

▶ How to Do Forward Rolls in Beginner Gymnastics : Beginning Gymnastics

▶ 6 Forward roll progressions that range from beginner to advanced

A forward roll is a foundational gymnastics skill that seems simple but requires specific technique to perform correctly and safely. Here's a breakdown of the proper technique:

Starting Position:

- **Squat down:** Feet together, knees bent, and bottom close to heels.
- **Hand placement:** Place hands shoulder-width apart on the ground in front of your feet, fingers pointing forward.

Execution:

1. **Tuck your chin:** This is crucial to avoid putting pressure on your neck. Look at your belly button.
2. **Push off with your feet:** Use your leg muscles to initiate the forward movement.
3. **Roll onto your upper back:** Your head should *not* touch the ground. The roll should go from your shoulders to your upper back.
4. **Keep your back curved:** Maintain a rounded back throughout the roll.
5. **Push with your hands:** As you roll over, use your hands to push off the ground and help with momentum.
6. **Stand up:** Use the momentum from the roll to come back to a standing position, reaching arms forward for balance.

Key Tips:

- **Practice on a mat:** Start on a soft surface to build confidence and reduce the impact.
- **Spotting:** Have a coach or experienced person spot you initially to ensure proper technique and safety.
- **Visual cues:** Use cones or lines to help guide the direction of the roll.
- **Break it down:** If struggling, practice individual components of the roll, like the tuck or the push-off.
- **Stay tight:** Keep your core engaged throughout the roll for better control.

Common Mistakes:

- **Not tucking the chin:** This can lead to neck injuries.
- **Putting hands too far forward:** This makes it harder to get over and can cause the roll to collapse.
- **Flattening the back:** This reduces momentum and can strain the back.
- **Using hands to stand up:** Rely on the momentum of the roll to stand up, not your hands.

By focusing on these points and practicing regularly, a 5-year-old can learn to perform a forward roll with good form and confidence.