

PORTA TRAK OWNERS MANUAL

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Congratulations on your acquisition of a Tumbl Trak product! The Tumbl Trak Line of Equipment has been designed and developed with the gymnastics coach **and** athlete in mind.

I. PORTA TRAK WORKSTATION

1. FRAME ASSEMBLY:

- A. Start assembly from the "take-off" end. *The "take-off end is where the athletes dismount into a mat or pit.*
- B. Lay the 2 Porta Trak rails out side by side approximately 6 feet apart.
- C. Stand the legs upright so that the plastic cap end is on the floor. The legs will run perpendicular to the length of the Porta Trak (like railroad ties). Match up the number on the legs with the number inside the square host sections of the rail (See Fig 2 and 3)
- D. Connect the legs to the rails using the bolts provided and fasten tightly. It is easier to connect the legs to the rail if the rail is collapsed to its smallest length. (i.e. if you are assembling a 15' unit, fold the rails in half to connect the first 4 legs, then flip the rail and connect the last 4 legs.) (See Fig. 4 & 5 on page 3)
- E. Wheel placement: If you match up the numbered legs to the numbered host section of the rail you shouldn't have to worry about the wheel placement as the legs are already numbered in the correct configuration. In the event that the legs are not numbered please reference the drawing on page 4.



Fig. 1

2. SPRINGING THE BED:

- A. Decide which end of the bed will be used as the "take off" end. Start springing the bed on this end.
- B. Hook two springs on the first D-ring (the silver rings that are sewn along the edges of the bed). See the bottom of page 4 for details.
- C. Using the Spring Tool, attach one of the springs to the first hole on the frame. See instructions on using the Spring Tool below #3.
- D. The other spring will attach to the second frame hole.
- E. The third spring will attach to the second D-ring and hook to the third frame hole
ALWAYS ATTACH HOOKS DOWNWARDS!!!
- F. Repeat on the other side.
- G. Springing the bed will be much easier and quicker if you have another person hand springing the opposite side of the Porta Trak while you are using the Spring Tool to spring one side. When hand springing the opposite side of the Porta Trak, be sure to stay at least 4-5 springs ahead of the person using the Spring Tool. **It is necessary to skip the hole and D-ring where the hinge is located.** When the bed is attached properly, it should be smooth and tight. It will be necessary to skip a hole within the first 15-20 holes to keep the bed wrinkle free. If you are setting up the Porta Trak by yourself, hand spring 4-9 springs on one side then alternated to the other side and continue to use the Spring tool to spring the 2-7 springs before you alternate to the other side again. By continuing down the bed further on the hand sprung side, the amount of effort to hand spring will remain low.
- H. The last 2-3 springs will attach to the frame at an angle; this pulls the end of the bed tight.
- I. After all D-rings have springs attached to them, double spring the last d-rings on each side of the frame. The springs may be difficult to hook, but will provide extra support for the end of the bed.

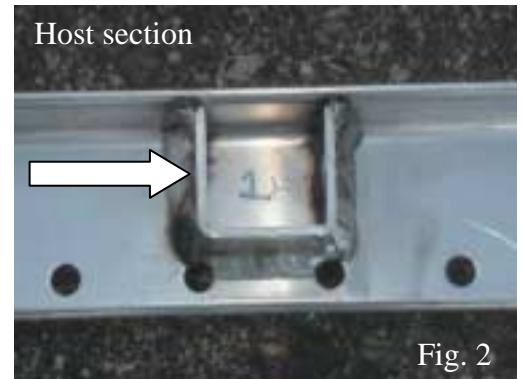


Fig. 2



For Safety and liability reasons, the polypropylene bed of your Porta Trak should be replaced every 5-6 years

Because of the manufacturer's variance in the length of Porta Trak beds, your bed may be slightly shorter or longer than the length of the Workstation frame.

3. USING THE SPRING TOOL:

This improved model has been re-designed for easier use. The bent end of the thicker rod fits in a frame hole one down from the hole into which you want to place the spring. Use the smaller hook to stretch the spring onto the tool handle. With your other hand, help place the spring into the desired hole.

