

Xcel FAQs – December 2014

GENERAL

The Xcel program rules are found in the official written and published Xcel Code of Points, the Xcel Committee minutes and the Women's Technical Committee minutes as they refer to Xcel ("Updates"). The Xcel rules are also available on the iBook Xcel Code of Points. The official written and published Xcel Code of Points and the Updates have final authority if discrepancies occur between these two versions of the Xcel Code of Points. In these documents, the written text takes precedence over accompanying pictures. Please realize that every variation of a skill cannot be written or depicted in these documents. There are many Judging/coaching/study aids available. While these are wonderful tools, errors may occur. In all instances, the official written and published Xcel Code of Points/Updates takes precedence over the Judging/coaching/study aids.

1. Refer to the USA Gymnastics Rules and Policies for movement between and within the Xcel and Junior Olympic Programs.
2. Maximum Execution Deductions: The 4.0 Maximum Execution deduction includes everything **EXCEPT** Spotting and Artistry deductions.
3. The following landing deductions are applied to "stick" landings for all Vaults that land on the feet and Dismount landings on Beam and Floor.
 - *Landing with feet more than hip width apart = 0.10*
 - *Landing with feet staggered = Up to 0.10*
 - *Failure to join (slide) heels together on controlled extension of landing = Up to 0.10*
 - *Entire foot/feet slide or lifted off floor to join on controlled extension of landing = Up to 0.10*

VAULT

Bronze

1. Clarification: VAULT 1B – Kick to Handstand – Fall to Flat Back. Gymnast may place hands on the mat or the board in order to execute the Handstand Flat back.

Silver

1. Clarification: VAULT 1B – Kick to Handstand - Fall to Flat Back. Gymnast may place hands on the mat or the table in order to execute the Handstand Flat back.
2. Clarification: VAULT 1 (See Women's Program Technical Committee Minutes / October, 2014)
 - Gymnast completes the Stretch Jump to the Table (Vault 1A), then falls off the table while stepping back to kick to handstand = 0.50 deduction for the fall. She may still perform the 2nd part of the Vault.
 - Gymnast completes the Stretch Jump to the Table (Vault 1A), then falls forward using hand support on the table = 0.50 deduction for the fall. She may still perform the 2nd part of the Vault.
 - Gymnast never arrives on table with feet first in attempt to complete the Stretch Jump to the Table. She has failed to complete the 1st part of the Vault and would lose the value of Vault 1A. She may still perform the 2nd part of the Vault.

GENERAL - BARS, BEAM, FLOOR

UNEVEN BARS

All Divisions

1. Q: Please clarify when a cast squat on, can or cannot be used for the CAST Special Requirement.
A: *The cast before a squat on – jump to high bar or a shoot through **CANNOT** be considered for the cast SR for ANY Division.*
 - *(#2.102) Cast squat, stoop or straddle on, also with jump to the HB = one “A” VP.*
 - *Cast shoot through (on the Xcel Bars Skill Chart) = one “A” VP.*

Cast, squat/straddle/stoop on that leads to a sole circle around the bar or to a dismount, may be considered for the CAST Special Requirement.

- *Cast, followed by a sole circle or underswing dismount is considered (2) VPs*

Note: *Only the 1st and/or 2nd cast receiving VP credit may be considered for SR Credit. Any further cast is considered a “0” VP and CAN NOT be used for SR as it is the 3rd time performed. In Bronze, Silver, and Gold anytime the hips leave the bar, a cast has been performed.*

2. Q: For the pullover mount on bars: Should judges use the 0.30 deduction for chin resting on the bar?
A: *Xcel does not take compulsory deductions unless specifically listed in the Xcel Code of Points. A rhythm deduction of 0.10 and the 0.10 deduction for “brushing” (regardless of the amount of weight during the resting position) the apparatus. This would result in not more than 0.20 for this error.*

BALANCE BEAM

General

- Q. Can shoulder rolls and forward and backward rolls be considered for “achieving or passing through vertical?”
A. *Yes, any roll that goes through a **candle position or shoulder stand** to show or pass through vertical may count as a vertical skill. (shoulders, hips and feet in alignment)*

Gold

1. Q: Can a Gold gymnast use a vertical handstand and a 3/4 handstand to fulfill the 2 acro skills in SR #3?
A: *“The partial handstands and vertical handstands listed on the Skill Charts ARE considered the same element.” (pg.94, C.2 – 2nd edition Xcel Code of Points.), In order to receive Value Part credit for the 2nd skill, there must be a different ENTRANCE or EXIT.
EXAMPLE: Partial Handstand by itself then later a Vertical handstand - Straight Jump connected.
Special Requirement is MET.*

2. Q: Can a headstand count as a vertical skill.

A. Yes, it may be given credit for passing through or achieving vertical provided they show alignment of the hips over the head and support on the head and/or hands.

