same division, an injury petition for the same division may be considered under special circumstances by the Regional Technical Committee Chairman and the Regional Xcel Committee Chairman. If necessary, the State Administrative Committee Chairman and the National Chairmen (Xcel and Technical Committee) will be consulted. The petition must include:
 - 1) A copy of the meet results must be included with the petition form. The scores from the previous Regional competition must be at least one point higher than the current Regional qualifying score for the division.
 - 2) A current video that is sent to both Regional officers.

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- 3) A Licensed Medical Professional's written verification of the illness or injury and date of release for return to gymnastics activity.
- d. The Regional Technical Committee Chairman (or her/his appointee) will handle the petition, in consultation with the Regional Xcel Committee Chairman and the State Administrative Committee Chairman. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Regional Technical Committee Chairman will make the decision.
- e. Deadlines for Petitions to Regional Championships:
 - 1) Coaches must notify their Regional Administrative Committee Chairman AND their Regional Technical Committee Chairman by FAX or e-mail NO LATER THAN the Monday following the State Championships of any athletes they intend to petition to their Regional meet.
 - 2) The complete Injury/Illness petition form (found online at <https://usagym.org/PDFs/Forms/Women/injury2015.pdf>). The request in writing from the coach and official results are due the Monday following the State Championships by 5:00pm local time. All other required documents (physician's note) are due the Wednesday following the State Championships by 5:00pm local time. Also send a copy to the State Administrative Committee Chairman.
 - 3) The Entry form and fees must be sent directly to the Meet Director, specifically marked as "Petition pending". If the petition is denied, the Regional Technical Committee Chairman will contact the Meet Director, who will refund the entry fee.
 - 4) If the gymnast was injured at the State Championships, the entry fees and form should be given to the USA Gymnastics officer who is designated to collect Regional entries at the State Championships, unless an electronic entry system is in place. (Fees will be returned within three weeks if the petition is not accepted.)
 - 5) The petitioner will be notified of the approval or denial of the petition by the Regional Technical Committee Chairman a minimum of one week prior to the Regional meet.
 - 6) The Regional Technical Committee Chairman will notify the Meet Director of the approval or denial of the petition.
 - 7) If a petition is accepted, but the gymnast is unable to compete, the coach must IMMEDIATELY notify both the Meet Director and the respective Regional Technical Committee Chairman.
11. Awards:

USA Gymnastics Xcel Awards for Regional Championships must be ordered from the national medal company by the Regional Administrative Committee Chairman (or designee). Awards should be ordered a minimum of four (4) weeks before the competition.
12. Results of Regional Meets must be e-mailed within 72 hours to:
 - State Administrative Chairmen in that region, the Regional Xcel, Regional Technical, and Regional Administrative Committee Chairmen.
13. The Meet Director must send the Financial Report form within 45 days (or otherwise designated time) to the Regional Administrative Committee Chairman.

Apparatus Requirements for Xcel Competitions

I. General Considerations

- A. Athlete safety guidelines, as listed in the *USA Gymnastics Safety Handbook*, should always be considered.
- B. It is recommended that there be a clearance of 5' to 6' from one apparatus to any other. This includes corresponding mat area or any other obstruction, i.e., other apparatus, walls, pillars, etc.
- C. It is recommended that there be a minimum of a 20-foot ceiling height for all USA Gymnastics sanctioned competitions.
- D. Equipment specifications, including vault runway thickness, must be published in the pre-meet information.
 - Exact bar measurements must be listed on bid forms for sectional and above meets.
- E. Bronze, Silver, and Gold gymnasts may set the equipment to facilitate the exercise within the standards listed on each event below.
- F. All equipment and matting used at a USA Gymnastics sanctioned competition must be manufactured by a recognized equipment manufacturer.
- G. Matting Height Specifications:
 1. COMPETITION LANDING MATS FOR VAULT, BARS AND BEAM
 - a. One 10-12 cm (4") competition landing mat is required; a second 10-12 cm (4") may be placed on top of the required mat for compulsory and optional competition. If a second 10-12 cm (4") mat is used for Platinum or Diamond, it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.
 - b. Maximum height is 24 cm (9").
 - c. 20 cm (8") competition landing mats are also allowed (but are not required).
 - 1) For vault, if 20 cm (8") mats are used, it is recommended that the Meet Director make every effort to also provide one 10-12 cm (4") competition landing mat.