****Watch your hands!!!** You may want to use gloves.



4. ATTACHING THE FRAME PADS

- A. Attach the pressure sensitive loop Velcro on the outer edge of the holes on the Porta Trak rails.
- B. Align the Velcro strips pre-sewn on the pads with the Velcro strips on the Porta Trak rails.
- C. Make sure the springs, frame and bed flaps are covered by the pads.

5. FOLDING THE WORKSTATION:

You will need to remove the pads on the frame *before* folding. *Folding the frame with the pads still attached may cause the hinge to break.*

6. TRANSPORTING THE WORKSTATION:

After the unit is folded, then lift onto its side with the wheels attached and slowly roll and then lower it down. To open, again use two or more people. The pads will need to be put back on when you set it back up.

Be very careful when folding and transporting any Porta Traks. Always use appropriate assistance.

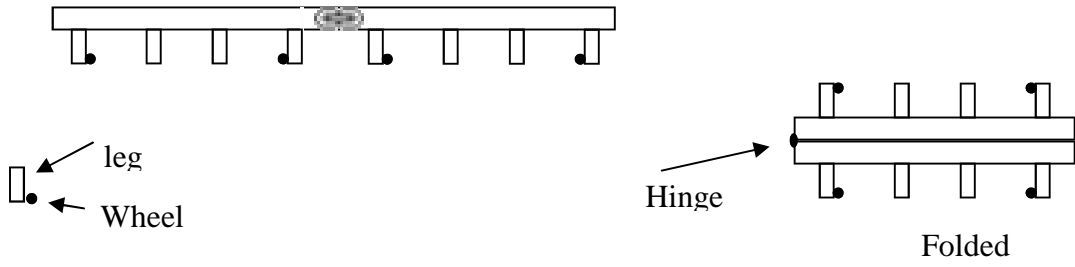


Fig. 4

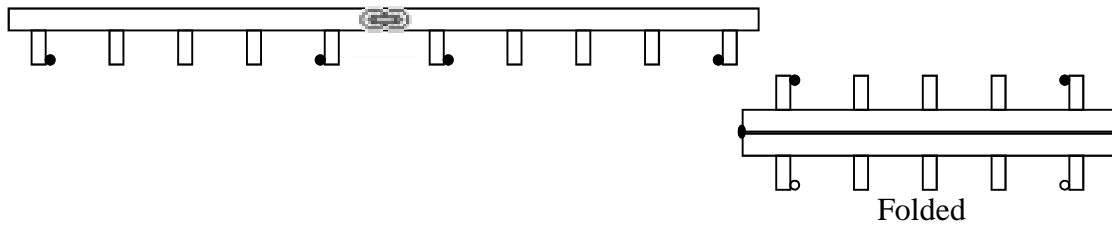


Fig. 5

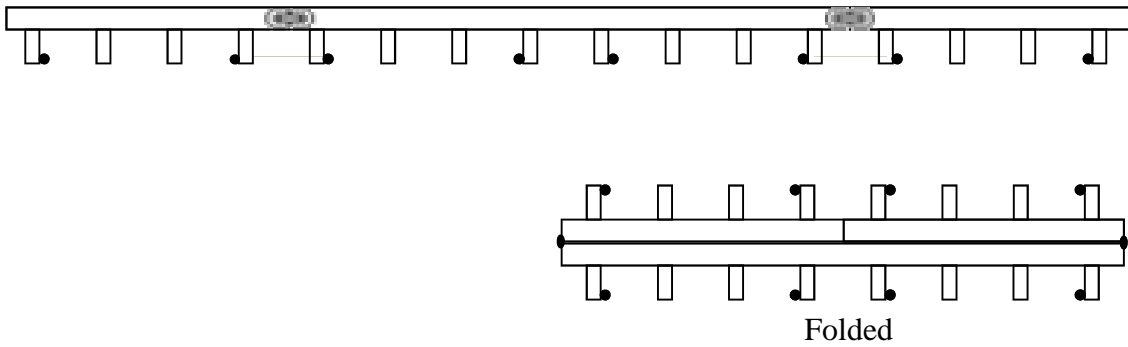
15' Porta Trak



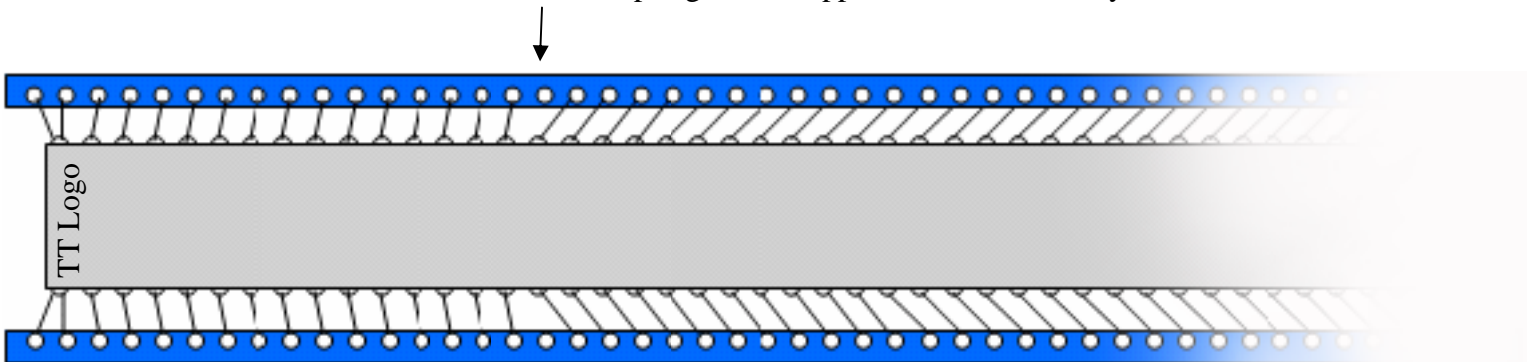
20' Porta Trak



30' Porta Trak



17th Spring Hole Skipped—Porta Trak Only



A. After Assembly Checklist

After you have successfully assembled your Porta Trak, check the following points:

- **Is the bed of the Porta Trak smooth?** If it is wrinkled, check your assembly instructions (written or video), and re-spring the appropriate springs to draw the bed smooth. Commonly, new owners will forget to skip a hole on the Porta Trak frame.
