

Scottish Gymnastics is enjoyable, safe and open to everyone

This fact sheet explains how people with a disability can be involved in any one of the nine gymnastics disciplines currently offered in Scottish Gymnastics registered clubs. You can hear stories from those directly involved to how to find a club near you, it provides everything you need to start your gymnastics journey today.

What is gymnastics? Why start it?

Gymnastics is a sport that works individuals' strength, flexibility, fine motor skills and coordination. With multiple disciplines, all accessible at fundamental movement and competitive levels, there is a place for fun and thrill for all. Each discipline is a sport in itself but, all feature the key elements of gymnasts listed above.

Acrobatics (shown below on right) can be competed individually when starting out then build up to working in pairs, trios and quads in same sex or mixed partnerships.

Display is non-competitive discipline for all ages and abilities. Our fan favourite display event Gymfest is held twice a year seeing gymnasts performing a routine in groups of varying numbers made up of dance, balances and acrobatic skills.

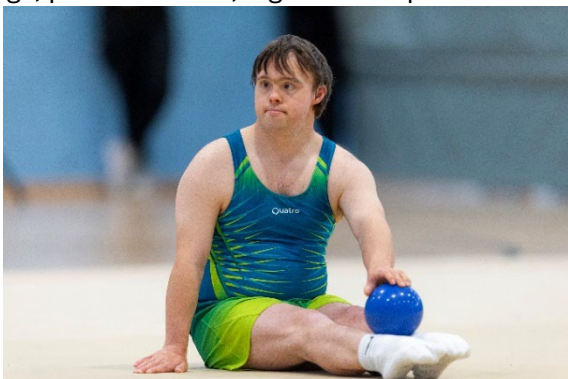
Rhythmic work with various hand apparatus such as ball, hoop, clubs and rope. More known to be an individual's sport, rhythmic routines can be made up in pairs and groups working the apparatus between each other. Disability rhythmic has opened the sport to males in Scotland (pictured below on left) at a competitive level!

TeamGym sees gymnasts compete in teams either all female, male or mixed on trampet, tumble and floor. Teams can be made up of 6-12 gymnasts with not all required to perform on the trampet and tumble pieces for competition.

Trampoline can be competed in individually and in partners to perform a synchronised routine, rebounding repeatedly into different skills in the air and down on the trampoline bed. Double-mini trampoline sees gymnasts bounce on and off two trampoline beds within one frame performing somersaults and turns alike.

Tumbling is made up of skills from jumps and cartwheels to somersaults in the air being connected in sequence down a track.

Women's artistic is an individual's discipline made up of four pieces of apparatus; balance beam, uneven bars, vault and floor. Men's artistic also uses floor and vault but also includes still rings, pommel horse, high bar and parallel bars.



Not many clubs or council facilities offer disability only sessions apart from low level open come and play with parent supervision. As gymnastics is a sport that is highly adapted to the individual in front of the coach in training, gymnasts with disabilities can often have their needs catered for in any class their local club has to offer.

Competition pathway

There is a widely known competitive aspect to gymnastics – with eight of the nine disciplines available for this – artistic, rhythmic and trampoline being the most well-known due to the Olympics and Commonwealth Games. The gymnastics community is ever growing here, especially in disability participation as evidenced through an increase of entrants at Scottish Gymnastics competitions with at least one participant at every Scottish National Championship and other events in 2024.

Gymnasts when competing are split into one of two categories: category I – learning disabilities and category II – physical and sensory impairments. The only exception to these categories is for those competing in pair/team disciplines such as acrobatics and TeamGym where they compete under one disability grouping depending on level and at least one participant having a disability to be eligible. All Scottish Gymnastics competitions have the disability pathway integrated, for any questions on how or what to enter contact our events team through events@scottishgymnastics.org.



Image above (left) copyright of Ken @ Katz Wizkas Photography.

[Special Olympics](#) is an international programme for training and competition for those with intellectual disabilities with gymnastics included through rhythmic and both men's and women's artistic. Scotland has had continual success from local to international level since the 2000's in this pathway. Watch what the opportunity to represent Great Britain and the lead up to the Berlin Special Olympics World Games in 2023 meant to Craig and Emma from City of Glasgow on our [YouTube Channel](#).

A Paralympic working group has been set up to develop the competition pathway beyond national level for artistic gymnastics with the aim to have it fully integrated into the 2032 Brisbane Paralympic Games. Hear testimonials of the sport from Scottish para-gymnasts and find further information, including the full roadmap, about this area on the [FIG's YouTube channel](#).

Confidence in coaching

Scottish Gymnastics 2023 Inclusion Award winners City of Glasgow – disability section coaches and judge spoke to us during the 2023 Scottish Disability Sport week. Discussing everything from being a first timer in disability sport to coaching with a disability yourself, the article gives insight into what the sport means to those within the club and beyond. Read the full piece on [scottishgymnastics.org](https://www.scottishgymnastics.org).

Information on disability gymnastics is included in all of the qualifications available but to build confidence for coaches there is an optional Disability Add on module.

Coaches and parents alike are welcome to attend our Understanding Neurodiversity in Gymnastics Coaching workshop we have recently launched with Alice Beveridge.



Find your fun!

We hope this fact sheet has inspired you to be involved in gymnastics in one way or another!

Club Finder – <https://www.scottishgymnastics.org/experience/club-finder/>

Judging – <https://www.scottishgymnastics.org/people/judging/>

Volunteering - <https://www.scottishgymnastics.org/people/volunteering-at-events/>

Latest disability news - <https://www.scottishgymnastics.org/category/disability/>

Our Strategy: <https://www.scottishgymnastics.org/about-scottish-gymnastics/governance/strategy/>

Atlanto-Axial Instability information - <https://www.scottishgymnastics.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Scottish-Gymnastics-Atlanto-Axial-Instability-Information-Pack-2021.pdf>

Useful Contacts

Scottish Gymnastics departments: <https://www.scottishgymnastics.org/contact/>

British Gymnastics Equality Diversity & Inclusion lead: natasha.mills@britishgymnastics.org

Chair of British Gymnastics Disability panel: angela.turner@britishgymnastics.org

Paralympic working group: paragymnastics@fig-gymnastics.org

Special Olympics Great Britain: <https://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/contact-us>