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- 2) For Bars and Beam, in order to use a 20 cm (8") mat, the apparatus must be capable of being raised to the FIG maximum height allowance (High Bar – 246 cm; Beam – 125 cm).
- d. A 3 cm (1¼") base mat must be used if a 10 cm (4") competition landing mat is used. When using 12 (4") – 20 cm (8") mats, a base mat is not required.
 - The 3 cm (1¼") base mat may be placed underneath or on top of the competition landing mat.
- e. The area under the apparatus and/or in the landing area must be matted with competition landing mats that are uniform in height.

H. Springboard/Mounting Specifications

1. Only unaltered manufactured vaulting boards are approved for USA Gymnastics competitions. The height of the board (22cm ± 1.5cm) is measured from the floor to the highest point of the board, including the covering. All springboards meeting the stated specifications are allowed; however, it is required to provide a springboard with coil springs.
Exceptions:
 - a. Bronze and Silver may use a manufactured "Junior" vaulting board.
 - b. Xcel Bronze, Silver, and Gold athletes may use alternative springboard apparatus, provided they are manufactured by a gymnastics equipment manufacturer. The apparatus should resemble the shape of a vault board, with a maximum of 38 cm (15 inches) at the high end and a maximum of 10 cm (4 inches) at the low end. The surface producing the "spring" may be other than the traditional coil springs, such as an air bladder or small trampoline bed.
 - c. If an alternative springboard is used at Platinum and Diamond division in a USA Gymnastics sanctioned event, the vault is considered VOID.
 - d. All divisions may also use a manufactured mat shaped like a springboard (Mount trainer/mount mat).
 - An inflatable rebounding device cannot be used for mounting purposes.
2. Plywood is not permitted underneath the board.
3. All Meet Directors must arrange to have boards that accommodate gymnasts of varying weights. Any boards brought in to a competition must be assigned to an event and must be available to all gymnasts in that session for warm-up and competition. The following 3-4 spring configurations for the springboard have been approved and may be utilized in USA Gymnastics sanctioned competitions:

4 COIL SPRING PLACEMENT (OPTION 1)



4 COIL SPRING PLACEMENT (OPTION 2)



4 COIL SPRING PLACEMENT (OPTION 3)



3 COIL SPRING PLACEMENT



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4. A board used to mount Bars or Beam may be placed on the competition landing mat(s) (one or two 10-12 cm (4") mats or one 20 cm (8")). The board may also be placed on the allowable competition landing mats plus the supplemental matting of 5-10 cm (sting mat or 4" throw mat type skill cushions).
 - a. For Bronze, Silver and Gold divisions: any combination of manufactured mats, skill cushions or padded spotting/skill blocks may be used for mounting purposes.
 - Any manufactured mounting apparatus may be placed on top of the mats.
 - b. For all divisions: a manufactured mount mat (mount trainer), spotting block, or folded panel mat may be used instead of a board for mounting purposes.
 - c. The board (or mounting apparatus) must be removed as soon as possible after the gymnast has mounted.
 - When performing the uneven bar mount of glide swing, then back hip pullover (or jump front support mount), the mounting apparatus must be removed as soon as possible after the jump into the glide swing.
 - d. For all divisions, the board MAY NOT be placed directly on a 20 cm (8") skill cushion for the purpose of mounting.
 - An inflatable rebounding device cannot be used for mounting purposes.
5. For Xcel, the gymnast may stand (without a board) on one or two 10 -12 cm (4") landing mats or one 20 cm (8") mat (with or without a 3 cm (1¼") base mat placed under or on top of the competition landing mat.)
 - a. The gymnast may also stand on an "up to 20 cm (8-inch) skill cushion" (sting, throw mat or 20 cm (8") skill cushion) that is placed on the competition landing mat(s).
 - b. For Bronze, Silver and Gold, any combination of competition landing mats and skill cushions may be used to facilitate the mount.
- I. Make sure all reasonable safety measures are considered. Examples:
 1. Each competitive area must have its own physical space and may not overlap with another competitive area.
 2. There cannot be any obstructions on the Floor Exercise Area.
 3. There must be sufficient room for mounting, dismounting, and vaulting areas.
 4. Procedures for the removal of blood and disinfection of the apparatus: A solution of 1 part bleach and 10 parts water (or an Anti-viral spray disinfectant) should be available for the removal/disinfection of blood from the apparatus or matting.
- J. Conversion for inches to centimeters:

Approx. ¾ inch	=	2 cm
4 inches	=	10 cm
4½ inches	=	12 cm
8 inches	=	20 cm
9 inches	=	24 cm

