

## 8. GENERAL CONCEPTS OF JUDGING FIGURES

A Figure is a combination of basic body positions and transitions, performed in a manner and order as prescribed by the World Aquatics Handbook rule descriptions.

General concepts on Figures:

1. Figures are defined in terms of their component parts: body positions and transitions.
2. A transition is a continuous movement from one position to another. The completion of a transition should occur simultaneously with the achievement of a body position and desired height. Except where otherwise specified, water level remains constant during a transition.
3. Unless otherwise specified in the figure description, maximum height is always desirable. Height is evaluated based on the water level of body parts.
4. Unless otherwise specified in the figure description, figures are executed in a stationary position. Transitions which allow some movement will be marked with an arrow in the diagram.
5. Diagrams are a guide only. If there is discrepancy between a diagram and a written description, the English written version of the World Aquatics Handbook shall prevail.
6. During the execution of a figure, a pause may occur only in basic body positions which are printed in "**bold type**" and defined in Appendix I of the World Aquatics Handbook.
7. Basic movements are described, in Appendix I of the World Aquatics Handbook and are "*italicized*" when referred to in a figure description.
8. When "and" is used to connect two (2) actions, it means one follows the other; when "as" is used, it means both actions occur simultaneously.
9. When "rapid" or "rapidly" is used in the description, it shall apply specifically to the tempo of the transition in which it is included, and not to the entire figure.
10. Arm/hand positions and actions are optional.

## 9. GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING FIGURES

Unless otherwise specified in the description, Figures shall be executed high and controlled, in uniform motion, with each section clearly defined.

All judgements are made from the standpoint of perfection.

An athlete can obtain points from 0 – 10 using 1/10th points.

Perfect	10	Satisfactory	5.9-5.0
Near Perfect	9.9-9.5	Deficient	4.9-4.0
Excellent	9.4-9.0	Weak	3.9-3.0
Very good	8.9-8.0	Very weak	2.9-2.0
Good	7.9-7.0	Hardly recognizable	1.9-0.1
Competent	6.9-6.0	Completely failed	0

To be able to judge correctly a Judge must have in mind the design and control factors further described below.

## 9.1 DESIGN

That portion of the Figure award attributed to the evaluation of the degree of conformation to the positions and movements specified in the figure description.

As part of the design, Judges consider the accuracy of positions and transitions as specified in the figure description.

**Specific design factors** include accuracy of all body positions and transitions according to the description:

### 1. Accuracy of the lines, angles, and arches

Examples:

- A **Ballet Leg** position is perpendicular to the surface
- A **Fishtail** position has the foot of the extended leg at the surface

### 2. Accuracy of alignment of body parts

Examples:

- In **Vertical Positions**, alignment of ears, shoulder joints, hip joints and ankles
- In a **Split Position**, vertical alignment of head, shoulder, and hip joints; and horizontal alignment of hip and shoulder joints with the two (2) horizontal lines 'square' and parallel to one another.

### 3. Correctness of pikes and tucks

Examples:

- 90° angle in **Front Pike** position
- **Back Pike** position 45° angle or less, with legs and trunk extended
- **Tuck** positions as compact as possible

### 4. Accuracy of transitional movement

Examples:

- In *assuming a Front Pike Position*, the hips replace the head at the surface
- In *Arch to Back Layout Position* and *Walkouts*, head replaces hips at the surface
- In a *Combined Spin*, the *ascending* and *descending spins* must have the same number of revolutions
- In a *Thrust*, a vertical upward movement of the legs and hips is **rapidly** executed **as** the body unrolls
- In *Spins* there is simultaneous rotation and completion of the required spin

## 9.2 CONTROL

That portion of the figure award attributed to the evaluation of how well a performance achieves control factors. The control factor is the use of strength and coordination to demonstrate mastery of figure execution.

Control factors, which are further explained below, include extension, height, stability, clarity, uniform motion, unless otherwise specified in the Figure description.

Control in Figures is the ability to:

- Maintain high stable correct positions
- Move the body smoothly, accurately, and effortlessly through the required transitions
- Remain 'on-the-spot' unless otherwise specified in the description
- Give an overall impression of ease of performance

**Specific control factors include:**

1. **Extension**

Extension of total body throughout the figure, unless otherwise specified.

2. **Sustained maximum height**

Sustained maximum height of body parts in relation to the water surface, unless otherwise specified in the figure description.

3. **Uniform motion**

Uniform motion means a constant speed of action throughout the figure, unless otherwise specified in the figure description.

