

# **My Gym Space Flight Handbook**

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## 1. Introduction

This handbook presents information for the safe use, training, and continued operation of the “Space Flight” activity at My Gym Children’s Fitness Centers. It is intended for use by My Gym franchisees, directors, and teachers. These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the Space Flight Training Videos.

## 2. Definitions

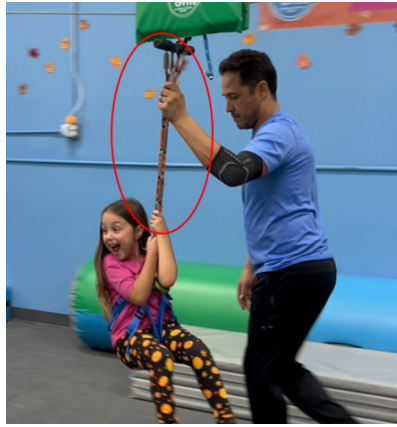
- a. **Space Flight:** Space Flight is an activity operated by one or two My Gym teachers who have been trained to operate the Space Flight ride. It requires spotting at all times while in operation. A child begins at one end and either sits in a swing with a buckle or is secured in an approved harness and slowly and gently glides from one side of the gym to the other. This is a slow-paced activity where participants do not exceed a fast-walking or jogging pace.
- b. **Trolley (pictured below):** Apparatus mounted on the cable that transports children while in a swing or harness on the Space Flight activity – The pad is not to be removed other than for general maintenance/replacement.



- c. **Harness:** An approved climbing harness that is used by children in Terrific Tots/3 and older in classes, camps, and parties – In October 2024, the harness replaced the “kids hold the handles” method of riding the Space Flight. Holding the handles is no longer approved.



- d. **Lanyard:** The lanyard is used to attach the harness to the trolley.



- e. **Loading Platform:** The Loading Platforms are various pieces of equipment for the children to stand on when they are entering the harness. Approved Loading Platforms are described and pictured in this handbook.
- f. **Loading Trolley Stopping Pad:** An 18-inch-long tubular pad that is wrapped around the cable at the higher side of the Space Flight to prevent damage to the trolley, post, or wall – Note: Some locations may require a longer pad.



- 3. **Landing Trolley Stopping Pad:** A 24-to-48-inch-long tubular pad that is wrapped around the cable at the landing end of the Space Flight to prevent damage to the trolley, post, or wall. The purpose of this pad is NOT to stop the rider during a routine spotting of the ride. The child must always be stopped by the Spotter before they reach this stopping pad, whether the child is in a swing or harness.



4. **Loader:** A Loader is an optional role of a My Gym teacher and MAY be necessary when a 3-to-4-year-old child is riding in a harness.
- a. **3 to 4-year-olds:** If needed, the Loader assists the spotter by holding the harness lanyard and also by holding the child's hand/arm to help them balance as they step into the harness.
  - b. **5-year-olds and older:** A Loader is likely not needed.

#### 5. Spotter

- a. To become a Space Flight Spotter, you must be properly trained according to the guidelines in this handbook.
- b. When Space Flight is performed using a swing: The Spotter is a Space Flight-trained My Gym instructor who walks, gently pushing the swing/child up and down the Space Flight.
- c. When Space Flight is performed using the harness, the Spotter is a Space Flight-trained My Gym instructor who...
  - i. Assists the child as they step in and step out of the harness.
  - ii. Spots the child as they travel down the Space Flight ride.
  - iii. Is responsible for stopping the child before the trolley hits the stopping pad.

#### 6. Installation and Initial Inspection

- a. Installation: Refer to the "Space Flight Installation" video and "Space Flight Hardware and Assembly Directives PDF" for detailed instructions on installing your Space Flight.
- b. Inspection: Refer to the "Space Flight Inspection Video" for detailed instructions on inspecting your Space Flight.

IMPORTANT NOTES: Space Flight installation hardware has varied over the years. If your hardware is different from what is noted in the videos, please consult with MGE for suggestions on how to proceed. If you are not comfortable installing the Space Flight cable, please hire a licensed handyman/contractor.

