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Lecture No. – 22

Lecture Title

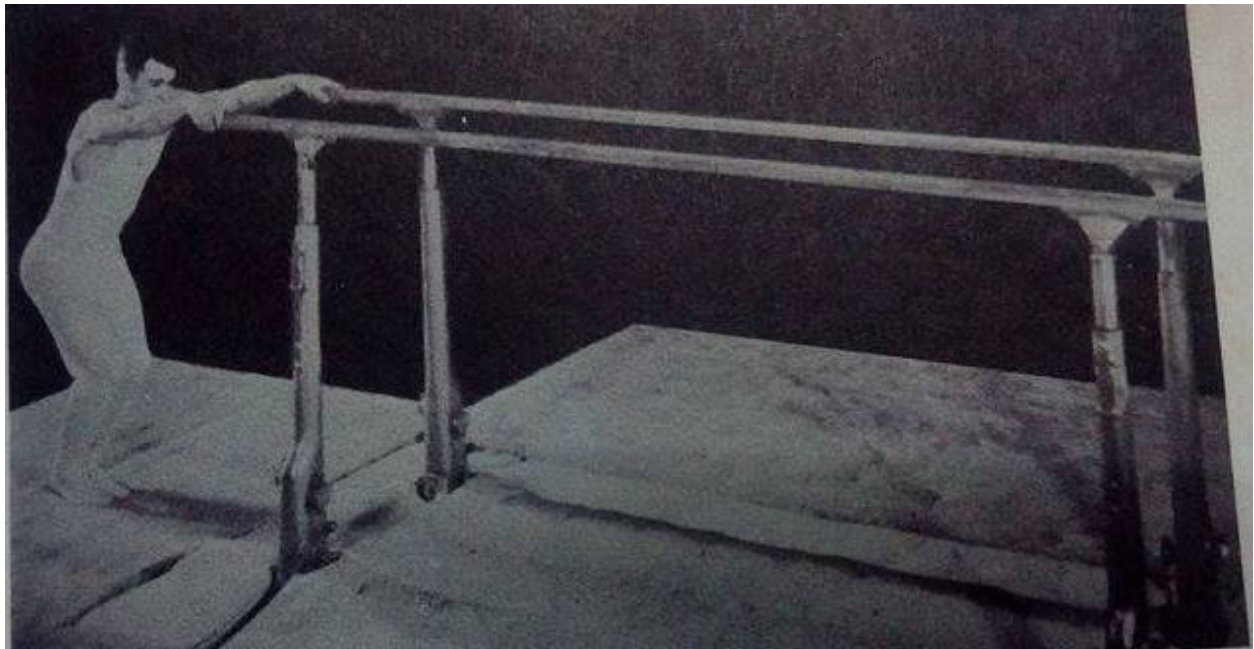
Parallel Bar and Horizontal Bar

Parallel bars

Men's Gymnastics provides a fun and safe energy outlet for boys of any age, where strength and discipline are key factors. Applying strength across six differing apparatus will build confidence and test any young thrill-seekers, through the development of mobility, endurance, flexibility and co-ordination. Men's gymnastics competition levels are split up into junior and senior events, catering from gymnasts as young as six up to adult competitors in the Masters division.

General information about Parallel Bar

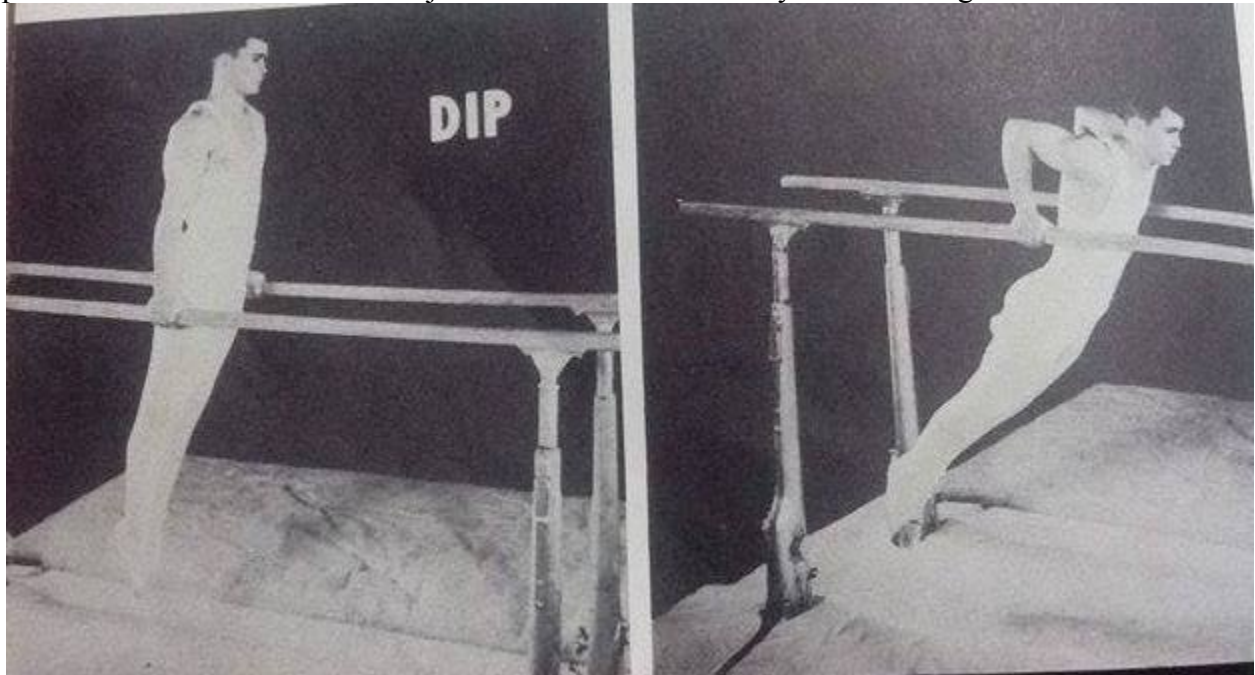
A predominately swinging apparatus, that is interspersed with only a few held or strength elements. Swings are completed above and below the bars and consist of acrobatic flight elements, changes of direction and swing types. The gymnast's routine ends in a dramatic dismount off the side or the end of the bars.



