

US LOG ROLLING

[HTTP://WWW.USLOGROLLING.COM](http://www.uslogrolling.com)

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LOG ROLLING PROGRAMMING 101

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Future Log Rolling Program Directors,

Congratulations on beginning your own log rolling program! You will find this to be a fun, rewarding, and profitable experience for you and your facility. The below document explains log rolling basics, and also reviews many drills, skills, and games used in classes. These are by no means the only options for class formats, and we are always excited to hear about your ideas and what you have been doing in your classes. Please stay in touch with us through info@uslogrolling.com to keep us updated on your program!

Sincerely,
The US Log Rolling Association

VOCABULARY

RUNNING V. BUCKING MATCHES

A **bucking match** occurs when two rollers roll over the same shoulder and consequently face opposite directions on the log. These matches tend to go slightly faster and have more action, as the athletes are always in a fight for control of the log.

A **running match** occurs when a left-shoulder and right-shoulder roller compete and therefore face the same direction. These often go on for a long time and are usually more endurance-focused matches.



A Bucking Match

FRONTSTEP

When a roller's feet are moving as though he or she is walking/running forward.

BACKSTEP (HEELING)

When a roller's feet are moving as though he or she is walking/running in reverse.

LEFT/RIGHT SHOULDERED ROLLER

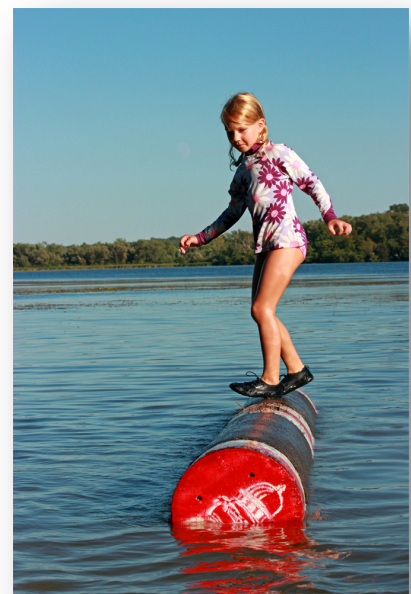
Indicates which shoulder a roller looks over while on the log. Similar to “goofy foot” or “regular foot” in snowboarding.

POLING OUT

At some tournaments matches begin with **pole starts** in order to ensure that competitors are far enough from the dock. Poles are usually held steady by separate judges as athletes push out from dock. Poles are released and match begins upon calling “Time In”.

TIME IN

When both rollers are in control of the log the head judge in competition will announce the beginning of the



A left-shouldered roller

match by calling “Time In” or blowing a whistle to indicate such.

SPIKES/CAULKS

Elite rollers wear **spikes** (occasionally called “caulks”) when they compete on uncarpeted logs and when they boom run. Spikes are made from soccer cleats. The cleats are shaved off and logging spikes inserted in their place.

SPIKE LOGS AND TRACTION LOGS

Traction logs are logs with 4 feet of carpet on each side of the log. **Spike logs** do not have carpet and are used by elite rollers with spiked shoes (caulks). Both logs are western red cedar.



Log rolling spikes

KICKING THE LOG

A roller gives a fast and powerful downward nudge with his or her lead foot in order to dislodge opponent.

BIRLING

The original term for the sport of log rolling.

LOGS & MAINTENANCE

Logs are made of lathe-turned western red cedar and are carpeted with indoor/outdoor carpeting (for traction). At some competitions elite competitors compete on uncarpeted logs and wear spikes.

Logs can be ordered through various sources. As of now the two popular sources creating high quality log rolling logs are Lumberjack Enterprises of Stillwater, Minnesota and JR Salzman of Hayward, Wisconsin. Logs can be made to your specifications and shipped. Please continue to check <http://www.uslogrolling.com> for updates on log suppliers.

Lumberjack Enterprises:

More information at: <http://www.lumberjackenterprises.com>

Contact: Jamie Fischer Jamie@lumberjackenterprises.com

JR Salzman:

More information at: <http://www.logboy.com>

Contact: jrsalzman@logboy.com

Key Log Rolling:

More information at: <http://www.keylogrolling.com>

Contact: abby@keylogrolling.com

LOG LEVELS:

#1: Red, 15" diameter 12' long

#2: White, 14" diameter 12' long

#3: Blue, 13" diameter 12' or 13' long

#4: Yellow, 12" diameter 12' or 13' long

#5: Blue & yellow, 11" diameter 12' or 13' long (Optional, only some tournaments will have a #5)



******STORE THE LOGS OFF THE GROUND SO THAT THEY DRY PROPERLY. ******

MAINTENANCE:

Glue: Recommended glue for applying/maintaining carpet on log rolling logs is PL400 construction adhesive (or similar sub-floor adhesive).

