



# RAISING A WRESTLER

MINDSET, MEALS, AND MATCH DAYS

BY KATHERINE SHAI



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## INTRODUCTION

# Hi there 🙌

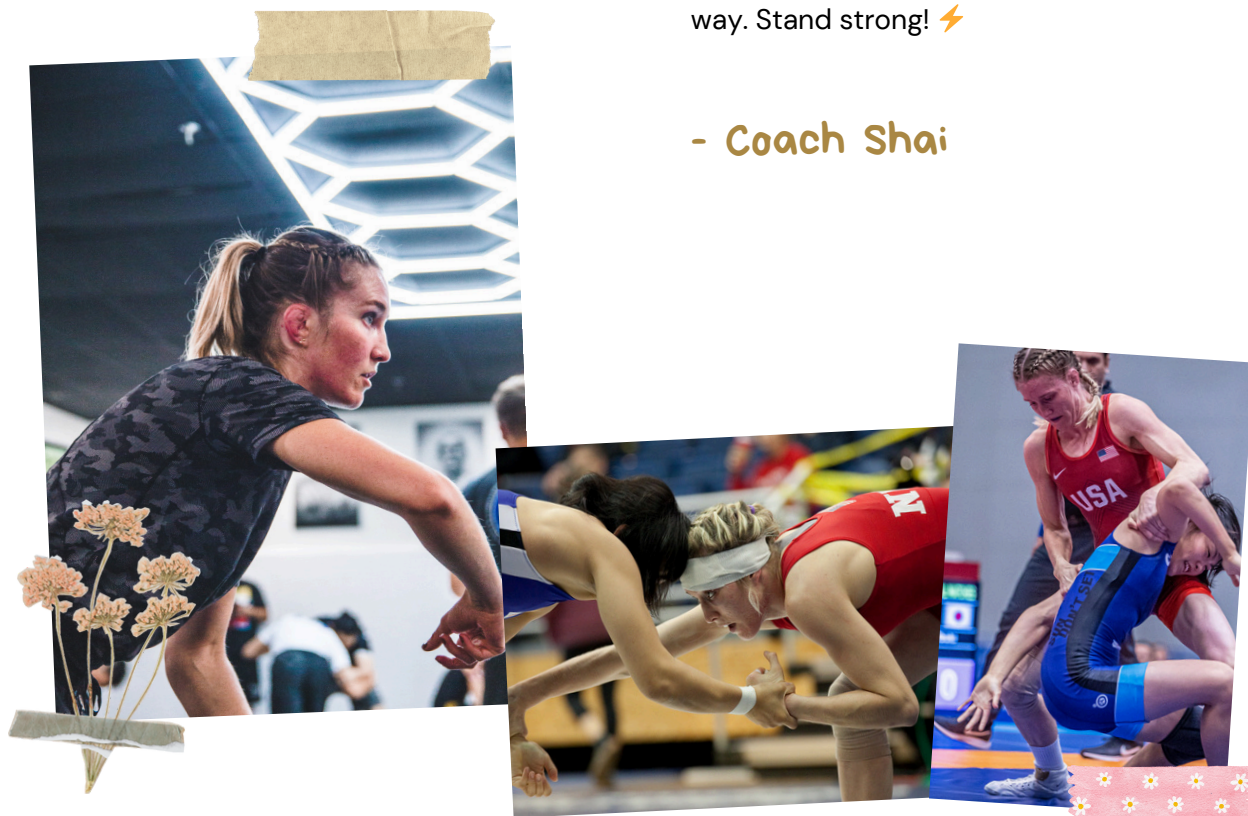
My name is Katherine Shai, and I am passionate about helping athletes, and their families, navigate the challenges of wrestling.

Through my experience working closely with parents and athletes as a coach, I saw how few resources existed to guide parents in supporting female wrestlers through the unique challenges of this sport.

As a 7x National Team Member, 2x Olympic Team Alternate, and World University Champion for Team USA, I've lived the highs and lows of wrestling. I know first hand that a girl's journey on the mat is unlike any other.

At it's heart, this sport is about building resilience, fueling potential, and helping her thrive. Your support can make all the difference, and my hope is that this guide gives you the tools to be her strongest ally every step of the way. Stand strong! ⚡

- Coach Shai





# WELCOME TO THE WRESTLING WORLD



**If you're reading this, you're already doing something right.**

Whether your daughter just laced up her first pair of wrestling shoes or she's chasing big goals on the mat, one thing is true: she needs you in her corner. This guide will help you show up with confidence, calm, and clarity.

