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# Gymnastic Nomenclature.



ARRANGED BY

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Associate Director of the Yale Gymnasium.

President of the Anderson Normal School of Gymnastics.

Dean of the Chautauqua School of Physical Education, Ltd.

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THIS LITTLE BOOK IS DEDICATED  
TO MY FRIEND,  
JOHN EDWARD HEATON, OF NEW HAVEN, CONN.,  
A STAUNCH ADVOCATE  
OF RATIONAL GYMNASTIC TRAINING.



## INTRODUCTION.

---

TEACHERS who have had much experience in drilling classes or individuals in gymnastics in our American Gymnasias understand the value of thorough groundwork. It is well known that one obstacle to success in teaching is the lack of system in the arrangement of elementary movements. There is no adopted Terminology in the American gymnasias outside of that arranged and partially adopted by the Y. M. C. A.'s in this country. The tendency of the young teacher is to deal with abstruse problems, to philosophise rather than to cope with the practical side of the subject.

On the one hand we admit the need of method in practice, but on the other we treat the matter with neglect; the result is that at this time there is lack of system among our instructors.

If teachers will adopt a nomenclature it will be better for the cause of gymnastics, it will make teaching easier, more intelligent, it will enable pupils to learn quicker, and we will be better able to describe exercises.

There are many arguments in favor of a terminology but no strong ones against it. If, then, a system of names and commands is so desirable, why not have it? Surely gymnastics have been taught long enough in America to have partially settled this question, but there is yet no adopted or recognized terminology.

The object of this work is to present a list of initial positions, to name them and to give the commands. True, many of the postures can be further subdivided, but it is not necessary.

The value of positions, the arrangement of exercises, and the progression of movements is not discussed.

A little space is reserved for the application of the rules recommended. Of course, there will be changes made as the terms are tested.

## GENERAL PLAN.

---

The important elementary positions are named and illustrated.

A few combinations are given to show the method of arranging initial positions in groups.

Each elementary attitude has a command.

So far as possible, only one command produces one position. The principal movements are described.

In preparing this list a number of Swedish and German works have been examined.

The author does not claim more than the classification of the postures, although a number of the terms are those used by him in his teaching, during the past few years.

Thanks are due Dr. Luther Gulick of Springfield, for the Terminology used by the Y. M. C. A. Committee.

Acknowledgments are made to our German and Swedish gymnasts for any terms adopted from their systems.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

## ATTENTION. (Fig. 1.)

Heels and knees touching, if possible; toes turned out at an angle of about 80 degrees, hips back, chest arched, shoulders level, arms at the side, but elbows back, head erect, chin in, eyes to the front and the body well forward on the balls of the feet.

Command, "Atten-tion."

The fundamental standing position, the position of a soldier, and the position of attention are the same.

## CLOSE STAND. (Fig. 2.)

The feet touch each other.

Command, "Feet close."

To resume attention, command, "Feet open."

## STAND AT EASE. (Fig. 3.)

Advance either foot diagonally forward to the front. Weight on the rear foot.

Pupils may converse when holding this position, but must not leave their places.

Command, "In place, rest."



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

#### STRIDE STAND. (Fig. 4.)

Command, "Right foot to the right, *place*," in which case the foot is carried twice its length to the right; or, Command, "Right and left foot placing, *one, two*." In this case each foot is moved one foot length to the side.

The weight is equally divided.

To resume attention the command is, "Right foot re-*place*," or "Right and left foot replace, *one, two*."

#### WALK STAND. (Fig. 5.)

Command, "Walk stand, right (L.) foot forward, *place*." To resume attention, command, "Right (L.) foot re-*place*." In this movement the foot is carried forward twice its length, and the weight is equally divided.

#### TOE STAND. (Fig. 6.)

Standing on tiptoes.

Command, "Toe stand, raise the heels, *raise*." To resume attention, command, "Heels *sink*, or, "Attention."



Fig. 7.



Fig. 8.

### HALF HORIZONTAL STAND. (Fig. 7).

The body is placed in a horizontal position by inclining it forward and at the same time extending one leg backward. The knee of the supporting leg is slightly bent; arch the chest, slightly elevate the head.

Command, "Half horizontal stand, right (L.) foot, body in position, *place*."

Indicate by counting the time allowed to execute the movement. In taking this and a number of other positions, count for the pupil.

### STEP POSITION. (Fig. 8).

The leg swings in a given direction, about a foot length, the tip of the foot touches the floor. The weight remains on the back foot.

