



## Handstand Strength Program

### STAGE 1: BASICS

Handstands are the most important skill to master as a gymnast. Why? Because they provide the base to hundreds of skills that can be learned and performed. The stronger the handstand base, the easier skill development.

Handstands are incredibly unique, in the sense that they work a very large number of muscle groups from the upper body - arms, shoulders, to the middle body - core and back as well as the lower body also.

*So...how do I get strong?*

Time. Consistency. Maximum Effort. Every. Single. Time.

# **MUSCLES INVOLVED IN BUILDING A STRONG HANDSTAND**

## **1. Arms, Shoulders & Chest**

Muscles involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deltoids</li><li>• Pectoralis</li><li>• Triceps</li></ul>
Important points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shoulder flexibility</li></ul>

## **2. Back**

Muscles involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Latissimus dorsi</li><li>• Erector spinae</li><li>• Trapezius</li><li>• Serratus</li></ul>
Important points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good spinal movement</li></ul>

## **3. Abdomen**

Muscles involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Abdominus muscles</li><li>• Obliques</li></ul>
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## **4. Lower Body**

Muscles involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quadriceps</li><li>• Hamstrings</li><li>• Glutes</li><li>• Forearm, hand and neck</li></ul>
Important points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tight muscles = balanced handstand</li></ul>

## Strength & Conditioning

### STAGE 1: BASICS

Welcome to Stage 1 of the Strength and Conditioning Program for Handstands. We start with the basics, and we perfect them before we move to Stage 2. This program is designed to be performed consistently, preferably, every session.

#### STRENGTH SHAPE STATIC HOLDS

Activity	Number	Reps
Angry cat shape hold	30 sec	3 times
Front support shape hold	30 sec	3 times
Dish hold on back	30 sec	3 times
Dish hold on sides	30 sec each	3 times each
Dish hold on stomach	30sec	3 times

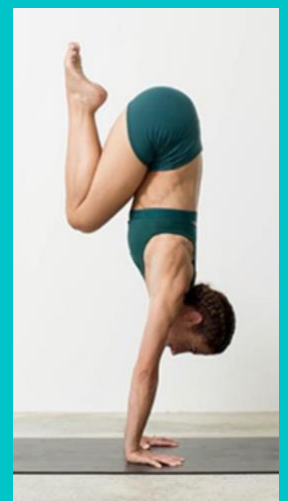
#### STRENGTH SHAPE DYNAMIC MOVEMENTS

Activity	Number	Reps
Push-ups (elbows out)	20	2 times
Push-ups (elbows in)	10	2 times
Dish rocs on back	30 sec	3 times
Dish rocks on sides	30 sec each	3 times each
Dish rocks on stomach	30sec	3 times

Let's get into specifics...

For the BASICS section, we're focusing on:

### Tuck Handstands



# Tuck Handstands

Tuck handstands are the first progressive step in learning how to correctly perform a handstand.

How do I break down tuck handstand?

## 1. Angry Cat Shape

- Learns to be strong through the chest and shoulders
- Learning that ears must be covered by armpits
- Eyes on hands

## 2. Front Support Shape

- Builds further chest, shoulder & back strength
- Pressing into the floor i.e. pushing the floor away
- Evenly spread fingers to balance

## 3. Dynamic Bunny Hop on Floor

- Press into the floor with hands, ears covered
- Keep knees on chest to assist with alignment → this allows the shoulder angle to open
- HIPS → SHOULDERS → WRISTS should all be aligned
- Slow and controlled

## 4. Static Tuck Handstand on Box

- Place knees on a box roughly the gymnasts hip height, hands on the floor into a bunny hop/tuck handstand shape
- Allows for gymnasts to feel their correct shapes such as back rounded, chest flat, tummy tight, shoulders pressed and fingers spread
- These are highly recommended to maintain during sessions with kids from preschool classes to high level competing gymnasts
- VERY beneficial exercise to adjust shapes and teach gymnasts correct technique

## EXTRA DRILLS: Basic Handstand Shaping

- Lay gymnast flat on stomach
  - Squeeze whole body
  - Round chest pulled away from the floor
  - Push arm-pits towards the floor
  - Hips pushed into the floor
  - Full knee extension and not touching the floor
- Body tension exercises
  - Gymnast lay on back & coach lifts feet → try maintain a tight body line
  - Same drills as above + attempt to separate feet
  - Tight log rolls staying in a straight line