

TEAM HANDBOOK



Cascade Elite Gymnastics
WEST

WELCOME

Welcome to the Cascade Elite West Competitive Team Program! We are so excited that you have chosen our program to take your gymnastics participation to the next level. As you venture into the next phase of your gymnastics career, there are a few things we would like to share with you and your families to help you understand our program, in order to be better prepared and ensure your success in the coming years. Please take the time to read this handbook and familiarize yourself with our team program ideals and expectations.

PHILOSOPHY

Cascade Elite Gymnastics West was founded on the belief that children NEED to be actively encouraged and challenged. With the structure and discipline of our gymnastics program, your child will be given the opportunity to grow mentally and physically stronger in a nurturing and positive environment. We believe that competition provides a platform for an athlete to display their mental and physical strength they have developed since joining our program. We regard them as a learning opportunity rather than a judgment of their self-worth or athletic value. We strive to prepare each and every child to compete to their best ability at a level that is both challenging and rewarding.

ROUTE TO SUCCESS

USA Gymnastics is our official governing body. They have developed, organized, and standardized competitions into safe and appropriate level progressions.

Levels 2-5 are categorized as “Compulsory” levels. Each level builds upon the skill set of the previous, with minor variations, in order to provide a standard of learning and help each gymnast achieve their maximum success. Within a specific level, each gymnast will perform the same prescribed routine on all 4 events. These routines are based upon the skill sets required to master the current level and progress to the next.

Levels 6-10 are categorized as “Optional” levels. Here, the gymnasts are given more freedom to choose routines, music, and skills that fulfill specific requirements and guidelines set for each level.

At CEGW, we begin competing at Level 2. Typically gymnasts will be allowed into our Level 2 program with a coach’s recommendation after successfully completing the Intro and Level 1 classes. From this point forward, movement into our Level 3 program and beyond is by invitation only. Each child will be individually assessed based upon their physical and mental preparedness and then evaluated and approved by our Compulsory /Optional Head Coaches. Invitation into our higher-level programs is a privilege and must be earned!

Xcel Program

The Xcel Program is designed to offer a broad-based, affordable competitive experience outside the traditional Jr. Olympic Program to attract and retain a diverse group of athletes. The program gives an opportunity for:

- * Class students to participate in organized gymnastics events
- * Athletes who have competed in the USA Gymnastics Jr. Olympic Program and have qualified to Level 7 or above but need a more basic introduction to optional competition.
- * Athletes who have competed in the USA Gymnastics Jr. Olympic Program at the Compulsory level and would like to experience a basic optional program during their “off” season while they train skills to move up in the JO Program.
- * Athletes who have either “retired” from the Jr. Olympic Program or do not wish to train or compete at Level 7 or 8.
- * Athletes not previously involved with USA Gymnastics to enter the program.

SUPPLEMENTAL TEAM CLASSES

(by invitation only)

Within our gymnastics program, we also provide supplemental and developmental classes that offer an alternative route to becoming a member of our team. These classes are highly advanced and require a coach's invitation to join.

HOT SHOTS:

This class is designed for girls ages 5-7 that have shown strength, discipline, and coordination early on. This is a two-hour class offered twice a week. The primary focus is on continuing to develop their strength, flexibility, and basic gymnastics skills at more advanced pace than our traditional classes allow. Oftentimes these gymnasts will transition out of this class and directly into our competitive program.

TOPs/Pre TOPs:

We also have established a TOPs (Talent Opportunity Program) route for girls who have proven motivation and dedication at a young age. Many of these girls start out in our Pre-TOPs class in addition to their regular gymnastics classes. This class is one hour long, once or twice a week and focuses mainly on strength and flexibility. During this class they will develop essential skills such as handstand holds, press to handstand, rope climb without legs, cast handstands on bars, leg lifts, and other supplemental strength and flexibility skills.

Once these basic skills have been developed, girls may be invited to participate in the TOPs team practices. These practices are two hours long and are focused on both the strength and skills needed to be successful at TOPs testing. These girls participate in a short competition season with several statewide tests being held in June and July. When they qualify in the top percentage in the nation they move on to a National test conducted in October at the National Team Training Center in Texas. From there they may also qualify to TOPs National camps and other events held at the Olympic Training Center throughout the year. Many of these girls will participate in our competitive teams simultaneously, while some will choose to focus solely on TOPs for a period of time. This decision is best discussed with the coach and will vary on a case-by-case basis.

