



PARENTS GUIDE TO

WRESTLING

COMPETITIONS



GRAPPLING HOUSE WRESTLING CLUB

AAU CARD TO PARTICIPATE

For all events in the offseason and regular season, participants must have an AAU Card (Amateur Athletic Union). The cost is \$16/year for wrestlers. They can be purchased online at www.aauwrestling.net -- when signing up, use club code W349WB, or search "Grappling House" -- once signed up, you'll receive an email with a copy of your card. Save that email. You'll need to input your child's membership number when you register for events.



COMPETITION GEAR



Wrestling shoes. SOME events will permit barefoot in case of emergency.



Singlet or two piece uniform (GHWC Fight Shorts & Club Dri-Fit T-Shirt). The majority of wrestlers wear singlets. We have these in stock at the facility for \$50. And the club t-shirts for \$25. Or, you can purchase them on our online [Gear Store here](#). You'll also find spirit wear, warm up clothing, team gear bags, and much more.



Headgear (optional until High School, but recommended). These protect wrestlers' ears from damage, and help prevent cauliflower ear.



Knee pads (optional, but recommended). Wrestling is hard on the knees over time. The earlier your wrestler gets comfortable wearing these, the better their knees will feel long term.



WHEN IS MY CHILD READY TO COMPETE?

This answer varies for every wrestler.

Typically, kids should have at least 2-3 months of practice experience before attending their first competition.

Younger kids (5-8 years olds) can pretty much start whenever you'd like, as the majority of their opponents will have similar experience levels.

Older newbies (9+) should adhere to the 2-3 months of practice guidelines. This is because a lot of wrestlers start at age 5/6/7. A new 9 year old 'could' be matched with wrestlers with significantly more experience.

Remember, this sport is a marathon and NOT a sprint. Everyone loses matches before they start getting the hang of it.



WHEN IS MY CHILD READY TO COMPETE? (CONT.)

- As coaches, we actually *want* the wrestlers to experience failure through competition. Our sports has a way of forcing participants to look in the mirror after losses. And, decide to work harder and continue growing. Or keep losing.
- While winning is the long term goal, it's not our goal at the beginning. We preach strong fundamentals and praise effort. Everyone develops at their own pace.
- As a parent, consider focusing on the effort they put forth into practice and matches. And keep things fun for your wrestler on competition weekends.
- Pro Tip: Schedule a fun family activity around tournaments. Win or lose, your child will have a memory of a family weekend to remember. And it'll help keep the FUN involved in wrestling, even if they're losing on the scoreboard. Eventually, the losses become a distant memory.. but, only if they stick with the sport long enough to become proficient. Intermixing family fun with wrestling tends to help longevity in the sport.



WHY IS COMPETITION IMPORTANT?

There are a lot of reasons why wrestling competition is paramount to the growth of youth wrestlers.

1) Drives home the life lessons involved in Wrestling - through competition, kids learn perseverance, discipline (maintaining their weight), accountability, and begin to develop a learner's mindset (which will help them in life WELL past their wrestling competition days).

2) Trial & Error - You don't know your strengths and weaknesses until you put it to the test. Wrestlers learn what they need to work on from these experiences.

3) Progression - As coaches, we work with tons of athletes in the practice room. Only through competition are we able to individualize areas of need for each wrestler by watching where they excel & lack in action.

WHY IS COMPETITION IMPORTANT? (CONT.)

4) Confidence & Longevity in Wrestling - When wrestlers get wins, they begin to develop confidence in themselves.

And, more importantly to kids, they win medals, trophies, and other awards, for their efforts. To adults, the awards are meaningless. But, to kids, they're a catalyst to setting and achieving goals.

5) Team Bonding - some wrestling tournaments are half day or full day affairs. In between matches, kids do a ton of playing with their teammates, and forming meaningful relationships with their peers and their coaches.

TYPES OF INDIVIDUAL WRESTLING EVENTS

There are 2 types of individual competitions in wrestling. We'll start with WAR Zone since that's what we'll be using in Fall of 2024 (shortly before this was written).

1) WAR Zone (used predominantly in the Offseason).

- Parents register their child with an estimated weight. The night before the event, you'll receive an email and a text message with your child's weigh-in time, and their competition window (always 2 hours from start to finish).



WARZONE (CONT).

- The order ascends based upon weight; lightest wrestlers compete at the start of the event from 9-11am, and the heaviest wrestlers compete at the end of the event from 2-4pm. Those weighing somewhere in the middle will be assigned times in between 9a and 2p.
- All wrestlers will weigh in at their designated time to prove (or disprove) the estimated weight the parent provided.
- Parents' role at these events is to request matches for their child within the [wrestlingtournaments.com App](#). It's extremely simple to do, but here's [a quick tutorial to keep handy in case you have any issues.](#)

IBT (INDIVIDUALLY BRACKETED TOURNAMENTS)

- Think March Madness brackets. Participants wrestle through to the Top 3 places in each bracket, and medals are awarded to each placewinner. Keep winning and reach the finals. Lose 1, and you can wrestle back aiming for 3rd. Lose a 2nd match, and you're eliminated from competition.
- In cases where 5 or less wrestlers are in your child's division, they'll wrestle a "Round Robin" bracket. This simply means that every participant will have a match against one another over multiple rounds. In these style brackets, there is no elimination. All wrestlers compete in every round, regardless of record for the day.
- Depending upon the size of your child's division and how it's structured, these events typically take 2-8 hours to complete your child's competition day.



IBT (INDIVIDUALLY BRACKETED TOURNAMENTS)

- Parents sign their child up for a division by AGE and WEIGHT. For example, the divisions may be 6 and under (6U), 40 lbs, 45 lbs, 50 lbs., etc. For a child to enter 6U 40 lbs. means that a child must be 6 years of age or younger, and must weigh 40.0 or less pounds to qualify. If they weigh 40.1 lbs, they'll be moved to the 45 pound weight class for wrestlers weighing 40.1 - 45.0 pounds.
- This format is typically used on a platform called "Trackwrestling"(.com). Parents' role at these events is to monitor the matchups on the website and ensure their child reports to the correct mat when it's their time to compete.
- These types of competitions generally begin during the regular season in November (extending through March). [Here's a "Parents Guide to Track Wrestling" video to help when the time comes.](#)





QUESTIONS?

If you have specific questions about the process that weren't answered in this document, or would like an opinion on if your child is ready for competitions, please contact Coach Jason Weslager at:

724-984-2413 (text is best) or
info@grapplinghouse.com