#### 7. Signage

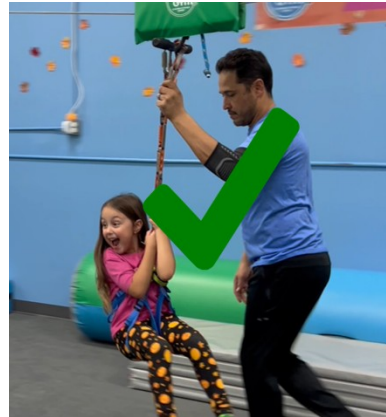
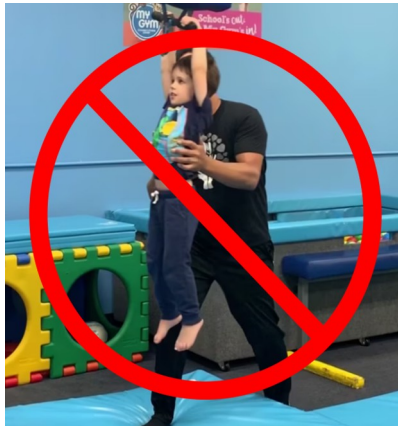
- a. The following sign (available from the Print System) must be visibly displayed at the high end and the low end of the Space Flight (2 signs). The sign may be placed on the wall, a post pad, or the spotting pads.



#### 8. General Safety Measures

- a. Common sense is one of the best safety measures. Use your common sense and always err on the side of caution.
- b. Regardless of age, a child must never be left unattended while on the Space Flight activity.
- c. When the Space Flight activity is not being operated, the trolley must be securely tethered at the high end of the Space Flight.

- d. Having children ride the Space Flight by holding the handles has been retired and banned in all My Gym locations. Under no circumstance should a child ride the zipline while holding the trolley handles.



- e. The “snap clip” pictured below is to be used only for securing accessories (hanging bolsters, hoops, etc.) to the Swing Support System. Under no circumstance should a double snap clip be used to support human weight on Space Flight.



- f. Space Flight safety announcements are to be made before the Space Flight activity begins. Additional safety announcements may be made as necessary at the discretion of the trained teacher/s present.
- g. Teachers, parents, adults, and children over the age of 10 years are not allowed on the Space Flight.
- h. There should be no posts of adults riding the Space Flight in any manner on social media.

## 9. Approved Swings and Attaching a Swing to the Trolley

- a. Only a steel carabiner similar to what is pictured below is permitted to secure a swing/apparatus to the trolley. Purchase at Shop My Gym or email [equipment@mygym.com](mailto:equipment@mygym.com) if you have questions. The carabiner must:
  - i. Be made of steel and have an auto-locking gate
  - ii. Have a minimum breaking strength of 30 kN (6750 lbs.) stamped on the carabiner
  - iii. Have a minimum gate strength of 16 kN (3600 lbs.) stamped on the carabiner
  - iv. Be approximately 4” long by 2.5” wide



- b.** Approved swings are those that are made of hard rubber or plastic, are designed for one child at a time, are manufactured by Little Tikes, Step 2, Fisher Price or a similar manufacturer, and:
- Have a safety strap and buckle
  - Are age-appropriate according to the manufacturer's guidelines
  - Are not recalled
  - Examples include but are not limited to the following swings:



- v.** Green Full Bucket Swing





- vi. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** As of October 2024, holding the handle, the Jungle Rope, and the Little Tikes Spinning Disc have been retired and are no longer approved for use on the Space Flight activity.



## 10. Approved Equipment Used in Conjunction with the Space Flight Activity

### a. Loading Platforms (for use when children ride in a harness):

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Space Flight heights vary from gym to gym, so determining the ideal loading platform height may take some testing.

- i. When is a platform too high?
  1. It is too high if the child is on the harness, sits and lifts their legs, and doesn't hang freely (they end up sitting on the platform).
- ii. When is a platform too low?
  1. It is too low if the child has to lift their legs so high that it is difficult for them to put their legs into the harness.
  2. If you ever feel the need to lift the child to get them into the harness, the platform is too low.
- iii. The following pieces of gym equipment are approved for use as a loading platform.  
(Note: Photos may vary slightly from your equipment. Some of these pieces of equipment are no longer produced, but they are approved for your gym if you happen to have them.)
  1. Best options:
    - a. Trapezoid Mat



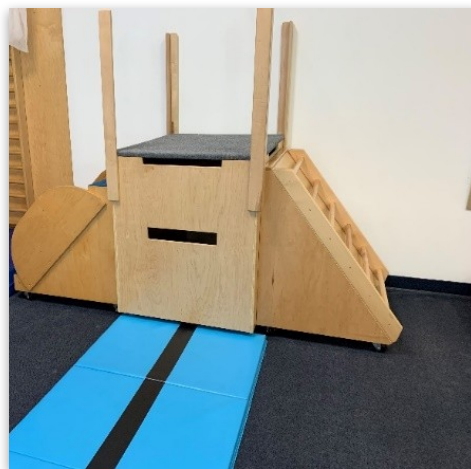
- b. Lock Blocks with Blue/Green Mat on top (Note: The Lock Blocks are no longer being manufactured, so your gym may not have this option.)