Technique

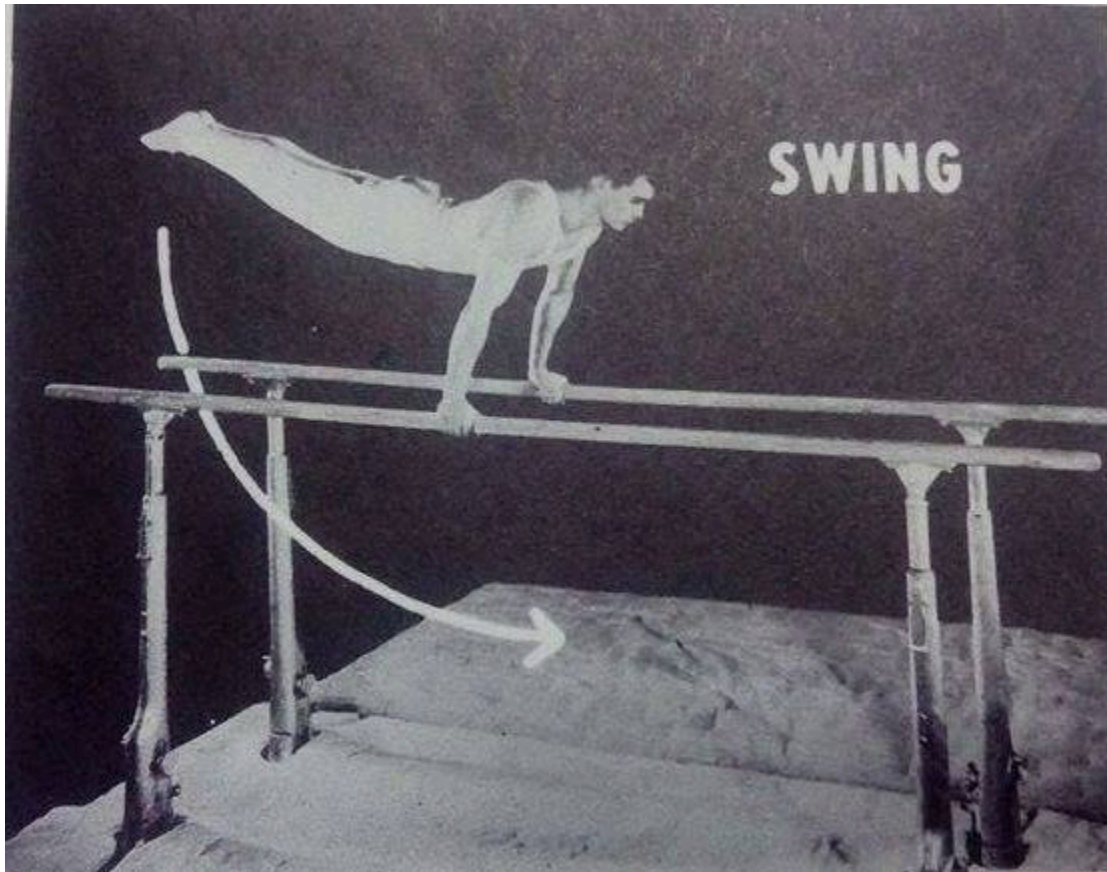
Becoming a successful performer on the parallel bars takes more than strength and some tumbling experience. You must be willing to devote a lot of time to practice, to building your skill and confidence gradually.

First familiarize yourself with the apparatus. The parallel bars are two smooth wooden handrails supported on a pair of sturdy uprights and bases. For safety's sake, the base area should be padded with mats and the bars adjusted to about chest while you're learning.

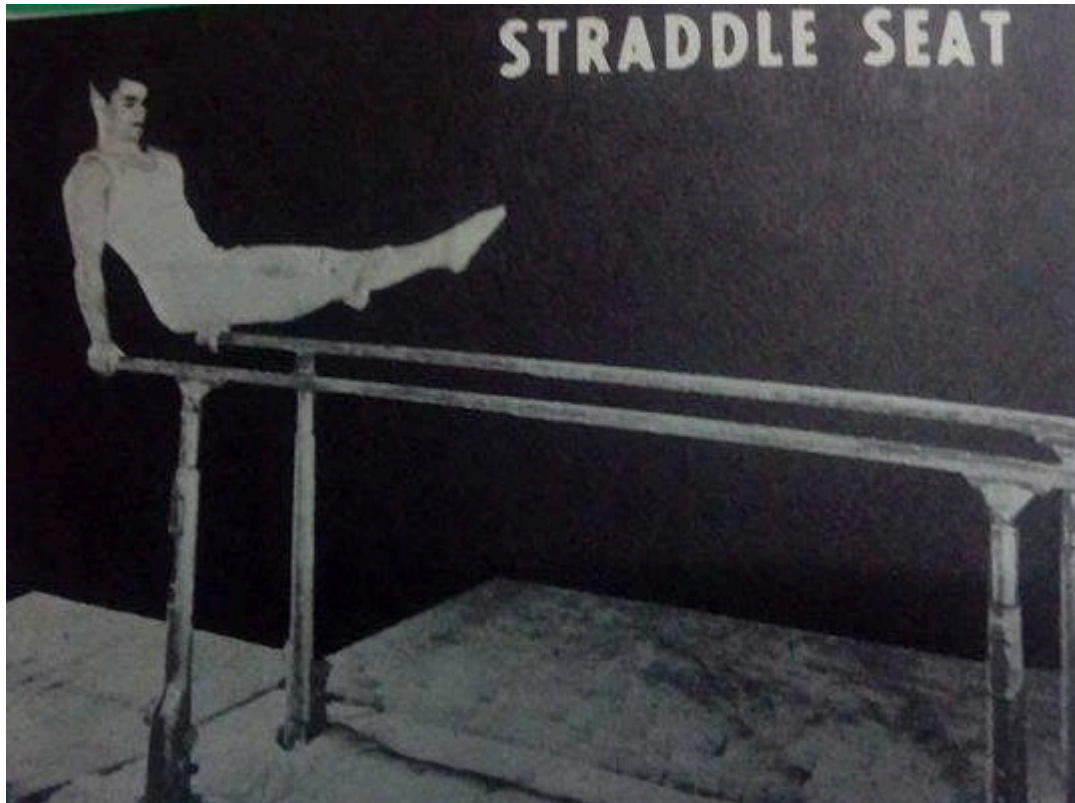


First get the feel of the bars, using a basic overhand grip. Then develop a good approach and a simple starting mount, such as the jump to a straight arm support. Practice until you can support yourself with your arms straight, chest out, body slightly arched and your toes arched and your toes pointed down.

Once you've learned this basic mount, you can try a beginning stunt such as the dip. After a jump to a straight arm support, flex your arms ease yourself down low without touching the mat. Bend your arms to the point where they form slightly less than a right angle. Then push yourself back up to your original straight arm support. Practice until you can do several in a row.

