

Womens Artistic Gymnastics Apparatus

Source: Content adapted from the European Union of Gymnastics website



Women's artistic gymnastics is characterised by four apparatus: vault, uneven bars, beam and floor. Each one of these four apparatus has special requirements.

Vault



Dynamism, power and precision in the rotations characterise the different flight phases.

The gymnast has a run-up of 25 meters (maximum). Running at maximum speed, she has to hit the spring board right to the millimetre, and then go into a flight phase after an explosive take-off from the board, followed in tenths of seconds by a short but equally explosive support phase on the apparatus.

A second flight phase follows, as high and far as possible, with rotations and long or breadth axis turns (saltos and twists) to be ended by a good and secure landing.

Instead of the traditional vaulting horse, the new vaulting table was used for the first time at the 2001 World Championships in Ghent. This vaulting table (height 1.25m, width 95cm, length 1.20m) shall not only offer a better security but allow the gymnasts to realise in the best possible way the technical difficulties of complex vaults.



Uneven bars



The uneven bars are one of the most spectacular apparatus in women's artistic gymnastics. It requires force, courage and coordination with the numerous grips or bar changes and rotations. An optimal exercise is characterised by an original combination of different elements such as flight elements, rotations and movements above, below or between the bars.

As the name says, the height of both bars is different; the lower bar has a height of approximately 1.65m, the higher one of approximately 2.45m; the distance between both bars can be up to 1.80m.



Beam



The main characteristics for the beam have to be a well-developed sense of balance and a great power of concentration. A good exercise includes acrobatic and gymnastic elements and series, with harmonic connections resulting in special highlights. The gymnast is expected to present a dynamic change of saltos, turns, leaps, jumps and balance elements.

The beam has a length of 5m, a height of 1.25m and a width of only 10cm.

According to the Regulations, an exercise may not last longer than 90 seconds.



Floor



Apart of the dynamic change of difficult acrobatic and dance-gymnastics elements, the harmony between the exercise and the music plays an important role, as well as the expressiveness and elegance of the gymnast. The exercise should have a high artistic value; therefore the choreography should correspond to the character of the music and the gymnast's type.

The floor area has a dimension of 12m x 12m.

According to the Regulations, the exercise may not last longer than 90 seconds.

