

My four-year-old daughter's face lit up when I told her I was going to have a trampolining lesson.

'Ooo mummy, make sure you do that thing where you bounce up and then land on your bottom, and then up on to your feet again, won't you?'

Yes Jess, I'll try.

I had thought that this trampolining business couldn't be too hard... my balance is pretty good, I've ridden horses all my life, I swim hard every week, I consider myself reasonably fit; but I will admit my stomach did lurch just a wee bit when I walked into the sports hall at Coleridge College in Cambridge as they were setting up the trampolines for the evening. They were just so high...

My teacher was the head coach for the Cambridge Kangaroos (*what a brilliant name for a trampolining club...*), Tony Fagelman, who ran through a swift warm-up and then it was onto the first challenge... get on to the trampoline.

This turned out to be easier than it looked, and I was soon getting a feel for the bounce, under the watchful eye of Tony.

Now, the thing that struck me very early on was that it would seem to be impossible to bounce on a trampoline without grinning. It's just such a fun, almost child-like thing to do... pony tail swinging... you know the kind of thing. Tony showed me how to move my hands and arms in a circular motion in front of me to help steady my bounce and keep the momentum.

And then we were on to the very move that my daughter had insisted I mastered. Bouncing up, down on to my bottom with legs straight out in front, hands behind me, and then immediately back up on to my feet. Wow. This was fun. It was so satisfying to feel the spring of the trampoline and be able to use it to complete a routine... albeit brief. We then added another element; turning 180 degrees as I bounced



back on to my feet to end up facing the other way. Trickier.

All this time Tony stood with me on the trampoline, ready to steady me if I lost my balance and assist me when needed.

We finished my taster session with an extremely high (well it felt it...) tuck jump; arms stretched above me as I bounced up, then, tucking my knees into my chest, arms wrapped round them, before bouncing back down again. Fab. I could definitely get into this.

Tony, who got into the sport at the age of nine and has competed internationally, explained that trampolining was a sport for all ages and it was never too late to take it up.

"It is regarded as the best sport for all-round fitness as it uses every muscle in the body," he said. "We take children from the age of three, and there is no upper age limit. It's great for improving flexibility and getting the heart pumping and it's such good fun."

I would have to agree. I now need to find a trampoline so that I can show off my new skill to my daughter....

factfile

The Cambridge Kangaroos was formed in 2004 and is affiliated to the British Gymnastics Club.

There are currently 110 members – which includes up to about 20 adults. Some members bounce competitively, taking part in regional competitions, and others just bounce for fun and to keep fit.

The club runs sessions at the sports halls at Coleridge College in Cambridge; Sawston Village College; Gottenham Village College and at Netherhall.

Annual membership is from just £30. New members are always welcome. Taster sessions are held for people who would like to give it a try.

■ Visit the website at www.kangaroos.org or email info@kangaroos.org

