



PARAVULTING GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES

The present Guidelines for Judges are effective January 1, 2026

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Czech Equestrian Federation

Zátopkova 100/2

160 17 Praha 6

www.cjf.cz

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE WELFARE OF THE HORSE

It is required that all those involved in equestrian sport adhere Code of Conduct and acknowledge and accept that at all times the welfare of the horse must be paramount and must never be subordinated to competitive or commercial influences.

1. At all stages of preparation and training, the welfare of the horse takes precedence over all other requirements. This includes proper handling of the horse, proper training methods, farriery, feed and transport.
2. Horse and competitor must be in good physical condition and fit to compete. This includes the use of medication and previous medical operations that may compromise safety, pregnancy of mares and the misuse of aids.
3. Competition must not compromise the welfare of the horse. This includes careful control of Event area, surfaces, weather conditions, stabling, security of the site and the capability of horse to be transported after the competition.
4. Provisions must be made to ensure that horse receives appropriate care after the competition and is treated humanely after his sport career. This includes proper veterinary care in the case of injury during competition, rest, and euthanasia after his sport career.
5. Czech Equestrian Federation (CEF) appeal to all those involved in this sport to obtain the highest possible level of education in the given area.

PREAMBLE

1. Definition

These Guidelines are to be understood as an interpretation of the Paravaulting Rules. Their aim is to establish uniform and objective standard of scoring for judges for all exercises.

2. Validity

These Guidelines must be observed by all judges delegated to CEF Paravaulting Events.

I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF SCORING

Based on the regulations below, judges are responsible for observing the following principles:

- consideration for the horse
- safety and balance of the athlete
- harmony of movements with the music
- fluidity of exercises
- quality of performed exercise
- degree of difficulty of the elements and transitions
- combination of movements

1. Optimal quality of exercise

An optimally performed exercise includes:

- optimal technique
- optimal performance

2. Quality of exercise deviations

Deductions will be given for deviations from the optimal quality of the exercise. The point deduction depends on whether the mistake is only in the performance or whether the exercise technique is also incorrect.

2.1. Optimal technique deviations

Optimal technique is the most important criterion for the exercise.

For technical mistakes in compulsory exercises, points are deducted, which in several examples are given as a basic score from which further deductions are possible.

For technical errors in free routines, imperfect execution of each exercise is considered.

2.2. Optimal performance deviations

Points for all deviations from optimal execution are deducted from the basic score of the relevant compulsory exercise, depending on the degree of severity.

Performance mistakes include:

- small range of motion
- delay between elements of the exercise, insufficient fluidity of the exercise
- insufficient naturalness, lacks in body posture
- insufficient body control and tension
- inconsistency with the horse's movement

	Small mistakes	Medium mistakes	Big mistakes
	1–3 points	4-5 points	6-10 points
Range	Satisfying	Weak	Insufficient, not performed
Fluidity, continuity	Small interruption	Interruption	Many interruptions
Optimal extension	Small deviations	Visible deviation	No extension and stretching
Precision of movement	Slight deviations	Incorrect body posture	Missing body control
Para vaulter harmony			Hitting horse, fall on the horse
Loss of balance	Slight deviations	Posture correction	Change of posture

II. COMPULSORY TEST

1. Vault-on

Mechanics:

- may be with help/ assistance
- vault-on is not scored

2. Basic Seat



Essence:

Harmony with the Horse

Seat, balance and posture

Body control & posture

Mechanics:




Paravaulter sits astride, in an upright position, just behind the surcingle, legs pointing towards the ground and in close contact with the horse, forming a straight vertical line through the shoulder, hip and heel.

Para vaulter's shoulders are parallel to the surcingle.

The knees do not touch the foam or surcingle.

The arms are stretched to each side, with the fingertips at eye level.