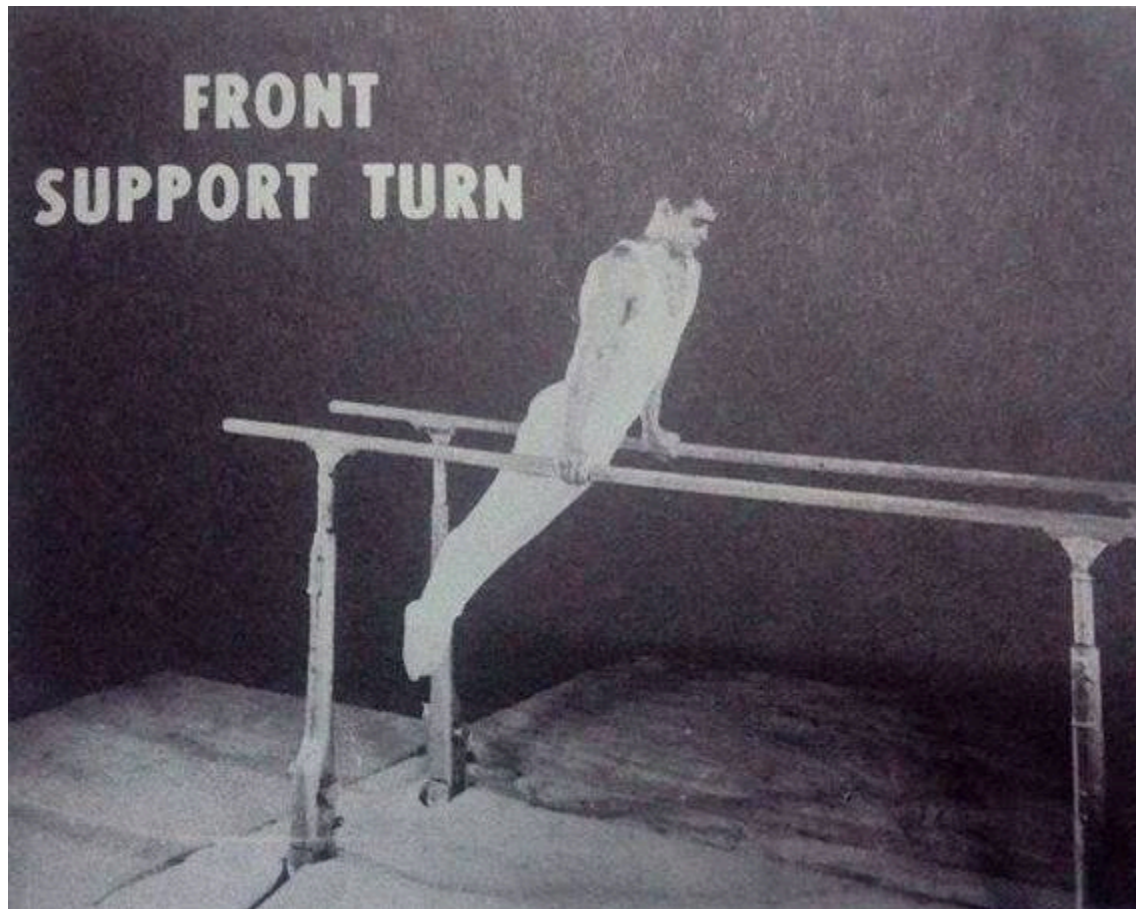


It's a good arm exercise and effective conditioning for your next basic movement: the swing. Develop a high, strong swing only after many low, easy swings. For safety, have someone act as your spotter, ready to help or catch you in case of trouble.



Soon you can add lift to your swing. As you swing higher, keep your arms straight. Try to make your shoulders the fulcrum of your swing.

You'll need a good swing to perfect another mount: the straddle seat. Starting from a straight arm support, swing your legs forward. As they come up slightly above the bars, separate your legs and let each drop on a bar. Then sit up so you end up sitting in a straddle with your head up, your back and legs straight, and your hands resting behind you on the bars.



The front support turn is another stunt that begins with a straight arm support. Go into your support in the right, lean to your right. Shift your weight and hips over to that side, and bring your left hand over to the right bar. Shift your weight and hips over to that side, and bring your left hand over to the right bar. Shift your weight quickly to your left arm, supporting yourself for a moment with the front of your thighs resting against the bar. Keep your body straight and back slightly arched.

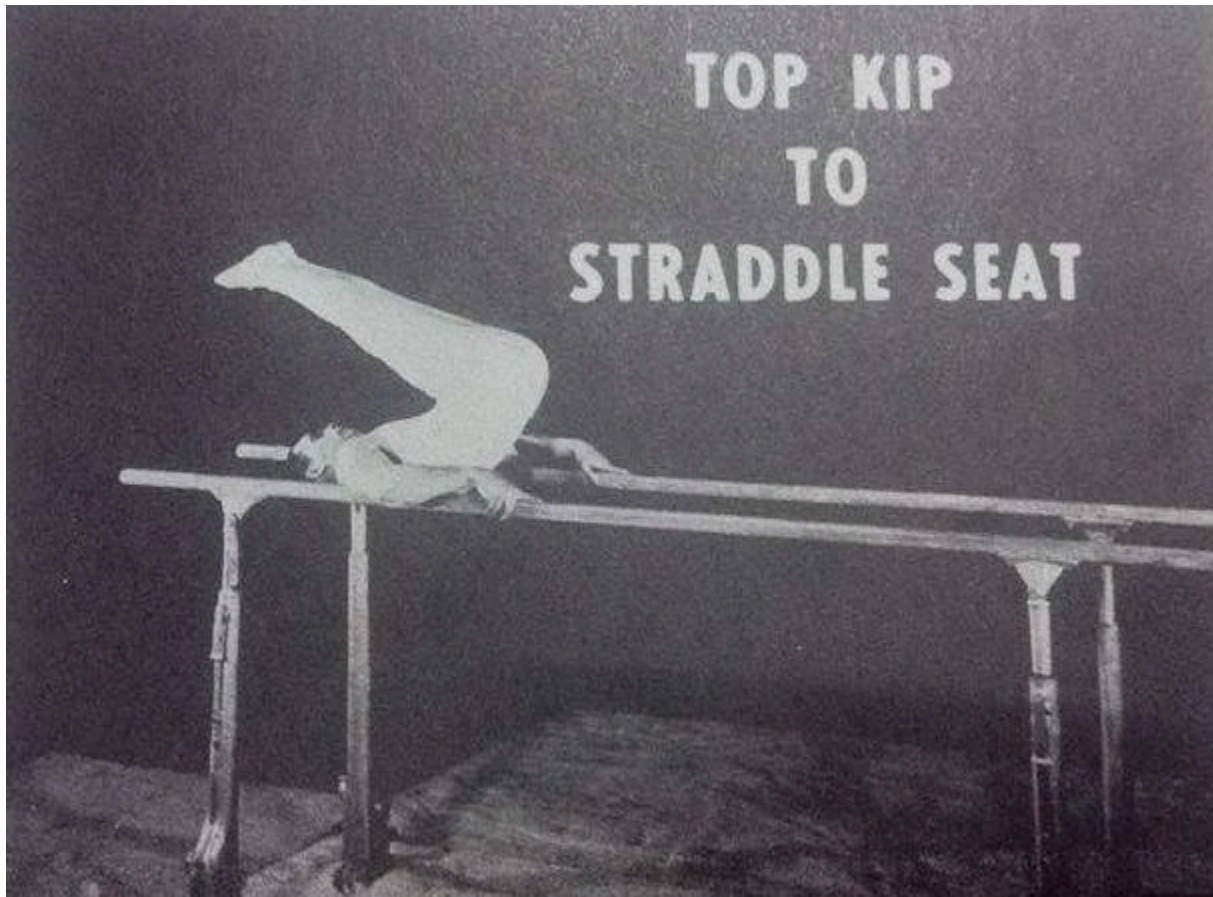
Then continue your half-turn by reaching back with your right hand to grip the other bar. When you complete your turn, you'll finish in a straight arm support again, only facing the other way.



