



***Foothills Skating Club***

[www.foothillsskatingclub.ca](http://www.foothillsskatingclub.ca)

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# ***STARSkate Handbook*** **for Test Level and** **Preliminary Prep Skaters**



Skills, Tests, Achievement, Recognition

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***What Every Parent and Skater Needs to Know***





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## ***Parents and Skaters –***

Physical activity stimulates growth and leads to improved physical and emotional health. Today, research shows that the importance of physical activity in children is stronger than ever. But sport, not just exercise, gives a child more than just physical well-being; it contributes to a child's development both psychologically and socially.

Being the parent of a child in sport requires far more attention, time, and commitment than just driving them to their practices and games. The primary goal of parents and coaches is to help children find the success in sport they need to make them feel valued and wanted.

We recognize that things are a little different as your child progresses through the Skate Canada Programs from CanSkate to STARSkate and your commitment becomes bigger, so in order to ensure a smooth transition for the skater and their family we offer some information that will be of benefit throughout this season and beyond.

If this instructional handout fails to answer any question you may have at any time, please contact your professional coach or one of our board members for information and guidance.

The FSC is run by a dedicated group of volunteers. Throughout the year notices will be posted or emails will be sent for volunteers to assist with numerous functions including our Annual Ice Show, the AGM and wind up banquet, helping with test days, etc. Volunteering within our club is a great way to learn the “who, what, where, why and how” of figure skating. The effort you put into your child’s sport is returned ten-fold!

More information can also be found on our website and on the Skate Canada website at [www.skatecanada.ca](http://www.skatecanada.ca) or the Section (Alberta-NMT/Nunavut) website at [www.skateabnwtun.ca](http://www.skateabnwtun.ca).

Once a skater is in the Skate Canada STARSkate Program, there are several options. Skaters may choose to remain in the STARSkate Program, taking tests (although not mandatory) at organized test sessions and honing learned skills. Skaters may also choose to enter competitions, while still trying Skate Canada tests. Other skaters may feel that they have progressed to a point where they may wish to enter the Skate Canada CompetitiveSkate Program or become involved in synchronized skating, evaluating or judging, or participate as an adult or varsity member.



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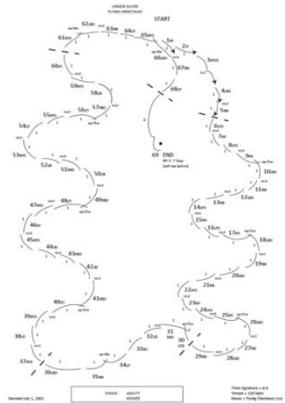


## How STARSkate works

The STARSkate program consists of figure skating skills in four areas:

### Skating Skills

Skating Skills are a combination of fundamental skating movements, executed on a pattern and skated solo. The basic components of all disciplines of figure skating are incorporated into the program. The movements are derived from former compulsory figures, free skating and ice dancing. The objective of the Skating Skills program is mastery of the basic fundamentals of skating – edge quality, control, power and speed.



The testing of each level contains multiple patterns and may be skated to music or not, depending on the skater, coach and evaluator. There are 6 Skating Skills tests in the STARSkate program:

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Preliminary</i>   | <i>Junior Bronze</i> |
| <i>Senior Bronze</i> | <i>Junior Silver</i> |
| <i>Senior Silver</i> | <i>Gold</i>          |

### Free Skating

Free skating consists of the execution of jumps, spins, footwork, field movements and stroking, either in isolation or performed in sequence to music.

Each test consists of 2 parts – Elements in Isolation and a Free Program, which can be tested separately.

There are six Free Skating tests in the STARSkate Program:

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Preliminary</i>   | <i>Junior Bronze</i> |
| <i>Senior Bronze</i> | <i>Junior Silver</i> |
| <i>Senior Silver</i> | <i>Gold</i>          |





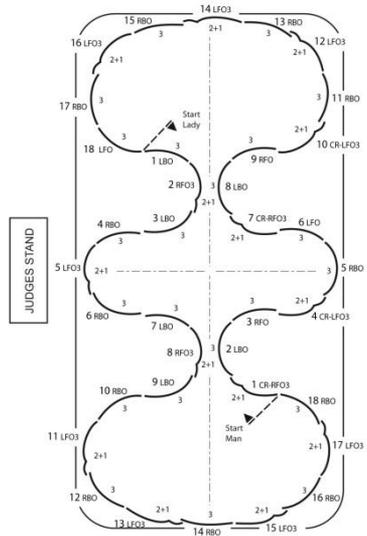
**Ice Dance**

Consisting of seven levels of tests, the Dance Test program teaches timing, musicality, rhythm interpretation, structure as well as basic skating skills such as edges, flow, control and unison.

