







Bars Divided into Skills

- Non-hanging Skills
 - (bar as a prop)
- Under the Bar
 - (hanging, swinging, holding)
- Over the Bar
 - (supporting, balancing)
- Around the Bar
 - (circles)

Principles

- Biggest benefit of bars is gaining upper body strength
- The ways you "play" with the equipment should show strength development
- Children's fears are more evident on bars than most other events
- Use props & make it a GAME = FUN
- NOT a team workout

Two Year Olds

- Hand shuffle (slide across bar)
- Hand walk across (lateral moving "Monkey Walks")
- Single knee touch (from hang, alternately bring knees to the bar)
- Under bar hang - tuck, straddle, pike
- Single knee push up (front support, bring one alternately to the bar)
- Leg-ups (toes to bar)
- Long hang
- Hang (walk forward & backward under the bar to prepare for swinging)
- Space walks - front support & hanging (legs under bar)

Front Support Skills

- "How tall can you get?"
- Look up, look down
- Hold for 3-5 sec.
- Turn shoulders side to side
- Space walk
- Knee bender
- Belly button push ups
- Lean side to side, lift hand
- Slide sideways
- Clap your feet
- Shift grip

Three Year Olds

- Chin-up to left ear and then right ear
- Swing in long hang
- Swing and re-grip
- Swing half turn
- Front support
 - Don't put a young child in a support position that's above their waist level. Lower the bar to the appropriate level or build up the height of the mats under the bar. Chalk the preschooler's thighs where you want them to touch the bar (the little ones have a tendency to lay their tummies on the bar)
- Bent arm hang - hang in tuck, straddle hang, pike hang

NO!

- Children under 18 mo. should not hang from a bar unsupported - they should always be able to touch the floor
- Front supports should be spotted
- Use smaller rails for safe grip
- Teach immediately to jump down to FEET
- Pad the bar for front support positions
- For supports, bar should be no higher than chest height

NO!

- Skin-the-Cats
- Penny Drops
- PreSchool flyway
- Back pull through
- Standing on the bar
- No Hanging by knees

Four Year Olds

- Cast to pike
 - For casting, tell the children to first hunch like a cat, lock their legs and squeeze their bottom. To keep their legs together, have them hold a foam piece or beanbag between their knees. Tell them to lock their arms and raise their chest high with their necks stretched tall like a giraffe.
- Back hip pull over
 - A hip pullover seems to be a difficult skill for young students to master. Use a ladder hanging from the high bar for students to walk their feet up. When their tummy is near the low rail, tell them to do a chip-up and kick their feet over. You can also use stacked panel mats or a trapezoid piece to assist the kick over action. When using stacked panel mats, unfold a section to make the kick-off point lower as they get stronger. After these drills, have them do chip-ups for strength development. More backward rolls on the floor may help overcome the fear of going upside down over the bar.
- Jump to straddle
- Back hip circle
 - When teaching the back hip circle insist that the feet stay in control on the front support finish position.

Four Year Olds

- Pull ups or chin-ups
- Back hip pullover
- Stemrise
 - A single leg stem rise is a favorite old skill I love to do in 5 year old classes. When teaching a stem rise, tell them to ride the bar with their thigh and pretend their leg is a piece of bread. There is butter on the top bar. They are going to butter the bread by sliding their extended leg against the top bar and then throwing their tummy over the bar to end in a front support on the high bar.

Five Year Olds

- Sole circle dismount
- Front support cast to return to bar
- Forward Roll dismount
- Swing, drop bean bag in hoop
- Run under bar and arch
- Swing in pike
- Single leg cut (Stride sit)
- Bellybutton push-ups
- Sole circle swings
- Glide swing
 - A drill you can use for glides is to have the child hold a bean bag or foam piece between their ankles. Have them try to glide out and drop it into a laundry basket, hoop, or on a chalk circle drawn on the mat. You can stand a wedge mat in front of the bars. Have them practice stretching to kick the incline to achieve a glide action and body extension.

MC²