2. Ball Pit with Cover



3. Castle Box (Note: May be too high for kids 5 and older)



iv. Next best options:

1. Jump Box: Best for taller children 7 and older





**b. Space Flight Safety Mats (for when children ride in the harness):**

**i. Space Flight Stopping Wedge Mat:**

1. A Wedge Mat standing on end must be placed against the wall, post, desk, etc. at the lower landing end of Space Flight.
2. The Space Flight Stopping Wedge Mat is a fail-safe safety measure, should the Spotter not stop the child at the end of the ride for some unforeseen situation. The Wedge Mat should never intentionally be used to stop a child at the end of the Space Flight activity. The instructor must always be in contact with the child and always stop the child/swing at the end of the Space Flight activity before the child hits the stopping pad.



**c. Area under Space Flight Cable (between loading and landing area)**

- i. Black line mats are no longer required under the length of the cable.
- ii. There should be no equipment impeding the path of the Spotter throughout the entire length of the Space Flight activity.

**d. Space Flight Landing Platform (for when children ride in the harness):**

(Note: Ziplines can vary in height from one gym to the next, so there is no one setup that will work for every location. Determine what works best for your gym by trial and error and then stick to the option that is best.)

- i. The approved Space Flight Landing Platforms are the soft stairs on top of one of the following items: A fat mat, folded rainbow mat, folded green panel mat, folded blue panel mat, or folded wedge mat.
  1. Using the soft stairs makes for the best unloading platform, as kids of varying heights can step up or down the stairs to be able to easily step out of the harness (child is not lifted out).
  2. If the padding in your Fat Mats or soft stairs is worn, the kids may be unstable standing on them. Hold their arms or give them a hand as they come down from the platform.



**e. Posts:**

- i. If the posts supporting the Space Flight cable are visible, they must be padded at all times from the ground up to a minimum of 5 feet in height. The pads may not be removed for use on other pieces of equipment.
  1. An actual “post pad” must be used. Makeshift or DIY padding may *not* be used on any posts in a My Gym.
  2. The post pad must completely surround all sides of the post and reach the floor as well. If there is a post brace plate or bolts used at the base of the post, this hardware must also be covered by the post pad.



## 11. Operating Procedures for Performing Space Flight During My Gym Class Programs

### a. Operating procedures for Gymsters and younger who perform the Space Flight activity in a swing attached to the trolley:

#### i. General:

1. For these ages, the Space Flight activity is operated by one trained instructor – the Spotter.
2. Loading and unloading takes place at the lower end of the cable.
3. Children Gymsters age and younger are not allowed to ride the Space Flight in the harness. They must be in an approved swing and secured using the swing manufacturer's safety belt/harness.

#### ii. Operating Procedures:

1. The child is lifted by the parent or guardian and put into the swing according to the manufacturer's guidelines.
2. The Spotter must secure the swing's safety belt before beginning the activity.
3. The Spotter must perform a visual "safety check" for equipment, children, or adults in the path of the ride.
4. The Spotter gently walks with the child and pushes the swing to the higher end of Space Flight, continuing to look for people or objects that impede the path.
5. The Spotter then walks with the child and swing down the Space Flight. The swing/child should always remain within arm's length of the Spotter the entire time.
6. There should be no jarring, excess pushing, etc. of the child while on the Space Flight activity.
7. The Spotter must slow and stop the child and swing before the trolley reaches the landing stopping pad.
8. After 2 turns, the Spotter stops the child/swing at the lower end of the Space Flight. The Spotter then unbuckles/removes the safety harness/belt, and the child should be removed from the swing by the child's parent or guardian.
9. Refer to the Space Flight spotting video for a demonstration on proper loading and spotting.