II. Vault

- A. Bronze Vault apparatus: Mat stack for Bronze Vault 1 and Bronze Vault 2
Mat stack / Matting System– minimum of 40 cm (16 inches) in height (± 2.5 cm (1 inch)) placed lengthwise. Any combination of manufactured competition landing mats, skill cushions and/or port-a-pit may be used; however, the top layer of matting MUST be a minimum of a 10 cm (4-inch) skill cushion or the port-a-pit, an inflatable mat may also be used in the configuration of matting; however, the uppermost landing surface must be a minimum of a 10 cm (4-inch) skill cushion. The maximum height of the mat stack is 120 cm (approximately 48" ± 2.5 cm (1 inch)).
 1. The mat stack may be placed on top of a solid foam pit.
 2. An additional mat (minimum of 10 cm (4")) must be placed on the floor behind the mat stack.
 3. All mats used in forming the mat stack must be a minimum of 5' wide and 10' long.
 4. An unfolded panel mat (or any manufactured matting to facilitate a firm surface) may be placed on top of the uppermost surface of the mat stack/resi pit if necessary to provide a more stable landing surface. This mat must cover the entire uppermost surface.
 5. The top surface may be either a "squared" (standard 8" mat corners) or "curved" (similar to a table trainer) on the front edge.

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B. Silver Vault apparatus: Mat stack / matting system for Silver Vault.

Mat stack / matting system – minimum of 60 cm (24 inches) in height (± 2.5 cm (1 inch)), placed sideways. Any combination of competition landing mats, skill cushions and/or port-a-pit may be used; however, the top layer of matting MUST be a minimum of a 10 cm (4-inch) skill cushion or the port-a-pit, an inflatable mat may also be used in the configuration of matting; however, the uppermost landing surface must be a minimum of a 10 cm (4-inch) skill cushion. The maximum height of the mat stack is 120 cm (approximately 48", ± 2.5 cm (1 inch)).

1. The mat stack may be placed on top of a solid foam pit.
2. An additional mat, minimum 6' x 12' x 4" (10cm) must be placed on the floor behind the mat stack.
3. All mats used in forming the mat stack must be 5' wide and a minimum of 5' long, ± 2 inches.
4. An unfolded panel mat (or any manufactured matting to facilitate a firm surface) may be placed on top of the uppermost surface of the mat stack/resi pit if necessary to provide a more stable landing surface. This mat must cover the entire uppermost surface.
5. The top surface may be either a "squared" (standard 8" mat corners) or "curved" (similar to a table trainer) on the front edge.
6. A sting mat may be used on top of the mat stack.
 - EXCEPTION: A sting mat is NOT allowed on top of an inflatable mat. The uppermost landing surface when using an inflatable mat must be a minimum of a 10 cm (4-inch) skill cushion.

C. Gold, Platinum, and Diamond Vault Apparatus

The vaulting table is required for Gold, Platinum, and Diamond. The maximum vaulting table height is 135 cm (± 1 cm). If using a vault table with two uprights, both must be set at the same height. The height is determined by measuring the distance from the floor to the center top of the vault table.

1. The center top of the vault table is determined by measuring 68 cm from the back of the vault table. Tape of any kind, including athletic tape, may NOT be placed on top of the table at any time during warm-up or competition.
2. If the vault runway is on a raised platform, the vault table must also be placed on a raised surface of the same height and the measurement of the vault table should be taken from the runway surface to the center top of the vault table, rather than from the floor.
3. All manufactured models of the vault table (including "retro-fit" tables that are inserted into the uprights of the old horse) are allowed for competition, provided that they are capable of being adjusted to the various height specifications allowed for Xcel athletes. Matting must be used to cover the upright of the vault table as well as to cover any weights placed on the vault base for stability.
- d. Athletes in all divisions may use the vault table at any manufacturer setting.