There shall be constant speed of action through each transitional movement. Transitions are to be executed without any pauses or stops therein. This does not mean that every transition takes the same amount of time, as it depends on the range of movement required. For example: the time to achieve a Split Position from a Front Pike Position takes longer than the time to assume a Front Pike Position from a Front Layout Position because there is a larger range of movement required.

Judging emphasis is placed on controlled uniformity of performance speed, not slowness.

When the rule requires a tempo change during one or more parts of a Figure, the change(s) must conform to the tempo(s) specified.

When the rule states 'rapid' or uses 'rapidly' to describe an action or movement in the figure, it should be obviously visible that there is more speed within this action or movement.

4. **Stationary**

Figures are performed 'on-the-spot', with no travelling, except for movement specified in a figure description.

5. **Stability**

Equilibrium must be maintained and unaffected by change of position.

6. **Clarity**

There must be a clear definition between positions and directions, continuous course of action in the transitions.

Transitions proceed through the most direct and accurate course of action. When the transition is finished, there should be a slight pause - as a 'comma', not a 'period' - to define the position and completion of the transition before the next transition begins.

7. **Ease of performance - overall impression**

Appearance of total confidence and effortless, fluid execution without evidence of strain.

**9.3 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF JUDGING FIGURES**

1. Plumb line points of reference are used when evaluating vertical and horizontal alignments.
2. The head always follows the alignment of the spine.
3. When initiating a transition, the athlete never begins by reversing the specified direction of movement.
4. Unless otherwise specified by the figure description, all movements are executed to be equal in time and space, with simultaneous and concurrent action within transitions. All movements specified within a transition should begin from the specified starting position and be completed with the achievement of the specified final position and level.
5. Axis - a straight line around which the body rotates.
6. Longitudinal axis - the lengthwise center of the body.
7. Lateral axis - extending sideways from the body, either through a cross section (such as the hips), or outside the body.
8. During a specific figure movement, the use of the term horizontal or vertical axis specifies the relationship of the longitudinal axis to the surface of the water.
9. Height is evaluated based on the water level of body parts.

## **9.4 DEDUCTIONS GUIDELINES FOR FIGURES**

### **9.4.1 Directions for the use of deductions guidelines**

Deduction guidelines are meant to be a good companion for Judges and facilitate discussions to unify judging criteria.

Judges are not calculators and are not expected to memorize the list of deviations in Section 3.2.2 Design Guidelines for Figures below. The information is to be used as a tool in assisting the Judges finalizing their score

Athletes are not machines as well and may show a large variety and combinations of inaccuracies or deviations during the performance of figures.

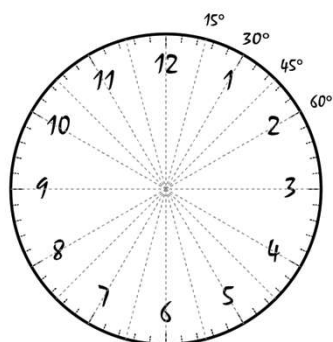
There are many aspects to consider in a Figure, even in the short ones, and the Judge has very little time to summarize all and complete the judging process by giving a mark. It would be great to review the Figure multiple times: once for extension, once for stability, once for design, etc., but this is not possible in competition, only during seminars or practice sessions for continuous learning.

### **9.4.2 Design deductions**

Design deductions are applied for transitions/positions being different from the description by a certain degree (see visible scale of angle deviation) or altering the movement/position concept (see deduction guidelines for figures in Youth and 12& under categories).

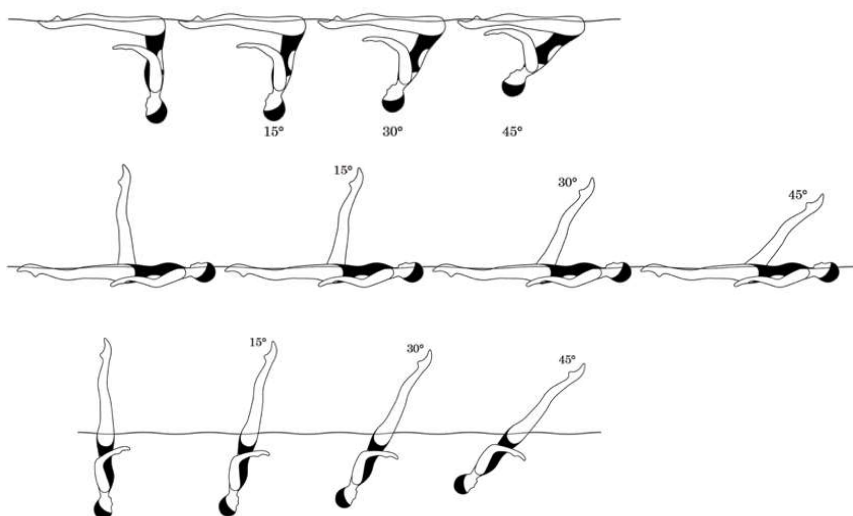
When there are inaccuracies, deductions are as follows:

