

Student Handbook



Eastern Acrobatics and Circus (EAC)

Student Handbook

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Welcome Message

Dear Student,

Welcome to Eastern Acrobatics and Circus (EAC)! We are thrilled that you have chosen to join our community of aerial artists, acrobats, and circus enthusiasts. At EAC, we are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inspiring environment where you can explore the exciting world of circus arts.

This handbook contains important information about our policies, procedures, and expectations. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference. Our goal is to ensure that your experience at EAC is not only fun and rewarding but also safe and educational.

We look forward to seeing you soar, flip, and create with us!

Warmly,

The EAC Team

About EAC

Eastern Acrobatics and Circus was founded in 2015 with a mission to make circus arts accessible to people of all ages and abilities. We believe in the transformative power of circus to build strength, confidence, creativity, and community.

Our facility is equipped with state-of-the-art rigging systems, safety equipment, and training apparatus to provide the highest quality circus education. All of our instructors are professionally trained and certified in their respective disciplines.

Our Mission: To inspire physical creativity, build confidence, and foster community through the teaching and performance of circus arts in a safe and supportive environment.

Our Values: - Safety First - Inclusive Community - Artistic Excellence - Personal Growth - Collaborative Learning

Contact Information

Main Office: - Email: info@easternacrobatics.com - Website: www.easternacrobatics.com

Key Personnel: - Program Manager: TJ Skeffington (info@easternacrobatics.com) - Safety Coordinator: Austin S. Lin (info@easternacrobatics.com) - Rigging Lead/Facility Manager: Jacob Skeffington (info@easternacrobatics.com)

Hours of Operation: - Monday-Friday: 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM - Saturday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM - Sunday: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: 28 Eliot St Natick, MA 01760

Class Offerings

- **Circus Tots 2-4**
 - **Circus Tots 4-6**
 - **Kids Intro to Circus 7-10**
 - **Kids General Circus 7-10**
 - **Kids General Circus 10+**
 - **Adult Stretch**
 - **Aerial Straps 10+**
 - **Aerial Fabric 7-10**
 - **Aerial Fabric 10+**
 - **Aerial Rope 10+**
 - **Mongolian Contortion**
 - **Partner Acrobatics**
 - **Handstands 10+**
 - **Adult Handstands**
 - **Advanced Handstands**
 - **Kids Tumbling**
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Staff Information

- **Jacob Skeffington:** Partner acrobatics, handstands. Experienced with Cirque du Soleil and trained at top circus schools.
 - **Bud Tumurbaatar:** Mongolian Contortion, Handstands, Group Acrobatics. Decorated acrobat with international accolades.
 - **Alex Jackson:** Straps, Handstands, Aerials. Performs regularly with Boston Circus Guild.
 - **Rachel Barringer:** Contortion, Aerial Rope, Aerial Hoop. Founding member of Circus 617.
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Class Policies

Registration

- All students must complete a registration form and waiver before participating in any class.
- New students should arrive 15 minutes before their first class to complete paperwork.
- Students under 18 must have a parent or guardian sign their waiver.

Attendance

- Please arrive 10 minutes before class start time to warm up properly.
- If you will be late or absent, please notify the front desk as soon as possible.
- Consistent attendance is important for skill development and safety.
- Students who are more than 15 minutes late may be asked to observe rather than participate, at the instructor's discretion.

Make-Up Classes

- If you miss a class, you may schedule a make-up within the same session, subject to availability.
- Make-up classes must be scheduled through the front desk.
- Make-up classes cannot be carried over to the next session.

Class Sizes and Ratios

- Beginner classes: Maximum 8 students per instructor
- Intermediate classes: Maximum 6 students per instructor
- Advanced classes: Maximum 4 students per instructor
- Private lessons are available for more personalized instruction.

Class Levels

- **Beginner:** No prior experience required
- **Intermediate:** Minimum 6 months of consistent training and instructor approval
- **Advanced:** Minimum 1 year of consistent training and instructor approval
- Level advancement is at the discretion of instructors based on skill proficiency and safety awareness.

Observers

- For safety reasons, only registered students are allowed in the training area.
- Parents and friends may observe from designated viewing areas.
- Special observation days will be scheduled throughout the year.

Safety Rules

Safety is our highest priority at EAC. The following rules are non-negotiable and must be followed by all students:

General Safety

1. Never train alone. A qualified instructor must be present at all times.
2. Always follow instructor directions regarding equipment use, spotting, and skill progression.
3. Inform your instructor of any injuries, medical conditions, or medications that might affect your training.
4. No training under the influence of alcohol, recreational drugs, or medications that cause drowsiness or impaired judgment.
5. No food or gum in the training areas. Water bottles with secure lids are permitted in designated areas.
6. Electronic devices are prohibited while training.