Command, "Step position, right (or left) foot," (give direction), "*step*;" or, if the movement is to be taken a number of times, say "*begin*," instead of, "*step*."

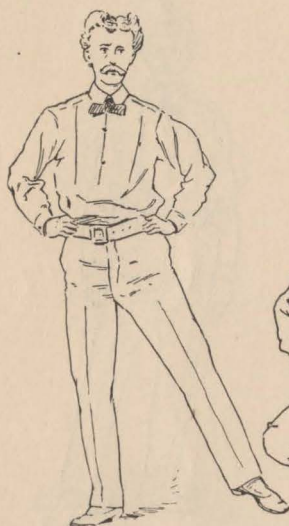


Fig. 9.



Fig. 10.



Fig. 11.

### BALANCE STEP POSITION. (Fig. 9.)

This is similar to the step position but the foot that is advanced does not touch the floor.

Command, "Swing the right (or left) leg," (give direction), "*swing.*"

### THE CROUCH POSITION. (Fig. 10.)

In taking this position, the knees point in the direction of the feet, the trunk is erect, chest arched.

Command, "Crouch, or half-crouch, position, knees, *bend*" or "*half-bend.*" To come to attention, command, "Knees, *extend,*" or "Extend the knees, *extend.*"

Indicate by counting the time required.

### CROUCH REST POSITION. (Fig. 11.)

Command, "Crouch rest position, *crouch.*"

This is similar to the crouch, but place the hands on the floor on the last count.



Fig. 12.

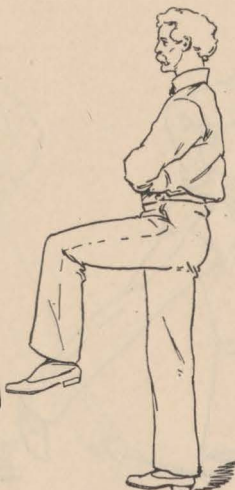


Fig. 13.

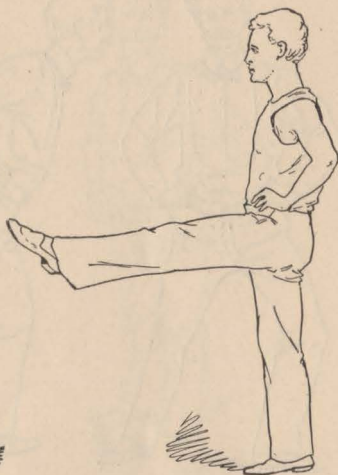


Fig. 14.

RIGHT (OR LEFT) "L" POSITION. (Fig. 12.)

Command, "Flex the right (or left) leg, *flex.*"

HALF RIGHT (OR LEFT) HOOK POSITION. (Fig. 13.)

Command, "Flex the right (or left) thigh, *flex.*"

RIGHT (OR LEFT) HOOK POSITION. (Fig. 14.)

Command, "Right (or left) hook, leg in position, *place.*"  
The hook position is with two legs extended front, and can only be taken from a hang, sit, or rest.



Fig. 15.



Fig. 16.



Fig. 17.

### CHARGE POSITION. (Fig. 15.)

The foot is carried about two lengths in a given direction. The ball of the foot touches the floor first. Both feet rest on the floor. The front knee is bent, the back knee is extended. The weight is carried forward. The trunk is erect, chest arched. The movement is a difficult one.

Command, "Charge the right (or left) foot," (state direction), "*charge*," or "*begin*."

### BALANCE CHARGE. (Fig. 16.)

This is similar to the charge but is made by raising the back foot from the floor and balancing the weight of the body on the forward leg. The trunk inclines forward. For command, see Balance Lunge.

### REVERSE CHARGE POSITION. (Fig. 17.)

In many ways this is the reverse of the charge. The foot is advanced about two lengths, but the knee is extended while the *back* knee is bent. The weight of the body is not carried forward but remains on the bent leg.

The figure represents a front reverse charge with the right foot.

Command, "Reverse charge, right, or left, foot," (state direction), "*charge*."



Fig. 18.



Fig. 19.

### BALANCE REVERSE CHARGE. (Fig. 18.)

Execute the reverse charge, then lift the charging foot from the floor. The figure shows a reverse balance charge to the left with the left foot.

For the command, see Balance Lunge.

### LUNGE POSITION. (Fig. 19.)

This is similar to the charge, but the foot is carried forward three times its length and points in the lunging direction and the rear foot is at right angles to it.

