



# EVALUATION FAQ'S





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Thank you for registering for our 2024-2025 season evaluations! Whether you are new to our program or have been with us for many years, the information below will help you prepare for your evaluation and give you some insight into the team formation process.

The formation of teams is a lengthy process that begins with evaluating every athlete on their abilities in tumbling, jumping, and stunting. Maturity, attitude, and feedback from prior coaches is also considered. The goal is to form teams that will be competitive, while allowing our athletes the opportunity to be challenged and have fun. There is no exact science to the formation of a team but here are some things we've learned to be true in our 30 years of experience:

1. Teams are at their most competitive when a majority of the athletes are towards the top of the age bracket. Our first priority is to keep athletes together with others of a similar age to create stronger bonds and a more positive experience. Athletes will only be placed on an older team if there is a legitimate need that cannot be filled by an age appropriate athlete.
2. Teams are at their most competitive when most of the athletes have elite level tumbling skills. Ideally, an athlete on a team would be able to perform any tumbling skill allowed in that level.
3. It's important to consider stunting capability. Some athletes are natural tumblers, but may need to compete on a lower level to allow time for their stunting skills to develop. Each athlete must be considered not only as a tumbler, but also as a flyer, base, and back spot. Strategically, it wouldn't make sense to have an entire team of small flyers with no strong bases, even if they were amazing tumblers.
4. While the initial disappointment of not making a desired team can be strong, what is often stronger is the disappointment of making that team and struggling to keep up all season. When athletes are the youngest or least skilled on a team, it can be stressful and frustrating for the child. Our primary goal is to ensure kids have the opportunity to feel like they are successful while enjoying themselves and contributing to their team.

We know that our process and criteria may differ from other programs and organizations. The most important thing you can do is keep an open mind. Your child will be carefully considered and placed on a team where we feel they can make the greatest contribution. As a staff, we have the difficult job of balancing what is best for the program overall with what is best for the needs of each individual child. We believe strongly in our evaluation system and feel the results speak for themselves.



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## Frequently Asked Questions

**Does everyone make a team?** Top Gun Orlando guarantees team placement on an age appropriate team for all athletes aged 18 and under. Due to limited spots on our Open teams, we cannot guarantee placement for adult athletes.

**Can I try out for a specific team?** Top Gun Orlando has an open evaluation process. This means we do not allow athletes to try out for specific teams and instead consider our entire athlete pool for all positions they might be eligible for. However, there is a place on your info sheet to indicate team preferences or wishes.

**How does Top Gun place athletes?** At Top Gun Orlando, we are fortunate to be able to offer teams of all levels for all ages. When placing our teams, we consider the following factors in this order:

1. Age
2. Skill
3. Team Needs

This means our top priority is placing an athlete on an age appropriate team. Athletes will only be placed on an older team if there is a legitimate need that cannot be filled by an age appropriate athlete.

Our target age ranges are as follows:

Tiny Novice	Tiny	Mini	Youth	Junior	Senior	Open
3-6 (2018-6/1/21)	6-7 (2017-2019)	8-9 (2015-2016)	10-12 (2012-2014)	11-15 (2009-2012)	12-18 (6/1/05-2012)	18+ (5/31/07) or prior)

**What should I wear?** Any type of athletic clothing that makes you feel comfortable and confident. Please make sure to wear closed toe athletic shoes and pull hair back and away from the face. For safety reasons, please do not wear jewelry.



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**Is there a dance or choreography I need to learn?** New this year, athletes 8+ will be asked to learn a short dance routine. These will be posted online and reviewed as part of your evaluation warm-up.

**What will my evaluation be like?** Athletes will be called in during their time slot with the 10-15 other people in their group. One of our coaches will lead the athletes through a warm up routine and give them a chance to warm up all their skills. When it is their turn to go in front of our panel, one of our evaluators will ask them to perform a variety of jump and tumbling skills based on the level they give us. They may also be asked to show body positions if they wish to pursue being a flyer. After their whole group is done, a coach will walk them out to the lobby.

**Are beginners welcome?** Beginners are always welcome at Top Gun! We offer entry level teams for all age groups. Our evaluation team makes sure everyone has a positive experience, even if they've never cheered or tumbled before.

**How will I find out what team I make?** Please be sure to keep or write down your number! Teams will be posted on our Facebook Page "Top Gun Allstars of Orlando" on May 23rd, 2024.

**If I don't attend evaluations, will I be able to join a team later?** Many of our teams fill to capacity. While we will attempt to place late athletes, we cannot guarantee a place for anyone who didn't go through our initial evaluation process.

**What if I decide not to join after I'm placed?** If after team placements you decide to decline your invitation, please let us know as soon as possible so we may offer that spot to someone else. Please note that any fees already paid are non-refundable.

**How can I help my child be successful?** Encourage your child to keep an open mind and focus on doing their best as opposed to making a particular team or level. Kids often perform their best when the pressure is low. Congratulate your child no matter what team they make. If they are disappointed, encourage them to give their new team a try before making a final decision.