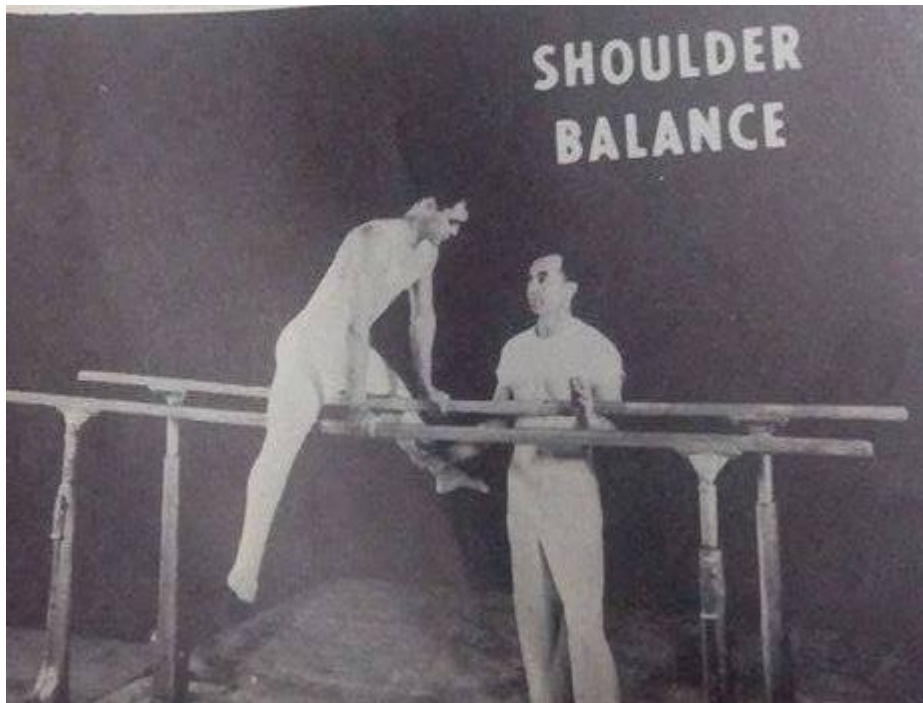
Another basic stunt in which you turn around is the side seat half turn to straddle seat. Start it from a side seat on bar. Then swing one leg over the bars, turning yourself in that same direction and placing your outside hand on the far bar. Complete your half turn and finish in a straddle seat position, with your legs straight and hands resting on both bars.

Once you've mastered this stunt, you can try another, such as the Top Kip to straddle seat. Start this stunt in a upper arm support with your legs raised overhead in a pike position.

Then roll your hips forward slightly, and quickly kick your legs forward and downward to toward the bars, pulling with your arms at the same time. As you come forward, spread your legs and land in a straddle seat position.



When you've perfected these basic stunts, you can try a more advanced one, such as the shoulder balance. At first you'll need the help of a spotter. Start from a straddle seat and lean forward on both hands until the bars support your upper arms close to your shoulder. Keep your elbows out to the sides. Raise your hips, keeping your legs extended, forcing your body straight up over your head into a shoulder balance. Keep your back arched toes pointed.



Later on, after some practice, you can go to a more advanced balance: the swing to a shoulder balance. From a straight arm support, swing back and forth a few times. At the end of back swing, flex your arms and drop down so you support yourself on your upper arms. Continue to grip the bars with your hands arch your back and swing up to a straight shoulder balance. Later on you can try the backward straddle shoulder roll. Begin it from as straddle roll. Begin it from a straddle seat, your hands gripping the bars behind you. Then lean backward and raise your legs, keeping them straight and spread and spread out wide. Bring them up over you as your arms and shoulders rest back on the bars. Now push with your arms, roll back over your shoulders, and drop your spread legs down toward the bars again. During the roll, you'll have to let go of the bars and then re-grasp them on the other side of your shoulders. As your legs come all the way over, push yourself up to an upright position and back in a straddle seat.



Next you can try a back Uprise. Make sure the bars are raised to regulation height. Start the back uprise with an upper arm support with your body in a kip position. Now swing your legs down into a strong back swing. At the peak of your back swing, take advantage of your momentum. Pull hard with your arms and straighten them so that you finish in a regular straight arm support.



After you've perfected the back uprise, you'll want to develop a few dismounts. A good dismount will protect you from injury and give your performance a smart finish.

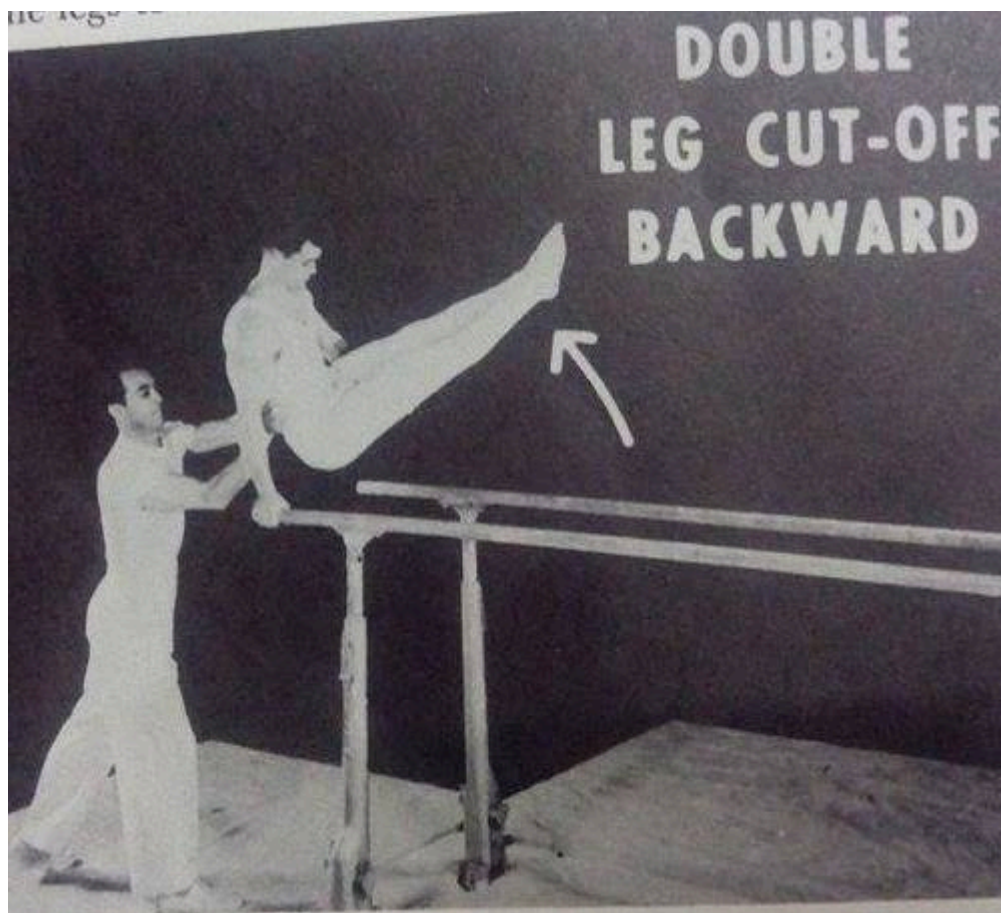


The first one you might try is the front vault dismount start by swinging back swing, if you're vaulting to the right, shift your weight over the right bar. Bring your left hand over at the same time. The instant you have a firm grip with your left hand, release your right and droop to the mat, your left hand holding the bar to balance your landing.