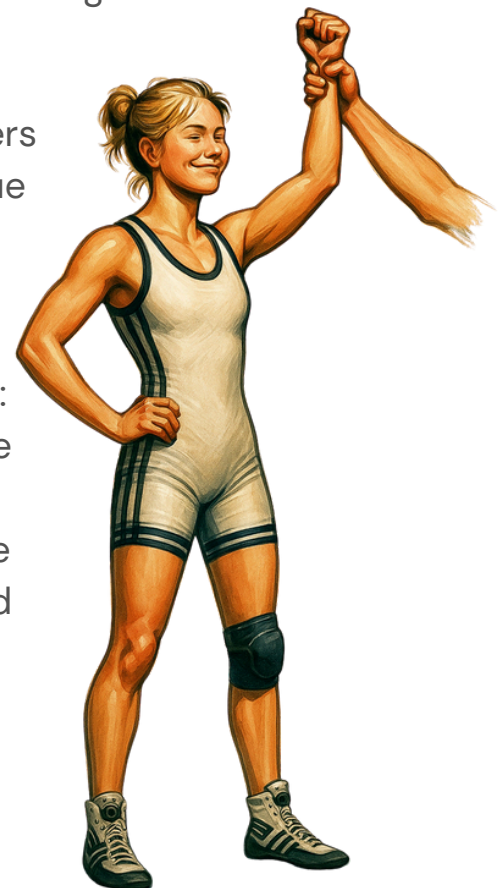
You don't need to know every rule. You don't need to be a nutrition expert. You don't need to coach from the sidelines.

What she needs most is what only you can give:

- Encouragement after a tough loss.
- Stability before a big weigh-in.
- A grounded presence when emotions are high.

Wrestling is intense, unfamiliar, and often male-dominated. But your presence matters more than you realize. This is especially true in a sport that teaches girls to be strong, disciplined, and self-assured.

This guide is built to walk you through it all: the mindset, the meals, the meltdowns, the big wins, and everything in between. You'll find tools, language, and strategies that are rooted in real-life wrestling experience and emotional intelligence.



# VALUES: CHOOSE WHAT MATTERS



Pick 3 values that reflect what you and your athlete want to focus on this season. These aren't just words, they're anchors for how you train, compete, and reflect.

| VALUE        | WHAT IT MEANS                                 | HOW TO ACT ON IT                            |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| GROWTH       | Progress over perfection                      | Praise effort, reflect often                |
| CONFIDENCE   | Trusting herself, even when it's hard         | Set standards and see it through            |
| JOY          | Finding lightness in the grind                | Choose fun events. Protect her spark        |
| GRIT         | Pushing through challenges with resilience.   | Highlight effort, even in loss              |
| BELONGING    | Feeling safe and seen                         | Build the team, relationships, community    |
| HEALTH       | Valuing her physical and mental well-being    | Prioritize sleep, food, and rest            |
| EFFORT       | Giving her best, regardless of result         | Point out hustle: "What did you try today?" |
| RESILIENCE   | Bouncing back after setbacks                  | Normalize discomfort                        |
| RESPECT      | Integrity with coaches, opponents, self       | Keep composure during tough moments         |
| INDEPENDENCE | Becoming more self-directed and responsible   | Let her lead warm-ups or packing            |
| CURIOSITY    | Wanting to learn, explore, and ask questions  | Try new styles or drills                    |
| COURAGE      | Showing up bravely, even when scared          | Praise new efforts, not just succeeding.    |
| TEAM         | Valuing connection, support, and shared goals | Build team rituals. Celebrate success.      |
| LEADERSHIP   | Uplifting others and setting a strong example | "Who looked up to you today, and why?"      |
| SELF-TRUST   | Believing in her decisions and instincts      | Let her adjust routines.                    |

# HOW GIRLS' WRESTLING IS UNIQUE



**“Guys have to battle to bond. Girls have to bond to battle.”**

For many girls, trust and belonging come before peak performance. This isn't weakness, it's a different path to strength that parents and coaches should respect.

## Why Connection Matters

- Connection fuels performance. When she's supported, she'll give all.
- In all-girls rooms, bonding often leads to focus.
- Silence often means she's processing, not shutting down.
- Emotion is not a red flag. Let her feel without rushing to “fix” them.
- Anchor her in meaning:
  - “What's one focus area you want to improve this season?”
  - “What do you love about wrestling?”

***Girls aren't harder to coach, they need connection before correction.***

## Navigating Social Pressures

### Comparison is Constant

- Girls often compare how they feel inside to how others look outside.
- Reframe: There's no one way to win—differences can be strengths.
- Focus on effort: “You were composed and focused. That matters.”

### Social Media is Loud

- People post wins, not the full journey.
- Encourage filtering online content and taking breaks before big events.

## Building Confidence

Confidence is a skill built through risk, reflection, and persistence.

- Highlight progress: “Remember when that move used to trip you up?”
- Celebrate courage: “That shot didn't land, but it was bold and smart.”
- Keep her identity rooted in who she is, not just what she does.

# PARENT MINDSET FRAMEWORK



## Your Role: Steady, Not Strategic

**Mindset shift:** *"I'm here to anchor, not analyze."*

Your calm support builds confidence without adding pressure.

## Motivations That Last

Her drive should come from within, not fear of letting you down: celebrate effort and growth, encourage breaks and other interests, show love. Support beyond wins helps her wrestle with freedom and longevity.

## Focus on Process, Not Outcome

Outcome praise can add pressure; process praise builds resilience, reflection, and confidence. Stay curious in your feedback.

## Train Smarter, Not Harder

Prevent burnout: limit back-to-back tournaments, mix in 1:1 sessions or clinics, prioritize recovery (sleep, nutrition, mindset, breathwork), and listen to pain, rather than push through it.