FAMILY PORTAL

After making the decision to join our team program, we will register the athlete, along with the pertinent family information, into our system for the appropriate team. We will then send you an email with a link to "*reset your password*" for your Customer Portal. This link will take you into your account where you can view your account as well as get a athlete QR Code for attendance, make payments, register for autopay, and much more. Please let us know asap if you have difficulties in accessing your account.

ATTENDANCE

Part of the expectations when committing to our team is regular attendance at all practices. We understand that conflicts such as family or school commitments and emergencies may interfere with practice times. Our coaches will remain flexible and willing to work around such situations, provided it is discussed in advance.

The sport of gymnastics requires many hours of hard work and dedication. Any practice time that is forfeited could result in a gymnast's inability to maintain their strength, progressions, and level of expectations set for themselves and the team, or worse, injury. Having to arrive late or leave practice early is preferred to not attending at all. Please contact your coach with any practice conflicts so that alternative options can be explored.

Starting from Level 2, team practices are scheduled to very specific days and times. There are no make-up practices or pro-rated tuition available, so it is extremely important that you attend your designated practice times as much as possible.

PRACTICE ATTIRE/ETIQUETTE

For safety and professionalism, we require all our gymnasts to practice in a leotard. Gym shorts are optional. No loose fitted clothing should be worn during practice as it presents a safety hazard to the gymnast. Loose clothing can become entangled on equipment or prevent the coach from being able to properly spot and result in injury. In addition to a leotard, gymnasts should have their hair pulled away from their eyes and face, and secured in a ponytail. Jewelry such as necklaces, rings, and bracelets should be removed. Gymnasts who do not arrive in the proper attire will not be able to participate in practice.

In addition to proper attire, we encourage you to provide your gymnast with plenty of water and a light/healthy snack, especially for Levels 3 and above, whose practice times are 4 hours.

At Cascade Elite Gymnastics West, we adhere to a structured and strict Code of Conduct. Our coaches strive to maintain a safe, positive, and fun learning environment, where all gymnasts feel welcome. In addition to teaching gymnastics, the coaches will be positive role models that exemplify our training philosophies. If they feel that another

gymnast is endangering or speaking negatively towards themselves or others, that gymnast will be asked to sit out for a moment of time. We believe in second chances and will offer them opportunities to reflect and modify their behavior. Bullying, shaming, ridiculing will not be tolerated! If they continue to be a danger or a negative influence on the group they will not be allowed to continue in our program.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Training schedules will be determined by the team coach(s). Our Rec Program are subjected to the 5th Day Closure Policy. Teams DO NOT follow the Rec Program Schedules. Your coach(s) will notify you directly on any changes that are made to the training schedule.

COMPETITIONS

All of our competitive team members participate in an annual competition season. This season typically begins December/January and ends April/May.

Levels 2-5 gymnasts will be automatically registered into every meet on the season schedule. They are expected to attend each of these scheduled competitions (roughly 6 occasions), unless otherwise discussed with their coach. In order for these levels to participate in the Sectional Championship meet, the individual gymnasts must qualify by achieving a level specific minimum score. Participation in the Sectional meet can further provide an opportunity for the gymnast to qualify for the Washington State Championship Meet. Qualification standards to the State Meet are predetermined by the Washington State Gymnastics Board and generally rely on scores as well as a percentage of participants who achieved the minimum score at the Sectional Meet.

At the Optional level (levels 6-10), the regular season (6 competitions December-March) will include several traveling meets to various states around the country. We choose to do this so that the girls can be exposed to the level of competition throughout the nation and gain an understanding of what it takes to be competitive on a national scale. Championship season for the Optional levels begins with the State competition rather than Sectionals. This is a qualification meet requiring a certain score during the regular season in order to participate. For level 6 and 7 this is the end of their competitive season. Levels 8, 9, and 10 can then go on to qualify for the Regional Championships, which includes competitors from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, and Hawaii. At level 9 the Regional competition serves as a qualification point for Western Nationals (all states West of the Mississippi) and at level 10 they qualify on to Junior Olympic National Championships (all states combined).

COMPETITION SCHEDULE INFO

A tentative Competition Schedule is typically distributed to the team families by early fall. At this point, all we know is the WEEKEND for which the event takes place. We WILL NOT know the exact date your child will compete until a few weeks prior to the each of the competitions. It is wise to reserve the entire weekend (Fri-Sun) for each of the competitions until more information becomes available.

TRAVEL PROCEDURES

Families are responsible for arranging all travel plans to each of the competitions. All travel expenses for athletes and family members are paid for by the family. All travel expenses for the coaching staff is covered by CEGW.