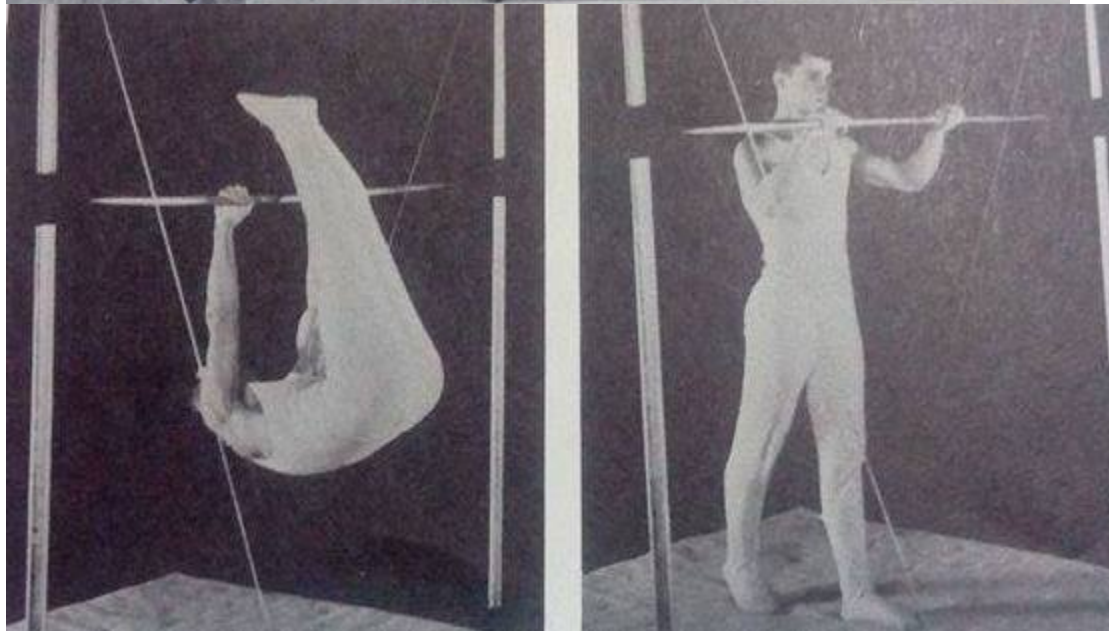
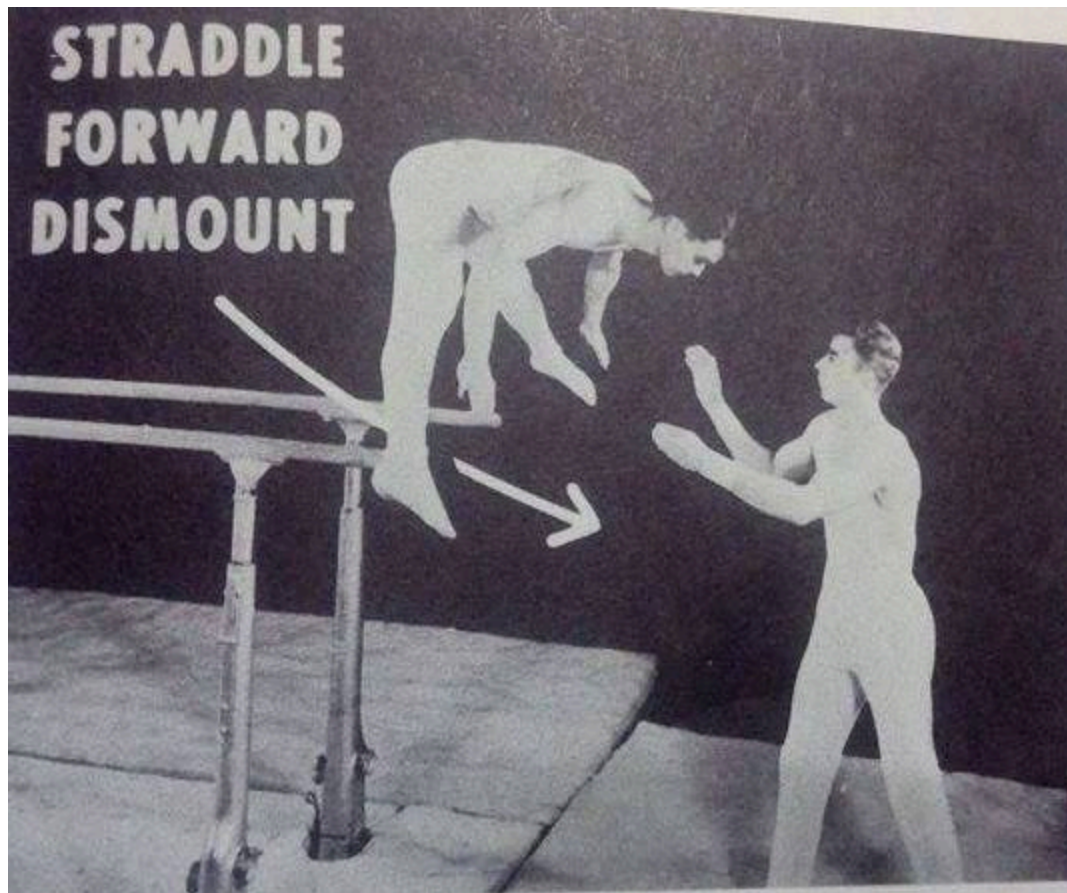


With practice, you can go on to a more impressive dismount: a rear vault dismount. At the peak of forward swing, vault over one bar. Bring one hand over to grip the bar behind you. Then release the other hand as you land on the mat with inside hand holding the bar.

Another dismount is the double leg cut-off backward. Use a spotter for this. Swing both legs forward from a straight arm support position. As they swing above the bars, pass them over one bar and backward. Release the grip on that side and allow the legs to continue to swing backward toward the mats. Then drop to a standing facing the bars with each hand on a bar.



To perform the straddle forward dismount, swing your legs and hips backward, spread your feet outside the bars in a straddle, and shoot your legs forward, releasing your grip to drop to a landing.



After perfecting these stunts individually, you can concentrate on arranging them into routines, improving them by adding spectacular catches and somersaults. But remember that it takes a lot of training before you can arrive at this point when you will be a successful performer on the parallel bars.

Horizontal Bar

General information about Horizontal Bar:

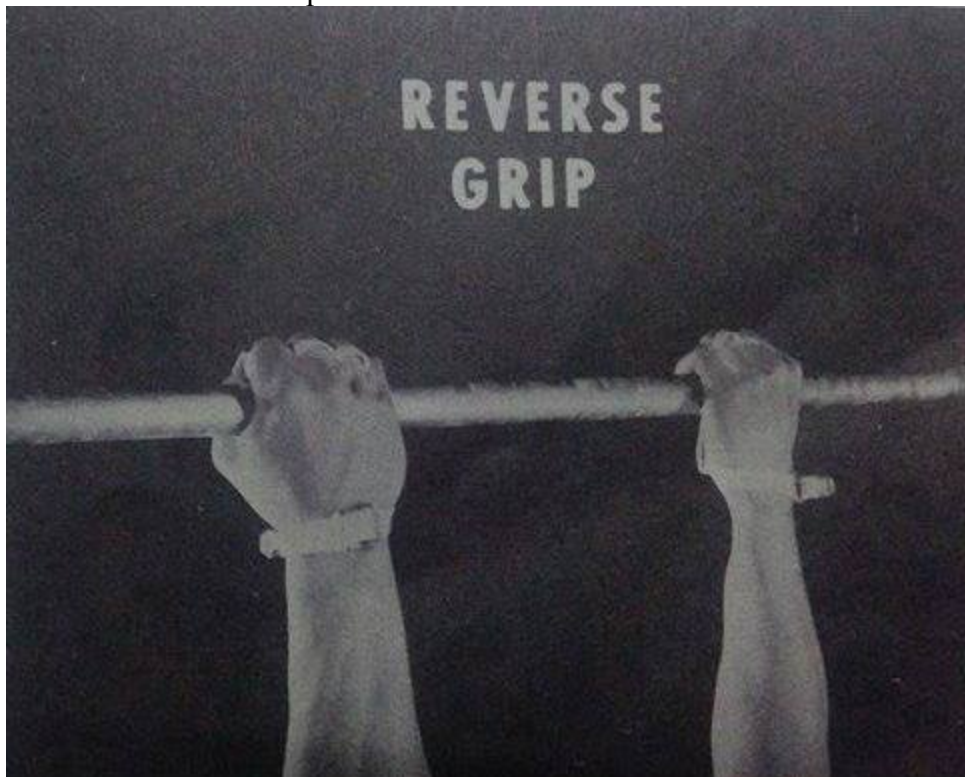
A spectacular apparatus sees the male gymnast combine swinging movements with strength and hold elements on a 2.8 meter high bar. Acrobatic releases and re-grasp flight elements provide heart in mouth entertainment, finished with a display of acrobatic talent in the dismount.

