

SECTION II

OPTIONAL VAULT

I. APPARATUS SPECIFICATIONS/RULINGS

- A. Refer to the current *USA Gymnastics Women's Rules and Policies* book. Requirements are subject to change every competitive year, beginning August 1.
- B. The Meet director is required to include the thickness of the vault runway in the pre-meet information.
- C. Use of tape or excessive chalk is not permitted on the vault table.
- D. A hand placement mat may be placed on the runway (but not on the vaulting board) ONLY for round-off entry or front handspring onto the board entry vaults at Level 8, 9 or 10. The mat must be manufactured by a gymnastics equipment company and placed on the runway according to manufacturer's directions (velcro-side down). It must not exceed two inches in height.
- A sting mat (or any other type of matting) is not allowed.
 - The hand placement mat may NOT be placed on the runway as a visual aid for forward entry vaults at any level.
- E. If the hand placement mat slips on the runway, it is NOT considered apparatus or personal equipment failure. This is not a reason to repeat the vault without penalty.
1. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that the mat is placed properly with the Velcro secure.
 2. The tape measure is also part of the coach's responsibility.
- F. The use of the Round-off "safety zone" mat is **REQUIRED** whenever Round-off entry vaults are performed at J. O. competitions (Level 8, 9 & 10). The safety zone mat may also be used (but not required) for ANY other vault in the Jr. Olympic Program.
1. Failure to use the safety zone mat when performing a Round-off entry vault would result in a "0" (VOID) score for the vault.
 2. For Round-off entry vaults, the safety zone mat must be placed in the proper direction (around the board) or the vault is invalid - "0" (VOID). The safety zone mat is designed to protect the area between the board and the vault apparatus, as well as on the sides of the board. It must fit snugly against the board so there is no space between the board and the safety zone mat.
 3. For vaults from Groups 1, 2 and 3 (forward entry with or without turns in pre-flight), the safety zone mat may be placed in either direction behind the board. It is also acceptable to have space between the board and the safety zone mat in this situation.
- G. Any combination of *skill cushions (maximum of 9 inches, using sting mats, 4-inch throw mats and/or 8-inch skill cushions) may be placed on top of the allowable competition landing mats (9 inches). If an 8-inch thick skill cushion is used, it must be a minimum of 5' x 10'.
- The use of any other unauthorized type of matting will receive a deduction of 0.30 from the average score by the Chief Judge.
- *Types of Skill cushions: Sting mat, 4" throw mat, 8" skill cushion
- H. *The Vault runway must be securely fastened to the floor with tape or Velcro.* Athletic tape, Velcro strips or small chalk marks may be placed across the width of the vault runway; however, the tape/strips may not exceed 2 inches in width.
- The markings should be removed no later than at the end of the rotation.

I. Conversion for inches to centimeters:

- Approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ inch = 2 cm
 4 inches = 10 cm
 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches = 12 cm
 8 inches = 20 cm
 9 inches = 24 cm

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Determining the Final Score for Levels 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10

1. The gymnast has the right to perform *one (1) or two (2)* vaults.
2. The vaults may be the same or different.
3. Each vault is scored and averaged separately.
4. The better score is counted (*Exception: If a Level 8 gymnast attempts/performs a second vault, the score for the second vault is the Final Score, regardless of the result.*)

B. Supplemental Approaches

The gymnast is allowed three (3) attempts (running approaches) to successfully complete one or two vaults.

1. A balk (*a running approach that does not result in going over the vault table*) is considered an attempt.
2. *If the gymnast either stops mid-run, runs off the runway, or makes contact with the hand placement mat, safety zone mat, board or vaulting table without going over the vault table, it is considered a balk and counts as one of the three approaches to complete one or two vaults.*
 - a. *If the gymnast balks two times, the second balk counts as a Void (0 score) vault.*
 - b. If the gymnast falls during her running approach to the vault, it is considered a balk and is counted as one of the three approaches.
4. A fourth attempt is not allowed.
5. **Examples for determining the Final Score:**

