

Choosing the Right Leotard for Your Gymnast



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As many kids begin (or restart) gymnastics for the new school year, puzzled parents will wonder how they are supposed to choose a leotard for their daughter. To help shed some light on how to select a leo, I asked Jody Levy of Destira Leotards for some advice and she graciously wrote this post. (No promotional consideration was given for this—just some really awesome advice.)

Here are Jody’s wise words:

“One of the best parts about being a gymnast is leotards! There is an abundance of options you have when shopping for your next workout – style, color, shape, and fabric. Your gymnast will easily recognize the leotard that she wants, but how can you make sure she’s wearing a leotard that is sized and fits correctly?

Check out these tips on choosing the right leotard:

FIT: Choosing the “right” leotard is based on personal taste and the way it fits, combining function and fashion. A comfortable leotard finds a balance between being close-fitting but not too tight. You want your gymnast to feel safe and confident with her movements, not restricted because of the leotard.

PRACTICE VS. COMPETITION LEOTARDS: what you see on TV and/or at local/national competitions are showier pieces: typically solid fabric, and embellished with lots of crystals that accent the athlete’s movements. Practice leotards are similar to one-piece bathing suits and come in a variety of prints and patterns. Practice leotards can have a roomier fit, while competition leotards are meant to fit like a second skin

BACK DETAILS: Not every gymnast has the same preference for back details so consider style as you shop! Your awesome new leotard can have anything from a racer back, camisole straps, a key-hole, or a wide open back. Remember that an older gymnast may wear a sports bra under her garment, and it is more difficult to hide bra-straps under cut-out backs.

FABRIC: Keep fabric type in mind when choosing size – metallic fabrics typically have less stretch and will have a tighter feel when worn. For athletes with sensory issues, lycra is the way to go. Some fabrics will wash and wear better than other fabrics. To keep your leotard in great shape, machine wash separately and tumble dry low. You don’t want to let the leotard fabric remain wet. Ivory Liquid snow is our favorite detergent to use when it comes to washing leotards. In fact, specialized detergents like Woolite will damage your leotards because it breaks down the adhesive that holds the hologram on the fabric.

SIZING: Just like street clothes, sizing can really vary from brand to brand. The best thing to do is to try on product in your local shop. If you’re shopping on line, review size charts before ordering and know that the most important measurement is the torso. As long as the leotard fits in length, you won’t need to fear the almighty wedgie!