For travel competitions, families will be sent information regarding the site and host hotel. You are not required to stay in any host hotels. Families are encouraged to reserve the hotel Coach's airline reservations will also be sent to families once plans are finalized so that families can join in if so desired.

"We all try to stay in the same hotel or fly on the same flights but with competitions that encompass ALL the levels, the group size becomes WAY TOO BIG to accommodate. Our different levels will compete on different days of the weekend which makes group travel arrangements challenging if not near impossible."

MEMBERSHIP(S)

Team Membership Fees:

What it covers...

Tuition (for hours/week) of training is based on a month to month basis.

** No extra registration fees, no extra equipment fees, and no contracts*

Competition expenses (entry fees into meets, coaches fees, etc) are what CEGW refers to as Team Competitive Fees. Most other gyms have one or two large assessments to cover the competition fees, but we have found that it is easier for families to manage the cost by breaking down this cost into 12 equal payments and then just add it to the monthly tuition. These competition fees are true hard costs that Cascade Elite Gymnastics West must pay in order to register our teams for each competition.

** Families who join the CEGW Team Program later than May 1 will be charged for all the missed competition fee payments.*

** There are no prorated membership fee for team members. Joining the team program is an annual commitment due to our financial structure*

** There are no refunds for athletes who leaves the team program*

Membership Fees **DO NOT** include:

- Athletic competition apparel
- Travel expenses (if any)
- Routine choreography (Levels 6-10 & Xcel only)
- USAG Athlete Memberships

Once you enter the Team Program, the tuition and competitive fees are a fixed amount. Since their training sessions are now multiple days a week, there are **no pro-rating or makeups for missed workouts..** We encourage all our athletes to attend all possible workouts to get the most out of their training.

USAG Athlete Memberships

If you competed for CEGW last year, then you will need to renew for the athlete membership for the 2021-2022 competitive season.

** If you are new to the CEGW Team Program but have previously had a USAG Athlete Number, I will need you to email me the number in order to affiliate the athlete to our club. Send to: cascadeelitewest@gmail.com*

** If you are **brand new** to competing in gymnastics, you will need to register with USAG for the athlete number.*

All renewals and new registrations can be completed online: <https://usagym.org/fw/login.html?url=/pages/membership/pages/index.html>

If you have any questions, please call Member Services at (800) 345-4719 or email at membership@usagym.org

ALL ATHLETES WILL REQUIRE THE ATHLETE USAG NUMBER TO REGISTER AND COMPETE AT ANY USAG SANCTIONED EVENTS

Athletic Apparel

Athlete's competition apparel are separate from tuition and competition fees. We will begin collecting these payments during the ordering process. These fees can vary year-to-year depending upon the catalog pricing. We will require your athlete to purchase a team leotard & team warm-ups. At CEGW we can also order your gymnast a team bag (approx. \$30) with name embroidery (approx.. \$20) and team flip-flops (\$20), but these items are optional and not required to participate at meets.

Every team member will be sized in August/September and ordered by the end of the month. Most of our young athletes will continue to grow throughout the year so we take that into consideration. We prefer to have a bit of growing room so they can hopefully get two full years out of wearing the team leotards. Please do not be alarmed if the leos are not a perfect fit at first.

TEAM EVENTS

In keeping with our philosophy at CEGW: to provide a fun and nurturing team environment; we like host several events throughout the year. Some of these events include a gym sleepover with organized games and free time on the equipment, spirit week, Thanksgiving Food drives, and in-house team competitions between the levels. There may also be practices when individual coaches set up games and contests with team rewards to build team unity and teach the girls the importance of working together to accomplish a goal. During the holidays, most of our team members participate in Secret Santa (optional to all families) and a holiday party where their secret gifts are given. At the conclusion of the competition season, we will host a team banquet to recognize the hard work endured, time commitment and accomplishments of the gymnasts throughout the past season. It is also a way for us to thank the families for staying dedicated to their daughters' athletic success and enduring all the trials and tribulations with them.

All of these extracurricular activities are set in place to help build strong, lasting relationships, an unbreakable team bond, and encourage supportive and positive character qualities that will follow each gymnast in any of their future activities. It is importance to us at CEGW to produce more than high quality gymnastics; we want to produce high quality individuals that have strength, endurance, and integrity to overcome any obstacle throughout their lifetime.

BOOSTER CLUB

Cascade Elite Community (CEC) Booster Club is a parent run organization that fundraises primarily by assisting CEGW host competitions throughout the year. The funds have previously been distributed to families by means of paying for team uniforms, competition costs, hosting team banquets, etc. Please consider being involved with CEC.