Carpet: Recommended 100% Olefin outdoor/indoor carpet. Preferred brand is "Prospector" sold at Menards.

Seams: Seams are held together and maintained with 2-part epoxy. The minute a seam begins to pull up, add the epoxy to prevent major wear and tear. When seams begin to fray, use blowtorch to burn ends down before applying 2-part epoxy.

Paint: Recommended oil based paint. Preferred brand: Rustoleum Safety Red 7564, Safety Blue 7524, Safety Yellow 7543, Flat White 7590.

Recommended Maintenance:

Yearly: Sand and repaint logs

3-5 Years: Recarpet Logs

As needed: Maintain seams

SAFETY

Log rolling is a very safe sport! Rollers tend to fall either forwards or backwards, rarely on the log. Shin bruises are common but anything more serious is virtually unheard of.

- Make sure rollers are sufficiently far from the edge of the pool when they are rolling.
- No swimming underwater or playing near the log (Stay out of the squish zone!)
- Supervise students at all times.

LOG ROLLING BASICS

Log rolling in a nutshell: Rollers on opposite end of the log each attempt to dislodge their opponent by changing the speed and direction of the log. Competitors may not cross the centerline or touch their opponent. Splashing is legal. New log rollers begin by learning to stay on by themselves, after they have mastered the basics they can start competing against each other.

HOLDING THE LOG ROLLING LOG:

Instructing a log rolling class is a lot more manual labor than one may think! The key to holding the log rolling log is using leg strength. For larger rollers, two instructors may be needed, one for holding each end of the log.

Shallow Water Log Holding:

Instructor straddles end of log rolling log and squeezes tight between legs. Hands are also used to stabilize the log, but the majority of the stability is coming from the legs. If the log is smooth (newly painted logs) it might help to hold at the carpeted area to prevent slipping.

Deep Water Log Holding (Edge of Pool or Dock):

This is most common for swimming pool instruction. Log is oriented perpendicular to edge of pool or dock. Instructor wraps legs around end of log, crossing feet at the ankles. The majority of the log weight is resting on the calves and ankles. Hands are used to stabilize the log.

Shallow Water Self Starts

As soon as possible, shallow water rollers are taught to start without assistance of an instructor. The roller places his or her outside foot (the one furthest from the center line) on the log, with both hands on either side of foot steadying the log. Keeping the log as close to the body as possible, the roller weights the elevated foot, presses up onto the log and moves his or her feet as fast as possible. The key to this is keeping the chest directly over the log and pressing straight up quickly.

DAY ONE: FAST FEET, EYES ON THE END OF THE LOG

These are the two basics that we teach everyone on their first day.

- **Feet:** Quick, up-and-down steps. Marching, pitter-patter, squishing ants/grapes/etc.
 - Don't try to spin the log; it will spin on its own, we promise!
- **Eyes** look at the opposite end of the log
 - In a competition you'd be looking at the other person's feet
 - Also helps balance and prevents roller from looking at his/her own feet
- **Which way to face?**
 - Most log rollers strongly favor looking over one shoulder. On day 1 rollers should try facing both ways until they decide which is more comfortable for them. Most people will have chosen a side by the end of their first couple classes but if they haven't that's okay! Those



rollers (usually kids) can roll both ways until they chose one. Once the roller chooses a dominant side, they can wear a rubber bracelet on that wrist as a reminder of which shoulder to look over.

SUBSEQUENT CLASSES

Students will get a hang of the basics at completely different paces. Teach to the level of each individual roller and when you think they're ready to advance start helping them with the following:

- **ARMS:** Outside arm (the one closer to the end of the log) should go out in front. Inside arm (closer to the center line) should be at the roller's side or slightly behind.
 - This helps students from having “crazy arms”
 - If students are having a hard time keeping their arms in position they can use their inside hand (the one that goes back/at their side) to hold on to their shirt/shorts.
 - Use for balance: If you're falling backwards, reach forwards. If you're falling forwards, reach down and back.
- **POSTURE:**
 - **Knees:** Knees should be slightly flexed
 - Drill: Rollers stand on pool deck. Tell them to jump on the count of three: “1,2,3, jump!” Repeat. The third time say “1,2,3” but not “jump” (you will probably have to repeat this step because they will probably jump anyway). The level of flex they have on “3” should be about how their legs should be when on the log.



