

# Understanding the count

## The Preparation - Counts 1, 2, 3, and

The preparation or (prep) for short, is the beginning of the jump. It is what starts your momentum and gives you the boost to help you leave the ground, a sloppy prep can lead to a sloppy jump so spend time working on your prep.

Although there are variations of the prep, these instructions cover the most commonly used method. Jumps can be divided into either 3 steps or 4, depending on who is instructing.

For simplification, we'll use 3 steps (prep, jump and landing) in this example, but knowing that sometimes there are 4 steps (prep, lift, jump and landing) might prove helpful.

Keep in mind that all jumps are done to an 8 count. On count 1, your body should be very tight, your legs should be straight, your feet together and your hands should be clasped in front of you. You will hold this position through count 2.

On count 3, you should step up on your tip toes and bring your arms into a high "V" position (hands in a fist). Hold this position through count 4.

## The Jump - Counts 5 and 6

On count 5, you will bend your knees while using all your strength to swing your arms down in front of you. Your arms should cross each other some where between your elbows and wrists when they reach your mid section or upper thighs. Your body should be a bit forward, but not too much. On count 6, you will propel or spring yourself into the air and hit the arm and leg position of the jump you are doing.

## The Landing - Counts 7 and 8

Do not forget this part of your jump; as the landing is the most important part of the jump. A bad landing can cause you injury. So take the time to get this part right.

Practice your landings as much as you do every other part of your jump and your efforts will result in a clean, well rounded and balanced looking jump that will earn good marks with the judges.

On count 7, you should snap your legs down and land on the balls of your feet; ensure your feet are together and your knees slightly bent. The bend in your knees is just as important as landing on the balls of your feet as the two things combined are what absorbs the shock of your landing.

Your arms should be straight at your side with your fingers straight and the palms of your hands facing your body. You should have a slight forward bend in your body to help you balance when you land.

You will hold this position for count 8. Then you can straighten up your body and be ready for your next jump.