

## 45-Second Touch Rule

The purpose of the 45-second touch rule is to provide the gymnast with an additional opportunity to warm up just before she competes. The 45-second touch rule normally does not add any additional time to the meet. It takes place while the judges are scoring or even conferring on the previous routine. It is difficult for a gymnast simply to stand there without trying to stretch in some fashion. The 45-second touch rule is meant to prevent penalties for "extra warm-ups."

1. The 45-second touch rule is optional for District and Region meets, but will be used at the VHSL Gymnastics Championships.
2. The timer for the touch should sit next to and be supervised by the Superior Judge. The watch should be started when the gymnast actually touches the apparatus (judges should allow for board setting, bar adjusting and chalking).
3. The watch should run continuously for 45 seconds even if the gymnast gets up and down from the apparatus.
4. If the gymnast prefers to use the mat in front of the beam instead of actually getting on the beam, simply start the watch at the first move.
5. Have the timer announce "45-second start" in a clear and firm voice and "touch over" at the end of 45 seconds.
6. To incur a deduction for "extra warm-up," the gymnast would have had to disregard totally the call for time over, or must have clearly taken another opportunity to warm up.
7. If the timer is unsure whether the gymnast is taking a touch, she asks the Superior Judge.
8. In all cases, if there is any doubt whether or not a gymnast had extra warm-up (e.g., watch not clearing, timer unsure, etc.), give the benefit of doubt to the gymnast.
9. Regarding Vault -- It seems to work better simply to allow 1-2 vaults rather than trying to determine when to start the watch, as we have to consider the run on vault.