- **Shoulders:** Different log rollers “hunch” their shoulders in various degrees. The key here is that your students should **not have good posture** when they are log rolling. Standing up straight with shoulders back will make it harder to balance. **This is not to be confused with bending at the waist, do not do that. You will tip forwards and end up doing a Dolphin Dismount** (when you tip forward and enter the water head first).
- **BACKSTEPPING:** Most rollers figure out fairly quickly how to frontstep and it is relatively intuitive that when you’re falling off the back of the log you need to reach forward (with just your front arm!) to regain equilibrium. Backstepping is a bit trickier.
 - Instead of reaching straight back on their backstep, rollers should reach down and back and bend into a squat position (“Stick your butt out like you’re sitting in a chair!”). This paired with pulling the inside heel to the backside of the log will help slow down the back step and change direction.
- **ADVANCED FEET**
 - For simplicity’s sake, and to avoid confusion while new rollers are finding their balance we teach them to move their feet straight up and down on the very top of the log. However, as rollers begin to have more balance and control they may wish to stagger their feet a bit and begin using a “gallop step” or “skip step”. This entails placing the inside foot slightly back-of-center and the outside foot slightly forwards. On their backstep the roller will dig in his or her inside heel (“get your heel back”). On the frontstep, he or she will use the ball of their inside foot to pull the log and the ball of their outside foot to slow it down.

- **SHOES:**

Once rollers begin to gain control of the log they may want to purchase a pair of shoes, especially



if they are thinking about competing. A first pair of log rolling shoes does not need to be expensive! The important parts are that they have a thin sole (so rollers can still feel the log) and a good tread (for grip). Many beginning rollers start out using water shoes or cheap canvas tennis shoes. Eventually serious rollers usually end up buying something a bit more durable (popular shoes in the past have been the Teva Gamma Pro and the Northface Padda, the current favorite is the Merrill barefoot). Once rollers get used to wearing shoes they really do help. It is recommended that a roller purchase shoes if he or she is starting to slip on a semi-regular basis (because it means they're trying to control the log and need more traction).

GAMES, SKILLS AND DRILLS

To keep things moving and structured during classes, more advanced rollers are encouraged to work on a drill or roll against another athlete. At the end of class rollers are rewarded with a fun game to play!

Many of these drills, skills, and games (and more!) are featured on our US Log Rolling YouTube Page: <http://www.youtube.com/uslogrolling>

DRILLS:

- **Rocking the Log:** Rollers use their body weight to bounce the log up and down, an actual tactic used in log rolling matches.
- **Distance Rolling:** how far can the roller make the log travel in a set amount of time?
- **Speed Rolling:** an actual event at some competitions! This drill is great practice for controlled, yet fast rolling. The roller spins the log, trying to get as many revolutions as possible in 30 seconds. If he or she falls in, they hop back up and continue spinning for the remainder of the 30 seconds.
- **3x3 Direction Changes:** The roller practices spinning the log three revolutions as fast as possible in a frontstep, quickly reversing the direction, followed by three revolutions in a backstep. This is continued as many times as possible until the roller falls in.
- **Timed Direction Changes:** The roller tries to achieve as many log direction changes as possible in 30 seconds.
- **Jump Rope:** Once the roller is able to obtain excellent control of the log, he or she turns their feet slightly sideways and attempts as many jumps as possible.

- **Hula Hoop:** Around the waist or arms, how long can the roller keep that hula hoop going before falling in?
- **Switching sides:** Take a big step/jump over the paint! Rollers whose legs are too short for this should be very careful. Some rollers will cross over and then turn around, others will cross and turn at the same time.
- **Splashing:** A legal technique used in competition to momentarily blind one's opponent, splashing is a fun but risky technique. To learn the splash, the roller will attempt the first splash with an instructor holding the log, once released the roller works on dipping their toe in the water. Finally, once stable, the roller will attempt to splash! Paired with this drill is also blocking the splash, in which the opponent holds hands low to block the splash from entering their eyes.
- **Ball Toss:** Instructor throws a ball from the edge of the pool (or end of the log in shallow water). See how many times the roller can pass the ball back and fourth before falling in! Eventually rollers can toss the ball back and fourth during a match.
- **Deep Water Starts:** With the log in deeper water the athletes uses their arms to spin themselves up onto log, followed by swinging a leg over the top, sitting on the log like a horse. Once balance is achieved, the roller leans forward onto their hands, puts feet up behind themselves, and pops up as fast as possible into rolling position.
- **Poling Out:** In many tournaments rollers "pole out" from the side of the pool before a match. This is something that takes practice before tournaments! If official poles are not available for practice, paddles and other "toys" can be used.
- **Poolside Fast Feet:** While waiting in line to roll, have athletes practice fast feet on the side of the pool.



Have then add in arm reaches and front foot/back foot alignment.