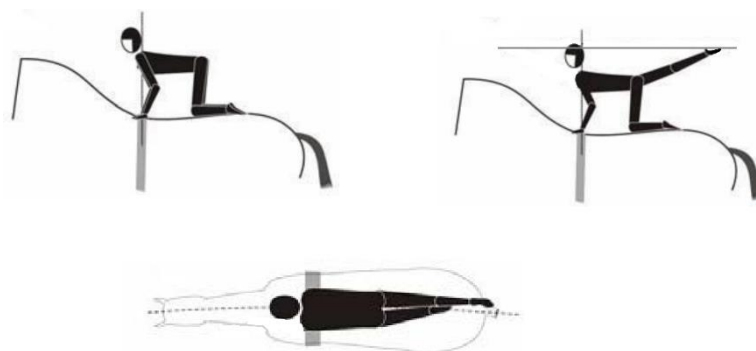
Basic Scores:

10		Correct mechanics with arm height. Seat with correct upper body posture, legs downwards and in contact with the horse forming a straight vertical line through shoulders, hips and heels, and perfectly follows horse's movement.
8		Correct mechanics with arm height. Horse's movement is not absorbed completely, pelvis is rising slightly.
6		Extreme legs forward or "Chair Seat".
4		"Fork Seat" (extreme arched back, COG is forward on pubic bone, heels are behind vertical line shoulders-hips.

Deductions:

½ point	Raised shoulders Incorrect hands position Fingers apart Body rotation
1 point	Retaking the handles repeatedly

3. Dove



Essence:

Harmony with the Horse

Balance and Suppleness (particularly shoulder and hip)

Mechanics:

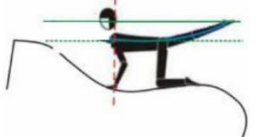
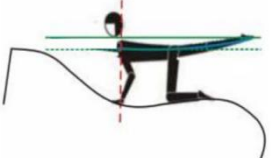
From the astride seat, the para vaulter moves into the kneeling position with both legs simultaneously. The shoulders are directly above the handles, elbows slightly bent and close to the body, and the line between hips and shoulders remains parallel to the ground. The back must not be hunched.


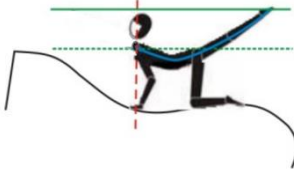
The head follows the extension of the body with a slight backward bend. Body weight is distributed evenly between the upper and lower limbs.

The right leg is stretched, with the toe at head level, while the left shin (from knee to toe) remains in constant contact with the horse.

Upon completion of the static exercise, the para vaulter moves the stretched right leg toward the horse's hip, extends the left leg downward, and slides softly back into the astride seat. The left shin may be placed across the horse's longitudinal axis.

Basic Scores:

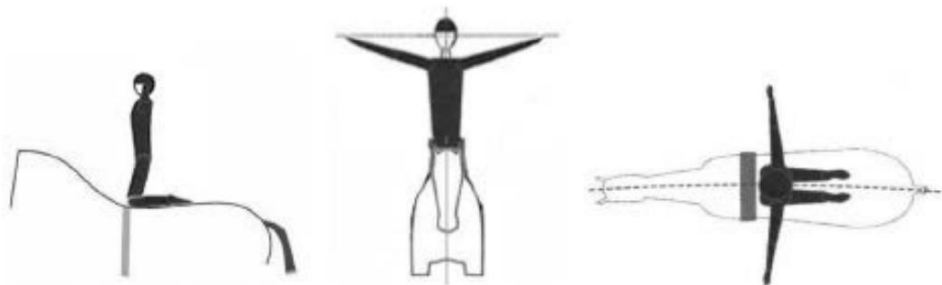
10		Correct mechanics with elevation and without broken arc of the top line.
8		Correct mechanics, leg is in one line with the body.

6		Correct mechanics, leg is under the line of the body. but with no elevation.
4		Extremely broken arc of the top line. Hip line is not parallel with to the ground.

Deductions:

1 point	Failure to kneel before the flag Return to kneel position after completing flag
2 points	Supporting down leg is not entirely in contact with the horse (knee to toes).

4. Kneeling position



Essence:

Harmony with the Horse
Balance and Posture

Mechanics:

From seat astride, para vaulter comes softly to kneel right behind the surcingle.

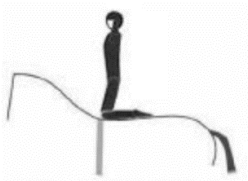
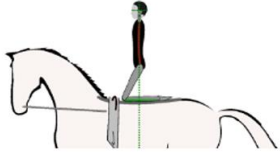

Distance between the legs is at most the width of the pelvis, shanks and toes are parallel and in constant contact with horse.