If you've ever "skinned the cat" on a tree branch or porch railing you'll know performing on the horizontal bar can be an exciting activity.

The horizontal bar itself is a simple apparatus. It's supported by two well-braced steel upright from 6 to 8 feet apart. And it can be adjusted from a full regulation height of 8 feet down to 3 feet. You'll want to start out on the low horizontal bar, where it's set at shoulder height.

Technique

Test the bar to make sure it's securely adjusted. Check its surface by rubbing emery paper or steel wool over it at frequent intervals.



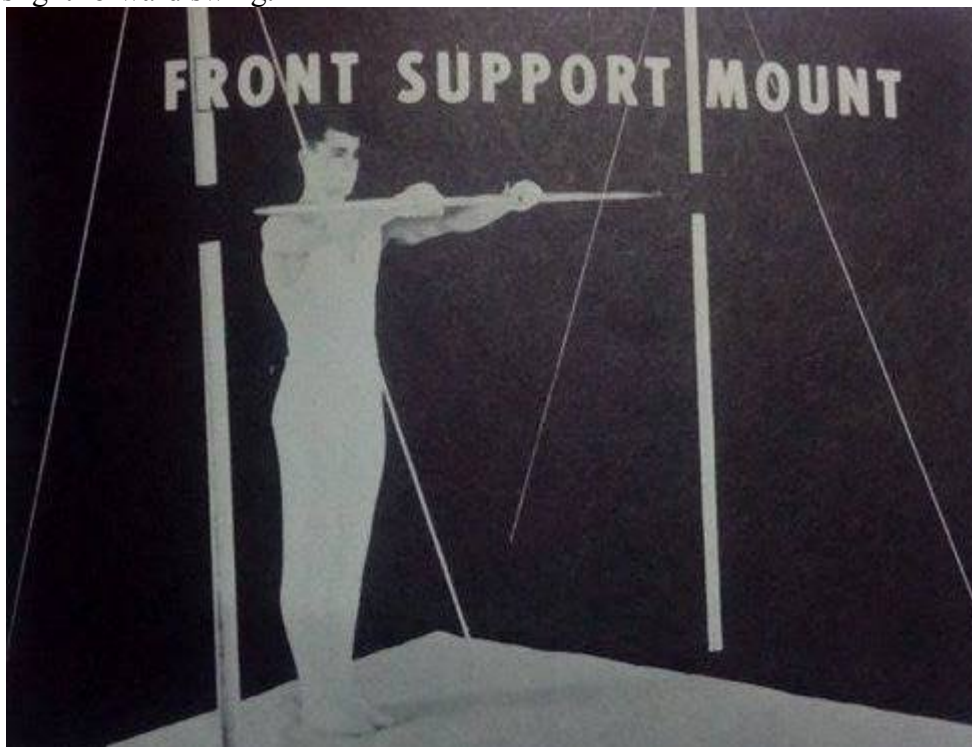
It's a good idea to protect your hands by wearing a pair of palm guards. These may be made of leather or lamp wicking. For further protection remember to practice first in short sessions until your hands have toughened up always remember to keep your hands well chalked to prevent slipping off.

Now you can try a few basic grips. One of them is the underhand or reverse grip, in which your circle the bar with the palms facing you

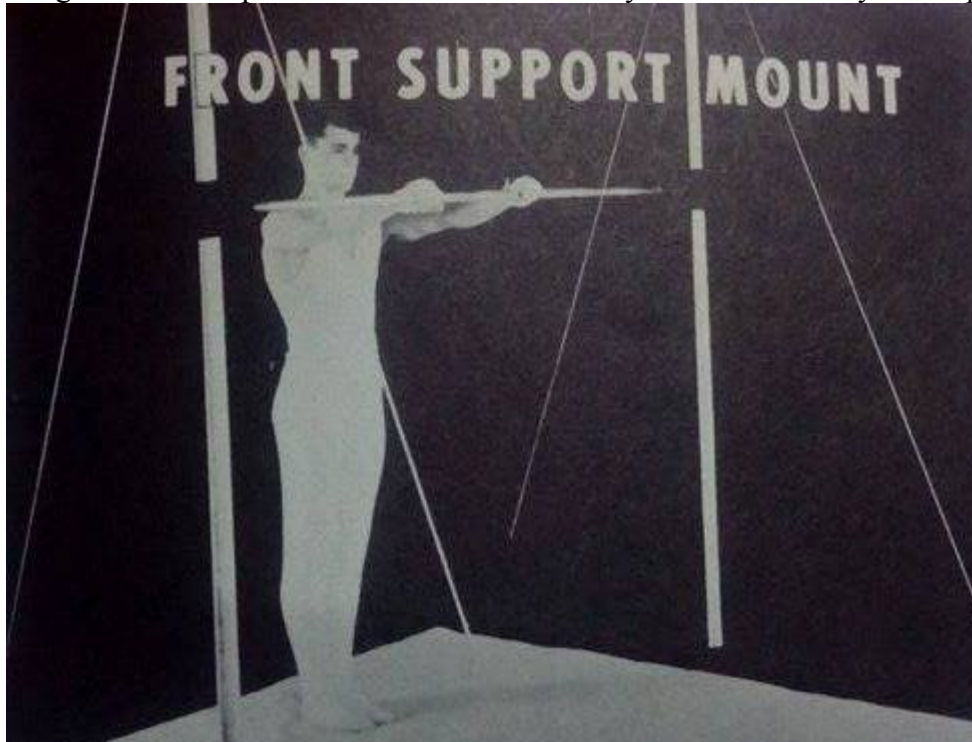
Another is the overhand or regular grip, in which the backs of your hands face you. In both grips your thumbs always circle the bar. Once you've gotten the feel of these grips, and have confidence in their strength, you can start learning one of the simpler stunts. As a safeguard against slips or falls while learning, you'll want to use a spotter and keep plenty of mats under the bar.