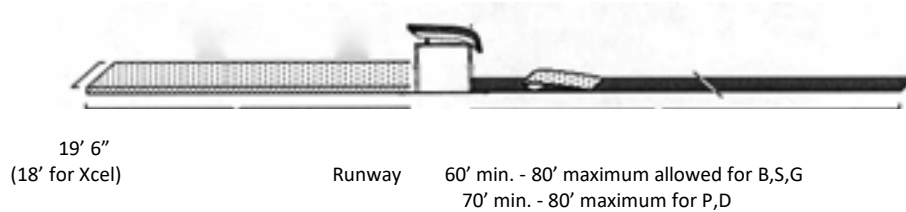
D. Runway

1. Measurement is from the front of the vaulting apparatus. The runway should be a clearly defined area that provides a flat, consistent surface, free of cracks, obstructions or seams. The Meet Director must provide a tape measure, which must be extended the length of the runway in order for the gymnasts to find the point at which to start their run. Minimum width of the runway should be the width of the board.
2. Runway specifications:
 - a. Lengths:
 - 1) A 70' minimum, 80' maximum runway is allowed for Platinum and Diamond.
 - 2) A 60' minimum, 80' maximum runway is allowed for Bronze, Silver, and Gold.
 - b. Thickness: A minimum thickness of 3.5 cm (1 and 3/8 inches) (± 3 cm or 1/8 in.) is required for the vault runway at Platinum and Diamond.
 - c. Athletic tape or Velcro strips (no chalk) may be placed on the vault runway, provided that such markings are removed no later than the end of the rotation. Maximum width of Velcro strip or athletic tape is 5 cm (2"), maximum length is 3 feet.
 - d. For the safety of the athlete, the Meet Director must securely fasten the vault runway to the floor with tape or Velcro.
3. A hand placement mat may be placed on the runway (but not on the board) ONLY for vaults that require placing the hands on the runway in front of the board (Round-off or Front handspring entry.) The hand placement mat must be manufactured by a gymnastics equipment manufacturer and cannot exceed 5 cm (2 inches) in height. No other type matting is allowed.
 - a. All Meet Directors of Diamond competitions MUST provide a minimum of one manufactured Round-off hand placement mat.
 - b. If the Meet Director cannot supply the above-mentioned Round-off hand placement mats, they may allow clubs to bring their own, provided the mat meets the criteria as stated above.
 - c. If a Round-off entry hand placement mat is used, it must be placed Velcro-side down on the runway.

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- E. Use of the "VAULTING BOARD SAFETY ZONE MAT" is REQUIRED for all Front handspring onto the board and Round-off entry vaults executed at Diamond division competitions. The safety zone mat must be placed snugly around the board so that there is no space between the board and the safety zone.
1. No extra matting is to be placed between the Round-off entry mat (Safety Zone mat) and the vault table.
 2. The Safety Zone mat may be used for all other vaults (not Front Handspring onto the board and Round-off entry vaults) for all Xcel Divisions. In this example, the Safety Zone mat does not have to be placed snugly around the board.

Example of fully matted landing area:



- F. Gold, Platinum, and Diamond Area required to be matted

Specifications

1. 3 cm (1¼ inch) Base mats: If 10 cm (4") competition landing mats are used, the following 3 cm (1¼") base mats are required:
 - a. A minimum of 6' by 18' for Bronze, Silver, and Gold.
 - b. A minimum of 8' x 18' for Platinum and Diamond.
 - c. If 12 cm (4") or 20 cm (8") landing mats are used, base mats are not required.
- b. Competition Landing Mats (CLMs):
 - a. For Bronze division, refer to section II.A.1. for required matting.
 - b. For Silver division, refer to section II.B.1.e. for required matting.
 - c. For Gold division, a minimum of a 6' by 12' matted area is required.
 - d. For Platinum and Diamond, a minimum of an 8' x 15½' matted area is required.
- c. For Platinum and Diamond, whenever a 10 cm (4") supplemental mat ("throw" mat) is used in addition to the competition landing mat(s), it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.
- d. For USA Gymnastics sanctioned Xcel competitions up to and including the State Championships for all divisions, one (10-12 cm (4") or 20 cm (8")) or two (10-12 cm (4")) competition landing mats (plus the maximum allowable skill cushions) will be allowed to be placed on top of a solid-foam pit provided that this information is stated in the meet information sent to the participating clubs.
 - Landing into a "LOOSE-FOAM PIT" AREA IS NOT ALLOWED FOR COMPETITION, unless the pit area is covered by a stable (wooden or metal) surface. Exception – this is allowable if the landing surface is deemed firm by the Meet Referee and Meet Director prior to the competition.