### b. Operating procedures for children Terrific Tots and older who ride in a harness on the Space Flight activity (classes, camps, PNO, etc.):

#### i. General:

1. For these ages, the Space Flight activity is operated by one trained instructor – the Spotter.

- a. Note that children 3-4 may need a second teacher at the loading platform to help them step into the harness.
2. Loading takes place at the higher end of the cable and ends on the lower end after one trip down.
3. Children must ride in a harness. They are not permitted to hold the handles.
- ii. The Spotters role:
  1. When loading, reach one hand through the harness leg hole and tell the child to step through with one foot. Then repeat with the other hand and foot.
  2. When both feet are in, the child will still be standing. Ask the child to sit down; then adjust the leg and back straps accordingly. At this point, the child should be hanging freely while seated in the harness. Guide the child's hands to the lanyard if needed.
  3. Instruct the child to "hold on tight and don't let go."
  4. The Spotter then walks/jogs alongside the child as they fly on the ride.
  5. The Spotter does not need to hold the child or the harness.
  6. If the child is going faster than a slow jog, the Spotter should slow them down by grabbing the lanyard and slowing down the ride.
  7. The Spotter must NOT push, pull, or swing (side to side) the child forcefully or move at a pace faster than a rapid walk or slow jog.
  8. The Spotter should visually scan the path of the Space Flight during the activity for any people or equipment impeding the path.
  9. When the child is a few feet from the end of the ride, the Spotter grabs the lanyard and stops the child before the trolley hits the stopping pad.
  10. The Spotter then instructs the child to stand up on the landing platform, push the harness down, and step out of the harness. To help, the Spotter can hold the child's hand and also pull down on the lanyard.
  11. The Spotter then spots the child down from the landing platform if needed.
  12. Once the child has securely exited the harness and is off of the loading platform, the Spotter may then jog back to the loading platform and repeat with the next child.
  13. Refer to the Space Flight activity spotting video for demonstrations on proper loading and spotting.

## **12. Operating Procedures for Space Flight During Birthday Parties and Other Parties**

- a. All general Space Flight procedures, mats, equipment, and spotting techniques described in this handbook apply to parties as well.
- b. For 1-and-2-year-old birthday parties:
  - i. Plan to operate Space Flight with a swing as described in this handbook for all children in attendance who are 2 and younger. This is typically done as a Big Deal while swings or independent toys are out.
  - ii. 3-year-olds: These children may ride in an age-appropriate swing or in the harness.
  - iii. If children 4 or older are present:
    1. One teacher gives all of the children 2 and younger a Space Flight turn in a swing.
    2. Once that is complete, call the kids 4 and older to sit on a mat or line, explain the rules, and give them a turn riding in the harness (as described in this handbook).
- c. For 3-to-10-year-old birthday parties:

- i. 3-year-olds can ride in a swing or in the harness. Choose the option you feel will work best.
- ii. 4 years and older:
  - 1. Plan to operate Space Flight with all children riding in the harness as described in this handbook.
  - 2. This is typically done as a game. All children should be sitting/standing on a waiting line. After one child gets a turn, he/she returns to the line and waits for the rest of the kids to go before getting a second turn (time permitting).
- iii. If children 2 or younger are present, select the best option (varies based on the younger children's participation, how many are present, attention levels, etc.):
  - 1. Option 1: Do not give the younger children a turn. This is OK if there are only a couple of younger kids who are not participating much in the activities. They may continue to explore the gym with their parents supervising them (away from Space Flight path) while the Space Flight game runs.
  - 2. Option 2: If the younger kids are engaged and participating, then you should give them an age-appropriate turn on Space Flight as well. First, give all of the older kids a turn following all Space Flight procedures; then let them explore the gym (put out hula hoops for the older kids). Then, following all procedures in this handbook, one teacher can give the younger children (1-3 years old) a turn on Space Flight in a swing while the other teacher spots the floor. A safety announcement asking all children and parents to stay away from the Space Flight area should be made before giving the younger children their turns in a swing. If children cross the path, just stop the swing; you should always be within arm's reach at all times anyway.

### **13. Space Flight Instructor Training Requirements**

- a. Before a My Gym teacher is allowed to be the Spotter on the Space Flight activity, the teacher must comply with all of the requirements listed below.