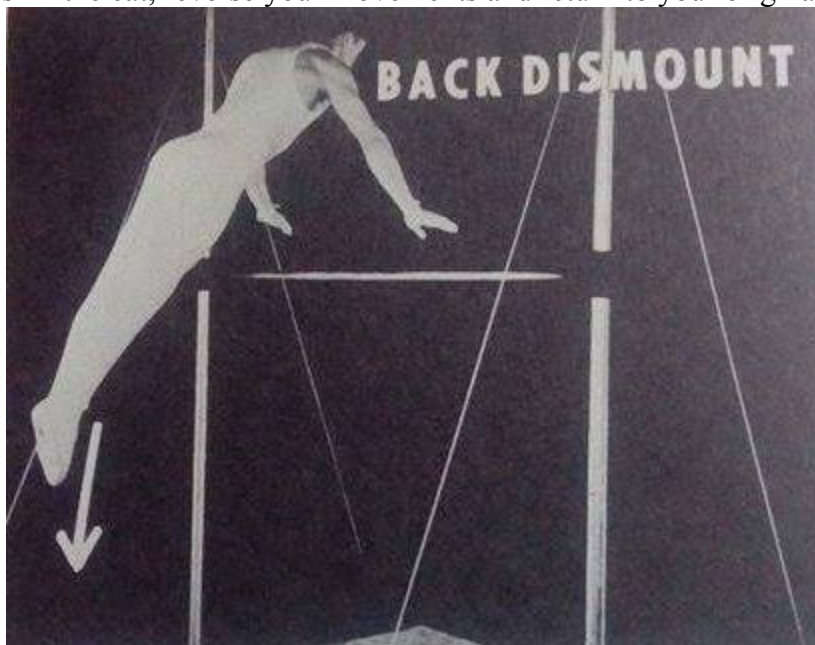
For your first stunt, you might try a front support mount. Begin it from a standing, with both hands on the bar in an overhand grip. Then bend your knees a bit and jump straight up. Pull hard with your arms and shoulders as soon as your feet leave the mat. At the peak of your jump, quickly straighten your arms so that they support your can finish it each time with your head up, elbows in, hips resting against the bar, and toes pointed down. To dismount, give your legs a slight forward swing.



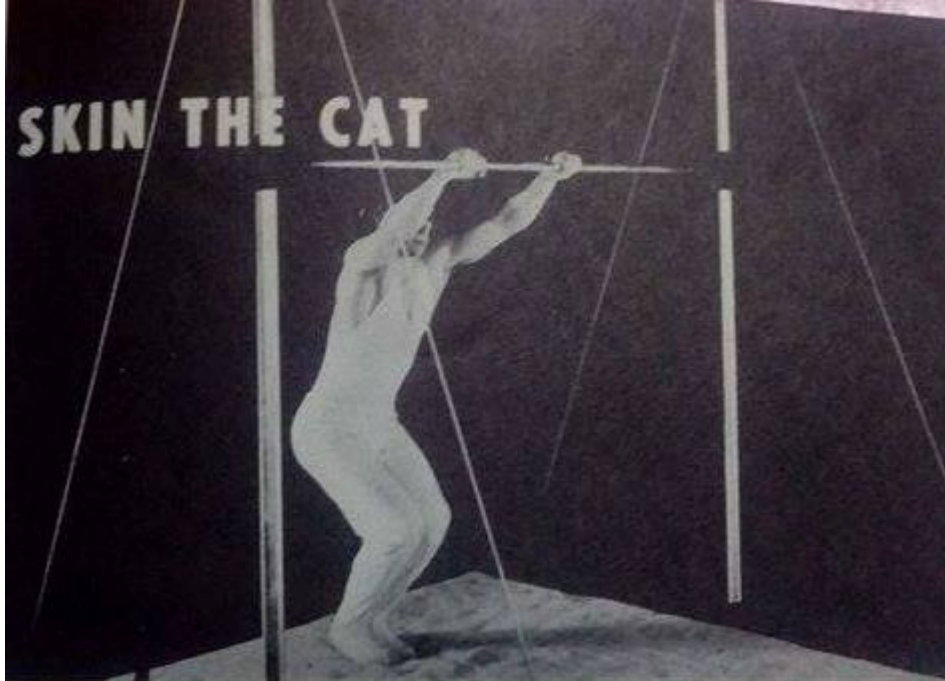
Then swing them back, and at the same time push yourself back and release your grip so that you drop to a smart landing. Bend your knees to absorb the shock, and extend your arms for balance and good form. Repeat this basic dismount until you can do it easily and expertly.



After a while you can develop the well-known stunt called "skin the cat". Start it from your basic stance, holding the bar in a regular grip. Then bend your knees so that you will hang from the bar. As soon as your body is fully supported by your hands, lift your knees so you can pass your legs through your arms and under the bar. Extend your legs back through your arms, until eventually you can lower them behind you to the mat without losing your grip. The finish the skin the cat, reverse your movements and return to your original stand.

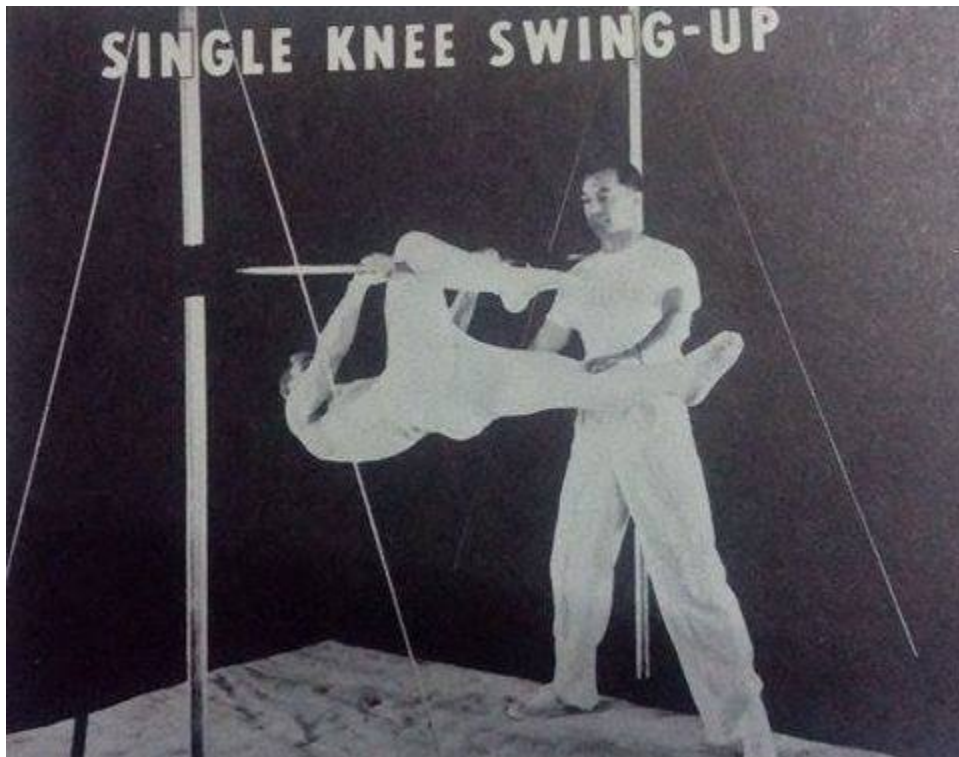


The next stunt you can try is a single knee swing-up. Be sure to use a spotter to guide you through its movements, until you are sure of yourself. This stunt is while hanging from one knee and a regular grip. Bring your free leg up swing it down hard and under the bar. Take advantage of your full downward momentum to pull up on your arms, so you swing up to a support position on top of the bar.

