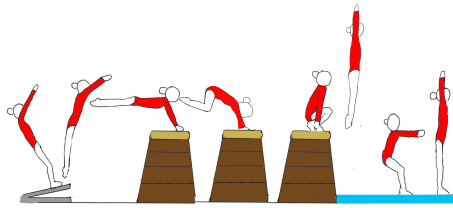


VAULT

THE SQUAT ON



You are looking for:

- ✓ A 'layout' of the body into an almost horizontal position in first flight.
- ✓ Hands are placed shoulder width apart on the vault.
- ✓ The feet are brought between the hands, ending in a squat.
- ✓ Arms and legs are driven immediately upwards into a straight body position for the jump off.
- ✓ The entire body should be above the level of the vault on the jump off.
- ✓ The landing should be with bent knees, chest up but slightly forward over the knees, and arms straight out in front.

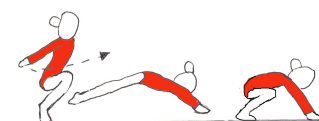
Common Problems with the Basic Vaults (Squat & Straddle)

- A slow, ineffectual run-up, or a slowing down just before the Springboard.
- Jumping onto the Springboard vertically, with feet underneath the hips, resulting in no forward momentum.
- Not understanding the bounce and hand placement sequence, resulting in a 'frog' jump onto the apparatus.
- Not lifting the hips high enough resulting in failure to get the feet on or over.
- Stopping on the strike phase, not allowing the shoulders to go forward, resulting in falling backwards, or not getting the feet on, or the bottom shooting dangerously upwards due to no forward momentum.
- Not keeping the head and chest up during the strike of the hands, resulting in a downward second flight off.
- Not looking forward, but down during second flight, usually resulting in over rotation and landing face down.
- FEAR. This often accounts for most of the above problems.

Progressions & Set-ups

The progressions below can be used for both Squat and Straddle vaults, with a simple variation in the feet placement. Start with these exercises on the floor:

- From front support, get the children to jump their feet in between their hands into a squat position
- Add a stretch jump up to correct landing position from the Squat position.
- Cat spring, with an arm swing. The children start in a standing squat with their arms back. They sharply swing their arms forward, extend their legs, and 'pounce' forward like a cat onto hands, then feet. They can do this to Squat again, or to a Straddle Stand.



Time to take the skill to a higher surface:

Teaching Points:

- Always start on a low surface and gradually increase the height.
- Always start with the apparatus long ways to the child to prevent them toppling over the other side on their first attempts.
- Start from a standing position at first (no run-up).
- Only introduce a springboard with a higher surface. Too low, and the child will not be able to place their hands safely and tip forward.

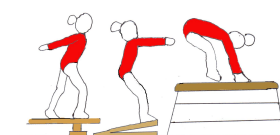
- Bunny hop onto box top / bench or similar. Walk along, Straight jump off to correct landing.



- Long bunny hop on, extending body out and trying to reach hands further on. Try and get the gymnast to start with their arms at the back, and swing them forward



- Start putting the Hurdle Step and Squat On together, still on a low surface. Always insist on the step off one foot, jump to two feet on the Springboard. Using a bench to step off onto the board can be useful. Again you may get some 'frog' style jumps to start with, so keep emphasising 'hands first, then feet'.



- Gradually the run up can be introduced and the height increased as the gymnasts become for confident. Once you are happy that the hand and feet placement are correct, and close enough to each other on contact, the Box can be turned round so that the children approach it widthways.

- As you are narrowing the area where the children will place their hands and feet, again practise must be undertaken on a low surface, from a standing position, so that they get a feel for how to stop themselves toppling over the other side.



- Once the technique has been practised successfully, the Coach can gradually add the run-up and increase the height of the Vault.

Common Faults:

Watch out for landing on knees instead of feet, usually unconsciously caused by a fear of toppling forwards. The best way to explain where they are going wrong is on the floor from Front Support. Ask them to watch what your bottom does when you jump your feet in.

First show what happens when you incorrectly land on your knees i.e *Bottom drops down*.



Then show them what happens when you correctly land on your feet i.e *Bottom lifts up*.



SECOND FLIGHT OFF

You are looking for:

- ✓ Feet together ready for a straight jump up and off.
- ✓ A strong, straight jump up, with arm swing and feet coming above the top of the Box. NB for Squat on, the child should jump up directly from the squat position, and not stand up first.
- ✓ A solid landing, with knees bent no more than 90 degrees. Feet together, arms out in front.

Teaching Points:

- Encourage an immediate jump off from the Squat on, rather than stopping, standing up, and then jumping off as the child becomes more confident, as the forward momentum will be needed when progressing on to the Squat Through.
- If the gymnast is clearly having to hold themselves back from going all the way over, (which is often where they are fighting to stop their hips rising up on contact with the top), then it is time to move onto the 'through' vaults. You can continue to use the same support and simply travel forward with the gymnast to the landing side of the vault.
- Remember to ask the gymnast to look straight ahead as the hands are placed, to ensure the head and chest are raised upwards, allowing room for the legs, and maintaining forward momentum.

Supporting:

- First Squat on attempts will normally be done with the Coach supporting at the hips, standing behind the child. This is fine for attempts from standing, or with a short slow run-up.
- As the skill improves, the Coach should stand to the side of the Vault and be ready to *move with the gymnast*. The Coach should stay slightly in front of the gymnast at all times.
- As the gymnast takes off, the Coach brings their far arm across the body and places the hand on the gymnast's arm just below the shoulder, so that there is control over the forward motion of the gymnast. The forearm of the nearest arm is placed under the gymnast at the stomach to aid lift.
- As the gymnast gains confidence at getting the feet on, the Coach can just place a forearm across the front of the gymnast at shoulder height to prevent falling forward.

