Tumbling skill 8: Backward handspring (flick flack)

Description

A backward handspring is a backward rotating skill travelling through two 180° phases. The backward handspring is a backward jump, extending backwards into a momentary handstand in a stretched arch position. This is followed by a snap-down to land with feet together on the floor. The arms are kept straight, shoulder-width apart; legs are also straight with toes pointed through the arch and handstand phases.

Skill progressions

The pictures below demonstrate some examples of progressions to teach the backward handspring.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jump to back</th>
<th>Snap-down shaping drill</th>
<th>Coach assist with jump to handstand**</th>
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**Jump to handstand uphill**  |  **Bounces from hands to feet on tramp or tumble trak**  |  **Spotted flick on trampoline with coach**

**This drill requires knowledge of spotting and should only be undertaken under supervision and with assistance from a qualified Intermediate Coach. Spotting requires much strength and timing and should not be attempted by anyone who is not certified to do so. The coach should stand between the take-off and hand contact points and support the centre of the back and mid-thigh.

Look at this video clips on the screen for some additional drills for the backward handspring on floor.

Physical preparation

The pictures below demonstrate some examples of physical preparation activities for developing the backward handspring.
<table>
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<th>Dish and arch holds and rocks</th>
<th>Jumping and rebounding activities</th>
<th>Other tension activities</th>
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<td>Pushing activities from hands</td>
<td>Body tension drills and activities</td>
<td>Handstand support activities</td>
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**Appropriate coaching points**

Key coaching points are:
- Stand with strong body posture, arms at ears
- Bend knees as arms swing downwards (can start without arm swing)
- Round back and chest in during arm swing – chest must not be out
- Legs drive through the floor with shoulders remaining still as legs drive
- Take off with hips driving up and arms reaching back
- SUPPORT – contact with the floor
  - Strong arched handstand line with body in one segment
  - Check support shoulders – extended and straight, on top of hands
  - Hips open, chest in and buttocks tight
- From a stretched handstand position the shoulders and hands push and the feet snap down to the floor
- The body remains hollow, hips tight and chest in on landing

**Common errors**
- Hips and shoulders not fully extended on take-off
- Chest open on take-off or in support
- Shoulders not vertical or open in support
- Knees forward of toes on take-off undercutting the skill
- Arms wide, hands turned out in support
- Head moves back on take-off
Evaluate when ready to move on

Your gymnast may be ready to move onwards if:

- They can perform a back handspring on trampoline with coach assistance.
- They demonstrate control and rhythm.
- They have a strong handstand and repulsion from handstand.

Additional notes:

It is important that you do not hurry in letting the gymnast do the backward handspring by themselves. Be insistent and accurate with the technique and form when you teach the drills. Errors will only be magnified when the gymnasts attempts the skill by themselves.

Always ask for assistance from a senior coach and/or supervisor if starting to teach this drill.