Equipment Safety

1. Never use equipment without proper instruction and instructor permission.
2. Always check your apparatus and rigging before use, even if an instructor has already done so.
3. Report any equipment concerns immediately to your instructor.
4. Do not adjust rigging, mats, or equipment without instructor supervision.
5. Use crash mats as instructed for all aerial work.

Physical Safety

1. Always complete a proper warm-up before training.
2. Know your limits and don't attempt skills beyond your current ability level.
3. Use spotters as instructed for new or challenging skills.
4. Take adequate rest between attempts of physically demanding skills.
5. Stay hydrated and listen to your body's signals.
6. Cool down and stretch after training to prevent injury.

Injury Protocol

1. If you experience pain (beyond normal muscle fatigue), stop immediately and inform your instructor.
2. In case of injury, first aid will be administered by certified staff.
3. For serious injuries, emergency services will be called.
4. All injuries, even minor ones, must be reported and documented.
5. A doctor's note may be required before returning to class after an injury.

Appropriate Attire

Proper attire is essential for safety and effective training. Requirements vary by discipline:

General Guidelines

- Remove all jewelry before class (including watches, rings, necklaces, dangling earrings).
- Secure long hair away from the face.
- Trim fingernails to prevent apparatus damage and injuries.
- No zippers, buttons, or other hardware that could damage equipment or cause injury.
- No loose clothing that could get caught in equipment.

Aerial Arts (Silks, Trapeze, Lyra)

- Form-fitting t-shirts or leotards that cover the armpits and midriff.
- Leggings or athletic pants that cover the backs of knees.
- No shorts for aerial silks (to prevent fabric burn).
- Clean socks may be required for certain apparatus.

Acrobatics and Ground Skills

- Form-fitting athletic wear that allows full range of motion.
- Layers that can be removed as you warm up.
- Clean socks or bare feet depending on the activity.

What to Bring

- Water bottle with secure lid
- Small towel

- Personal grip aids if approved by your instructor
- Change of clothes for after class

What Not to Wear

- Street shoes in training areas
 - Loose or baggy clothing
 - Clothing with metal embellishments
 - Jewelry of any kind
 - Strong perfumes or scented products
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Facility Information

Training Areas

- **Main Studio:** Aerial silks, trapeze, and lyra
- **Acrobatics Room:** Tumbling, handstands, and partner acrobatics
- **Flexibility Studio:** Contortion and flexibility training
- **Performance Space:** Rehearsals and small performances

Amenities

- Changing rooms with lockers (bring your own lock)
- Gender-neutral restrooms
- Water fountain and refill station
- Small lounge area for breaks
- Free Wi-Fi (password available at front desk)

Parking and Transportation

- Limited parking available in the lot behind the building
- Bike racks located at the main entrance
- Public transportation: Bus routes 42 and 47 stop directly in front
- Nearest subway station: Central Square (0.5 miles)

Facility Rules

- Keep all areas clean and tidy
 - No street shoes in training areas
 - No food in training areas
 - Place all trash in appropriate receptacles
 - Report any facility issues to the front desk
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Emergency Procedures

Fire Emergency

1. If you hear the fire alarm, stop all activities immediately.
2. Follow your instructor's directions to the nearest exit.
3. Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
4. Proceed to the designated assembly area (north parking lot).
5. Do not re-enter the building until authorized by emergency personnel.

Medical Emergency

1. Alert the nearest instructor or staff member.
2. Do not move an injured person unless they are in immediate danger.
3. First aid will be administered by certified staff.
4. If necessary, emergency services will be called.
5. All injuries must be reported and documented.

Power Outage

1. Stop all activities immediately.
2. Stay where you are and wait for instructions.
3. Emergency lighting will activate automatically.
4. Instructors will guide students safely out of training areas if necessary.

Severe Weather

1. In case of severe weather warnings, classes may be cancelled.
2. If severe weather occurs during class, follow staff instructions to designated shelter areas.
3. Check our website and social media for closure announcements.

Evacuation Procedures

1. Know the location of all exits in the facility.
2. In case of evacuation, calmly proceed to the nearest exit.
3. Instructors will lead students to the designated assembly area.
4. Do not return to the building until authorized by emergency personnel.

Note: Refer to posted evacuation maps in each training area for the nearest exits. Emergency exit routes are marked with illuminated signs throughout the facility.

Student Code of Conduct

At EAC, we strive to maintain a positive, supportive, and respectful community. All students are expected to:

Respect for Others

1. Treat all students, instructors, and staff with respect and courtesy.
2. Use appropriate language and behavior at all times.