<b>Small</b>	<b>0.2 points</b>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>0.5 points</b>
<b>Large</b>	<b>1 point</b>

**9.4.2.1 Visible scales of angle deviation**


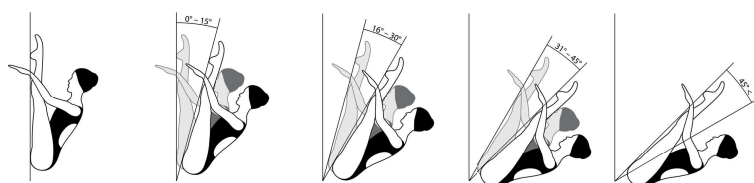
Apply to plumb line points of reference when evaluating vertical and horizontal alignments required

- Small Deviation**      **1° – 15° (0.2)**
- Medium Deviation**      **16° – 30° (0.5)**
- Large Deviation**      **31° or more (1.0)**



Deviation allowances for the *Thrust* action are unique and allow for the legs to be up to an additional 15° off the vertical line.

- Small Deviation**      **16° – 30° (0.2)**
- Medium Deviation**      **31° – 45° (0.5)**
- Large Deviation**      **more than 45° (1.0)**



### 9.4.3 Control deductions guidelines

Control factors give an **overall impression** of the mastery level of athletes, that is Judges observe the performance in control terms. The Judge evaluates all control factors to establish the execution range.

In all areas the Judge observes, as the performance goes, if there are small, medium/obvious, or large deviations from perfection, and how often those appear, but does not distract with any calculation.

The Expanded Marking Scale show both, the overall general impression and the specific design and control points, depicting how a performance can look in each scoring range. This does not mean that all areas adjust precisely.

Control factors include:

1. **Height**

Amount of body (body parts) above the water surface.

Sustained maximum height, according to height charts, defines perfect height.

Height should set the maximum score attainable; in other words: a figure that can be considered of perfect execution in terms of design, extension, stability, etc. performed at a height of 8, according to the height scale, should not score more than 8. Judges must consider height shown during all figure performance, not only in difficult parts but easier ones as well and have at the end of the figure an **average** height in mind (e.g., vertical positions, knight, fishtail, split, etc.). See the Guiding Height Scales for stable and dynamic height in Section 9.5 and for splits in Section 9.5.2.

2. **Extension**

“The amount, degree, or range to which something can be stretched to its fullest length. Use of muscular strength to enhance the stretch”.

Consider extension of body, legs, instep, neck.

3. **Stability**

“Solid, with equilibrium maintained and unaffected by change of position”. Position unaffected by movement. Attain position exactly without correction. Fluid without evidence of strain”.

4. **Timing / Uniform motion**

“Constant speed of action throughout the figure unless otherwise specified in the figure description. Transitions are to be executed without any pauses or stops herein”.

5. **Travel**

Figures are to be performed stationary unless otherwise specified. Travel or lack of required travel need to be taken in consideration. Travel occurs when hips move in the horizontal plane.

### Travel deduction guidelines

Maximum deduction for travel from the overall impression score is 0.5.

<b>Small deduction 0.1</b>	<b>Medium deduction 0.3</b>	<b>Large deduction 0.5</b>
Minimal travel or minimal lack of required travel	Obvious travel in one (1) transition, and or/ travel in several transitions	Obvious travel in two (2) or more transitions and or travel throughout

### Summary

As a summary, the process should be:

1. Establish a general impression score range based on the continuous control observations: ease of performance, confidence and effortless, fluidity in execution and height demonstrated (perfect, near perfect, excellent, very good, etc.).
2. From this score, deduct design deviations observed, if any, and travel, if any. It is very important not to miss large design errors.

For example, the general impression places the performance in the good category, but the Judge noted that extension was excellent and must be credited. The Judge must balance and work with the tenths and decide, in this case, maybe to place in mid to high seven (7). There was a medium design error in one transition and a minimal travel, so must deduct 0.5+0.1 (0.6). So, the final score should be low seven (7).

Another example: in a Barracuda Airborne Split, the Judge appreciates excellent height, full extension, on spot performance, a small break in fluidity prior to *Thrust*, and is in a low nine (9.3), but the athlete started to split before reaching first vertical position; a medium 0.5 deduction should be applied, and the final mark should be lowered to 8.8.

Remember that the use of deduction guidelines is to help the Judge arrive at the accurate score based on the performance.