## The 7 Cs for Parent Support

- Common Sense: Shift her focus with gratitude.
- Conditions: Ease up before big events; adjust training to her needs.
- Communication: Reflect, don't correct.
- Control: Let her make small decisions.
- Competence: Celebrate growth and effort.
- Confidence: Build it through reflection.
- Caring: Be steady, warm, and supportive.

## Quick Mindset Check

Before speaking, ask: Am I asking or ordering? Praising effort or outcome? Listening more than talking?

## PROCESS VS. OUTCOME CHEAT-SHEET



Your words shape how your wrestler sees success. Outcome-focused praise can accidentally build pressure and fear of failure. Process-focused language teaches reflection, resilience, and confidence in effort. Use this chart to reframe your feedback and reinforce long-term growth.

| PRAISE EFFORT & LEARNING   |                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OUTCOME FOCUSED            | PROCESS FOCUSED                                                                                           |
| "Did you win?"             | "What did you try today?"                                                                                 |
| "Good job!"                | "You worked hard. What part are you most proud of?"                                                       |
| "You won that match!"      | "What did you learn from that match?"                                                                     |
| "You pin everyone!"        | "Strong finish. How did you set up your pin this time?"                                                   |
| NORMALIZE SETBACKS         |                                                                                                           |
| "Don't mess up next time." | "What's one small tweak you'd like to try next time?"                                                     |
| Criticism after a loss     | "Let's figure out what this match taught us."                                                             |
| CHAMPION HER AUTONOMY      |                                                                                                           |
| Making all the decisions   | "Do you want me to stick around before your match?" or<br>"Which coach do you need in your corner today?" |
| Ignoring her feedback      | "Sounds like your legs felt heavy, that's okay, we'll adjust."                                            |



# RAISING A RESILIENT WRESTLER



## Recognizing Burnout Early

Burnout isn't just from hard work, it comes from doing too much, too often, without enough rest or joy. It's not weakness; it's a signal asking for care, not correction. A bad day isn't always burnout, but if her spark is fading, it's worth pausing. Sometimes it's loud with frustration; often it's quiet — a shift from lighting up at competition to saying, "I don't care."

## Warning Signs

- Sounds Like: "I'm just tired, it's whatever." / "I don't even care if I win." / "I don't want to go to practice, but I don't know why." / "I feel like I'm always behind."

## Prevent Burnout Before it Starts

- Balance over volume. Schedule breaks, mix in joy and variety, and adjust when emotional or physical signals appear.

## How to Talk About It

- Lead with curiosity, not pressure:
- "You've been pushing hard. How's your energy?"
- "Is any part of wrestling still fun, or does it feel like a job?"
- Remind her: Rest doesn't make her soft, it makes her smart.

## Support Not Solutions

- Offer guilt-free time off, reconnect her with play in or out of wrestling, and frame recovery as growth and a reset — not lost progress.

# RAISING A RESILIENT WRESTLER



## Red Flags in Coaching

A good coach challenges her, not controls her. They prioritize development over win records, communicate with both athletes and parents, support rest and mental wellness, and see her as more than a wrestler. Don't be afraid to ask about their philosophy or observe how they talk to the team.

Even well-meaning coaches can miss the mark, and unhealthy patterns can erode trust, confidence, and safety.

### Red Flags

- Shaming or Yelling: Feedback feels like scolding, not teaching.
- Body Shaming: Stressful comments about size, or appearance.
- Favoritism / Exclusion: Certain athletes always in spotlight or ignored.
- Disregard for Injury: "Walk it off" responses to legitimate concerns.
- Emotional Manipulation: Pitting teammates against each other.
- Overstepping Boundaries: Excessive contact, ignoring parent input.

### When to Step In

If she's dreading practice, feeling unsafe, silencing herself, or more anxious than motivated, it's time to check in. Listen without judgment, then:

- Speak privately: Address concerns calmly, using "I" statements.
- Example: "I've noticed my daughter feeling anxious about weight talks. Can we discuss how that's being handled?"
- If behavior continues, involve an athletic director, club leader, or trusted advocate. A strong coach builds trust, not fear.

### What Makes a Great Coach

Prioritizes athlete development over win records. Communicates clearly with both parents and athletes. Supports rest, recovery, and mental wellness. Sees her as more than a wrestler. Don't be afraid to ask about their philosophy or observe how they talk to the team.

# RAISING A RESILIENT WRESTLER



## How to Talk About Quitting, Breaks, or Pivoting

Wrestling asks a lot of your daughter—physically, mentally, emotionally. So when she says, “I don’t know if I want to do this anymore,” it can hit hard.

You might feel panic, sadness, even frustration. Her questioning doesn’t mean she’s weak or you’ve done something wrong. It means she’s growing.

## Start with Curiosity, Not Control

Her doubts are a doorway, not a dead end. Meet them with openness.

- Try: “If we paused wrestling, what would you hope to feel more of?”
- Avoid: “You’ve worked too hard to quit now.” or “You’ll regret it later.”

These shut down conversation and amplify shame.

## Normalize Breaks Without Guilt

A break doesn’t mean the end. It’s time to recover, reassess, reconnect.

**Let her know:**

- “Taking a step back doesn’t erase your progress.”
- “You can pause, and still be proud of all you’ve done.”
- “We can create a plan that lets you rest without pressure.”