Gold, Platinum, Diamond

1. Q: Will 2 VP's meet the Dance Series SR #2 for Gold, Platinum and Diamond Beam or do we need 3 VP's?

A: *Special Requirement is met if: Leap/Jump with required split is isolated then 2 connected dance skills performed OR Leap/Jump with required split is connected to 1 other Leap/Jump.*

EXAMPLE: Tuck Jump - Straight Jump connected then later an isolated Split Jump - SR met.

OR: Split Jump – Tuck Jump connected. SR met.

FLOOR EXERCISE

All Divisions

ORDER MATTERS (OM) PDF: This document can be found on the USA Gymnastics website under Women's Xcel Updates. OM provides written and chart form steps to help determine whether an Acro series will receive Special Requirement.

1. Clarification on Round-offs and Dive Cartwheels:

- A round-off must have flight from the hands to be considered a flight skill. A rebound does not constitute flight.
- A dive cartwheel has flight before hand placement.
- A cartwheel with flight after hand placement (pop) would also be considered a flight skill.

2. When considering whether or not to give VP credit for a skill, remember that not every entrance and exit can be listed. Example: A backward roll to the feet or to a push up position = "A" VP. If the gymnast performs a backward roll and purposely lands on her knees or steps out to a lunge, that skill can also be considered for "A" VP.

Bronze, Silver

1. Q: Can a Bronze/Silver gymnast on FX use a Round off Rebound FORWARD roll as her acro series?

A: No, Round-off rebound back roll is the only exception. Refer to Oct 2014 Errata for page 141/145 II. 2. a. and II. 3. a.

NOTE HIGHLIGHTED CHANGES FOR JULY FAQ

Xcel FAQs – July 2014

GENERAL

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1. Refer to the USA Gymnastics Rules and Policies for movement between and within the Xcel and Junior Olympic Programs.
2. Maximum Execution Deductions: The 4.0 Maximum Execution deduction includes everything **EXCEPT** Spotting and Artistry deductions.

VAULT

All Divisions

1. Q: Do we apply the Dynamics deduction for vault?
A: *Yes. See Xcel Vault Values and Deductions in the Xcel Code of Points. The Dynamics deduction is applied at all divisions. For Bronze Vault Option 1: Dynamics is applied to the Stretch Jump to Mat portion of the vault. The Dynamics deduction is also applied to the new Silver Vault Option 1.*
2. Q: What is the deduction for an unallowable vault?
A: *If a gymnast attempts a vault listed on the Vault Chart for her division, 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 her other vault is a legitimate vault. If EITHER of the two vaults performed are vaults that are not allowed at the gymnast's division, the gymnast would receive a final score of "0" (VOID) for that event because an unallowable vault was performed.*
3. Q: Do we apply the Courtesy Score of 4.0 to Vault?
A: *Yes. EXAMPLE: Bronze gymnast fails to do Bronze Vault 1 A (the stretch jump portion to mats) (0). She does perform the Kick to Handstand Flat Back portion (worth 4.5), but receives 1.0 in deductions for poor form. This would result in a score of 3.5. However, she would receive the Courtesy Score of 4.0.*
4. Q: How/when is the deduction for Failure to Pass through Vertical Handstand Position (up to 2.0) applied?
A: *This deduction would be used when the gymnast has a very poor body shape throughout Handstand Flat back portion of the vault - more like a poor dive roll position. It could mean they never show a vertical position from the hands through the hips because their shoulders are forward of the head and they are rounded through the back.*

This deduction has been added to Bronze Vault 1B and to the NEW Silver Vault 1B and also is applied at Silver Vault

2. Refer to Page 16 of the Xcel Code of Points (version 1) and the Xcel Committee minutes of May 2014.

Bronze

1. Q: The deduction for running on the board and stepping on the mat is a 4.5 deduction. Can the gymnast still perform the second phase of the vault or will she receive a "0"?
A: *If the gymnast runs up on the board, they have failed to perform that phase of the vault and will receive a "0". However, they may still do the handstand flat back and earn up to 4.5 for that phase of the vault.*
2. Q: Can a gymnast step back onto the board after her stretch jump to do her handstand fall to flat back?
A: *Yes. She is allowed to do this and may place her hands on the board or the mat for the handstand flat back phase of the vault. If possible, the meet director can provide additional matting beyond the end of the required matting to avoid this issue.*

