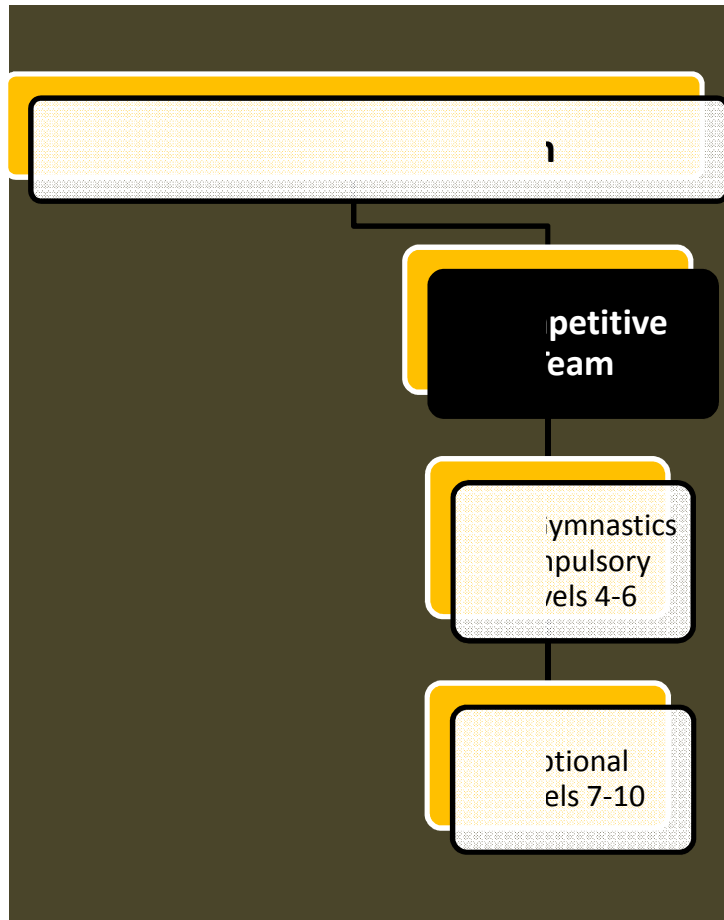
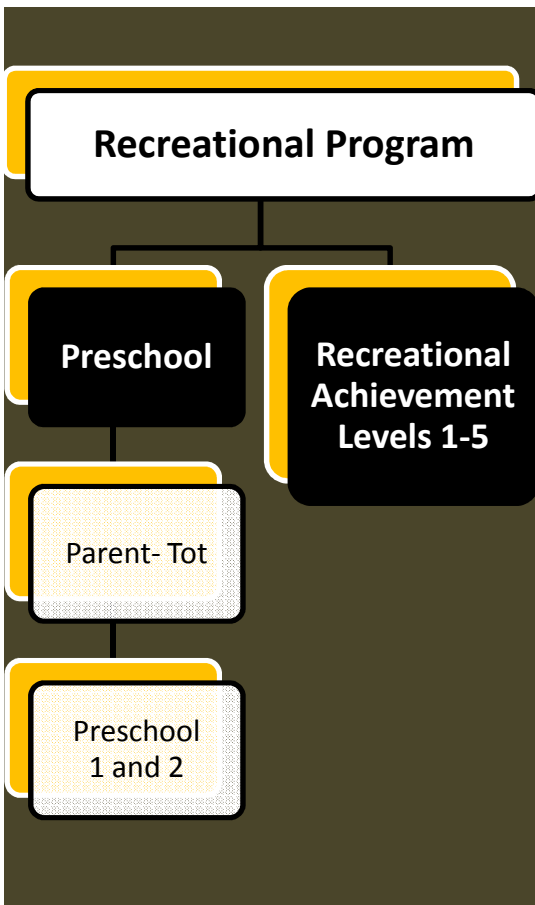


# Recreational Gymnastics vs Competitive Gymnastics

## What's the Difference?

Just like any other sport, gymnastics provides two different tracks of participation. One is our recreational program and the other is our competitive team program. Our Recreational Program classes teach the fundamentals of the sport in a fun and safe environment. The Competitive Team track follows that same principle with the exception that the increased time of participation allows for more precise technique and therefore, a more exciting learning curve. Competitive Team athletes also get the opportunity to earn awards at local, state, regional and even national competitions.

While our recreational program is designed with the use of quality progressive instruction that could be used to ease transition into our team program, it is actually an entirely different program. There is no skill pre-requisite or achievement level from recreational classes when considering participation in our Developmental Program. Young gymnasts learn all they need to know for competitive team participation through the Developmental Program. In essence our Team Developmental Program is an enhanced version of our Recreational preschool program and the lower achievement levels for the most dedicated young athletes and families.