## Redefine Success

Maybe she’s outgrown the goal she once had. Maybe her values are shifting. That’s not failure, it’s growth.

- “Wrestling helped you grow your grit. That’s yours forever.”
- “You get to evolve, your path doesn’t have to look like anyone else’s.”

## When to Nudge, When to Let Go

She may need a push, or space to pivot. Ask:

- “Do you want help making a plan or time to process?”
- “If you stayed in, how would it look?”

# FOOD IS FUEL, NOT THE ENEMY



In wrestling, weight is a number, but fuel is power for effective training. One of the most lasting lessons your daughter can take from this sport is how to properly eat, recover, and hydrate. Wrestlers must be strong for injury prevention, not depleted, down in weight, believing this will lead to wins.

## Fuel vs. Restriction

- Fueling looks like eating consistently, hydrating early, and choosing foods that help her compete, not crash. You'll hear: "That snack helped my energy today."

## Smart, Safe Weight Management

- Weight management done well teaches body awareness and discipline. Done poorly, it leads to burnout and disordered habits.
- Fuel-first: Food is energy and brainpower, not something to fear.
- Performance-centered: The goal is to wrestle well, not weigh less.
- Slow & intentional: Small, steady habits, not drastic cuts.
- Collaborative: She should feel in control, not micromanaged.
- Wrestling doesn't require a perfect body. It requires a resilient one.

## Hydration that Helps (Not Hurts)

Improper hydration is one of the fastest ways to drain strength and focus.

- Daily goal:  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz per pound of bodyweight (120 lb → 60 oz)
- Add electrolytes: pinch of salt or a tablet daily
- Coconut water: great between matches

### Match-Day Timing:

- 2 hrs before: 12–16 oz plain water
- 20 min before: 4–6 oz sports drink
- Between bouts: sip, don't chug
- Skip the plastic suits. They don't build grit, they break down her body.

# MATCH-DAY SNACKING



**Snack Formula:** Carb-forward + small protein + low fiber + portable

**Meal:** ½ fruits & veggies • ¼ lean protein • ¼ carbs (rice, oats, potatoes)

**Avoid:** New foods, high-fat/fiber meals, sugary or spicy snacks

## Pre-Match Snacks (30–60 min Before)

- ☐ Banana + 1 Tbsp. peanut/almond butter
- ☐ Plain rice cake + honey drizzle
- ☐ Applesauce pouch (½ cup)
- ☐ 4–6 oz diluted sports drink

## Between Matches (Quick-Bite Boosts)

- ☐ Pretzels or Goldfish crackers
- ☐ Mini granola bar (low-fiber)
- ☐ Dried fruit (mango, raisins)
- ☐ Cheese stick or yogurt tube
- ☐ Electrolyte water or coconut water

## Post-Match Recovery

- ☐ Chocolate milk (8–12 oz)
- ☐ Smoothie pouch (fruit + protein)
- ☐ Turkey + cheese roll-up (tortilla)
- ☐ Greek yogurt + berries
- ☐ Small protein bar (20g carbs : 10g protein)

## Car Snacks

- ☐ Fruit leather strips
- ☐ Trail mix (nuts, seeds, dried fruit)
- ☐ Rice crackers or mini rice cakes
- ☐ Nut butter squeeze pack + apple slices
- ☐ Whole-wheat crackers + single-serve hummus

## MONTHLY CYCLE & PERFORMANCE



Hormones shift across a roughly 28-day cycle, influencing energy, strength, recovery, weight, and mood. When parents and coaches align training, nutrition, and support to match each phase, it helps her stay confident, resilient, and primed to perform.

| PHASE              | DAYS  | WHAT TO EXPECT                        | WHAT TO ADJUST                                                  |
|--------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| MENSTRUAL          | 1–5   | Low energy, cramps, water retention   | Prioritize recovery, hydrate with electrolytes, iron-rich foods |
| FOLLICULAR (EARLY) | 6–10  | Rising energy, strong recovery        | Push intensity, fuel with clean carbs + lean protein            |
| OVULATION          | 11–14 | Peak strength, speed, confidence      | Sharpen skills, trust your power, stay consistent               |
| LUTEAL             | 15–28 | Fatigue, cravings, mood swings, bloat | Focus on steady meals, potassium foods, and gentle recovery     |

**Tip:** If the scale jumps 2–5 lbs in the luteal phase, don't panic, it's normal water weight. Focus on consistency, not correction. Use the **Female Wrestler's Guide to Weight Mastery** to learn weight management in detail, only on LuchaFit.com.



# GAME PLAN FOR BIG DREAMS



## Stage 1: Foundation (Ages ~10–14)

Mindset: Build love for wrestling, curiosity, and work ethic.

Training: 2–4 practices/week, multi-sport balance.

- Work with local elite coaches when possible (clinics, camps).
- Begin wrestling journal and film study on self and elite wrestlers.
- Introduce recovery basics: sleep, hydration, light strength work.

## Stage 2: Development Years (Ages ~13–16)

Mindset: Intentional training with age-appropriate structure.

Training: 4–6 practices/week + structured S&C.

- Attend national-level events for experience, not just medals.
- Expand “team” — 1:1 coach, strength, mindset, nutrition guidance.
- Deepen film study: break down scoring sequences, setups, defense.
- Use journaling to set short-term goals, track training, and reflections.
- Seek opportunities to train with top athletes/coaches.

