

# Why JOGA?

Guide to starting a JOGA program at your gym  
(Jersey Optional Gymnastics Association)



# What is JOGA?

- JOGA stands for Jersey Optional Gymnastics Association.
- It is a gymnastics league that was started in 1999 by judges in New Jersey. All members are clubs in New Jersey.
- The league is member run, which means the coaches determine the rule changes each year by vote at the annual meeting. The league rules move along with the needs from the athletes and coaches.
- The goal of JOGA has always been to make competitive gymnastics accessible.
  - Reduced training hours - JOGA programs typically train between 4 and 12 hours depending on skill level and program needs.
  - Reduced costs - JOGA local meets are capped entry fees. This along with the reduced training hours and only local meet travel makes it overall lower cost for families.
  - Supports all ages - JOGA supports athletes ages 5-18. JOGA trends older than some of the other leagues offered in the state. It is common to have older athletes at a lower levels.



# What does your customer want?

- Clubs across the State use JOGA to support the needs of their customers. The question is what customers are you losing?
- Are athletes entering your recreation program “late” at ages 9 and 10 but have lots of talent and want to compete? JOGA is an excellent program for these athletes because there is no age to level expectations. The average JOGA athlete is 13 years.
- Are athletes on a competitive program but leaving when they hit middle or high school because the typical high training hours is too much (they want to participate in other activities with their school friends)? Many JOGA athletes do a second sport, gymnastics might be their primary sport or it might be their second sport. Don't have your high school kids train Friday night - they will quit gymnastics to be at the football games. But can't they do both? YES! Reduced training hours allows for this.
- Do you have extremely talented athletes in your rec classes but the time and financial commitment of team is too much for their families? JOGA is an excellent low time and lower cost program for those families.



# How can it fit in your club's team offerings?

- JOGA is used by clubs across the state of NJ in a few different ways.
- JOGA as the only option: There are clubs who have run JOGA only team programs for many years. These JOGA only programs have athletes of all ages, but typically start competing at younger ages than the clubs with multiple leagues.
- JOGA and USAG: For clubs who have USAG and JOGA, typically the athletes are split based on commitment level and age. It is not very common for athletes to enter USAG at older ages (age 9 and up) but this is typical for JOGA, so the combination of the two programs can fit well. Also, the increased training hours of USAG can cause athletes (especially high school) to quit. If the club has JOGA, those athletes find great success and joy in JOGA.
- JOGA and XCEL: Since XCEL is also intended to be a low training hours program most clubs think that if they have XCEL they don't need JOGA. However, the skill level and the ages of the kids are not similar in these two programs. JOGA offers levels at higher skill levels than XCEL. Clubs use a combination of XCEL (at low skill levels) and JOGA (at high skill levels) to fit the needs of their low training hour members.



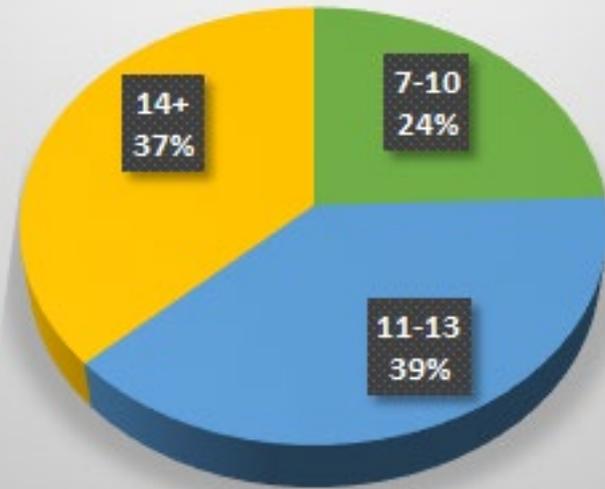
# What level are my athletes?

- JOGA levels start at JOGA 7 (lowest skill level) through JOGA 1 (highest skill level).
- The chart below shows an approximate conversion between JOGA Levels and other leagues.
- JOGA has forced mobility rules but no minimum mobility rule. Athletes can be placed at a higher skill level with no requirement. Force mobility requires athletes who scored higher than their peers to move up a level or two the next season.

USAG WAG	USAG XCEL	USAIGC	JOGA
Level 2 or 3	Bronze or Silver	Copper 1	JOGA 7
Level 4 or 5	Gold	Copper 2 or Bronze	JOGA 6 or 5
Level 6 or 7	Platinum	Diamond or Silver	JOGA 5 or 4
Level 8	Diamond	Gold	JOGA 3 or 2
Level 9	Diamond	Platinum	JOGA 2 or 1
Level 10	Diamond	Premier	JOGA 1



## 2021 JOGA Athletes By Age Group



### Average Ages By Level:

Level	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Average Age	9.3	11.1	12.2	13.3	15.6	15.7	16.6

## What about ages?

- The league supports athletes ages 5-18.
- The average age for the entire league is 13 years.
- Most of our athletes are middle and high school ages. This matters because kids like to “fit in” by age at meets and have competition by age.



# What are the rules?

- JOGA is based on the National Federation of High School (NFHS) Sports rule book. There are unique “JOGA” rules layered on top of the High School rules.
- Skill restrictions - In order to differentiate the levels and prevent kids from competing in an inappropriate level we have restrictions. For example, you can't perform a giant until JOGA Level 3.
- JOGA Bonus - In addition to the standard bonus in NFHS rules, there is JOGA Bonus offered to levels 5 to 1 on Bars. This bonus helps us to incentivize certain skills. At JOGA levels 1 and 2 there is JOGA Bonus on all 4 events. This differentiates the best of the best. For example, any layout flipping vault starts from a 10.1 in those levels.
- JOGA Level 7 has further modified rules with different event requirements and composition requirements than the levels 6-1.
- Since we use High School rules, our athletes that do attend school in a town with high school gymnastics excel in their school programs!



# What about scores?

- Most JOGA Levels do NOT start from a 10.0. The requirements do NOT change from level to level and so the lower-level athletes can not achieve 10.0 starting value.
- Athletes get to truly see their scores increase year over year as a direct reflection of their hard work.
- We set our mobility and states scores so that most athletes will achieve the states score, but about 50% will be forced to move up the following season. It is common to repeat a level in JOGA (as it is common in most leagues).
- If athletes switch from a 10.0 scoring system (USAG or XCEL) to JOGA, they need to understand their new starting values are lower, but so are all the athletes at their level. We provide “cheat sheets” to help understand example starting values at each level.

## Qualification Scores

Level	States (2x)	Mobility (3x)	Skip Level (3X)
1	34.5	37.0 (1+)	
2	33.0	34.5	
3	31.5	33.0	35.0
4	30.0	31.5	34.0
5	28.0	30.0	32.0
6	25.5	28.0	30.5
7	n/a	n/a	



# How do I start a program?

- Contact the JOGA president for more information regarding starting a program at your club. [jogastatedirector@gmail.com](mailto:jogastatedirector@gmail.com)
- The JOGA 5-6 season is typically November through February. The JOGA 1-4 season is typically December through April. The JOGA 7 season is typically January through May.
- The annual meeting is each summer and attendance is required for JOGA clubs.

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