The dances in the STARSkate Program can be tried in any order but a candidate must pass the required number of dances in a dance test before proceeding to the next level. In addition to the traditional compulsory dances, there are also Creative Dances to challenge skaters' creativity, artistry and originality.

Each level has between three and five compulsory dances to be tried before moving on to the next level. Each dance is tried with a partner. The Dance Tests are as follows:

- Preliminary*
  - Junior Bronze*
  - Senior Bronze*
- Junior Silver*
  - Senior Silver*
  - Gold*
  - Diamond*



		Introductory	
		Singles	Couples
Skating	Edge and Turn Quality	2/4 must be Satisfactory or better	
	Speed, Flow and Power		
	Creative Movement with Sureness		
	Carriage and Line		
Performance	Interpretation of Music	2/5 must be Satisfactory or better	3/6 must be Satisfactory or better
	Communication of Theme		
	Use of Whole Body		
	Use of Levels and Space		
	Originality / Creativity		
	Interaction (couples only)		

**Interpretive**

The objective of the Interpretive program is to encourage and develop skaters' creativity, expression, musicality, movement, interpretation of music, as well as the use of space, rhythm, line and style. The program provides skaters with the opportunity to explore the performance aspect of skating without focusing on technical elements.

The Interpretive tests consist of skating to and interpreting a piece of music 2.0 to 3.0 minutes (+/- 10 seconds) in length. Skaters can take Interpretive tests as individuals and/or as a couple (male/female, female/female or male/male) at four levels:

- Introductory Bronze Silver Gold*



## Coaching

### *The Value of a Coach*

A private coach is highly recommended for all skaters in our Test Level program. Coaches are **highly recommended to help navigate the complex world of skating**. They will work with your child to teach, support, assist, guide, direct and mentor them as they learn the many skills, jumps and spins that make up the beautiful and athletic sport of figure skating.



Your coach will create a yearly plan for the skater, which will start with the basic skills and fundamentals and will eventually progress to include choreography of competition programs and tests in skating skills, dance and free skate. The coach's primary role is to determine the course of these events based upon how the child is progressing. The role of the parent will be to support your skater.

The **test level registration fees do not include coaching fees for lessons**. Please contact your coach(es) to discuss fees and arrange lessons. The cost of a coach varies depending upon their qualifications. Typically they can charge anywhere from \$10 to \$20.00 per 15 minute session. These lessons can be private, semi-private or group depending on the situation. The coach will provide advice about the lesson time recommended to achieve certain goals but **parents decide** how many lessons their child will have each week. We recommend that beginning skaters take semi-private or group lessons.

Coach's fees are not administered by the FSC. The coach(es) will invoice each skater or family individually for lessons on a monthly basis and you will need to pay them directly. These invoices are to be paid within 30 days of the invoice date, paid directly to the coach. Unpaid or overdue bills may result in the revoking of ice access.

The coaches will also bill skaters for lesson time during test days and competitions and during partner practice. See further details below on each of these subjects.

Any questions or issues a skater or parent has regarding coaching, including fees, billing, expectations or skater progress should first be addressed directly with the coach in private. The Coaches Liaison, President or Vice President can be involved if needed.



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## **Program Assistants**

Program Assistants (PA's) are trained by our professional coaches to assist in running the Pre-CanSkate and CanSkate programs as outlined by Skate Canada. All STARSkaters in the FSC are expected to be PA's and will receive incentives for participating. PA training is provided each fall and skaters are required to attend the training when offered in order to be a PA during that season.

Being a PA is a busy job and is an important role in the program's success. PA's are a role model and are examples to skaters in the way they move on the ice and skate. This inspires CanSkaters to work hard so they can skate like the PA's. For many new skaters, the ice can be a very scary place and a smile and helping hand can turn a cold, scary rink into a warm, welcoming environment.

PA's need to make a commitment for the season and be available for the same session each week. If a PA will be late or absent for their session, they need to let the coach know as soon as possible and try and find a replacement PA.

PA's need to be patient and willing to work with different ages and abilities of skaters, under the supervision of different coaches. Duties include helping skaters on and off the ice, handing out stickers and other incentives, collecting name tags, demonstrating skills, playing games, setting up supplies and taking supplies off the ice, assisting skaters who need a little more assistance, reinforcing the coaches instructions, etc.