		<i>Final Score for Levels 6,7,9 &10</i>	<i>Final Score for Level 8 only</i>
a.	<i>Approach #1: Runs + Balks Approach #2: Runs + Balks Approach #3: Completes Vault #1 No more attempts allowed</i>	<i>Count the score of the one vault performed (Vault #1)</i>	<i>Count the score of the one vault performed (Vault #1)</i>
b.	<i>Approach #1: Completes Vault #1 Approach #2: Runs + Balks Approach #3: Completes Vault #2</i>	<i>Count the vault with the higher score</i>	<i>Must count Vault #2, even if score is lower than score of Vault #1</i>
c.	<i>Approach #1: Runs + Balks Approach #2: Runs + Balks Approach #3: Runs onto board-does not go over table (Balks)</i>	<i>2nd Balk = Void Vault #1 3rd Balk = Void Vault #2 Final Score = 0</i>	<i>2nd Balk = Void Vault #1 3rd Balk = Void Vault #2 Final Score = 0</i>
d.	<i>Approach #1: Runs into table (Balks) Approach #2: Completes Vault #1 Approach #3: Runs + Balks</i>	<i>Count the score of the one vault performed</i>	<i>Final Score = 0 for unsuccessful attempt at Vault #2</i>
e.	<i>Approach #1: Completes Vault #1 Approach #2: Runs onto board-does not go over table (Balks) Approach #3: Runs-Performs a vault but does not land on bottom of feet first = Void</i>	<i>Count the score of the Vault #1</i>	<i>Final Score = 0 for unsuccessful attempt at Vault #2</i>
f.	<i>Approach #1: Completes Vault #1 Approach #2: Runs + Balks No 3rd Approach due to injury</i>	<i>Count the score of the Vault #1</i>	<i>Final Score = 0 for unsuccessful attempt at Vault #2</i>

C. Announcement of Intended Vault and Performance of the Wrong Vault

1. Before beginning the approach, the gymnast or coach must designate the correct vault to be performed by announcing the name of the vault or by flashing the vault number indicated on the Jr. Olympic Vault Chart for the specific level.
 - a. At meets below State Championships, the coach may announce the vault to be performed instead of flashing the number.
 - b. The vault number must be flashed at all optional State level and above competitions.
 - c. The Chief Judge will signal the gymnast to vault as soon as the intended vault has been flashed or announced by the coach.
2. There is no deduction for performing a vault that is different than the vault announced or flashed, provided it is a vault allowed at the specific level of the gymnast.
3. The vault performed determines the Start Value, not the vault number flashed or announced.
4. The body position that is demonstrated for the majority of the vault will determine which vault has been executed.

Example for Level 10:

Vault announced is a Tsukahara stretched (layout):

Gymnast performs the backward salto by first piking, then showing a stretched position, and then piking again. Since the majority of the vault was performed in a pike position, the Start Value will be 9.50 for the Piked Tsukahara, rather than 9.70 for the Stretched Tsukahara.

D. Performance of a Vault Without a Signal from the Chief Judge

1. Vault is ignored, even if both judges see it.
2. Gymnast has the opportunity to perform two more vaults.
3. The Chief Judge applies a 0.50 penalty to the average of the next completed vault.
4. The penalty may or may not affect the final score.

Example: *Approach # 1* - Runs/vaults over table without being signaled to start

Approach # 2 - completes Vault #1, scores 9.0, receives penalty of -0.50 for score of 8.5

Approach # 3 - completes Vault #2, scores 9.0, which will be her final score.

E. Coaching Deductions

1. All judges take the 0.50 deduction for spot (assistance) upon landing.
2. If the coach assists during the vault, the vault will be scored "0" (VOID).
 - **Exception: At Level 8 ONLY, if the coach spots (assists) the gymnast during the post-flight phase, the vault is scored and each judge applies a deduction of 1.00.**
3. All judges deduct 0.50 if the coach stands between the board and the vault apparatus (inside the domain of the apparatus).
 - Exception: NO DEDUCTION for the coach standing between the board and the vaulting apparatus is taken if performing a Round-off entry vault (Levels 8, 9, & 10).
 - There is no deduction if the coach, when standing between the board and the vault table, makes contact with the safety zone mat or inadvertently touches the vaulting table.
4. The coach may speak to the gymnast between vaults without penalty, but may not give verbal coaching cues during the vault.

F. Miscellaneous Vault Rules

1. Arrival on the Vault Table
 - a. May occur from a run with forward arrival on the board with both feet.
 - b. May occur from a run with backward arrival on the board with both feet from a Round-off (Level 8, 9 & 10 only).
 - c. May occur from a run with a forward arrival on the board with both feet from a front handspring (Level 9 and 10 only).