- Check to see that the Frame Pads are securely connected to the frame with Velcro, and that they cover the entire frame and springs.
- Check the landing surface at the end of your Porta Trak. If it is a Tumbl Trak landing mat, the end should have straps that fasten to the end of the frame. The end of the mat should be placed under the "take-off" end of the Porta Trak so that it rests against the last leg of the Porta Trak. If you are using other mats, check to see that they are of appropriate softness for landing; while not too soft to bottom out.

B. Maintenance Checks for the Porta Trak

Daily:

- * Check to see that the pads or mats are securely in place on the frame of the Porta Trak.
- * Check to see that the landing surface is set up for use in appropriate fashion.
- * (If applicable) Check to see that the runway and/or ramp is secure to the Porta Trak frame and to each other.
- * Tip: If you purchased a folding ramp with your Porta Trak, you may want to attach a strip of loop Velcro to the bed of the Porta Trak. The flap on the ramp will fasten to this Velcro strip, securing the ramp to the Porta Trak.

Weekly:

- * Check the bed of the Porta Trak once every week for wear. On some occasions the seam, near the edge where the D-rings are sewn, can show a stretch in the black polypropylene material. It is common to have a stretch of up to 1 inch.
- * If there is a greater stretch, or any of the strands of material have actually torn, discontinue use and contact VTL Inc., Tumbl Trak at 1-800-331-4362.

Monthly:

- * Check the welds on the Porta Trak frame.