## Stage 3: College Prep (Ages ~15–18)

Mindset: Elite athlete approach — purposeful and consistent

Training: Year-round cycles with planned breaks

- Build plan with performance team: top national & international events
- Study trends in elite wrestling, watch top women’s matches weekly.
- Track performance data (win/loss by move, scoring tendencies).
- Begin networking with college coaches and national team staff.

## Stage 4: Post-HS / Elite Track

Mindset: Full commitment to the Olympic path.

Training: 8–12 sessions/week, consistent 1:1 with performance team.

- Live at or near an elite training center.
- Fully integrate nutrition, recovery, mental skills into daily life.
- Regularly analyze film with coaches for micro-adjustments.
- Compete globally; adapt plans based on international feedback.

# INJURY, RECOVERY, AND REST



Every wrestler will feel discomfort, but knowing the difference between pain and injury keeps her safe and in the sport long-term. Teach body awareness early—sharp, stabbing, or persistent pain isn’t “normal.” Ask, “Does it change with movement or stay the same?”

## Red Flags It’s More Than Soreness

- Limping, swelling, or favoring one side
- Pain that gets worse instead of better with rest
- Numbness, tingling, or reduced strength

## Rest Is Not a Weakness

Ignoring pain isn’t bravery, it’s a shortcut to burnout or injury. Reframe rest as purposeful training: rehab exercises, light movement, nutrition, sleep, visualization, or breath work. Every step, regaining range of motion, training smarter, rebuilding confidence is progress worth celebrating.

## Anchor Her in the Big Picture

Injury can feel like a full stop. Remind her: “This is a pause, not the end.” Her worth isn’t tied to rankings or showing up “tough.” Stay calm, get to the right professionals and create a plan.

## Invisible injuries

Mental fatigue, hormonal changes, and emotional burnout can sideline her as much as a sprain. Puberty and cycles affect energy, mood, and focus. Track patterns, listen without judgment, and adapt. If she’s crying more, dreading practice, or losing joy, that’s a signal. Ask: “Do you want support or a break?” Validate the unseen: “It’s okay to need rest, even if nothing’s broken.” Listening to her body is a skill she’s improving.

## ANSWERS FOR TOUGH SITUATIONS



### **My kid doesn't have a corner coach what do I do?**

Network at weigh-ins or warm-ups and find a willing coach. Ask for calm, strategic guidance, not move-by-move calls. Their job is to keep her composed, patient, and focused, not wrestle the match for her.

### **She's crying after a tough loss what should I say?**

Keep it short and supportive:

"I love you." ; "I saw how hard you fought."

Don't fix or rush the moment. Let her feel it. Talk later when she's ready.

### **She's upset about a ref call.**

Validate: "Yeah, that looked tough." Then shift: "Still proud of how you wrestled through it. We can clarify that call with a coach and lean from it."

### **She didn't make weight.**

Stay steady: "We'll figure this out together." No pressure or shame, just model calm regrouping and ask the coach what's next.

### **She doesn't want to eat or drink after a match.**

Offer small options like chocolate milk, applesauce, or electrolytes. Say: "Let's try a little now, you can stop if it doesn't feel right."

### **She's nervous and doesn't want to warm up.**

Normalize it: "Nerves mean you are ready for battle." Invite a small action: "Want to jog with me for 1 min?"

### **She wants to leave early after a tough day.**

Ask: "Would leaving feel better or worse?" If she's still in, check with the coach on their policy. We recommend always staying and supporting teammates. This shows real strength and ability to build comraderie.

## ANSWERS FOR TOUGH SITUATIONS



### **I disagree with the coach, what should I do?**

Skip mid-match debates. Note concerns and talk privately after. Stay collaborative and respectful; she'll learn how to advocate without drama.

"Can we talk about today's match? I'd like to understand your approach and share what I saw."

### **How do I manage younger siblings at tournaments?**

Pack a "sibling survival bag" (books, headphones, activities, snacks). Set expectations: "We're here for your sister. I'll check in between matches." Tag-team with another parent if possible.

### **She's not bonding with teammates, what do I say?**

Listen first: "That sounds hard. Do you want to vent or get advice?"

Then, reinforce values: "You train because you love wrestling. Be patient, you don't have to connect with everyone on the team.."

### **What should we focus on after the season ends?**

If she has next-year goals: Stay active—train or try freestyle for college-style experience. Ask, "What's one thing you need to do to be ready?" Respect breaks, but consider an offseason lifting plan and 2x/week mat time to keep skills sharp.

### **When should I not give advice or talk strategy?**

**Skip advise right after matches.**

- Avoid discussing strategy, weight, or nutrition in front of teammates, mid-emotion, or while she's still breathing hard. Let her coach guide.

**Use a reset phrase:**

- "Let's breathe. We can talk later if you want."
- Giving space builds trust, and keeps communication open.

