

## Welcome to Tumbling for Cheer at Diablo Gymnastics School!

Tumbling for Cheer is a fairly new program here at Diablo. The need for a cheer specific class has come up as cheerleading is now such a popular sport for girls in our area. This letter will help you understand what the program is all about, give you some insight into why we designed the curriculum the way did and what you can expect your student to learn at each level.

Our Tumbling for Cheer classes follow along the same outline as our traditional tumbling classes but have a few modifications specific to cheerleaders. Typically, our classes have very specific skill progressions that lead from basics to more advanced training. However, our cheer program had to be designed to accommodate the more advanced skills that even new cheerleaders are often asked to perform, i.e. the back handspring. In a regular gymnastics setting, a student would have 4 or more years under her belt before attempting a back handspring, yet cheerleaders today are asked to learn this skill in a matter of months, often with no previous tumbling experience. Our goal is to help your cheerleader along as quickly as we can while installing a solid foundation for safe tumbling.

Beginning Cheer Tumbling: For new students who have little or no tumbling experience. Students are introduced to proper body positioning, terminology, and technique. They learn about the muscle groups responsible for each tumbling skill and the role that flexibility, strength, and timing play in tumbling. Emphasis is placed on conditioning and skill requirements needed for intermediate and advanced cheer tumbling. Students will learn forward and backward rolls, handstands (both wall and free standing), bridge, handstand to a bridge, back bend into bridge, kick -overs, cartwheels and round offs.

Intermediate Cheer Tumbling: Students in Intermediate Tumbling refine their basic tumbling skills and increase their strength and flexibility. The back handspring is the “must-have” of cheer tumbling and is a requirement for many cheer teams. One of the primary goals of Intermediate Tumbling is to introduce and master the back handspring. The round off is refined with a focus on developing a strong round off back handspring. Conditioning and stretching focus is placed on shoulder/chest flexibility, back flexibility, and leg strength, all critical for a strong back handspring. Students will be taught the back handspring in progressions, utilizing specialized equipment such as the boulders, trampolines and spotting rigs. Students will be spotted on the back handspring until both the student and the coach feel that a spot is no longer necessary.

Advanced Cheer Tumbling: Students work on front tumbling, multiple trick skills and combinations. Students will work on jumps to multiple back handsprings, back handspring back tuck, back handspring layout, and twisting. Students must be able to do a round off to two back handsprings AND a standing back handspring (without a spot) in order to register.

*Who will benefit from this class?* Our coaches are trained in the basics of tumbling all the way up to flips and twists, so beginning tumblers all the way to advanced tumblers will enjoy class. We also include strength and jumps to help with all aspects of cheer.

*My daughter knows how to do a handstand, why is she practicing them in class?* While our goal is to expedite the skill progressions for our cheerleaders, there are still many skills that are vital to good technique and safe tumbling. Handstands, bridges, kick overs, walkovers, and cartwheel variations are good examples of skills that may seem unimportant and even a little tedious, however, they pave the way for strong tumbling.

*How long will it take for my daughter to learn her back handspring and round off back handspring?* Every student is different, so there is no easy way to predict. Coaches often give students “homework” they can practice throughout the week that will help move things along in the gym. Our coaches are always willing to talk with you regarding your student's progress. Please feel free to contact them before or after class if they are able and will gladly give you a call or send an email if that is more convenient.

Please feel free to ask any other questions you may have!

Jaime  
Diablo Gymnastics School