C. Tumbling with Porta Trak

Remember that the Porta Trak has more "spring" than most tumbling surfaces. Your beginner to advanced athletes may need to start slowly when tumbling on the Porta Trak. There is the potential to over-power skills. Tumbl Trak suggests gymnasts start the skill standing and progress before going "all out". Make careful preparations to measure the approach to the take-off end of the Porta Trak. Gymnasts often dismount too close to the end of the bed. The red vinyl with the Tumbl Trak logo provides a visual cue to help gymnasts take-off.

For programs that plan to tumble off the Porta Trak into a loose foam pit, Tumbl Trak offers an end piece that fits under the "take-off" end of the Porta Trak bed. The Porta Trak end piece attaches to the frame and offers extra support under the "take-off" end of the bed.

D. Safety Suggestions for Use of the Porta Trak

1. Tumblers should be able to tumble in a straight line before using the Porta Trak.
2. The Porta Trak should be used under proper supervision only.
3. Explain to all new participants that the Porta Trak has more "spring" than most other tumbling surfaces, and that it should be approached with care. For example, it is very easy to over-rotate skills on the Porta Trak. Tumblers may barely be able to perform these skills on another surface. Over-rotating tumbling skills on or off of the Porta Trak can be risky and dangerous. A shorter and easier approach to a tumbling pass (rather than a hard run) will usually be more than sufficient on the Porta Trak.
4. Tumbling with 1.25" or 2" mats (such as panel mats or carpet-bonded foam) is an excellent way to slow down the tumblers and allow them to feel as if they are tumbling on a more traditional surface.
5. We suggest that the Porta Trak be set up with a mat that is 16-24 inches thick, a loose foam pit or a "resi"-pit at the "take-off" end. VTL can supply a 7'x14'x18" thick mat with a connecting device so that the mat is attached to the frame. The mat will fit under the colored Tumbler Trak Logo on the bed and up against the frame; so that tumblers who take off too near the end of the bed will have a mat to protect them. Although the Porta Trak can certainly be used as a landing surface for more difficult skills, it is more appropriate to take a progressive approach to the training of aerial skills. For example:
 - Learn a back Salto off the end of the Porta Trak into loose foam pit or soft, thick mat (a spotter may be used if necessary).
 - Then, the Salto can be performed off the Porta Trak onto a firmer mat without the aid of a spotter.
 - The next step may be placing a 12", 8", or 4" mat on the Porta Trak and landing the salto on this mat.
 - Finally, the skill may be landed on the Porta Trak without a mat on the bed.

Skipping steps in the progressions suggested above may be dangerous, because the participant may not be mentally or physically prepared to perform the skill safely. Neither the Porta Trak, spotters, or mats are any substitute for proper training. Coaches should never assume that any of these can take the place of proper training.

E. Mat Use on the Porta Trak

1. PANEL MATS ON THE PORTA TRAK:

Using mats in connection with the use of the Porta Trak enhances the potential for what can be taught and learned with Porta Trak. Often gymnasts will perform better with panel mats (or carpet-bonded foam) covering the entire surface of the Porta Trak. This makes the experience more like tumbling on a very springy tumbling platform. It also slows down the reaction of the Porta Trak bed and gives the gymnasts more time to make any adjustments. Using mats still allow the Porta Trak to offer more bounce than standard tumbling strips or platforms.

2. STACKED MATS ON THE PORTA TRAK:

You may be interested in tumbling up onto a pile of mats on the Porta Trak for training purposes. Think carefully about the appropriate height of the pile for the size and ability of the athlete. Consider using an inclined mat, in the middle of the mat pile. This will help raise the surface of the pile without using as many mats, and the incline can make the landing safer.