# MATCH-DAY CHECKLIST



## Gear & Essentials

### ATHLETE BAG:

- ☐ Wrestling Gear – Singlet, headgear, wrestling shoes, warmups
- ☐ Medical – Athletic tape, scissors, bandages, mouthguard
- ☐ Comfort – Hoodie, sweatpants, sandals or slides
- ☐ Hydration – Water bottle, electrolyte packets or sports drink
- ☐ Fuel – Quick snacks (bananas, bars, raisins) for between matches
- ☐ Recovery – Protein bar, chocolate milk, or other refuel options
- ☐ Extras – Plastic bag for dirty clothes, hair ties, spare singlet if possible

### PARENT & TEAM GEAR:

- ☐ Chair or blanket, notebook + pen, phone charger
- ☐ Cash/cards, first-aid kit (band-aids, athletic tape, pain gel)

## Logistics & Info

- ☐ Weigh-in time, location, and arrival target (60–90 mins early)
- ☐ Bracket link saved or screenshotted
- ☐ Venue address, parking, and gate info
- ☐ Emergency contacts: coach's number + medical station

## Arrival & Warm-Up

- ☐ Check in: weigh-in + sign-in
- ☐ Find a team spot in the bleachers, unpack, and change into warmups
- ☐ Warm up: jog 2–3 min, dynamic stretches, light drilling with a partner
- ☐ Mental prep: breathing (4 in / 6 out), review of go-to move or focus area

## Match-Time Checklist

- ☐ Keep water and quick snacks within reach between matches
- ☐ Use phone only to track brackets or mat assignments
- ☐ Cheer her name and keep it positive
- ☐ Watch body language and offer calm support if needed

## WRESTLING STYLE: FOLKSTYLE

### Used In

Elementary, middle school, high school, and men's college wrestling

### Objective

Control your opponent, especially on the mat.

Folkstyle rewards time spent in dominant positions and solid defense.

### Primary Scoring Opportunities

- Takedown (3 pts): Bring your opponent to the mat and gain control
- Escape (1 pt): Break free from bottom; opponent no longer has control
- Reversal (2 pts): Switch from bottom to top control
- Near-Fall (2–4 pts): Hold opponent's back near mat without pinning
- Penalty Points (1–2 pts): Illegal holds, stalling, or misconducts

### How to Win

- Pin (Fall): Hold both of your opponent's shoulders on the mat
- Points: Score more than your opponent by the end of 3 periods
- Tech Fall: Lead by 15+ points = automatic win
- Major Decision: Win by 8–14 pts
- Decision: Win by 1–7 pts

### What You'll See as a Parent

Starts standing, transitions to top/bottom positions. Hand-fighting, setups for takedowns. Three periods, usually 1–2 min each.

### High School vs. College

- High school: three 2-min periods.
- College: 3-min first period, then two 2-min periods.
- College adds 1-pt riding time bonus for 1+ min of top control.



## WRESTLING STYLE: **FREESTYLE**

### Used In

National and international events, including Worlds and Olympics. Girls wrestle freestyle at many girls-only events; it's the main style for U.S. college women.

### Objective

Expose opponent's back to the mat with takedowns, turns, and throws. Rewards quick scoring, big moves, and explosive action.

### Primary Scoring Opportunities

- Takedown (2): Bring opponent down, gain control
- Exposure (2–5): Roll/turn to show back (45° angle)
- Feet to Back (4): Standing to back in one move
- High-Amplitude Throw (5): Lift and throw into danger position
- Step-Out (1): Force opponent out of bounds standing
- Penalty (1–2): Illegal moves, stalling, fleeing

### How to Win

- Pin: Shoulders on mat = instant win
- Points: Lead after 2 periods
- Tech Fall: Lead by 10+ pts
- Decision: Win by <10 pts

### What You'll See as a Parent

- Matches typically stay standing longer than folkstyle. Quick bursts of scoring; matches can end fast. Two 3-min periods (adults) or two 2-min (youth).





## WRESTLING STYLE: GRECO-ROMAN

### Used In

National and international competitions, including the Olympics and World Championships. Greco is typically only wrestled by boys and men. There are currently only a few competition opportunities for girls, and is not used in men's or women's college wrestling.

### Objective

Upper-body throws and turns to expose the opponent's back. No attacks below the waist—no leg grabs, trips, or sweeps.

### Primary Scoring Opportunities

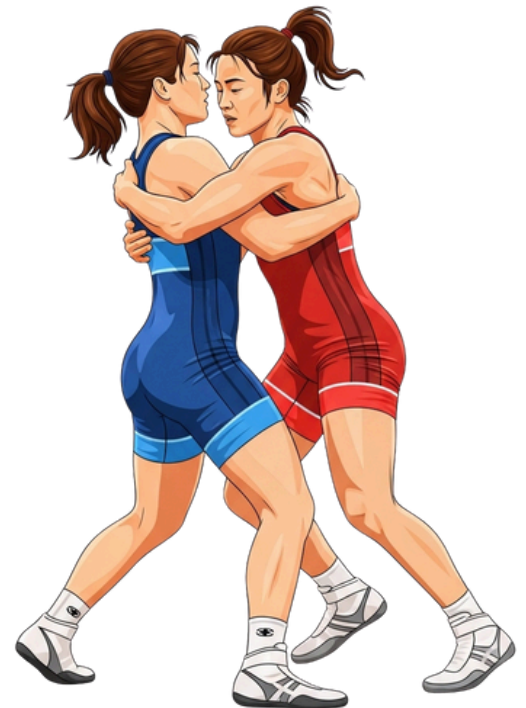
- Takedown (2 pts): Bring opponent to mat with control
- Feet to Back (4 pts): Throw/lift directly to back
- High Amplitude Throw (5 pts): Lift and arc opponent into danger position
- Exposure (2 pts): Turn/roll to expose back
- Step-Out (1 pt): Force out of bounds standing
- Penalties: Illegal moves, stalling, fleeing