# What is USA Gymnastics?

USA Gymnastics is the national governing body of the sport of gymnastics in the United States. They offer an organized and safety based approach to progression throughout all levels of the sport. Any US gymnast (male and female) that you may have seen on television has been a product of USA Gymnastics' Junior Olympic Program. In addition to National Team members, USA Gymnastics provides nearly the entire pool of athletes for collegiate gymnastics.

The USA Gymnastics Junior Olympic Program is broken down by three main categories:

## **Junior Olympic Program**

Developmental: Pre-teams and level 4 competition

Gymnasts prepare mentally and physically for the competitive levels.

Compulsory Competition: Levels 5-6 competition

Gymnasts compete with standardized routines created by USA Gymnastics.

Optional Competition: Levels 7-10

Gymnasts compete with originally composed routines with varied levels of skill limitations throughout the ranks.

Elite:

Athletes who exceed the limits of the Junior Olympic program may test into an Elite level. These are the athletes you see when you watch gymnastics on TV.

## **Developmental Program**

This is where it all begins. Granite City Gymnastics' Team Developmental Program is the pride and joy of the gym. These young children (starting at 4 years old) and their families are introduced to the wonderful world of gymnastics. Participation in our Developmental Program is earned through coach's recommendation or a try-out period.

This is their first experience in a "team" training group. Coaches use team-building activities, stickers for rewards and charts to motivate our youngest team members. Training at the developmental stage is focused on conditioning and flexibility with an emphasis on body positions on basic gymnastic skills. At Granite City Gymnastics we believe in teaching them right from the beginning in order to maintain safety and achieve excellence. Children learn to work hard and enjoy seeing how strong they get from training. We believe in goal setting at every level of our team program and by creating easy to manage short term goals we expose these young athletes to the intrinsic values of achieving something worked hard for.

While in our Developmental Program, the coaches continually evaluate the child and update the families on their progress and where they are best suited in the program. Decisions over movement within the Developmental Program itself and ultimately to our competitive team are determined by a combination of skill, overall attitude and family support. Although the children do not officially compete, they are very much included in the team through participation in parades, exhibitions and team outings.

Granite City Gymnastics currently has three levels in our Developmental system; Starlets, Pre-Team and USA Gymnastics Level 4.

Starlets are an introductory class that focuses on team building, conditioning and the most basic of gymnastics skills. This class is specifically designed for girls under the age of 6. Because of this, the teaching style is similar to our pre-school classes in the recreational program. The difference is the extended class time; which provides time to increase overall physical ability as well as attention to detail.

Pre-Team is our team group of athletes who are preparing for competition within the next 2 years. These athletes must be at least 5 years old (there is no maximum age limit at Granite City gymnastics). Gymnasts in this group learn the skills they will need to perform the level 4 requirements. The structure of the class builds on the Starlets philosophy but begins to pull from the Competitive Team structure as well.

USA Gymnastics Level 4 is the big transition period between preparation and competition. The gymnasts will learn the standardized USA Gymnastics routines and compete in between 4-6 competitions during the season. Gymnasts must be 6 years old to compete at this level.

## **The Developmental Program**

- What – A transitional program that reinforces proper gymnastics’ basics and team building skills.
- Who – Any interested athlete is welcome to try out our Starlets and Pre-Team programs.

### **Why choose Granite City Gymnastics’ USA Gymnastics Competitive Program?**

#### Parents:

- You’re child will learn more than just great gymnastics. She will learn lifelong skills like goal setting and time management. Benefits include lifetime friendships, belonging to a team, physical fitness, and potential accolades from performing well. Athletes who make it to the higher ranks of the Junior Olympic program also have the potential to compete in college.

#### Kids:

- Kids start and stay because it’s fun! They get to be with friends, learn impressive skills, and love the feeling of accomplishment through one’s own hard work.

#### **Prerequisites:**

#### **Love of Gymnastics:**

- A desire to be in the gym is the most important requirement for participation in our team program. We have our share of fun, but we also train to be competitive at competitions and sometimes it’s hard. But even after the toughest days, our gymnasts return because of their love of the sport and desire to meet the goals they set for themselves.

#### **Commitment of Resources:**

- Ability and willingness by parents to provide the financial and time commitments required by the competitive gymnastics track.

#### **The desire to make this an annual commitment:**

- This is a year-round developmental program and competitive program. We do provide days/weeks off for each year and understand that your child may have other commitments as well that means that they may miss a few practices here and there.
- They will be creating bonds and friendships with other teammates which can last for many years!
- We also understand the time adjustment that it may take for some of the younger athletes to get used to. It is necessary to give it as much time as possible to get acquainted with a different schedule. Please note that we also understand that when the school year starts, it does take time to get the gymnasts adjusted as well.