Command, "Lunge the right (or left) foot," (state direction), "*lunge!*"

### REVERSE LUNGE POSITION.

This is similar to a reverse charge, but the foot is carried forward *three* lengths. The feet are at right angles to each other.

Command, "Reverse lunge, right (or left) foot, (state direction), "*lunge!*"



Fig. 20.



Fig. 21.

BALANCE REVERSE LUNGE.—*See Balance Reverse Charge.*

The commands for the balance charge, balance reverse charge, balance lunge and balance reverse lunge are similar. Give the command to produce the initial attitude, as "Charge the right foot, *charge!*" Then, "Raise the right (or left) foot, *raise.*" To come to charge position, command, "*Charge!*" To come to starting position, command, "*Position!*" To come to attention, command "*Attention!*"

PACE POSITION. (Fig. 20.)

This is similar to a reverse lunge backward with either foot, but only the ball of the foot touches the floor.

Command, "Pace the right (or left) foot," (state direction), "*pace!*"

FENCING POSITION. (Fig. 21.)

Execute an oblique face to the left and at the same time carry the right forward nearly three lengths. Bend both knees, weight a trifle more on the back than front foot.

Command, "Fencing position of legs, *on guard!*"



Fig. 22.



Fig. 23.



Fig. 24.

#### KNEELING HIP SUPPORT. (Fig. 22.)

Command, "Kneeling hip support; on the count one, crouch; on the count two, lower the knees until they rest on the floor. *One, two!*"

To come to attention, change to a crouch or crouch rest and then proceed as explained under these headings.

#### KNEELING POSITION. (Fig. 23.)

The command is similar to that for the kneeling hip support, but one extra count is given to raise the hips.

#### A RIGHT OR LEFT KNEELING POSITION. (Fig. 24.)

The right or left knee rests on the floor.

Command, "Right kneeling position, *kneel.*" On the count *one*, carry the left foot back one length, toes on the floor, heel raised; on the counts two, three and four, kneel. To come to attention, rise in three counts and touch heels on four.



Fig. 25.



Fig. 26.



Fig. 27.

### STOOP POSITION. (Fig. 25.)

Command, "Stoop position, body forward and downward, *bend.*"

To come to the position of attention, command, "Body upward, *raise.*"

### PRONE POSITION. (Fig. 26.)

In the Prone position keep the head raised and the chest arched; do not look down.

Command, "Body forward, *bend.*" To come to attention, command, "Body upward, *raise.*"

### BOW POSITION. (Fig. 27.)

Command, "Body backward, *bend.*" To come to attention, command, "Body upward, *raise.*"

### RIGHT (OR LEFT) BOW.

Command, "Body to the right (or left), *bend.*" To come to attention, command, "Body upward, *raise.*"



Fig. 28.

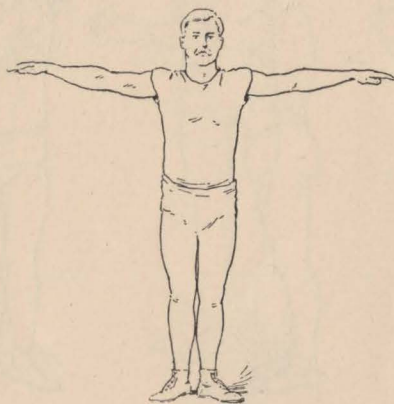


Fig. 29.



Fig. 30.

### ARCH POSITION. (Fig. 28.)

This consists of arching the chest to its fullest extent.  
Command, "Arch the chest."

### CROSS POSITION. (Fig. 29.)

Command, "Cross position, arms *out*." This is sometimes called the "Yard C position."

### RIGHT CROSS POSITION, OR RIGHT ARM OUT.

Command, "Right (or left) cross. Arm *out*."

### STRETCH POSITION. (Fig. 30.)

Command, "Stretch position, arms *up*."

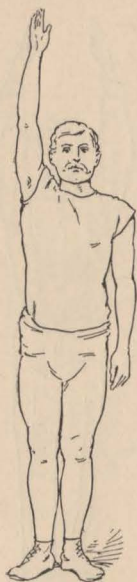


Fig. 31.

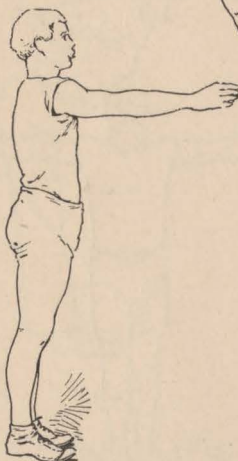


Fig. 32.

