Developing The Forward Roll

Good Technique

1. Rock in tucked shape
2. Safely take own weight on their hands, well supported by the arms. Can also slowly lower to the floor with control. Feet on the floor initially, then progress to raised feet.
3. Caterpillar Walks. To raise the hips high and gain strength in the arms and hands, and flexibility in the hamstrings.
4. Rock in tucked shape to the feet, helped by a partner, or perform the rock sitting on a slightly raised surface.
5. Rock in tucked shape to the feet and stand up without using the hands.
6. Safely bunny hop without collapsing; again practising high hips. Ensure previous stages are achieved before attempting this height of lift.
7. Begin to roll FORWARDS from semi-support on the hands with the head well tucked under. The head should not touch the floor but the back of the neck and shoulders. This must NOT be done until the child can safely hold their own weight on their hands (2,3 & 6), and lower safely to the floor, NOT fall. Children must understand that the lifting of the hips into a high position is important; rolls with head crunched in under low hips are more likely to cause discomfort or injury to the neck.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Children must begin on the floor and climb their legs up one at a time, not start on the raised surface and drop their hands and body weight to the floor.

Many are put off by the thought of teaching a forward roll, however, you can confidently and safely teach the progressions leading up to the full skill.

Below are various progressive stages of a forward roll. All can be used individually or as practice stations to keep children active and engaged within a group.

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