GAMES:

- **Simon Says:** While the rollers are on the log, the instructor is Simon and calls out safe tricks for the rollers to complete (i.e. Touch toes, backstep, jump, etc.)
- **Monkey on the log:** one roller hangs on the end of the log while the other roller tries to spin him/her around. Helps rollers with pulling, control, slows the log down for beginners.
- **Noodle Jousting:** Log rollers joust each other with noodles while they roll. Faces are off limits!
- **Butt Rolling/Team Rolling:** rollers straddle the log and spin it, trying to get their opponent off the other side. If more than two people play at one time it is called team rolling. This game is a great way for rollers to practice balancing on the log for deep-water starts. Careful of bum rug burn!
- **“Boom Run”:** Line up logs end-to-end in the pool. Instructor(s) holds them loosely in place so that they stay lined up. Kids run all the way down and jump in at the end. Please remind them to mind the paint.
- **Round Robin Tournament:** For smaller classes, every roller rolls each other in actual three out of five log rolling matches to gain the experience of a real competition.
- **King of the log:** Rollers line up. The first two in line roll each other. Winner stays on, loser goes to the back of the line. When one person has consecutively beaten everyone in line he or she is “King” and the game is over, OR the king can be banished to another practice log and the game



can continue until everybody has the chance to be “King of the Log”.

- **Super Soaker:** Have rollers spray each other with a super soaker (avoid the eyes!) and see how long they can stay up.
- **Over/Under:** Only for the deep area of the swimming pool. Instructors (2) hold 2 logs perpendicular to the edge of the pool about 15-20 feet apart. The students form 2 lines at the deep end of the pool. On “Go” the rollers have a relay by jumping in the water, swimming over the first log, under the second, turning around, back over the second, under the first, and tagging the next roller in line. First team to finish wins!
- **Over/Over:** The version of “Over/Under” in shallow water. 2 logs are lined up (with an instructor steadying each one) with two lines forming facing the first log. The athletes do the same as in “Over/Under” but are only allowed to jump over each log. First team to finish wins!

OTHER TEACHING STRATEGIES

- **Timing:** Don’t forget to time the students! Both kids and adults LOVE setting new records.
- **Record Whiteboard:** Keep track of the new rollers personal best times on the log. Once they are able to stay on longer than 2 minutes, they join the “2-minute Club” and are no longer timed.
- **Stay in contact with families:** Please make sure parents know what’s going on with the classes and in the log rolling community. Use some combination of announcements, emails and newsletters to make sure they know:
 - When tournaments are and how to register
 - When sessions end/start
 - Other events, the USLRA, how to buy shoes, etc.
- **Promote unity and team spirit:** Make shirts, have log rolling parties/events, make sure everyone remembers to encourage and support their teammates (have them practice shaking hands after matches, or at least high-5ing during classes).
- **Be encouraging:** Log rolling is **really tough to learn**. Most people will still have a hard time staying up even after a few sessions (abilities vary widely though). It is easy to get frustrated so please reiterate that it’s normal to get frustrated and that this is an incredibly challenging support. Improvement will come with time. Don’t give up!

SAMPLE CLASS PLAN

Begin with individual warm-ups

Beginners continue to work for time on the log and rolling technique throughout class

Drill of the day: 3 x 3 Direction Changes

After Drills have a Round Robin Mini-Tournament

Game for last 5 minutes: “Boom Run”

TOURNAMENTS

Log rolling tournaments are a lot FUN and they are a great chance to practice and meet new people. You do not need to be an awesome log roller to compete at a tournament!

Beginning rollers should not attend tournaments expecting to win but please encourage them to go, it is a great way to connect with the rest of the log rolling community. Encourage families to carpool to events, particularly if the contests are out of town. Outdoor tournaments are by far the best part of summer and should not be missed. Registration forms can be found on the USLRA website (<http://www.uslogrolling.com>)

Age divisions are based on age as of Jan. 1st of the competition year: U7, U10, U13, U17
Additional divisions: Adult Sport, Semi-Pro, Elite

TOURNAMENT CHECKLIST:

Remember to bring:

- Water
- Snacks
- Something to read
- Sunscreen
- A change of clothes - be prepared for any weather.
- Towel
- Shoes
- A hat or sunglasses that will stay on in case the sun is in your eyes while you're rolling
- Registration form and waivers, if you are sending a child with someone else
- A camera

Expect some downtime so be sure to bring snacks and reading material.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The log rolling community is very welcoming, friendly and helpful so feel free to reach out to any USLRA Board Members, program directors, and tournament directors.

<http://www.youtube.com/USLogrolling>

Videos of all of the above games, drills , skills and more! Also, so great clips of amateur and professional log rolling and boom running competition.

<http://www.uslogrolling.com>

The US Log Rolling Association website. Has membership forms, tournament registration information and more.

<http://www.madisonlogrolling.com>

Information and photos, good example of a strong program.

<http://www.lumberjackenterprises.com>

Great information about purchasing and maintaining logs.