3. Respect others' personal space and boundaries.
4. Support and encourage fellow students.
5. Embrace diversity and practice inclusion.

Respect for the Facility

1. Keep all areas clean and tidy.
2. Treat equipment with care.
3. Report any damage or maintenance issues promptly.
4. Follow all posted rules and guidelines.

Class Etiquette

1. Arrive on time and prepared for class.
2. Listen attentively to instructions.
3. Take turns and share equipment fairly.
4. Ask questions when you don't understand.
5. Stay focused and engaged during class.

Prohibited Behaviors

1. Bullying, harassment, or discrimination of any kind
2. Physical or verbal aggression
3. Disruptive behavior that interferes with others' learning
4. Unauthorized use of equipment or facilities
5. Use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs on the premises
6. Theft or vandalism

Consequences

Violations of the code of conduct may result in: 1. Verbal warning 2. Written warning 3. Parent/guardian notification (for minors) 4. Temporary suspension from classes 5. Permanent dismissal without refund

Registration and Payment

Registration Process

1. Registration can be completed online or in person.
2. All new students must complete a registration form and waiver.
3. Registration is confirmed upon receipt of payment.
4. Classes fill on a first-come, first-served basis.

Payment Options

1. Session payment (most economical)
2. Monthly payment plan (additional fee applies)

3. Drop-in classes (subject to availability, higher rate)
4. Private lessons (scheduled directly with instructors)

Payment Methods

- Credit/debit card
- Check
- Cash (in person only)
- Electronic transfer

Refund Policy

- Full refund if cancellation is made 14+ days before session start
- 50% refund if cancellation is made 7-13 days before session start
- No refund for cancellations less than 7 days before session start
- Pro-rated refunds for medical reasons with doctor's note

Financial Assistance

- Scholarship applications are available at the front desk
- Work-study positions may be available for adult students
- Payment plans can be arranged on a case-by-case basis

Skill Progression

Skill Assessment

- New students will be assessed during their first class to determine appropriate level placement.
- Periodic skill assessments will be conducted to track progress.
- Advancement to higher levels requires instructor approval.

Progression Guidelines

- Mastery of fundamental skills is required before advancing to more complex techniques.
- Each discipline has a specific skill progression chart (available from instructors).
- Progress at your own pace – everyone's journey is different.

Training Recommendations

- Consistent attendance is key to skill development.
- Cross-training in complementary disciplines is encouraged.
- Supplementary conditioning exercises will be provided for home practice.
- Keep a training journal to track progress and set goals.

Private Lessons

- Available for accelerated learning or specific skill focus

- Can be scheduled directly with instructors
 - Recommended before attempting performance-level skills
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Performance Opportunities

Student Showcases

- Held twice yearly (winter and summer)
- Open to all students who have been enrolled for at least one full session
- Participation is optional but encouraged
- Additional rehearsal time may be required

Community Performances

- Opportunities to perform at local events and festivals
- By invitation based on skill level and readiness
- Represents EAC in the broader community

Performance Troupe

- Audition-based company for advanced students
- Regular performances throughout the year
- Additional training and rehearsal commitment required
- Separate fees and policies apply

Performance Preparation

- Costume guidelines provided for each performance
 - Technical and dress rehearsals are mandatory
 - Performance workshops offered throughout the year
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Community Guidelines

Communication

- Regular updates will be sent via email
- Follow us on social media for the latest news
- A community bulletin board is located in the lobby
- Direct questions to the front desk or appropriate staff member

Volunteer Opportunities

- Performance support (ushering, ticket sales, etc.)
- Facility maintenance days
- Special events and fundraisers

- Community outreach programs

Photo and Video Policy

- Photography and video recording during regular classes is prohibited without prior permission.
- EAC may photograph or record classes and performances for promotional purposes.
- Students who do not wish to be photographed should notify the office in writing.
- Official performance photos and videos will be made available for purchase.

Social Media Guidelines

- Tag @EasternAerialCircus when posting about your training
- Obtain permission before posting photos/videos of other students
- Represent our community positively online
- Follow our social media accounts for updates and inspiration

Inclusivity & Accessibility

EAC is committed to an inclusive environment. Accommodations are available for students with disabilities.

Regulatory Compliance

Eastern Acrobatics and Circus (EAC) complies with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations, including: - Boston Municipal Code Chapter 16 (Building Code) - Massachusetts State Fire Code 527 CMR - ADA Accessibility Guidelines - OSHA workplace safety standards

Our facility passed inspection on January 15, 2025 (Permit #BOS-2025-0127) and maintains a Public Assembly Permit (#PA-2025-0089) valid through December 31, 2025.