- b. Instructor Training:

Special Notice: For purposes of reopening Space Flight in October 2024, the My Gym owner and/or director may train their teachers in a mock setting and not hands on (such as in a Weekly Meeting or private training)

- i. Step 1: Education:

- 1. Trainee must watch the "Space Flight Training" videos and then read this manual in its entirety. (It's best to watch the videos first to get a base understanding of how the activity runs.)

- ii. Step 2: Shadowing:

- 1. The trainee must be on the floor shadowing (trainee is not hands on yet) a Space Flight-trained teacher, director, My Gym owner, or MGE team member spot:
  - a. A child 2 years or younger in a swing on the Space Flight ride
  - b. A child 3 years or older in a harness on the Space Flight ride
- 2. Shadowing may be during a Weekly Meeting, open time on the schedule, class program, party, Practice and Play, Camp, or PNO, as long as a trained Space Flight Spotter is participating in the training.
  - a. Trainee observes the following while shadowing:
    - i. Proper loading, spotting, and unloading procedures
    - ii. Proper hand placement of the Spotter for the duration of the activity

- iii. The fast walking/slow jogging pace of the activity
    - iv. That the child is never left unattended/unspotted
  - iii. Step 3: Hands-on training (may be done immediately after shadowing)
    - 1. The trainee must be on the floor as the primary hands-on Spotter while under the direct supervision of a Space Flight-trained teacher, director, My Gym owner, or MGE team member. The trainee must spot:
      - a. A child 2 years or younger in a swing on the Space Flight ride
      - b. A child 3 years or older in a harness on the Space Flight ride
    - 2. Hands-on training may be during a Weekly Meeting, open time on the schedule, class program, party, Practice and Play, Camp, or PNO, as long as a trained Space Flight Spotter is participating in the training.
      - a. Trainee is hands-on, working on the following:
        - i. Proper loading, spotting, and unloading procedures
        - ii. Proper hand placement of the Spotter for the duration of the activity
        - iii. The fast walking/slow jogging pace of the activity
        - iv. That the child is never left unattended/unspotted
  - iv. Step 4: Trainer assessment / Trainee repeat or approval
    - 1. The Space Flight trainer must assess whether or not the trainee is ready to independently perform the Spotter role on the Space Flight activity according to the guidelines in this manual and the Space Flight videos.
    - 2. This assessment must be made by the trainer before the trainee may perform those duties independently.
    - 3. If the trainer, owner, director, etc. believe the trainee is not ready, the trainee must repeat Steps 1-4.

#### **14. Maintenance and Inspection of Space Flight**

- a. Semiannual Inspections:
  - i. Every year by June 1, the owner or director is mandated to complete the "Equipment Safety and Maintenance Checklist," which includes an inspection of Space Flight.
  - ii. Every year by December 1, the owner or director is mandated to complete the "Equipment and Safety and Maintenance Inspection," which includes an inspection of Space Flight.
- b. If, at any time between inspections, the Space Flight trolley, cable, or hardware show signs of wear, the Space Flight activity must be temporarily closed until repairs are completed.
  - i. Signs of wear to the cable include but are not limited to cable fraying, rust, discoloration, kinks in its length, etc.
  - ii. Signs of wear to the trolley include but are not limited to unusual sounds, burning smell, loose bolts, handle movement/spinning, etc.
  - iii. Signs of wear to the hardware include but are not limited to unusual sounds, loose bolts, excessive sagging, excessive wear of components, etc.
- c. Additional Inspections Required by the State of Texas:
 

IMPORTANT: Please apply these additional inspections if your My Gym is located in the state of Texas.

  - i. Texas requires that zip lines be inspected daily before use. If you are not using the Space Flight that day, an inspection is not required. Inspect your Space Flight on every day it will be used.
  - ii. Daily inspection includes:



1. Remove the "Loading Trolley Stopping Pad" and "Landing Trolley Stopping Pad." (These are the tubular pads that are wrapped around the zip line cable and secured with Velcro. See pics in Section 2 and Section 3 of this manual.)
2. Slowly walk under the cable and carefully look for any excessive wear or fraying in the cable.
3. Visually inspect all hardware at the loading and landing ends of the zip line installation. Be sure the cable is not frayed, all bolts are present and tight, and no components exhibit excessive wear or damage.
4. If all looks OK, reinstall the Loading and Landing Stopping Pads and proceed with operating your Space Flight *that* day.
5. Perform this inspection each day the Space Flight activity will be used.