III. Uneven Bars

A. Apparatus Specifications

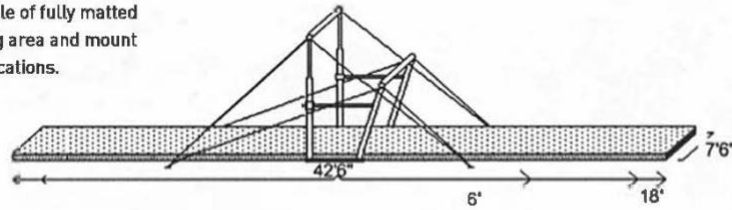
1. Based on the best interest of the gymnast's safety, it is permissible to adjust the High Bar and/or Low Bar to a height which exceeds (or is lower than) the FIG specifications. Regardless of the measurement, the rails must be adjusted to a position where the spin lock may be fully tightened and meets the manufacturer's recommended safety parameters.
 - a. The distance (spread) between the bars may be set to the preference of the athlete, provided that after such adjustment, the bars remain within the allowances identified by the manufacturer of the apparatus.
 - For equipment that has a slider mechanism on both bars, it is strongly recommended that the low bar slider remain in the highest position, and that adjustments are made only with the high bars slider. This will expedite changing of bar sets during competition.
 - b. A single bar may be used for Bronze competitions, provided that the single bar meets the current low bar specifications. This information must be included in the pre-meet information.
2. Fiberglass rails with wood covering are required for all sanctioned meets.
3. No other substance besides chalk and water may be placed on the uneven bar rails.
4. Round fiberglass rails are allowed at all USA Gymnastics competitions. Diameter: 39 mm ± 1 mm.
 - AAI "soft blue rails" are allowed but must be listed in the pre-meet information.

B. Mount specifications:

1. Platinum and Diamond: 18' minimum is allowed. (No maximum).
2. Bronze, Silver, and Gold: 6' minimum is allowed. (No maximum).

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Example of fully matted landing area and mount specifications.

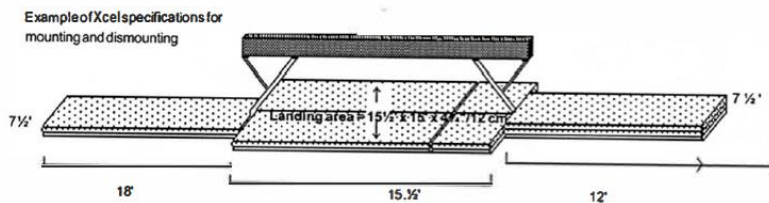


C. Area required to be matted:

1. The matted area under bars must be:
 - a. a minimum of 6' by 15' for Bronze.
 - b. a minimum of 6' by 24' for Silver and Gold.
 - c. a minimum of 7½' by 36' for Platinum and Diamond.
2. For Platinum and Diamond, whenever a 10 cm (4") supplemental mat ("throw" mat) is used in addition to the competition landing mat(s) for the dismount, it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.
3. If a 10 cm (4") mat (skill cushion) is placed on the competition landing mat(s) for dismount purposes, an additional 10 cm (4") or 20 cm (8") skill cushion may be used for the purpose of protection on a release element; however, the additional skill cushion must be removed immediately after the release element is performed.
 - An alternate skill cushion made of softer foam is allowed at invitationals and is REQUIRED at State Championships and above. The mat must be a minimum of 4 ft. x 6 ft. and eight (8) inches high for "C" and more difficult bar releases performed in the Diamond Division ONLY (to be placed under the gymnast during the release and immediately removed). This is NOT allowed for dismounts or landings on any event.
4. When a raised surface is needed to spot release moves, it is recommended that a spotting block or folded mat be used; however, there is no penalty for standing on the board, provided that the board (or spotting device) is removed immediately after the release move is performed.
 - A 0.30 deduction will be taken if the spotting device is not removed.

IV. Balance Beam

- A. Specifications – The height of the beam is measured from the floor to the top of the beam. For all competitions, the balance beam legs must be placed on the floor or a stable surface.
 1. Height specifications:
 - a. For all sanctioned Xcel events, the beam MUST be adjustable.
 - b. All divisions may use the beam at any height, regardless of age division; however, the height must be within a minimum of 100 cm (± 1 cm) and a maximum of 125 cm (± 1 cm).
 2. Padded manufactured beams are required at all sanctioned competitions.
 3. Beams with a "spring" mechanism are allowed at Xcel competitions.
 4. It is strongly recommended that padding for the Beam uprights and bases be used, if available from the manufacturer.



B. Mount Specifications

1. Bronze, Silver, and Gold: 12' minimum is allowed. (No maximum)
2. Platinum and Diamond: 18' minimum is allowed. (No maximum)
3. It is strongly recommended that the entire mounting area be level.

