

SAMPLE: This is a sample lesson from #723 Stars and Stripes Tumbling Program Curriculum. This set of tumbling lesson plans offers five levels of tumbling instruction, from the most basic to a very advanced skill level. Each individual plan connects to a bi-weekly theme and is set up so the athletes are working and learning through a new skill circuit every 15 minutes. Each circuit within a lesson plan has a daily focus, starting off easy and gradually getting harder every week, allowing the athletes to constantly build on skills and techniques learned previously. These plans feature creative and effective drills explained in detail, with instructions on how to set up the class in order to ensure progress from the athletes. The descriptions of each drill are so in-depth, even class instructors can learn how to teach and spot the skills while simultaneously achieving results from their athletes.

**Tumble 2
Week 1 & Week 2
Theme: Rock N' Roll!**

Warm-Up: 5 minutes

Place 4 cones in a rectangular shape around your warm-up area. Have athletes begin by jogging around the cones. Every 30 seconds, yell, "ROCK N' ROLL" and have your athletes hit a safe landing position and then perform a rock n' roll on the floor. Stand up into a safe landing position, hold for 3 seconds, and then give them a new command, such as hopping on one foot (and then switching), jogging backward, hopping with 2 feet, skipping, etc... Have the athletes do the second command for 30 seconds before yelling, "ROCK N' ROLL" and having them do their rock n' roll again. Repeat this cardio circuit for 5 minutes.

Stretch: 10 minutes

Since it has been awhile since we've reviewed and we may have some new students, make sure to re-introduce the basic positions during stretching. Include a hotdog, safe landing, straight body, lunge, squat, tuck and straddle.

Have athletes stretch bodies starting from the head and working down. A sample stretch is below, but please use your best judgment according to your class' abilities.

Neck → Arms/Shoulders → Pike → Wrists → Straddle Stretch → Splits → Bridges → 3 Rocking Chairs → 1 Candlestick Rock n' Rolls (no hands to get up, finish in a straight body)

***Out of the candlestick rock n' roll, have the athletes perform 5 candlestick jumps as a reminder of the shapes they are about to be performing, and also a quick conditioning exercise.*

The Stations listed in each section are most effective when done in order, as the skill practiced in drill number 1 will be necessary to properly perform drill number 2, and so on.

Rolls: 15 minutes

FOCUS: Hollow & Candlestick Body Shapes

1. Sit-Ups

Mark an area of the floor with a rock n' roll prop and have the athletes lie here to perform 10 sit-ups. In order to get stronger tumbling skills, the athletes must develop strong core muscles. The abdominal muscles are especially important in the body shapes we are about to practice and use.

2. Hollow Push-Up Hold

Athletes will place their feet onto a tall, 6-panel panel mat and hold their front support (push-up) position.

Athletes must maintain a hollow body shape, meaning their shoulders are directly on top of their wrists, their hips are flat, bottom squeezed, and their back is nice and rounded (like an angry cat). Count to 15 before moving on.

3. Hollow Body Front Support Walks

Open a large, 6-panel panel mat for the athlete to walk across. At the front end of the mat, the athlete should get into their front support/push-up position. This means their arms should be straight, shoulders directly on top of their wrists, their legs together behind them, and their back nice and round. Then, keeping their arms and legs straight and shoulders in their place above the wrists, the athlete should take very small steps toward the end of the mat. They must maintain their hollow shape throughout the entire length of the mat. Remind athletes that they are not worrying about speed here, so go slow and focus on their body shapes.

4. Candlestick Rock n' Rolls

Open a small, 4-panel panel mat for athletes to perform the skill on. Starting in a straight-body position, the athletes will rock backward to hit a tight candlestick position, then perform their rock n' roll, standing up without using their hands, and arms remaining over their head to finish in a straight body. Athletes will perform 1 candlestick rock n' roll on each of the panels, doing 4 total. Explain to athletes that during a backward roll as well as a handstand forward roll, which they will learn in this class, they must hit this candlestick position.

5. Handstand Forward Roll with Coach

Set up a large, 6-panel panel mat long ways, and an incline mat. Leave about a foot and a half of space between the 2 mats. Have the athletes start in their lunge position on the panel mat and reach over the gap to hit a tight handstand on the incline mat. Help the athletes hold their handstand for 3 seconds before rolling into their candlestick position without their arms ever bending. Upon hitting the candlestick, allow the athlete to finish the roll and stand to a straight body by themselves. Remind them that their hands are not allowed to help them stand up.