Head is raised. Handles are simultaneously released as para vaulter rises into a kneeling position. The arms are extended immediately and stretched outward along the frontal plane with the tips of the fingers at eye level.

Upon completion of the static position, the arms are lowered towards the handles, which are taken simultaneously with both hands.

Head remains up, para vaulter slides smoothly with straight legs into an astride position.

Basic Scores:

10		Head, shoulders, pelvis and knees are almost in vertical line to the horse's top line. Weight evenly distributed from knees to toes.
8		Body almost in vertical line, pelvis slightly forward/backward
6		Vertical line is slightly disturbed. Up to 45° from vertical line.
4		Upper body about 45° and more in front of the vertical (almost seat).

Deductions:

½ point	Raised shoulders Failed position of hands
1 point	Retaking the handles Knees wider apart than hip width Shanks are not parallel with horse's
2 points	For distributing the weight unevenly between knees and toes (kneeling with support of toes or only knees in contact)

5. Mill



Essence:

Harmony with the Horse

Seat, Suppleness, Scope and Timing

Mechanics:

The mill is an exercise in which para vaulter never abandons the seat position in any phase. From seat astride, para vaulter makes a complete rotation on the Horse's back in four evenly-timed phases. Leg is stretched and carried over the Horse in a high, wide arc (like a semi-circle). The opposite leg remains stationary, down and in contact with the Horse.

The upper body stays erect, centred, and nearly vertical in each phase. Head and body rotate with each pass of the leg.

The Mill is performed in a four-stride count.

It is recommended to begin the movement with the right leg toward the inside of the circle.

First Phase of Mill

Stretched right leg is carried over the horse's neck. Each handle is released and retaken in turn as the leg passes. Phase 1 ends in a sideways seat inside position, head in line with body, shoulders are parallel to the horse's spine, with legs together and in contact with the horse.



Second Phase of Mill

Stretched left leg is carried over the Horse's croup. Phase 2 ends with seat backward. Head in line with body, shoulders are parallel to the vaulting surcingle.



Third Phase of Mill

Stretched right leg is carried over the croup. Phase 3 ends with sideways seat outside position head in line with body, shoulders are parallel to the horse's spine, with legs together and in contact with the horse.



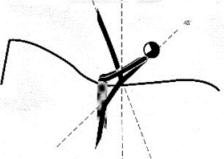
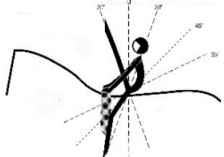


Fourth Phase of Mill

Stretched left leg is carried over the Horse's neck. Each handle is released and retaken as the leg passes. Phase 4 ends in astride position.



Basic Scores:

10		Upper body vertical, angle between leg and horse's top line more than 45°.
8		Upper body almost vertical, angle between leg and horse's top line approximately 45°.
6		Leg is low, angle between leg and horse's top line is less than 45°. Leaning too far back with upper body (more than 45° from vertical)
4		Round back.

Deductions:

1 point	Upper body does not turn simultaneously with the leg Resting leg unstable Rhythm failure Hand touching the pad Breaking contact of sitting bones with the pad
½ point	Hip movement in sideways seat position

6. Dismount to inside



Essence:

Harmony with the Horse

Seat, Posture, Suppleness, and Timing

Mechanics:

From a seat astride, para vaulter carries the right stretched leg over the Horse neck. Upper body remains upright and almost vertical, while left leg remains downward and in contact with the horse without changing position. Each handle is released and retaken in turn as the leg passes.

After completing the semicircle, legs are brought together, para vaulter leans on the handles and rolls onto his right side, slightly bounces off the handles and after short flying phase lands near horse's inside hind leg.

Basic Scores:

10		No deviations and flying phase.
8		Correct mechanics, no flying phase.
5		Assisted jump off.
4		Fluidity of movement is disturbed by sitting aside.

Deductions:

½ point	Landing on one foot. Touching the ground by hands/knees.
1 point	Landing on all four or to a seat. Holding handles after landing.

Other deductions of Compulsory test

- If an exercise is performed out of the prescribed order, the omitted exercise is scored 0 points.
- In the case of fall during an exercise, the given exercise is scored 0.