### How to Win

- Pin: Both shoulders on mat
- Tech Fall: Lead by 8+ points
- Points: Outscore by end of 2 periods

### What You'll See as a Parent

- All upper-body, no leg attacks
- Big throws, body locks, frequent standing restarts
- Two 3-min periods



# TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

## Weigh-Ins

Held early the morning of competition. Your wrestler must “make weight” to compete in her division. She must weigh exactly her weight class or anything below.

## Brackets & Pools

- Double-Elimination Bracket (Most Common):
  - Wrestlers keep competing until they lose twice. A first loss sends them into a “wrestle-back” bracket to fight for 3rd or 5th place.
- Single-Elimination (Less Common):
  - One loss and you're out. Occasionally used in small brackets.
- Pool Format (Round-Robin):
  - Everyone wrestles everyone. Top wrestlers advance to finals.

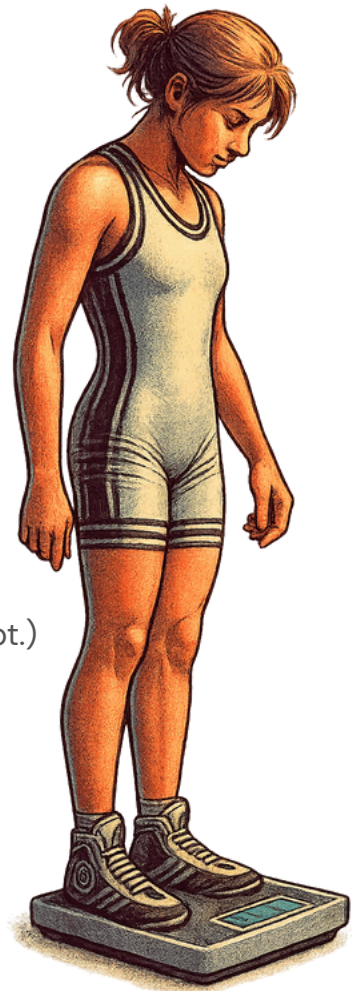
## Finals & Consolation

- Championship matches decide 1st and 2nd.
- Consolation rounds determine 3rd, 5th, etc.

## Team Scoring (Folkstyle Only)

**Every match result contributes team points:**

- Match Points: Decision (3 pts); Major (4 pts); Tech Fall (5 pts); Pin/Forfeit/DQ (6 pts).
- Advancement: Win in championship bracket (2 pts); consolation (1 pt.)
- Placement Bonus Pts: At the end, if a wrestler places (e.g., 1st–8th), their team gets bonus points based on placement.
- Bonus Points: Major (+1 pt); Tech Fall w/ back pts (+1.5 pts); Tech Fall no back pts (+1 pt); Pin/Forfeit/DQ (+2 pts).



# COMMON WRESTLING TERMS

| TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE            |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TERM                            | MEANING & CONTEXT                                                                                                                   |
| BYE                             | Automatic advancement due to an odd number of wrestlers, no match this round.                                                       |
| CONSOLATIONS<br>ROUND "CONSIES" | Bracket for wrestlers who lost once and are still competing for 3rd, 5th, or 7th place.                                             |
| WRESTLE-BACK /<br>REPECHAGE     | Opportunity to re-enter the bracket to compete for bronze after losing to a finalist.                                               |
| BLOOD ROUND                     | Elimination round in the consolation bracket where the winner secures a top placement; the loser is eliminated just shy of placing. |
| SEED                            | Pre-tournament ranking used to separate top competitors in the bracket.                                                             |
| POOL                            | Round-robin format where each wrestler in a group competes against one another; top performers advance.                             |
| DUAL                            | Team vs. team format where each individual match contributes points toward the team score.                                          |

# COMMON WRESTLING TERMS

| SCORING ACTIONS            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TERM                       | MEANING & CONTEXT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| TAKEDOWN                   | <p>Bringing an opponent from the neutral (standing) position to the mat and establishing control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Folkstyle: 3 pts</li><li>• Freestyle/Greco: 2pts</li></ul>                                                                        |
| ESCAPE                     | <p>When the bottom wrestler gains a neutral position and escapes the opponent's control.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Folkstyle only: 1 pt</li></ul>                                                                                                             |
| REVERSAL                   | <p>Bottom wrestler gains control over the opponent from bottom position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Folkstyle: 2 pts</li><li>• Freestyle/Greco: 1 pt</li></ul>                                                                                                 |
| NEAR-FALL / EXPOSURE       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Folkstyle:</b> Holding opponent's back within 45° of the mat for 2–4 seconds (2 pts) or 5+ seconds (3 pts).</li><li>• <b>Freestyle/Greco:</b> Exposing the back earns 2–5 pts depending on control, height, and amplitude.</li></ul> |
| PIN (FALL)                 | <p>Both shoulders held in contact with the mat for a required duration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High School: ~2 seconds</li><li>• College: ~1 second</li><li>• Freestyle/Greco: Immediate</li></ul>                                                         |
| TECHNICAL FALL (TECH FALL) | <p>Match ends early when a wrestler leads by a set margin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Folkstyle: 15–point lead</li><li>• Freestyle: 10–point lead</li><li>• Greco: 8–point lead</li></ul>                                                                      |
| MAJOR DECISION             | <p>Winning by 8–14 points in folkstyle.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| DECISION                   | <p>Winning by 1–7 points in folkstyle.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| RIDE TIME                  | <p>College folkstyle only: 1 bonus point awarded for 1+ minute of total control time from the top position.</p>                                                                                                                                                                 |