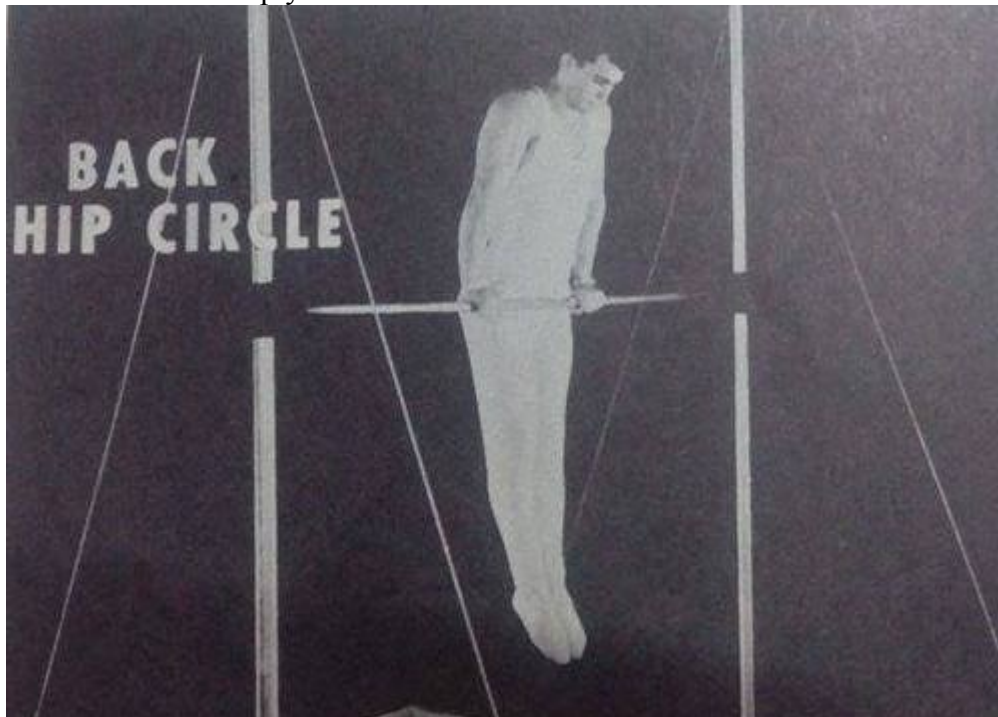


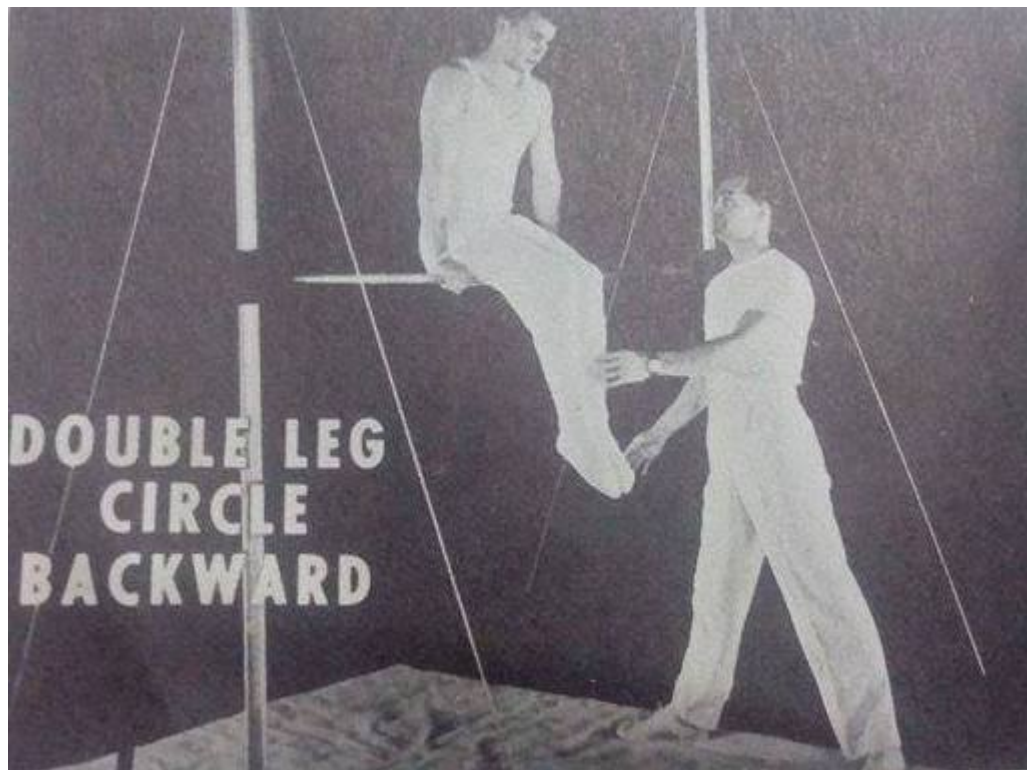
With a little more practice, you should be able to go from this stunt into an advanced one, such as the single knee circle backward, in which you pitch backwards and make a complete circle on one knee. Or, you can go on to single knee circle forward, in which you push off toward the front and complete a full circle. Before going into it, however, be sure to place your hands in a reverse grip.

After learning the knee circle, you can advance to a stunt like the back hip circle. Start the back hip circle from a front support position on the bar. First flex your arms slightly and extend your legs away from the bar. While you keep a firm grip let your legs drop naturally and swing them under and upward to the other side of the bar. Pull with your arms through your swing so that your legs continue on over the bar. During your circle, try to make your hips the pivot point by resting them against the bar and keeping your arms straight. You will have completed your circle when your arms are straight. You will have completed your circle when you can brace yourself back into your original front support position. Later on in your horizontal bar training, you'll want to put more swing into your stunts.



One advanced stunt that depends on a swinging technique is kip. Begin your kip with a strong back swing, by lifting one leg back followed by the other. Then glide both legs forwards, just skimming the mat. At the front of your swing, arch your back for a second and then bring legs up towards the bar sharply.





In first learning this you may want to tap one foot on the mat to help lift your feet up to the bar. Now, you're going through two distinct movements arching yourself out in front and, in a flash, piking your body and pulling yourself up. This quick snap-action should shift weight back and your hips back so your knees hook around the bar. Continue leaning back to start you into a circle around the bar. Continue leaning back to start you into a circle around the bar. At the bottom of your swing, when you pass uprights, start pulling yourself up again. Pull with your

swing and pike your body strongly so you can complete your double leg circle backward by finishing in your original sitting position.

With more practice you should soon be ready to try a sole circle backward. Start it from a front straight arm support. Then flex your arms and whip your hips above your arms, putting your feet on the bar in a straddle position outside of your hands. Holding this position, fall backward, starting into a complete circle while holding on to a bar with your feet and hands. Try to keep an even pressure on the bar with the soles of your feet as you continue around and towards the top of the bar. When you've almost completed a full sole circle backward, you can continue on over for the complete circle or you execute a dismount, by releasing your grip and lifting your shoulders and chest up. Then push forward off the bar with your feet and snap your legs under you, so you drop to a smart landing on both feet with your arms extended. After learning a few such dismounts, you can try mastering some of the more spectacular stunts. Your progress may be a bit slow at first. But you'll soon find it's worth all the practice to become a top performer on the horizontal bar.