III. FREE TEST

1. Structure of free test exercises

Free test exercises are listed in the guidelines are divided into groups based on similar biomechanical structure. To achieve optimal technique, it is necessary to meet the corresponding biomechanical requirements of each exercise. (See Chapter VI, Glossary).

1.1. Static exercises

A significant part of the body mass doesn't move/is not displaced relatively to the Horse. Body mass means body COG.

Criteria of static exercise are:

- para vaulter's body mass stays still;
- balance is held for four strides of horse;
- harmony with horse is achieved.

1.1.1. Sitting exercises

Exercises, where at least para vaulter's buttocks must for COG.

1.1.2. Kneeling exercises

Exercises, where one of both para vaulter's shanks form the support of COG.

1.1.3. Standing exercises

The essence of standing exercise is a balanced position in accordance with horse's movement. Body weight is transferred by the legs to the supporting surface, where pressure is created.

1.1.4. Bench exercises

Exercises, where the axis of the shoulders is above the support surface. The body weight is transferred by arms to the support surface, where they create pressure. COG is below the shoulder axis.

1.1.5. Hanging exercises

Exercises, where the axis of the shoulders is below the holding point. The body weight is transferred by arms or legs to the point of grip, where they create pressure by pulling.

1.1.6. Lying exercises

Exercises, where the at least body is the support in an almost horizontal position. The position is maintained by the vaulter.

1.1.7. Hazardous exercises

Hazardous (risky) exercises are prohibited for individuals: jumping on horseback; standing on one leg; hanging exercises on the back over the horse, where the head is lower than the vaulter's hips.

1.2. Dynamic exercises

Vaulter's body, COG or majority of body mass is during dynamic exercise in relation to the horse in motion.

The impulse of movement is given by:

- muscle force
- kinetic (movement) force

The requirements of a dynamic exercise are:

- body in motion;
- during a dynamic exercise, para vaulter must remain vertical to the line stated at the beginning of an exercise until the exercise is completed. Otherwise, the movement is out of control;

- control of a dynamic exercise is determined by the relative length of time the movement is vertical to the supporting surface.

1.2.1. Swinging exercises

Exercises, where, through rapid swings of various parts of the body, sufficient kinetic energy is developed to move the entire body.

1.2.2. Turns

Turns are movements around one of the three axes of the body. Combined turns are those around multiple axes of the body, usually having a corresponding name (e.g. somersault with a twist).

Turns are categorized according to three axes of the body.

1.2.2.1 Pirouettes

Pirouettes are turns around the vertical axis of the body.

1.2.2.2 Cartwheels

Movements rotating around sagittal axis of the body.

1.2.2.3 Rolls

Movements rotating around the lateral axis, still in contact with supporting surface.

IV. FREE TEST SCORING

Free test exercises are scored according to:

1. degree of difficulty
2. technical performance
3. composition – overall impression

1. Degree of difficulty (DOD)

Maximal score is 10 points. Scoring may be in tenths.

DOD depends on following required conditions:

- flexibility
- strength
- balance
- coordination
- harmony with the horse

The better the conditions are fulfilled, the higher is DOD.

Scoring of exercises:

Difficult exercises	D	1,0 point
Middle exercises	M	0,8 point
Easy exercises	E	0,5 point

Calculating the final score for the difficulty of the test:

- All exercises of the same difficulty are added up and the total difficulty of the test is determined according to the table.
- Maximum of 10 exercises of the highest difficulty are scored.

TABLE OF CALCULATION OF THE DIFFICULTY OF THE FREE TEST:

For Free test with 10 elements:

	0M	1M	2M	3M	4M	5M	6M	7M	8M	9M	10M
0D	5	5,3	5,6	5,9	6,2	6,5	6,8	7,1	7,4	7,7	8
1D	5,5	5,8	6,1	6,4	6,7	7	7,3	7,6	7,9	8,2	
2D	6	6,3	6,6	6,9	7,2	7,5	7,8	8,1	8,4		
3D	6,5	6,8	7,1	7,4	7,7	8	8,3	8,6			
4D	7	7,3	7,6	7,9	8,2	8,5	8,8				
5D	7,5	7,8	8,1	8,4	8,7	9					
6D	8	8,3	8,6	8,9	9,2						
7D	8,5	8,8	9,1	9,4							
8D	9	9,3	9,6								
9D	9,5	9,8									
10D	10										