2. All vaults must be performed with support of both hands on the vault table.
 - a. If neither hand makes contact with the vault table, the vault is scored "0" (VOID).
 - b. The Chief Judge takes the 1.00 deduction from the average score for the performance of a one-arm vault, if at least half of the vault panel saw that only one hand touched the vault table.
3. All vaults must land on the feet first on the landing mat in order to be considered for Value-Part credit. Landing on the feet first is defined as "any part of the bottom of the foot touching the mat first." Any vault that fails to land on the feet first will be scored "0" (VOID).
 - If the gymnast lands standing, sitting, or lying on top of the vault table, it is a "0" (VOID) vault.
4. **Level 10** gymnasts may perform any vault listed on the Level 10 Vault Value Chart. See Appendix. All vault values listed in the Vault element section of the *J.O. Code of Points* refer to the values for Level 10.
 - a. For Level 10 only, all 10.0 Start Value vaults performed successfully (no fall or spot) are eligible for a bonus of +0.10, except those marked with an asterisk: #3.407, #4.403, #4.306, #4.309, #5.408 and #5.409.
 - b. Each judge adds the vault bonus to his/her score and must visibly (by means of a placard or other signage) indicate that the bonus was awarded. If using paper scoreslips, the judge should also indicate in writing any bonus awarded.
5. At **Level 9**, only specific vaults from the five groups may be performed. Refer to the Level 9 Vault Value chart. The Level 9 vault values are different than the vault values for Level 10.
6. **Level 8 Vault regulations**
 - a. Only specific vaults from Groups 1, 3, 4, and 5 are permitted. The Level 8 vault values are different than the Vault values at Level 9 or 10. Refer to the Level 8 Vault Chart in the Appendix.
 - b. *A Level 8 gymnast may attempt one or two vaults. If a second vault (same or different) is attempted/performed, the score for the second vault is the FINAL score, regardless of the result.*
7. **Level 6 and 7** gymnasts must perform vaults from Group 1 that have no more than 360° turn in one flight and no more than 540° turn in total. All Level 6/7 vaults are valued at 10.0. Refer to the Level 6/7 Vault Chart in the Appendix.
 - The deduction for Too long in Support (Up to 0.50) and Angle of Repulsion (Up to 1.00) are applied for ALL Level 6 and 7 vaults.
8. If a gymnast attempts a vault listed on the Vault Value chart for her level, but does not complete it, resulting in a vault that is not found on the chart, the vault is scored "0" (VOID). However, the gymnast does NOT receive a "0" (VOID) as the final score for the event if the second vault is a legitimate vault.
9. If **EITHER** of the two vaults performed are vaults that are not allowed at the gymnast's level (Level 6, 7, 8 or 9), the gymnast would receive a final score of "0" (VOID) for that event because a restricted vault was performed.
10. The vault touch warm-up is not regulated by time. During the competition touch warm-up, each gymnast is guaranteed a specific number of warm-up vaults, depending upon her level.
 - a. After presenting to the judges, the gymnasts are allowed ONE "run-back" from the board before the vault attempts are counted.
 - b. Each gymnast is allowed to stand on the vault table and jump (or salto) off ONE TIME ONLY, in addition to their specific number of guaranteed vaults.
 - c. Level 8-10 athletes are guaranteed three vaults.
 - d. Level 6 and 7 athletes are guaranteed two vaults.
 - e. *It is not considered exceeding warm-up time if a gymnast who is next to compete on vault runs or jumps on the vault runway following the previous competitor's final vault. The gymnast may NOT run or jump in front of the vault judges' table. A warning would be given in this instance for exceeding warm-up time.*
11. Group 1 Vault clarifications:
 - a. All Group 1 vaults that have a turn in pre-flight may be performed with ¼ (90°) to ½ (180°) LA (long axis) turn in the first flight phase.
 - b. For Group 1 vaults with a twist in both the first and second flight phase, the twist may be performed in either direction.

12. Group 3 (Tsukahara entry) Vault clarifications:
 - a. A slight arm bend of the lead arm is allowed for all Group 3 vaults.
 - b. All Group 3 (Tsukahara entry) vaults may be performed with $\frac{1}{4}$ (90°) to $\frac{1}{2}$ (180°) LA turn in the first flight phase. There is NO deduction for incomplete turn.
 - This also includes Group 3 vaults that have a $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ turn in the preflight and a $\frac{3}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ turn off to a front salto.
13. Group 5 Vault Clarifications:
All Group 5 vaults described as having a 1/1 (360°) LA turn in the first flight phase with a backward salto in the second flight phase may be performed with 3/4 (270°) to 1/1 (360°) LA turn in the first flight phase.