Best way to get in touch with the Booster Club is through the Cascade Elite Community Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=cascade%20elite%20community> or via email: cecbooster@gmail.com

COMMUNICATION

We strongly believe that parents are an integral link in the growth and development of their child as an athlete. We strive to keep the lines of communication open at all times to keep both the gymnast and the family informed. Please feel free to contact your daughter's coach before or after practice or by phone/email with any questions or concerns. Contact information can be obtained from the front desk. Conferences can be scheduled at any time during the year to discuss successes, setbacks, progress, injuries, etc.

Contact Info

cascadeelitewest@gmail.com

(360) 479-0130

www.cascadeelitewest.com

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. If my daughter is invited to team, when will the move happen?

Movement to the Team Program can happen throughout the year, so long as the prerequisites are met.

2. How do you “LEVEL UP”? Do you move up a level at the end of every season?

Coaches will decide on a case-by-case basis with the gymnast and families of those who have shown potential to move quickly through one level. There should be no expectation other than for your daughter to remain at her current level, until her coach says otherwise. Every gymnast is different and learns at a different rate, some move rapidly, others can remain at the same level for more than one season.

3. Can I pay my Membership fees in one lump sum?

Of course, you can always pay in advance and your account will be credited.

4. Can I break down the cost my daughter’s leotard and athletic apparel into smaller payments over time?

Generally, we require full payment at the time of placing the order. The specific amount will be added to the family’s accounts.

5. Will we use the same leotard every year?

Our goal is to use the same competitive leotards for at least a couple of years. Our coaches/staff do a tough job of trying to keep the apparel costs down to a minimum without sacrificing the design or comfort.

6. What if my daughter outgrows or loses her leo?

We try and order a few extra competition leotards for just these reasons. Please check with the front desk if one is needed.

7. What if we will be out of town for a meet? Does that change my competition fees?

Life and family events happens... so an occasional absence from a competition is sometimes unavoidable. Please notify the appropriate coaches so that they will be aware of the situation. We register our athletes into the competitions months in advance. Missing a meet does not change the competition fees.

8. What if I am stuck in traffic and will be late to the meet?

Call the coach right away to let them know. We can try to formulate a plan to get them warmed up and caught up with the rest of the team if possible.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (cont.)

9. What if my daughter wakes up sick the morning of a meet?

Please get a hold of her coach as soon as possible. They can help make a judgment call on whether your child may be able to attend a portion of the meet. There are great lessons to be learned in dealing with uncomfortable situations.

10. What is a session? How long do meets last?

Meets can last several days due to the number of registered competitors. In order to maintain efficiency, the levels are each given their own SESSION, or block of time, throughout the meet. Most sessions last 3 hours and are followed by a brief awards ceremony.

11. Do we need to bring anything special with us to the meet?

As your daughter gets more experience, they will formulate their own list of things to bring but here are a few items to consider,

- Uniform
- Grips (if appropriate)
- Hair products and accessories
- Snacks/Drinks
- Spare undergarments

12. My daughter is moving to Level 4, but we can still only come 3 days a week, does my tuition stay the same?

Once you enter the Team Program, the membership fees are a fixed amount. Since their training sessions are now multiple days a week, there are **no pro-rates and make-ups**. We encourage all our athletes to attend all possible workouts to get the most out of their training.

13. My daughter is worried about getting her homework done and practicing every night, what should we do?

Discuss the concern with your coach. School is the priority and we will accommodate those needs. There are lots of different options; no child will ever be penalized for having to take time to get their schoolwork done. Those athletes who are serious about their training will quickly learn to efficiently manage their time. Our highest level of athletes also have amazing academic standards well throughout their junior high and high school years.

14. What can we do at home to facilitate our daughter's growth as a gymnast?

There are several skills that can be worked on at home. Flexibility, Strength, routine memory, confidence! Have them sit in their splits every night while brushing their teeth, encourage them to hold handstands as long as possible. Challenge them to jump and reach a high spot on the wall. The possibilities are endless...make it fun and exciting and they won't even know they are working out!

OTHER RESOURCES

CEGW Website: www.cascadeelitewest.com
CEGW Facebook: facebook.com/groups/124687074307183/
USA Gymnastics: usagym.org
USAG Washington: usagwa.com
TOPs Information: usagym.org/pages/women/updates/tops.html
USAG Parent info: usagymclub.com

CONTACT

Cascade Elite Gymnastics-West
5603 NW Quantum Ct.
Silverdale, WA 98383
(360) 479-0130
cascadeelitewest@gmail.com