

## **Equipment**

### **Clubs - Manufactured by Juggling Companies**

Major juggling shops have a wide variety and price range of modern clubs made from moulded plastic. You may decide to buy fluorescent props or to redecorate the clubs for your swinging performance, for instance with ribbons on the base.

Length: long or short standard handle sizes. Long: approx. 52cm, short: approx. 47cm.

Weight: standard - approx. 230- 280g each, lightweight 180-220g each,

Knobs should be rounded, if possible.

### **Clubs - Apparatus for Rhythmic Gymnastic Competition**

Made of wood or plastic and available from specialist gymnastic suppliers and selected sports shops.

Length: 40-50cm.

Minimum weight: 150g each.

Knobs are rounded and head diameter is 3cm.

### **Clubs - Traditional Wooden Swinging Clubs**

These were made of heavy hard wood, but are now difficult to find as they are antique props. Small wooden clubs are occasionally used in health care by physiotherapists.

Length: up to approx. 50 cm.

Weight: dependent on the swinger's fitness - light for curing injuries or heavy for physical fitness - from 1 ¼ to 2 ½ kilos (3lb. up to 5-6 lb. each!)

### **Fire Torches**

These are crafted from wood and metal, with non-asbestos fire wick on the base. Available from reputable juggling suppliers. Torches tend to be longer and heavier than plastic juggling clubs and specialist swinging torches are also available. These will have smooth knobs and tapered handles but are otherwise the same as jugglers' torches. Fire swinging is fun, exciting and very entertaining, but can be dangerous. Read this book's chapter on fire performance and safety (pages 79-81) before starting to practise with fire.

### **Broom Stick Pole**

Wood or aluminium broom sticks are cheap and readily available from DIY or other hardware shops. Use these, or cut lengths of hardwood dowelling or plastic piping, when learning to spin poles.

Length: approx. 110 - 120 cm (4 feet)

### **Devil Stick**

This juggling prop originated in China. As well as being twirlable by hand, more usually a central stick is tapped back and forth by two hand sticks and appears to be suspended in mid air. The standard devil stick is made of wood or metal and plastic.

Length is short: approx. 70 cm (27")

Average weight: 225g (8oz) .

### **American Baton**

Made of an aluminium shaft with white rubber ball on the top and small tip on the bottom end. Specialist sports shops will be able to order batons. The recommended length is short:

measure from your armpit, the arm held in a horizontal position, to the tip of your middle finger. Manufacturers tend to make their batons in even inches. If your arm length is an odd number of inches, (say 21"), buy a baton a size longer (22").

### **Chinese Ratan - Cane Stick Favoured by Peking Opera Pole Spinners**

Specialist cane suppliers will be able to order lengths of Chinese ratan. This is a light, strong and flexible bamboo-like natural material, which is traditional for use in Chinese style pole spinning. Its flexibility makes kicking and other body-impact moves possible without injury. Length is a matter of taste.

### **Fire Devil Stick and Fire Pole**

These props are straight lengths of wood with aluminium tubing and fire wick at each end. Fire devil sticks can be bought from juggling retailers but fire poles are rarely manufactured.

Wood is a much cooler material than metal and it will not conduct the heat produced at the flaming ends. However, the wood will burn away to charcoal unless you protect the area around the fire wick with metal tubing. Be sure to screw your fire wicks down firmly, or else they might fly off during a performance. Follow sensible fire precautions when practising or performing with fire, as outlined in the fire performance and safety chapter.

### **Buying Equipment**

Most major towns now have specialist juggling retailers who stock a wide range of equipment. You can find your nearest shop by looking at the advertisements in the magazines listed opposite.

*This chapter is taken from*

### **Modern Club Swinging and Pole Spinning**

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**[www.cosmosjugglers.co.uk](http://www.cosmosjugglers.co.uk)** - see the *Holidays* pages for Anna's annual May and August UK events for club swingers, poi & pole spinners, jugglers, fire enthusiasts and glow-in-the dark/UV performers.