# BRACKET CODES EXPLAINED

| FREESTYLE/GRECO BRACKET CODES |                                                                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TERM                          | MEANING & CONTEXT                                                         |
| VPO                           | Victory by Points (opponent scores 0).                                    |
| VPO1                          | Victory by Points (opponent scores $\geq 1$ ).                            |
| VSU                           | Technical Superiority (opponent scores 0). 10 in freestyle, 8 in Greco.   |
| VSU1                          | Technical Superiority (opponent scores $\geq 1$ ).                        |
| VFA                           | Victory by Fall.                                                          |
| VIN                           | Victory by Injury.                                                        |
| VCA                           | Victory by 3 Cautions. Opponent disqualified after three rule violations. |
| VFO                           | Victory by Forfeit. Opponent did not show up or forfeited.                |
| DSQ                           | Disqualified. Removed for rule violations or misconduct.                  |

# BINGO

HEARD THE  
CROWD GO  
“OHHH!”

SAW  
WRESTLERS  
HUG AFTER A  
MATCH

SHARED A  
SNACK WITH  
SOMEONE

HEARD THE  
CROWD GO  
“OHHH!”

HEARD  
SOMEONE  
YELL “CIRCLE!”

SAT IN  
BLEACHERS  
FOR 3+ HOURS

EXPLAINED A  
RULE TO A NEW  
PARENT

SAW A  
COME-BACK  
WIN (5+ PTS)

SAW A  
WRESTLER TIE  
THEIR SHOES  
MID-MATCH

SAW SOMEONE  
FILMING ON  
THEIR PHONE

SAW SOMEONE  
WEARING  
SUNGLASSES  
INDOORS

CELEBRATED A  
PIN, WHETHER  
YOURS OR  
NOT!



HELPED A  
PARENT FIND A  
MAT

HEARD A  
COACH SHOUT  
“SHORT TIME!”

CHEERED FOR  
SOMEONE NOT  
ON YOUR TEAM

NOTICED  
MISMATCHED  
SOCKS

HEARD  
SOMEONE  
TALK ABOUT  
WEIGHT  
CUTTING

SPOTTED A  
WRESTLER  
WEARING  
CROCS

GAVE ADVICE  
OR TO A NEW  
PARENT

HEARD “LET  
THEM  
WRESTLE!”

TOOK A  
MATCH-DAY  
PHOTO

SAW A  
WRESTLER  
WITH  
HEADPHONES

SAW  
SWEATPANTS  
TUCKED INTO  
SOCKS

CONCESSION  
STAND VISIT

## AMAZON (NOT SO) NECESSITIES



### Inflatable Lounger Air Sofa

\$20-40

No pump needed. Inflates in seconds for sideline napping, or surviving long wait times.



### Bleacher Seat with Back Support

\$30-70

Turns metal bleachers into actual seats.



### Bento Snack Box

\$10-25

Keeps pre-match, mid-match, and recovery snacks organized.



### External Power Bank

\$20-40

Keeps your phone alive for brackets, videos, and emergencies.



### Phone Tripod

\$15-25

Film matches hands-free, even from awkward gym corners.

## BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Changing the Game: The Parent's Guide to Raising Happy, High-Performing Athletes and Giving Youth Sports Back to Our Kids**

by John O'Sullivan

Emphasizes positive reinforcement, process over outcome, and long-term engagement, exactly what we want for keeping confidence high and pressure low.

### **How to Succeed (and Fail) as a Wrestling Parent: A Detailed Guide For Supporting Your Wrestler's Journey**

by Donovan Panone

A seasoned coach and wrestling parent shares 28 years of lessons, stories, and guidance to help you support your wrestler on and off the mat.

### **Raising Young Athletes: Parenting Your Children to Victory in Sports**

by Jim Taylor, PhD

Offers scripts for communicating about effort, confidence, and goal-setting, perfect for our "say/don't say" scripts.

### **Mental Toughness for Young Athletes: The Ultimate Parent's Guide**

by Troy Horne & Moses Horne

Gives parents a plan to build young athletes' confidence and toughness.

### **Parenting Athletic Kids**

by Travis Rogers

Parenting Athletic Kids is a blueprint for parents to navigate youth sports, fostering joy, passion, and a mindset that benefits young athletes both on and off the field.

### **Thrive: A Guide for Parents—How to Raise Elite Athletes**

by Audrey Akins

This guide gives parents essential strategies for choosing the right sport, finding a coach, and building a mastery mindset to help young athletes reach the elite level.