Handstands & Cartwheels: 15 minutes

FOCUS: Handstands & Beginning Round Off Drills

1. Handstand Holds

Open a small, 4-panel panel mat. The athletes will perform a handstand starting and finishing in their lunge position at each panel of the mat, doing 4 total. Encourage athletes to hold their handstand for as long as possible before coming down. If they fall over or take a step with their hands, they must start the station over.

2. Fast Cartwheel

Open a large, 6-panel panel mat. Have athletes perform a fast cartwheel across the mat, starting and finishing in a tight lunge. Explain to the athletes that every panel is for a different body part (first panel is for the back leg of the lunge, second panel is the front leg of the lunge, third and fourth panels are each for a hand, and the last 2 panels for each foot in the lunge), making the cartwheel very long. Athlete should focus on speed and length at this station.

3. Handstand Snap-Down

The athlete will kick into a handstand onto an elevated surface (2 stacked panel mats, for example). Then, shrugging through their shoulders, the athlete will snap both feet down to the ground and rebound. I like to tell my students to try to push the mat away from them as hard and fast as they can. It is very important that they athlete is snapping their feet to the ground away from the mat, because the goal is to stay in the straightest body position possible. It is common for the students to try to pike at the waist to get their feet to the ground, so telling them to push the mat away and keep their body straight really helps. They have to push extra hard in order to get their arms and chest up and rebound. Explain to the athlete that when they perform a round off, this is how their feet should come to the ground together.

4. Cartwheel Step-In

This drill helps prepare students for a round off. Set up an inline mat and have the students begin with their front lunge foot on the top of the high end of the mat. They will then reach down the incline, kicking their back foot over their head to perform the cartwheel. However, instead of landing in a lunge, they will quickly pull their back leg into their front leg and remain up on their toes. This helps practice the act of getting the feet together right before hitting the ground in the round off.

5. Power Hurdle Lunge/Cartwheel

Starting in a straight body on top of a panel mat (or other elevated surface), have the athletes swing their arms down to their sides and jump into a lunge position while lifting their arms back over their head. Explain to the athletes that they want to jump as far away from the mat as possible, and, if they are more advanced, to let the back leg hit before the front leg. If they are catching on to the concept, have them begin to add a cartwheel, then a cartwheel step-in.

Bridges: 15 minutes

FOCUS: Back & Shoulder Flexibility & Beginning Back Walkovers

1. Bridge Rocks

Have athlete lie on their back with their feet up on a panel mat. They will then bridge up, leaving feet on the panel, and rock back and forth 5 times. Straight-arms are a must at this station, and knees should remain together as well. The goal is to be able to push the shoulders until they are able to be directly on top of, or past, the wrists. This will build shoulder and back flexibility that is required for a back walkover.

2. Back Bend

The athlete will begin standing at the bottom of an incline mat facing away from the mat. ****Athletes should never backbend going down an incline mat as it is extremely unsafe for the athlete.**** Arms should be stretched high over the head and shoulders shrugged tall. Without the "head falling off", or being thrown back,

the athlete will lower their arms and chest into a bridge position onto the incline mat. Their hands should be near the top of the mat while their feet should never move.

3. Handstand to Bridge- Kick Over

Starting in a lunge position facing the bottom of an incline mat, have the athlete reach their hands to the mat and kick into a handstand. Hold the handstand for 3 seconds, and then slowly lower legs into a bridge position. The athlete's shoulders should remain over the wrists for the entire skill. They may then kick over with straight legs to land in a lunge.

4. Walking Bridge

Set out a small, 4-panel panel mat. The athlete will back bend at one side of the mat and walk their hands and feet to the other side, remaining in a bridge the whole time. This mimics the push through the legs that is required for a back walkover. It is very important, however, that the athlete is leading with their hands, not their feet. Don't let them walk across the mat leading with their feet because that will not teach them how to push the floor away.

When they have reached the opposite side of the mat, allow them to kick-over into their lunge.

5. Back Walkover with Coach

Spot the athlete on a back walkover on the floor. Make sure they are starting in the correct starting position (a straight body with their kicking leg pointed to the ground in front), and slowly lower to their bridge position without throwing their head back. As the hands hit, the athlete should take a big kick to push their feet over. Stop them in their split handstand to make sure their arms and legs are straight and their head is in line before letting them finish the skill on their own.

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