## Common Concerns

### **My Gymnast is Too Young**

- Often times, kids will start activities around the ages of 2-3 years old. Consider this similar to your child signing up for soccer in hopes that down the road they will eventually be able to compete at the highest level of that sport. Gymnastics is no different! We hope that by being a part of our team program, your gymnast will reach their full potential and may even have the opportunity to continue the sport past their high school career.

### **My Gymnast Wants to Participate in Other Activities**

- Granite City Gymnastics is flexible in giving the gymnasts a chance to also be in other sports or activities as well. We have team gymnasts that choose to do activities such as Knowledge Bowl, Soccer, Volleyball, Track and Field, Softball, Math League, Yearbook Committee, etc. As long as there is good communication about practices missed and the desire to make it to practice when you can, we rarely have any issues or concerns. We want kids to be able to grow and experience other activities. Also, by being a gymnast, it provides a basis for other sports to come more naturally based on strength, flexibility, and endurance learned at gymnastics. Our Team Handbook States:

“At Granite City Gymnastics, we understand that the gymnasts may want to participate in other sports. If this occurs, then parents need to inform the coaches when the other sport begins and ends, along with how much practice time will be missed. We are much more understanding of the outside activities if we are informed. There are no make-ups for missing their regular practice hours. In order to maintain a spot on the team, tuition payments must be maintained during the time that is missed.”

### **The Cost and Time**

- Any competitive sport has additional costs and time requirements. Granite City Gymnastics will do its best to notify all families about practice schedules and any costs associated with their gymnast's level.

### **Transportation**

- Sometimes it may be hard to match your schedule with the practice schedule that your gymnast has. We highly suggest getting to know the parents in your gymnast's group along with parents in other levels. This way, you might be able to car pool with other families and save some time! A lot of our team kids car pool with other families and it definitely helps out! The gym also creates a car pool sign-up sheet for any family that may need or can provide a ride. Otherwise, families have had their grandma or grandpa, aunts or uncles, or siblings drop them off. That is also a great way for other family members to see what your gymnast has been learning in practice!

## **Breakdown of Costs for Team Program**

### **COST FOR STARLETS AND PRE-TEAM:**

#### **Monthly Tuition**

- Starlets: \$49-\$99/month (depending on choosing 1 or 2 practice days)
- Pre-Team: \$69-\$119 (depending on choosing 1 or 2 practice days)

#### **Booster Club**

- There is no cost for Starlets since this is not an option to join.
- Pre-Team has the option to join. It is \$40/year to be a part of the booster club.
- You MUST join the booster club when your gymnast moves up to competitive level 4 for meet fee purposes.

#### **Grips**

- Grips typically are not recommended for Starlets or Pre-team gymnasts because their hands are too small to fit into them and the skills they are learning do not require them. However, there may be an instance where they are necessary.
- Cost: \$60 including wrist bands. Grips can last anywhere from 1-3 years.

### **COST OF LEVELS 4-10:**

#### **Team Tuition**

- Monthly tuition paid to Granite City Gymnastics (Tuition varies with each level.)
- Level 4: \$180/month
- Level 5: \$200/month
- Level 6: \$270/month
- Level 7-10: \$270 - \$300/month

#### **Membership in Granite City Gymnastics Booster Club**

- \$40.00 per year/family – must be renewed each year and is a MUST for ALL level 4-10 families.

#### **USA Gymnastics Athlete Registration**

- \$49.00 per year/gymnast. (Can change annually)
- Must be renewed every year in order for the athlete to compete. It is illegal for any gymnast to be on a competition floor without a USAG athlete number.

#### **Head Tax which is used to sponsor the State and Regional competitions.**

- \$15.00 per year/gymnast (May change annually)

#### **Meet Fees**

- Levels 4-6 will typically compete anywhere from 5-8 meets per season.
- Meet fees –roughly \$45.00-90.00 per meet/gymnast
- Must be in booster club account prior to meet registration.

#### **Coaches Fees**

- Is divided amongst the amount of athletes that are competing at a meet.  
There are coaches' fees for each competition, along any travel expenses to drive your gymnast to meets. Lodging for out-of-state meets may also be necessary. (Costs vary and can be reduced by ride and room sharing.)  
Gymnasts also divide the costs for paying coaches for their time, meals, and lodging at meets.
- Taken out of your booster club account.

#### **Competition Leotard – purchased every 2 years**

- \$60-\$100
- In alternate seasons, Granite City will order tank leotards to help offset costs.

#### **Warm Up suit – purchased every 2-3 years**

- \$70-\$100 for pants and jacket

#### **Competition Bags**

- \$15 – may change annually

#### **Grips and Ankle Weights (Optional)**

- \$60 for grips including wrist bands
- Up to \$10 for ankle weights – 2-3lbs only
- Can be used anywhere from 1-3 years.