Silver

1. Q: How much higher above the table can the stack mats be?
A: *The mat stack must be 8" (+ 2") above the height of the table.*
2. Q: If the gymnast is unsuccessful in completing the stretch jump onto the table (Silver Vault 1A) can she still perform the second phase of the vault?
A: *Yes. EXAMPLE: If the gymnast performed a squat on to the table, they have failed to perform that phase of the Vault for which she will receive a "0". However, they may still do the handstand flat back portion (Silver Vault 1B) and earn up to 4.5 for that phase of the vault.*
3. Q: Silver Vault 1B: Can a gymnast step onto the mats after her stretch jump to do her handstand fall to flat back?
A: *Yes. She is allowed to do this and may place her hands on the table or the mat for the handstand flat back phase of the vault.*

GENERAL - BARS, BEAM, FLOOR

1. Q: Are falls included in the maximum 4.0 execution deductions allowed?
A: *Yes. However, Artistry and Spotting deductions are in addition. Refer to pages 47, 100, and 155 in the Xcel Code of Points (version 1).*
2. Q: Can a gymnast use previous or current Compulsory Routines for Bars, Beam and Floor?
A: *Yes, as long as they are altered to meet the Xcel Special Requirements and time constraints.*
3. Clarification on the "Unallowable Skill" deduction:
When applying the "Unallowable Skill" deduction, it should be for a skill that is restricted for that division. EX: If a Gold gymnast performs a punch front full dismount ("C" Value Part), one would deduct 0.5 for missing the dismount Special Requirement and 0.3 for No Dismount AND 0.5 for performance of an "Unallowable Skill". These deductions would all come off of the Start Value. If a Gold gymnast performs a Partial Cartwheel to Handstand Dismount, one

would apply the deduction for not meeting the SR. **Do Not** apply the additional deductions of 0.30 for No Dismount and 0.50 for "Unallowable Skill". Refer to Xcel Committee minutes of May 2014.

UNEVEN BARS

All Divisions

CLARIFICATION: [#2.102] Cast squat, stoop or straddle on, also with jump to the HB is considered one (1) "A" VP.

Cast shoot through (on the Xcel Bars Skill Chart) is also considered one (1) "A" VP.

Cast, followed by a sole circle or underswing dismount is considered (2) VPs

1. Q: What would be the value of a "jump to clear position LB and immediate back hip circle" as a mount?

A: *This mount has been added to the Xcel Code of Points under Group1 Mounts and will receive "A" Value Part credit. (Element 1.109 on page 53/55 October 2014 Errata). This element will not count for the Special Requirement "Circling Skill" because the back hip circle was in the mount.*

Bronze / Silver / Gold

1. Q: Is there a deduction for extra swings when a gymnast casts multiple times from a front support?

A: *No. There are no extra swing deductions at these divisions. Apply the Xcel rule for awarding VP which requires a different entrance or exit to a skill to give it credit two times. All casts in the routine may incur rhythm and execution deductions.*

EXAMPLE: Glide kip ("A"), cast return ("A"), cast return ("A"), cast (0 VP), back hip circle ("A"). This routine has 3 casts in a row. The first 2 casts receive VP credit but the 3rd does not. No other casts in this routine will receive VP credit. Any of the casts in the above sequence could incur execution deductions for poor form if applicable.

2. Q: If a gymnast does a cast return to front support, cast squat on; is this an extra swing?

A: *No. Cast return to front support ("A") VP, cast squat on ("A") VP. Also see EXAMPLE in question #1 above.*

3. Q: Does cast to squat on fulfill the cast Special Requirement (SR)?

A: *No. Cast squat on = one ("A") VP. Likewise for cast single leg shoot through. In the following examples, there are 2 "A" elements: Cast("A"), sole circle dismount(A), or cast("A"), back hip circle("A").*

4. Q: Gymnast does a single leg shoot through to a forward stride circle. Do we use the flat 0.20 compulsory deduction for failure to simultaneously change both hands to reverse grip?

A: *No. See Xcel Uneven Bars deductions. Apply up to 0.10 for poor rhythm in elements/connections if applicable.*

5. Q: Do the same rules apply for counterswing/tap swing (Silver and Gold) as for successive casts?

A: *Yes. It may count twice as a VP provided it has a different entrance and exit.*

EXAMPLE: Gold: long hang pullover ("A"), underswing/counterswing – tap swing ("A"), counterswing - 2nd tap swing ("A"), counterswing – tap swing forward to ½ turn dismount or flyaway ("A").