For Free test with 9 elements:

	0M	1M	2M	3M	4M	5M	6M	7M	8M	9M	
0D	4,5	4,8	5,1	5,4	5,7	6	6,3	6,6	6,9	7,2	
1D	5	5,3	5,6	5,9	6,2	6,5	6,8	7,1	7,4		
2D	5,5	5,8	6,1	6,4	6,7	7	7,3	7,6			
3D	6	6,3	6,6	6,9	7,2	7,5	7,8				
4D	6,5	6,8	7,1	7,4	7,7	8					
5D	7	7,3	7,6	7,9	8,2						
6D	7,5	7,8	8,1	8,4							
7D	8	8,3	8,6								
8D	8,5	8,8									
9D	9										

For Free test with 8 elements:

	0M	1M	2M	3M	4M	5M	6M	7M	8M		
0D	4	4,3	4,6	4,9	5,2	5,5	5,8	6,1	6,4		
1D	4,5	4,8	5,1	5,4	5,7	6	6,3	6,6			
2D	5	5,3	5,6	5,9	6,2	6,5	6,8				
3D	5,5	5,8	6,1	6,4	6,7	7					
4D	6	6,3	6,6	6,9	7,2						
5D	6,5	6,8	7,1	7,4							
6D	7	7,3	7,6								
7D	7,5	7,8									
8D	8										

For Free test with 7 elements:

	0M	1M	2M	3M	4M	5M	6M	7M			
0D	3,5	3,8	4,1	4,4	4,7	5	5,3	5,6			
1D	4	4,3	4,6	4,9	5,2	5,5	5,8				
2D	4,5	4,8	5,1	5,4	5,7	6					
3D	5	5,3	5,6	5,9	6,2						
4D	5,5	5,8	6,1	6,4							
5D	6	6,3	6,6								
6D	6,5	6,8									
7D	7										

2. Technical performance

The performance of each exercise with optimal execution is evaluated:

- movement mechanics
- precise and correct form of movement
- confidence and balance in all parts of the exercise
- body control, flexibility and posture
- continuity, fluidity of movements
- range of motion: height, width, range, span, strength

The maximum grade of each exercise is 10 points. Deductions are recorded individually for each exercise.

Deductions:

See 2.2 deviations from optimal performance.

Deductions are deducted from the total average mark for technical performance	
If the same exercise is repeated in a free test, the repeated exercise is not evaluated	
1 point	For a fall with abandonment of a horse
0,5 – 1 point	For a fall after a dismount Fall on a horse For disregard for horses
up 2 points	For assistance during the routine (any physical contact with the exerciser), they are added to the deductions from the performance of the next exercise.

Calculation of the final mark for technical performance:

- All deductions are added up, divided by the number of exercises (max. 12) and this sum is subtracted from the number 10.
- If there are more than 12 exercises in the Free test, the deductions are added up from all exercises, but the sum is divided by max. 12 (see Fig. Para-vaulting rules ARTICLE 033: FREE TEST).
- The rating can be in tenths.

3. Composition – overall impression

The overall impression is evaluated by:

- Choreography and harmony with the music (expression of the music, chosen clothes/dress)
- Setting up exercises:
 - Fluency and sequence of exercises
 - Exercises in all directions of the horse's movement
 - Variety of exercise selection
 - Changing the height of the vaulter's centre of gravity
- Exerciser's expression
- Harmony with the horse
- Originality

The maximum grade of the overall impression is 10 points. The rating can be in tenths.

VI. GLOSSARY – PARAVAILTING

1. BASICS	
Exercise	Exercise is a move or static position under control which is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Described in para vaulting rules • described as a technique exercise in the Guidelines or • valued as an E, M, D exercise according to the Guidelines for Judges
Transition	A Transition is a move, passage, or change under control from one position to another, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may displace the Centre of Gravity • be a rotation around any axis or • a static position not held for three canter strides