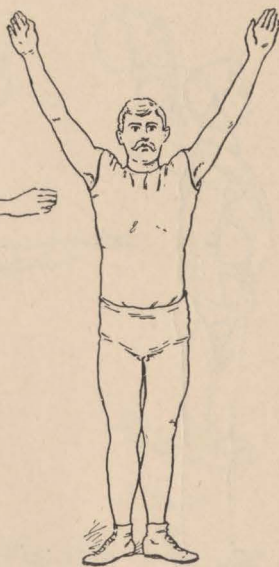


Fig. 33.

RIGHT STRETCH POSITION, OR RIGHT ARM UP. (Fig. 31.)

Command, "Right stretch position, arm *up*."

REACH POSITION. (Fig 32.)

Command, "Reach position, arms *front*."

RIGHT REACH POSITION.

Command, "Right reach position, arm *front*."

LETTER "Y." (Fig. 33.)

Command, "Letter 'Y,' arms in position, *place*."

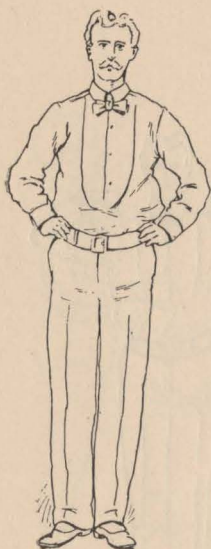


Fig. 34.

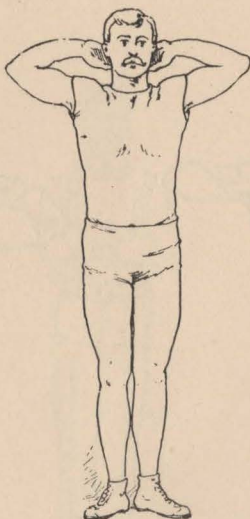


Fig. 35.



Fig. 36.

## WING POSITION. (Fig. 34 )

Command, "Wing position, hips *firm*."

## NECK POSITION. (Fig. 35.)

Command, "Neck position, neck *firm*."

## BENT ARM POSITION. (Fig. 36.)

Command, "Flex the arms, *flex*."

(In describing a flexed arm position use the word "bend." See page 22.)

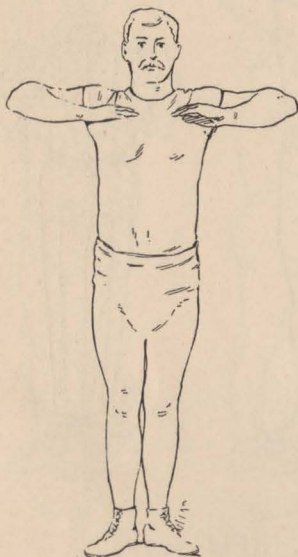


Fig. 37.

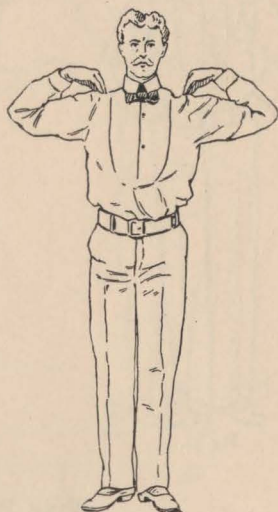


Fig. 38.

YARD A POSITION. (Fig. 37.)

Command, "Arms forward, *bend*."

HALF CROSS POSITION. (Fig. 38.)

Command, "Arms in position, *place*."

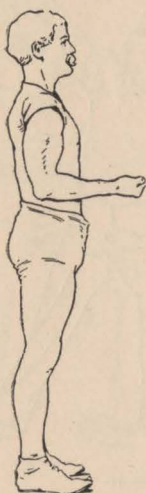


Fig. 39.



Fig. 40.

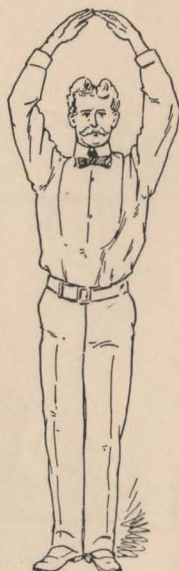


Fig. 41.

### THRUST POSITION. (Fig. 39.)

Half flex the arms; hands closed; palms up.  
Command, "Arms in thrust position, *place*."

### ORDER POSITION. (Fig. 40.)

Command, "Fold the arms in front, *fold*."

### CURVED STRETCH POSITION. (Fig. 41.)

Command, "Arms in position, *place*."



Fig. 42.



