

06 Rhythmic Gymnastics

Originally, the Greek term referred to physical exercises to warm up and prepare for competitions. With the introduction of apparatus and floor routines, modern gymnastics was formalized in the early 19th century. Since then, various specialties have emerged. Depending on the equipment used and the disciplines, whether male, female or mixed, specializations have emerged: rings, pommel horse, parallel bars, high bar, uneven bars, beam, trampoline, acrobatic gymnastics and many other forms.

Rhythmic gymnastics was formalized in Russia in the middle of the twentieth century through exercises given to opera dancers and circus acrobats to ensure their skill and flexibility. Rhythmic gymnastics is the most feminine of the disciplines, with a series of supple, graceful, precise and even playful figures set to the rhythm of music and the manipulation of objects. It is a complete sport that can be practiced as a team or individually. The Olympic event has existed since 1996.

In competition, the combinations presented, alone or with others, last between one and two and a half minutes.

A ball, weighing 400 grams and measuring some twenty centimeters. Clubs, each weighing 150 grams and measuring forty to fifty centimeters in length. A rope, simply tied at both ends and of a length proportional to the gymnast's height. A hoop, weighing three hundred grams and with a diameter of eighty to ninety centimeters. A ribbon, four to six centimeters wide and six meters long, attached to the end of a stick fifty to sixty centimeters long.

Image six shows two gymnasts in two different poses, one using a hoop on the left and a ribbon on the right.

At the bottom of the page, on the left, is the floor line.

In the middle of the line, the gymnast's bent foot invites us to follow her left leg, in a vertical position. The right leg, in this vertical extension, shows its stretch with the right foot at its highest point. The body, in profile, is arched, tilted back in a supple position. The right arm descends vertically to meet the left foot at ground level.

The head is partially concealed by this arm and can be seen through the chignon hairstyle, with the gaze focused on the ground.

The left arm is extended perpendicularly, and the hand holds the hoop between two fingers, well placed in the movement of the body. Much of the rounding can be seen above and behind the gymnast's posture.

In the right part, the floor is no longer represented, the gymnast is in the air, in an enjambé position, in suspension.

On a diagonal axis, she performs an arched vault with a large lateral split. The legs are straight and opposite, and the feet are in a flexible pointe position. The body is fitted with a costume whose fringes accompany the body shape and movement. The right arm is extended backwards, the hand whose palm is open.

This arm conceals the upper part of the head. Depicted in profile, it is turned towards the sky, the eye, nose, jaw and lower ear can be made out. The top of a bun is visible on the other side of the arm.

The left arm is also facing backwards but is partially folded to allow the hand to control the graceful movements of the shiny satin ribbon. The sequences of circles, spirals, serpentine, with harmonious throws in the air and catches are particularly complex to coordinate. The ribbon must always be in action, without becoming tangled or knotted, or risk penalties.

The evaluation is made up of 10 points for difficulty and 10 points for execution, minus any penalties.