2. POSITIONS	
Position in relation to the horse	
Forward (fw)	The vaulter is facing in same direction as the horse
Backward (bw)	The vaulter is facing in the opposite direction as the horse
Sideways in	The vaulter is facing toward the centre of the circle
Sideways out	The vaulter is facing toward the outside of the circle
Position on the horse	
In/on the handles	Exercises with one or both feet / hands in/on the handles of the surcingle
In the loop (s)	Exercises with foot / feet or hand(s) in a loop of the surcingle
Inside	Exercises on the left side of the horse, when the horse is cantering on the left lead
Back	Exercises on the back of the horse, close behind the surcingle and in front of the croup
Croup	Exercises on the croup of the horse
Neck	Exercises on the neck of the horse
Surcingle	Exercises on the surcingle
Outside	Exercises on the right side of the horse, when the horse is cantering on the left lead
Direction of the movement in relation to the vaulters body	
Backward rotation	Turn around the horizontal axis, back of the Vaulter toward the direction of rotation
Downward	From a higher position to a lower
Upward	From a lower position to a higher
Forward rotation	Turn around the horizontal axis, front of the Vaulter toward the direction of rotation
Turn inward	a turn leading to or towards the centre

Turn out	a turn leading from or away from the centre
Body position	
Aerial	the vaulter's movement through the air, without touching the horse with his hands
Arabesque	Kneeling plank, one leg stretched backwards, torso and leg form a line.
Hight Arabesque	A standing scale where the body is balanced on one leg with the other leg extended above the horizontal forming a graceful arc. Knees may be slightly bent
Arch	Upper body bent backward, , a curve backwards of the spine.
Back	Vaulter is lying on their or his back
Front	Vaulter is lying face downward on the stomach
Bridge (backbend)	The body bends backwards in an arched position and the feet and hands provide the base of support while positioned on the horse/handles simultaneously
Biellmann Arabesque	The vaulter is in a kneeling position – Ring flag or standing position - Ring arabesque, he holds one foot above the head elbows pointing forward
Body alignment	Head, shoulders, ribs and pelvis in alignment
Body wave	A wave-like movement which moves through the entire body. There is front, back and side body waves
Head out	Head is out away from the body causing the back to arch
Bending forward	Abnormal backward curvature of the spine. The body is rounded, the chest between the shoulders.
Bending back	An abnormal inward (forward) curvature of the spine. Flat pelvis, rounded body, chest forward
Cobra	Lying and bending
Lunge	Standing with the support leg bent well in front and the other leg extended to the back
Pike position	Hips are bent forward more than 90 degrees, and the legs are kept straight.
Tuck	angle between upper body and upper legs is 90° and between upper legs and lower legs is 90°
Push up	A position in which the straight body is supported by the stretched vertical arms and the feet. Can be done facing down or up. Also called "Plank" or "Press"
Split	A stretching position of the legs in which the legs are in line with each other (180°) and extended in opposite directions without any bend to the knees
Front split	Seat, one leg forward of and the other leg to the rear, the legs form a right angle with the body, the angle between the limbs is 180°
Side split	Seat, legs extended to the left and right of the torso, the legs form a right angle with the body, the angle between the limbs is 180°
Tuck	Knees and hips are maximally bent and drawn into the chest, with the body folded at the waist

Twisting splits	Are performed by transitioning from front split to side split, and then to the opposite front split
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3. STRUCTURE GROUPS

Sitting exercises

Elements, where the buttocks and/or the back of the upper legs are the base of support.

L-seat (pike)	Sitting, legs are together and extended
Seat astride	Sitting on the horse just behind the surcingle, hands on the handles
V-seat	The legs are raised in the air in a deep pike position and the body is supported by the hands and the rear of the buttocks (tailbone)
Chair seat	Seat astride, knees in right angle touching the surcingle

Kneeling exercises

Exercises, where one or both lower legs form the support

Bench	The upper body is in a horizontal position supported by both arms and upper legs, the lower legs are on the horse.
Prince	The upper body is in a vertical position supported by one foot and one lower leg, hands free

Standing exercises

Exercises, where the centre of gravity is above the supporting part of the body (labile equilibrium)

The body load can be transferred via the upper or lower limbs, shoulders, neck, head, or chest to the support area, wherever pressure is exerted on them.

Chest stand	The body as a support part rests on the chest, the feet point upwards
Forearm stand	Forearm stand
Handstand	Standing on one or both arms, with legs stretched out, legs can be together, spread or in a split
Candle	Lie on your back with your legs in the air, feet pointing upwards, body resting on shoulders and neck
Split	Stand, one leg bent to 180°