Fig. 43.

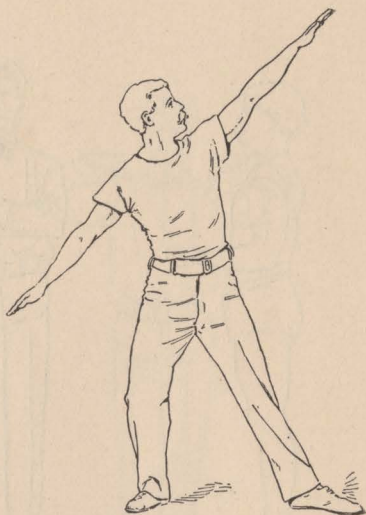


Fig. 44.

### FRONT LEANING REST. (Fig. 42.)

Command (1), "Crouch rest position, *crouch*;" (2), "Extend the body backward, *extend*." To come to attention, command (1), "Crouch rest position, *crouch*;" (2), "At-ten-tion."

### RIGHT (OR LEFT) LEANING REST POSITION. (Fig. 43.)

Command the same as front leaning rest, but after number two give the command for a right (or left) turn.

### EXTENSION POSITION. (Fig. 44.)

Command, "Right (or left) extension, arms in position, *place*."

For right extension the right arm is forward and up.



Fig. 45.



Fig. 46.



Fig. 47.

ATTACK. (Fig. 45.)

Command, "Attack, posi-*tion*."

DEFENCE. (Fig. 46.)

Command, "Defence, posi-*tion*."

NECK, PRONE, STRIDE STAND POSITION. (Fig. 47.)

This position is given merely to illustrate a simple combination.

## EXPLANATORY.

In describing a compound position the arms and parts are first mentioned then the trunk and finally the legs and feet.

Illustration: Neck, prone, stride stand. (Fig. 47.)

The exercise or movement is mentioned after the name of the posture.

Illustration: Neck, prone, stride stand; heel raising.

This means that the heels are to be raised while the body is in the posture described.

Wing, walk; trunk bending forward.

Cross stride; trunk turning.

Assuming and maintaining a position is often as valuable as taking an exercise.

## DRILL IN COMPOUND POSITIONS.

Wing, Stride Stand.

Cross, Stride Stand.

Stretch, Stride Stand.

Right Reach, Stride Stand.

Neck, Toe Stand.

"Y," Toe Stand.

Bend, Toe Stand. ("Bend," refer to Fig. 36.)

Yard A, Close Stand.

Half Cross, Close Stand.

Cross, Lunge.

Stretch, Charge.

## THE LIGHT GYMNASTIC ALPHABET.

Below will be found a brief description of the movements used by the Author in teaching Light or Free Gymnastics.

While it is evident that these terms do not include all the movements that may be or are used in gymnastics yet they embody the principal ones.

For a more complete description of the Alphabet the reader is referred to *Light Gymnastics* and to *Methods of Teaching Gymnastics*, by Dr. W. G. Anderson.

## THE ALPHABET.

- |                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Stepping.                    | 12. Running.                     |
| 2. Placing.                     | 13. Swaying.                     |
| 3. Charging.                    | 14. Twisting, Turning, Rotating. |
| 4. Reverse Charging.            | 15. Rolling.                     |
| 5. Lunging.                     | 16. Opening or Closing.          |
| 6. Reverse Lunging.             | 17. Slapping.                    |
| 7. Balancing.                   | 18. Stamping.                    |
| 8. Swinging.                    | 19. Circling.                    |
| 9. Flexing or Bending.          | 20. Percussing.                  |
| 10. Extending or Straightening. | 21. Breathing.                   |
| 11. Hopping.                    |                                  |

The rules for the use of these terms are not arbitrary and cannot be made so at the present time. The meanings will frequently overlap each other, but this is unavoidable.

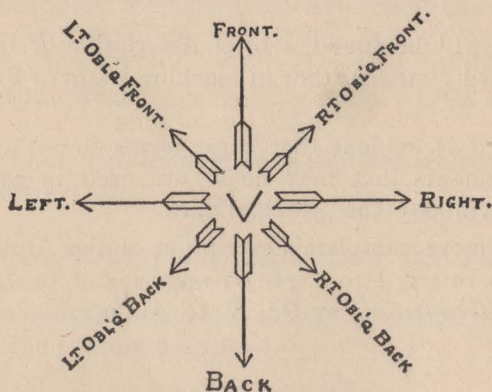
Movements are made in certain directions, namely:

Forward and backward.