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C. Area required to be matted:

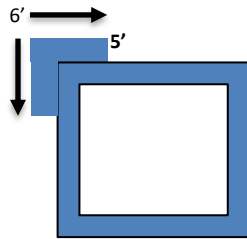
1. Bronze, Silver, and Gold requires a minimum of 6' by 12' matted area at each end of the beam (mats may be placed sideways if the dismount is not off the end), and a minimum of 12' wide by 15½' long matted area under the beam.
2. Platinum and Diamond requires a minimum of 7½' by 12' matted area at each end, and a minimum of 15' wide by 15½' long matted area under the beam. An 8' wide mat for dismount area is recommended.
 - For Platinum and Diamond, whenever a 10 cm (4") supplemental mat ("throw" mat) is used in addition to the competition landing mat(s) for the dismount, it must be a minimum of 7' by 10'.

V. Floor Exercise

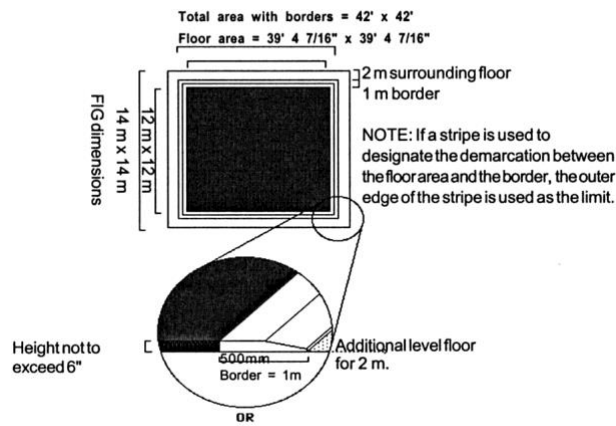
A. Xcel uses FIG specifications for Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, and Diamond.

FIG specifications: 12 meters X 12 meters (39' 4 7/16" X 39' 4 7/16"). The measurement is from the outside of the tape or where the carpet changes color. The floor surface must be a minimum of 3.2 cm thick (1¼") to a maximum of 19.05 cm thick (7½"). The top of the mat must be joined into one continuous level surface maximum of 19.05 cm thick (7½").

1. When the floor exercise carpet has two colors to distinguish the border rather than a solid color with taped boundary lines, it is permissible to place small pieces of tape (of the same color as the floor area carpet) at the inside corners of the boundary to assist the gymnast's awareness of the boundary.
2. For Platinum and Diamond competitions held in outside facilities, the outside of the corners must be padded with unfolded panel mats or other such matting or carpet-bonded foam (a minimum of 3.5 cm (1 3/8 inches) high) to protect the gymnast if they go beyond the dimensions of the Floor mat. The matting must extend a minimum of 5 feet out from the edge of the boundary line and extend a minimum of 6 feet from the corner down each side of the Floor Exercise area. The corner padding should be attached (with Velcro or something similar) to the floor, foam or carpet to avoid separating or slipping. An example of the additional matting at one corner is shown below:



- B. A tumbling strip may be used for competition for Bronze and Silver Division, provided it is a minimum of 8' wide and 56' long. The Meet Director must indicate this in the pre-meet information.
- C. If carpeting is used, 3.2 cm (¼") pile is maximum height recommended.
- D. Rebound or spring type floors are required for all Platinum and Diamond competitions. It is strongly recommended that a spring type floor also be used for Bronze, Silver, and Gold.



E. Additional matting:

For all Xcel divisions: Up to two manufactured mats (maximum thickness of 20 cm (8")) may be placed separately on the Floor Exercise area. If the skill cushion is 20 cm (8") in thickness, it must be a minimum of 5' x 10'. A "sting" mat may also be used on top of or under the 20 cm (8") mat.

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1. Only one skill cushion or 10 cm (4") throw mat per tumbling pass may be used, with no more than two mats on the floor exercise area at any one point in time. A sting mat may be placed on top of or under the skill cushion/throw mat(s).
 2. Whenever additional matting is placed on the Floor Exercise area and covers any portion of the boundary line(s), the mat must be clearly marked. It is recommended that athletic tape (provided by the coach) be used to mark the mats. Chalk may be used but should be removed before the next competitor. A towel should be provided by the Meet Director to facilitate the removal of the chalk markings.
- F. When a tumbling "strip" is used in place of a full floor exercise area in the training and/or warm-up gym, it must be constructed of the same materials as the spring floor used in the competition gym and must be a minimum of 8' wide and 60' long for Xcel. A minimum of 3' in length of additional padding (carpet bonded foam or something similar) is required at each end of a 56' tumble strip that is used for warm-up.