6. Q: What is the deduction for not doing a re-grasp on the tap swing ½ turn dismount? Is the .3 deduction for NO re-grasp applied?

A: *NO. Deduct up to 0.2 for incomplete twist on the dismount plus any other amplitude or body position errors.*

Gold

1. CAST CLARIFICATION: SR #2 is a “cast to horizontal”. A gymnast may receive VP credit for other lower casts in the routine. EXAMPLE: Pullover(“A”), cast below horizontal (“A”), cast squat on (“A”), long hang kip (“A”), cast below horizontal (“A”), back hip circle (“A”), underswing dismount (“A”). This routine meets SR#1 for 6 skills/VP (because the low casts are on the Gold Skills Chart), and SR #3 – the back hip circle, and SR#4 the underswing dismount. However she has not met the cast to horizontal requirement (SR #2), and will incur a 0.50 deduction.

Platinum

1. Q: If a gymnast does the tap swing forward to ½ turn dismount instead of an “A” or “B” VP from the Code of Points, what is the deduction?

A: *No VP credit, deduct 0.5 for not meeting the Dismount SR.*

2. TAP SWING CLARIFICATION: One tap swing-counterswing may be used for “A” VP. Any subsequent tap swing – counterswings performed will receive extra swing deductions. If after an extra swing(s) the athlete jumps down from the bars; - do not take the extra swing deduction. Only apply the deduction of 0.50 for the fall.

3. Q: What deductions are appropriate if a Platinum gymnast does a pullover mount on the Low Bar?

A: *The pullover would **not** receive VP credit as it is not a recognized skill in the Xcel Code of Points. Deductions for execution and rhythm may be appropriate depending on how well it was performed. **DO NOT** take “Unallowable Skill” or “uncharacteristic element” deductions.*

Diamond

1. TAP SWING CLARIFICATION: Tap swing-counterswing is NOT a Value Part for Diamond and will be deducted 0.3 for an extra swing. If after an extra swing(s) happen(s) the athlete jumps down from the bars; apply only the deduction of 0.50 for the fall. If this was the end of the gymnast’s routine, also deduct 0.5 for not meeting the Dismount SR and 0.30 for no dismount

2. Q: What happens if a gymnast performs a “B” clear hip circle on the low bar (meets SR#2) and then does another “B” clear hip on the high bar? Will the “B” clear hip on the high bar meet SR#3?

A: Yes. The Rule Chart for Xcel Bars specifically states that “If the same circling skill is performed on the low bar and the high bar, it counts as two different skills/VPs and meets SR#3.

BALANCE BEAM

All Divisions

1. Handstand Clarification when achieving or passing through vertical is required.

Page 95 (2nd edition) of the Women's Xcel Code of Points gives the criteria for Handstands to receive VP credit.

EXAMPLES: A 2 second hold not required.

- a. Handstand (vertical) step down – “A” VP.
- b. Cartwheel to side handstand (vertical) – lower to single leg stride position. “A” VP
- c. Handstand (vertical) with double stag legs – lower to single knee sit – “A” VP

EXAMPLES: Acro series. Handstand vertical, within exercise, 2 second hold not required.

- a. Handstand (vertical) step down (“A”) – immediate back walkover (“A”). Meets SR credit at Platinum and an acro series for Diamond.
- b. Forward roll step-out (“A”) – immediate handstand with single stag leg (vertical) (“A”). Meets SR credit at Platinum and an acro series for Diamond.
- c. Handstand (vertical with split legs) step down (“A”) – immediate back handspring (“B”). Meets SR credit at Platinum and Diamond.

Reminder: At the **Silver and Gold Divisions** the gymnasts get VP credit for a Partial Handstand provided it meets the following criteria: Feet must close together and the handstand must reach of minimum of 45° from vertical.

Bronze

1. A “Partial Handstand” is an allowable skill for Bronze. **Bronze** athletes may receive VP credit for a Partial Handstand provided the lead leg reaches a minimum of 45° from vertical – feet/legs are not required to close.

Bronze / Silver / Gold

1. Q: *What would be the criteria for giving credit for a $\frac{3}{4}$ headstand?*

A: *If the gymnast can balance this $\frac{3}{4}$ headstand with alignment of the hips above the shoulders and head, then give credit and take deductions if appropriate for poor leg/foot position and possibly lack of a definite body shape (straight, tuck, straddle, pike, etc.).*

Gold

1. Q: In Gold: If a gymnast does not achieve vertical for one of her acro skills, can she count it for her Special Requirement (SR)?