G. SPECIFIC APPARATUS DEDUCTIONS

1. First flight Phase

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|------------|
| a. | Incorrect foot form (flexed, sickled) | Up to 0.10 |
| b. | Incorrect leg form | |
| | - Legs crossed | Up to 0.10 |
| | - Legs separated | Up to 0.20 |
| | - Knees bent | Up to 0.30 |
| c. | Poor technique | |
| | - Hip angle | Up to 0.20 |
| | - Arched body | Up to 0.20 |
| d. | Incomplete LA turn | |

2. Support/Repulsion Phase

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|
| a. | Poor technique: | |
| | - Staggered/alternate hand placement on all vaults, except
Gr. 3 vaults & Gr. 5 vaults with 3/4 - 1/1 on - salto off | Up to 0.10 |
| | - Shoulder angle | Up to 0.20 |
| | - Arched body | Up to 0.20 |
| | - Alternate repulsion from hands on all vaults, except
Gr. 3 vaults & Gr. 5 vaults with 3/4 on - 1/1 on-salto off | Up to 0.20 |
| | - <i>Legs bent in support for all vaults with saltos</i> | <i>Up to 0.20</i> |
| b. | Prescribed LA turn begun too early | Up to 0.30 |
| c. | Additional hand placements (taking steps/hops on hands) | Up to 0.30 |
| d. | Bent arms (bent 90° or more = max. ded.) | Up to 0.50 |
| | • A slight arm bend of the lead arm is allowed on all Group 3 vaults | |
| e. | Too long in support
<i>(applies to all Level 6-10 NON-SALTO vaults from any Group)</i> | Up to 0.50 |
| f. | Angle of repulsion
<i>(applies to all Level 6-10 NON-SALTO vaults from any Group)</i> | Up to 1.00 |
| | If the gymnast leaves the vault table: | |
| | - by vertical | no deduction |
| | - from 1° to 45° | deduct 0.05 – 0.50 |
| | - from 46° to horizontal | deduct 0.55 – 1.00 |
| g. | Touch with only one hand on the vault table | <u>1.00</u> |
| | • Chief Judge deduction if $\frac{1}{2}$ of panel sees only one hand touch | |
| h. | Head contacting table during support phase | <u>2.00</u> |
| | • Includes 0.50 deduction for extreme arm bend | |
| i. | No hand contact on the vault table | VOID |

3. Second Flight Phase

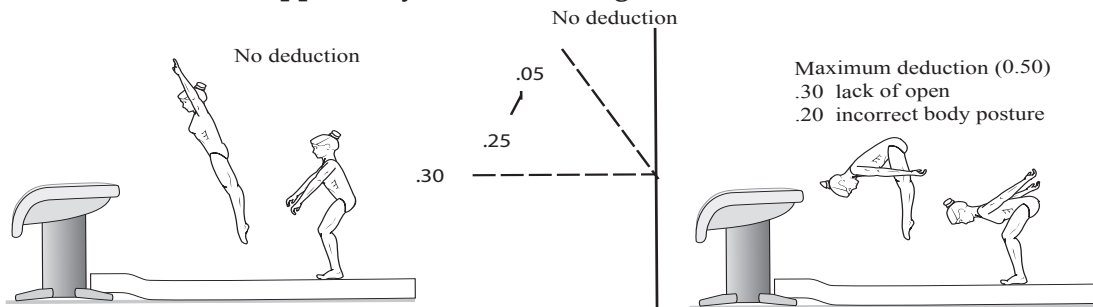
- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|------------|
| a. | Incorrect foot form (flexed, sickled) | Up to 0.10 |
| b. | Insufficient exactness of LA turn | Up to 0.10 |
| c. | Under-rotation of salto vaults | Up to 0.10 |