3. PILLOW/STING MATS ON THE PORTA TRAK:

Another use of mats on the Porta Trak, is to place smaller mats such as 4' x 6' x 8-12" mats (sometimes referred to as pillows, or sting mats) on the surface of the Porta Trak. Have the gymnasts attempt back handsprings or front skills, putting their hands on the mat and not their feet. This can be a very good test to see how well the gymnasts are stretching out their tumbling skills. Also, on their first attempts at a new series of skills, whether it be a round-off to a back handspring or a double layout to a whip-back, the gymnasts will feel much more secure landing on a mat that will slow down their bounce.

For Tumbling or bar skills, keep in mind that Porta Trak works well with or without matting. The matting only takes away a portion of the total bounce of Porta Trak. Even a 12" landing mat allows enough bounce to perform back handsprings and whip-backs.

II. PORTA TRAK ACCESSORIES

A. The Frame Bar

****Can be used on the Tumbl Trak, Porta Trak Workstation, Kid Trak and Mini Trak XL****

1. ATTACHING THE FRAME BAR TO THE PORTA TRAK

- A. The Frame Bar can be used anywhere along the frame of the Porta Trak.
- B. Decide where you will attach the Frame Bar.
- C. Remove the springs from the holes into which the Frame Bar will be placed. **Note:** Holes must be directly across from each other.
- D. Insert bolts of the Bar into the holes of the Porta Trak.
- E. Place steel knobs on the bolt ends underneath the Porta Trak rail and tighten securely.

2. MAINTENANCE CHECKS

Daily:

- * Check end fittings and make certain that they are tight daily.

Weekly:

- * Check bar for any cracks or imperfections.

3. TRAINING BAR USE

Tumbl Trak suggests that before beginning use of the Frame Bar, the gymnasts show mastery of handstands on the floor and floor bar.

BACK BOUNCES:

- Early training for gymnasts using the Training Bar, should include lying on their backs and performing small bounces. Keep the back a little rounded, with the hips in contact with the bed, and the arms as straight as possible. The feet stay pointed at the ceiling. A pad may be placed in between the hands of the gymnasts to protect their heads and faces. As more bounce is developed, the gymnasts may extend their arms and body to a handstand. This movement may be attempted with a spotter if necessary.
- Another part of early bar training is to develop control of a handstand and drop onto the bed of the Porta Trak (this is the beginning of the drop for a front giant). This may be practiced with a floor (pirouette) bar onto a soft mat. Then the Training Bar may be used with a wedge or other mat to land on. The gymnasts must learn to drop from a straight handstand, keeping the arms straight and the shoulders opened. As they fall they must pike their hips and land with their back flat on the mat or Porta Trak bed. After the handstand drop is perfected, with the feet pointing, then build up to extend the arms and hips to a handstand. For beginners, a small wedge mat with the low edge facing the bar will make it easier to bounce back up to a handstand.

FRONT BOUNCES:

- Bounces off the stomach should be learned with the same progressive approach as the back bounces. Start small and build up. Be very careful with these bounces, as incorrect action may cause back injury. After appropriate drills are perfected, start handstand to stomach and bounce.
- After the basic handstand, fall, and "bounce to handstand" is perfected, many other skills that move in and out of handstands, can be learned on the bar. These include:
 - All pirouette work off the back or stomach
 - Releases such as the Tkachev and Jaeger, and stalder work out of a straddle sit.
 - Gymnasts will also be able to get more comfortable with reverse gripped skills much quicker.

B. The Cross Support System

1. USE INSTRUCTIONS

- A. The Cross Supports are designed to support the Table Top and the Porta Table, making the Porta Trak useful for vaulting.
- B. To support a balance beam on the Porta Trak, use 2 sets of supports and adjust accordingly.
- C. To secure the Porta Table, place a Base Block on the Cross Supports with the Velcro flaps and then put the Porta Table on the top. You can also use the Table Top block instead of the Porta Table.

C. Tumbl Blocks and Ramps

Tumbl Blocks can be used as runways for the Porta Trak. It is important to use the appropriate height blocks. When the blocks are being used individually, the Velcro flaps on the bottom of the blocks should be velcroed to the block to keep them cleaner and not snag anything. The folding block also has a Velcro flap on the end of it so it won't slip sideways.