A: *No. To meet this SR, the athlete must perform two acro skills – one must achieve or pass through vertical.*

EXAMPLES: Handstand to vertical (“A”) and a forward roll (“A”), would fulfill the SR. Other examples of vertical skills are: cartwheel, back walkover, round-off, and side handstand.

2. Q: The gymnast does a handstand, wobbles and then does a back walkover. It is obvious she intended to do a series. What deductions are appropriate? Would she lose the Acro Special Requirement?

A: *This gymnast has met the Special Requirement of 2 Acro skills – one must go achieve vertical. The judge takes execution deductions on both skills (if appropriate) and the wobble deduction in between. There would be no rhythm deduction because a series is not required.*

Platinum

1. Q: Platinum gymnast does a split jump around 100° and is sufficient to receive SR credit. However, the split jump was not near the 135° necessary to receive a “B”. If the split jump was their only “B” then she would be missing a “B” for a deduction of 0.30 off of their start value. Is this correct?

A: *If the split jump was her only attempt at a “B” skill then yes; she would be missing the “B”. Since Platinum gymnasts are required to do a 120° jump or leap, and they were at 100°, they would meet the SR.*

Diamond

1. Q: If a gymnast does a back walkover-back handspring series, does she still need to do a single acro skill with flight?

A: *No. To meet this SR, the athlete must perform an acro series with or without flight AND an acro flight skill (which may be included in the acro series). This could be accomplished in a variety of ways.*

EXAMPLES:

1. Back walkover – back handspring. Fulfills both parts of the SR.
2. Backwalkover – backwalkover series, Round-off by itself. Fulfills both parts of the SR.
3. Back handspring – back handspring. Fulfills both parts of the SR.
4. Cartwheel swing through – round-off series. Fulfills both parts of the SR.

All of these examples will work provided the gymnast gets appropriate VP for the skills and there are no rhythm errors (feet move, hesitation etc.) that negate the series credit. Refer to page 89 of the Xcel Code of Points (version 1).

FLOOR EXERCISE

All Divisions

1. Q: Can a gymnast use a chassé as one of her Group 1 elements for the dance passage?

A: *No. The Dance Passage requires 2 Different Group 1 VPs from the Xcel Code of Points or the Bronze, Silver or Gold Xcel Charts. A chassé is not a Group 1 VP or a B/S/G Chart skill. However, a chassé may be used in the dance passage as a connector.*

2. Clarification: *A plain “stretch/straight jump” on Floor is not a Group 1 element in the Xcel Code of Points or in the Bronze, Silver or Gold Xcel Skill Charts. It may not be used as a Group 1 dance skill to meet the SR in the Dance Passage.*

Bronze

1. Q: Does SR #2 have to be a single, isolated element or can it be in a connection?

A: *This SR can be fulfilled with a single, isolated element or with a connection. In this situation, “isolated” means that any skill/series used to fulfill SR 2 cannot be directly connected to SR 1. EX: Gymnast does a Round-off, rebound, back roll to fulfill SR #1 and then later does a handstand roll step-out to an immediate cartwheel. This connection would be acceptable to fulfill SR #2. Likewise if the gymnast did only the cartwheel, SR #2 would be fulfilled.*

Bronze / Silver

1. Q: Can a gymnast use a Roundoff – rebound – back roll for Special Requirement #1 (Acro series) and later then use an isolated Roundoff - rebound for Special Requirement #2?
A: Yes, The Roundoff rebound can be used twice and get VP credit both times because they each have a different exit or entrance.

Gold

1. Q: Please give an example of 2 “different” acro series that would fulfill SR #s 1 and 2 at the Gold Division.
A: *An example that would work is round-off, back handspring for one pass and front handspring, round-off, back handspring for the second pass. These are 2 different acro series because there is a different acro element in the 2nd series (Pages 147/151 I. B. d. in the Xcel Code of Points). All the skills in the 2nd series receive VP credit and the 2nd series fulfills SR #2.*
2. Q: At the Gold Division it states that gymnasts may use “Any “A” or “B” VP in the JO Code of Points”. Under “Difficulty Restrictions” it also states “No “B” saltos.” Please clarify.
A: *Gymnasts are allowed to use other “B”acro VP (e.g. full twisting back handspring and a flyspring) AND any “B” dance VP. They may not perform “B” saltos (e.g. front pike or full twisting back layout). “B” saltos are unallowable skills and will incur a 0.50 deduction.*

Platinum

1. Q: Gymnast does RO, BHS, Back Tuck and later does RO, Back Tuck. Is this considered the same pass?
A: *No. Refer to page 147 1, B, d: in the Women’s Xcel Code of Points (version 1), If the second series is in a different order It will count as a different series.*