To the right or left (sideways.)

In the four oblique directions.

The following outline will make the directions clear, it is called the "Gymnastic Compass."



**THE STEPPING MOTION.**—A stepping motion is made by swinging the leg in any of the given directions and touching the toes lightly to the floor.

The length of a stepping motion is about that of the foot. The object of this exercise is to acquire control of the leg. There should be no motion to other parts of the body.

The difference between the foot-placing movement and the stepping movement is that the weight is equally divided in the former. (Fig. 8.)

**FOOT PLACING.**—The foot is carried forward in one of the given directions one or two foot lengths and placed on the floor. The weight of the body is equally divided. (Figs. 4 and 5.)

**THE CHARGING MOTION.**—This is made in the same direction as the stepping motion. It consists in carrying the foot twice its length in one of the given directions. The right knee is bent to such a degree that the leg in front is parallel to the back leg. (Fig. 15.)

An exception to this is found when charging to the rear and with either foot in the opposite direction.

The heels of both feet as well as the toes must rest on the floor. The back leg should be straight.

The knee of the charging leg should be a little further forward than the toes of the same foot. The chest is further forward than the hips while the trunk of the body keeps an upright position.

This rule will apply only to the following directions—front, right oblique and to the right.

In any charging motion touch the ball of the foot first. The charging motions are among the hardest movements to teach.

Lunging is similar to charging and is governed by the same rules, the difference being that the foot is carried forward three and not two lengths. In fencing the lunge is four foot lengths and is made only to the front. (Fig. 19.)

THE REVERSE CHARGE is in many respects a reverse of the Charge. It is made by carrying the foot in a given direction twice its length, but the body is only lowered and not carried forward. The knee of the forward foot is extended the other knee is bent. Both feet rest on the floor. (Fig. 17.)

The Reverse Lunge is similar to the Reverse Charge, but there is a difference of three foot lengths between the feet.

THE SWAYING MOTION is made by changing from a Charging to a Reverse Charging position without moving the feet. The weight of the body is carried forward and backward. In the Swaying movement the body is kept erect.

Another form of the Swaying motion is to change the

weight of the body from one foot to the other while holding the position of attention.

The feet are not raised from the floor. The body is slowly "swayed" from right to left or forward and backward. The movement is a rhythmical one.

HOPPING.—Hopping consists of leaping lightly upward and alighting on the ball of the foot. It may be from two feet, the landing being made on one foot or both. It may be from one to the other foot.

Keep the knees slightly bent while hopping and always alight on the balls of the feet.

RUNNING consists of a series of leaps forward or backward or it may be "In place," in which case the pupil leaps directly up and down and makes a semblance of running but does not gain ground.

While running, leap from one foot and land on the other but always keep on the balls of the feet. The head should be erect and the chest arched.

[See *Light Gymnastics*, by Dr. W. G. Anderson, for more complete description of running.]

SWINGING MOTIONS are applicable to both arms and legs. They consist in swinging the limb in a certain direction and to a certain height.

FLEXING OR BENDING.—By Flexing we mean the shortening of a joint or the bending of a joint. The term *flex* is usually applied to the parts of the limbs and the word *bend* to the portions of the trunk. They are interchangeable however.

EXTENDING OR STRAIGHTENING.—The reverse of Flexing, it is the antagonistic movement and means the lengthening of the joint.

**TWISTING OR TURNING.**—These terms mean the rotating of the members of the body that can be so moved, on their own axes.

The arms are twisted, also the legs, the head is turned to the right or left, also the trunk; the terms *twist*, *turn* and *rotate* are nearly synonymous. Rotate and turn are preferable.

**ROLLING.**—A term applied to the head and trunk. It consists of letting the head or trunk drop forward and then rolling it around to the right or left.

**OPENING AND CLOSING** are sometimes used for the terms flexing and extending. They apply to the hand and fingers.

The fingers are *separated* when they are spread apart, and the hand is *clinched* when it is tightly closed and the thumb is closed or “locked” over the first and second fingers.

**CIRCLING.**—A circle is described by the arm as in club swinging, or by the leg when used to outline the form of a cone, the base being marked by the feet.

**THE SLAPPING AND STAMPING MOVEMENTS** are frequently used in gymnastics but do not need special description.

**PERCUSSING.**—A term used in massage but frequently made use of in the gymnasium. It consists of striking rapidly and lightly some portion of the body with the tips of the fingers. See page 78, *Light Gymnastics*.

**BREATHING EXERCISES** are well understood by the term and do not need special description.