Substance Use Policy

EAC strictly prohibits the use of alcohol, recreational drugs, and misuse of prescription or over-the-counter medications on premises. Students or staff suspected of being under the influence will be immediately removed from activities. First violation results in a written warning; a second violation may result in suspension or termination. Staff are trained to recognize signs of impairment and report concerns to the Safety Coordinator.

Abuse and Harassment Policy

EAC maintains a zero-tolerance policy for abuse and harassment. All incidents should be reported immediately to the Program Manager or Safety Coordinator, who will document the incident and notify appropriate authorities as required by law. All staff are mandated reporters and receive annual training on recognizing and reporting abuse. For more information, refer to the complete Abuse and Harassment Prevention Policy (available in the

Facility Environment and Comfort

- **Temperature & Humidity:** Facility temperature is maintained between 68-75°F (20-24°C) with humidity between 40-60%. Classes may be rescheduled if temperature cannot be maintained above 65°F.
 - **Restrooms:** Cleaned twice daily, ADA-compliant, gender-neutral options and changing tables provided.
 - **Lighting:** Training areas meet or exceed recommended illumination levels. Emergency lighting is installed throughout the facility.
 - **Space Separation:** Training, performance, observation, and public areas are clearly marked and separated for safety.
 - **Security:** Main entrance requires check-in; visitors must sign in and wear badges. Security cameras monitor entrances and common areas.
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Risk Assessment and Safety Management

- **Risk Meetings:** Monthly risk assessment meetings are held to review incidents and hazards. Minutes are documented and action items assigned.
 - **Staff Training:** All staff receive safety orientation and quarterly refresher training. Safety documents are available in the staff portal and at the front desk.
 - **Qualified Personnel:**
 - Qualified Riggers: Jacob Skeffington (ETCP Certified Rigger), Sophia Williams (ETCP Certified Rigger)
 - Safety Inspections: Austin S. Lin (OSHA 30-Hour certified), Elena Rodriguez (OSHA 30-Hour certified)
 - Emergency Response Leaders: Michael Chen (First Aid/CPR Instructor), Tara Johnson (EMT-B)
 - **Certifications:** All instructors maintain current CPR and First Aid certification. At least one staff member with concussion management training is present during all classes.
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PPE, Secure Storage, and Incident Reporting

- **PPE:** Stations with gloves, CPR masks, and eye protection are located at the front desk, rigging room, and training areas. Staff are trained in PPE use.
 - **Secure Storage:** Cleaning supplies and hazardous materials are stored in locked, ventilated rooms with limited access.
 - **Incident Logs:** All accidents, injuries, and near-misses are logged in the Safety Database. Reports include date, individuals, description, actions taken, and follow-up. Quarterly analysis identifies trends and prevention strategies.
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Insurance and Documentation

EAC maintains current liability insurance. Proof of insurance and safety documentation are available for review upon request.

Commitment to Safety Standards

Our safety policies and procedures are designed to meet or exceed the standards set by the [American Youth Circus Organization \(AYCO\)](#) and the [American Circus Educators Association \(ACE\)](#).

Student Feedback

We value your feedback to continually improve our programs and services. - At the end of each session, students are encouraged to complete a feedback survey available online or at the front desk. - Feedback can also be provided directly to instructors or via email to info@easternacrobatics.com. - Your input helps us maintain high standards and address any concerns promptly.

Handbook Review, Distribution, and Accessibility

- This handbook has been reviewed by key personnel (Program Manager, Safety Coordinator, Rigging Lead) for accuracy and completeness.
 - It is distributed via email, the EAC website (www.easternacrobatics.com), and in-person at registration.
 - Instructors review key handbook sections (safety rules, emergency procedures) with students at the start of each session.
 - The handbook is available in accessible formats (PDF, print, digital) in line with ADA compliance.
 - Legal counsel has reviewed this handbook to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local laws, including OSHA, ADA, and Boston Municipal Code. Insurance policies meet or exceed industry standards.
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Appendix

Glossary of Circus Terms

- A comprehensive list of terminology used in classes

Recommended Resources

- Books, videos, and websites for further learning
- Local bodywork practitioners familiar with circus arts
- Nutrition resources for athletes

Equipment Care

- Guidelines for personal equipment maintenance
- Recommended grip aids for different apparatus
- Where to purchase personal equipment

Training Log Template

- Track your progress, goals, and achievements

Injury Prevention Exercises

- Warm-up and cool-down routines
- Conditioning exercises for circus arts
- Recovery techniques

This handbook is subject to change. Students will be notified of any policy updates via email and updated versions will be available on our website.

Last updated: May 4, 2025

Eastern Acrobatics and Circus (EAC) | 28 Eliot St, Natick, MA 01760

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