d.	Incorrect leg form	
	- Legs crossed	Up to 0.10
	- Legs separated	Up to 0.20
	- Knees bent	Up to 0.30
e.	Brush or hit of body/head on vault table during post-flight	Up to 0.20
f.	Insufficient Length	Up to 0.30
	<i>When evaluating length, consider size of the athlete, type of vault, where the hands contact the table and where the feet land and overall trajectory (amplitude) of the 2nd flight phase; not just the distance from where the gymnast lands in relation to the end of the vault table.</i>	
g.	Failure to maintain stretched body (pike down of stretched vaults to facilitate landing)	Up to 0.30
h.	Insufficient exactness of body position:	
	- Insufficient tuck or pike	Up to 0.30
	• tuck = min. 90° bend in hip & knees (Except in twists in tuck position-allow for more open “puck” position)	
	• pike = min. 90° bend in hips. 91°-135° = insufficient pike	
	- Insufficient stretched position (ideal=180°, but greater than 135° is considered stretched position)	
	• arch	Up to 0.30
	• hip angle of 136° - 179° = insufficient stretched pos.	Up to 0.30
i.	Late completion of the twist (Group 1 Vaults and Group 4 & 5 vaults without saltos)	Up to 0.30
j.	Insufficient extension (open) of body before landing	
	- Insufficient and/or late extension (tuck and pike vaults)	Up to 0.25
	- Total absence of extension (tuck and pike vaults)	<u>0.30</u>
k.	Insufficient Height	Up to 0.50
l.	Prescribed LA turn begun too late	Up to 0.50
4.	<u>Landing</u>	
a.	Slight hop, small adjustments of feet or staggered feet	Up to 0.10
b.	Extra arm swings	Up to 0.10
c.	Extra steps (per step with maximum of 4)	each <u>0.10</u>
d.	Landing with feet wider than hip-width apart	<u>0.10</u>
e.	Incorrect body posture on landing	Up to 0.20
f.	Additional trunk movements to maintain balance	Up to 0.20
g.	Large step or jump (approximately 3 feet or more)	<u>0.20</u>
h.	Squat on landing (hips even with or lower than the knees)	Up to 0.30
i.	Slight brush/touch of 1 or both hands on mat (no support)	Up to 0.30
j.	Prescribed LA turn incomplete:	Up to 0.30
	- 1° - 30° missing	Up to 0.10
	- 31° - 60° missing	0.15 - 0.20
	- 61° - 89° missing	0.25 - 0.30
	- 90° or more missing	award lower vault value
k.	Deviation from a straight direction (determined by initial contact with mat)	Up to 0.30
l.	Insufficient dynamics	Up to 0.30
m.	Support on mat with 1 or 2 hands	<u>0.50</u>
n.	Fall on mat to knee(s) or hips	<u>0.50</u>
o.	Fall against apparatus	<u>0.50</u>
p.	Landing in a sitting, lying or standing position on top of the vault table	VOID
5.	<u>Other deductions</u>	
a.	Coach standing between board and vault table	<u>0.50</u>
	Exception: This deduction is NOT taken if gymnast performs a Round-off entry vault at Level 8, 9 or 10.	

- b. Spotting assistance upon landing 0.50
- c. Vaults without signal from Chief Judge 0.50
 - CJ deducts 0.50 from average of next vault
- d. Failure to land on any part of the bottom of the feet first VOID
 - Vault is scored if gymnast falls, landing on hands and bottoms of feet simultaneously 0.50
- e. Spotting assistance during the vault VOID
 - **Level 8 ONLY: Spotting assistance in post-flight only** **1.00**
- f. Run approach without execution of the vault VOID
 - with touch on the springboard or vault table VOID
- h. Failure to use the safety zone mat for round-off entry vaults VOID
- i. Level 6-9 gymnast performs restricted vault for the level VOID

*** Clarification of the deductions for insufficient/late opening and total absence of extension in Second Flight Phase:**

The opening deduction should reflect the body shape prior to landing. The "Up to 0.30" deduction is applied according to small, medium and large errors in regards to the body shape. The following illustration refers to the degree of closure of the upper body towards the legs.



If the gymnast begins to extend or completely extends the hips prior to landing, but upon landing cannot maintain the upper body posture and closes the upper torso downward toward the legs (compresses), the "up to 0.20" deduction for "incorrect body posture on landing" is applied.

- * If the gymnast lands in a squat position and then proceeds to fall, deduct only the 0.50 for the fall. However, other deductions such as insufficient open may also be applicable.

Clarification on steps on landing: Examples of one step = Up to 0.10

1. A step-close is considered one step and receives a 0.10 deduction. A very small step-close or other small foot movement would receive 0.05 deduction.

Examples of one step = - 0.10

- a. The gymnast lands with feet together, then takes one step forward, sideward or backward on the Right foot; then returns the Right foot to join the Left foot, OR
- b. The gymnast lands with feet together, then takes one step forward, backward or sideward on the Right foot; then steps with the Left foot to join the Right foot.
- c. If a gymnast lands with feet a maximum of hip-width apart, there is no deduction, provided that she joins (slides) the heels together on the controlled extension.
 - If the entire foot/feet are sliding or lifting off the mat to join, it is considered a small step.
2. If the gymnast is out of control or has additional movements to maintain balance after the step(s), additional deductions may be applied.
3. There is a maximum deduction of 0.40 for steps (regardless of size or number); however, if the steps result in a fall, deduct only 0.50 for the fall.
4. If the gymnast lands with feet apart/staggered and then continues to take steps, deduct only for the steps. The deductions for landing with feet apart/staggered are to be applied only when the gymnast "sticks" the landing.

- G. See Appendix or go to USA Gymnastics website at www.usagym.org and check under Women's Program: Rules: Optional for the most current USA Gymnastics Jr. Olympic Vault Value Charts.