PA's must remember that their behavior on the ice is important. All On-Ice Rules apply while being a PA, in addition to the following:

- This is not personal skating time, this is the CanSkaters time to skate
- No chatting with fellow PA's, be engaged with the skaters at all times
- PA's will participate and assist in all parts of the Pre-Can/CanSkate session – Warm Up, Lesson Time, Group Activity and Cool Down
- Always watch for safety on the ice – skaters who are not looking behind them when skating backwards, long laces, skaters who come on the ice without a helmet, etc. and watching for your own safety as well
- Remember to Smile and bring enthusiasm to the ice! Use a polite and enthusiastic tone of voice
- If you are unsure of what to do on the ice, always check in with a coach and ask what you can do to help
- If a skater is hurt, make sure to let a coach know
- Make sure you are on the ice each day before the CanSkaters get on the ice, and you are not to get off the ice until the CanSkaters are off the ice or you have approval from a coach



## Test Days

Test Level skaters take tests throughout the year after learning the required skills. The coach recommends to the parent when a skater is ready for a test, however it is the parent/skaters decision whether to test or not.

The Test Chair will notify parents of the test day details including location, time and fees. FSC has at least one test day annually but tests can be at other clubs in the area. We try whenever possible to schedule our test days so that they do not conflict with school but this is often not the case for all test days.

**Low Test Days** include Preliminary, Junior Bronze and Senior Bronze Free Skate, Skating Skills and Dance tests. **High Test Days** include Junior Silver, Senior Silver and Gold Free Skate, Skating Skills and Dance, Diamond Dances, Competitive tests and Introductory, Bronze, Silver and Gold Interpretive tests.

Fees are typically about \$30 per test taken, paid prior to testing. The fee includes a portion paid to Skate Canada and the rest covers the club's costs, including ice fees, evaluator expenses (mileage), music player and food, etc.

Parents/Skaters are responsible for all test fees, their coaches' time during the testing and expenses if applicable (mileage, meals, etc.). Additionally, for Ice Dance tests, there may be partnering fees, which are paid directly to the partner. Partner fees can range widely depending upon the location of the test day (mileage and expense are factored in) and how many skaters the partner is skating with on test day but are generally between \$15 and \$30 per dance test.

Submissions for tests days occur about four weeks prior to the test day. Tests can be pulled up to two weeks prior without penalty. Within two weeks of the test day or on the test day, if a skater has to pull out for any reason other than illness or injury (may need to be substantiated by a Doctor's note), the skater/parents will be responsible for the fees. A skater must be in good standing with the club in order to participate in testing, whether at our club or at other clubs.

Evaluators are trained by Skate Canada and volunteer their time. Skaters must be respectful and appreciative of the evaluators. Please remember to always smile and show your appreciation to the many volunteers including Judges, Evaluators, Test Chairs and parents who volunteer their time to provide test days.

Parents may be asked to volunteer to play music, ice captain or bring snacks for the meal provided for the evaluator. These days tend to be long days for the evaluators as well as the club Test Chair and the day would not succeed without the volunteer help. The club and skaters appreciate all that their parents do.



The Test Chair has many things to coordinate in order to provide test days so it is very important to adhere to test day deadlines for submissions and pulls. The Test Day schedule is set 5 days prior to the beginning of test days and there cannot be any changes under any circumstance after this time. The Test Chair will attempt to accommodate scheduling requests where possible, but it is often not possible.

Only coaches (or parents if the coach is not available and has given permission to the parent) can pick up test results from the Test Chair once all the information has been properly recorded.

All test results are recorded by the Test Chair and kept permanently as well as submitted to Skate Canada for the skaters test record. Test Records can be accessed by skaters through their account in the Members Only section of the Skate Canada website.

Skaters and/or parents should always keep the test result papers in their records. If there is ever a discrepancy regarding the test, this document may be required.

PART 1: ELEMENTS	
Pass <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Retry <input type="checkbox"/>

### Ice Dance Partnering Practices:

In order to prepare skaters for ice dance tests and the partnering required in order to test, the club will hold partner practices about once per month. Female skaters must generally partner with a male partner and male skaters must generally partner with a female partner.

Most of our female skaters will partner with our chosen Club Partner, although at the preliminary level, the coach may choose to partner for testing. The coach will generally partner the male skaters on test day. During the partner practices, each skater who is preparing to test an ice dance will have a lesson with the chosen club Partner for the upcoming test day in order to get comfortable doing the dance with a partner. Male skaters may have a lesson with the Partner as well.

Skaters are responsible for the drop in ice fees for the designated partner practice ice time as well as the partner and coaches fees.



## **Competitions**

Competitions are held throughout the season in the region and section (Alberta). Skaters and parents will be advised of the dates and locations and participation is optional. The coach will suggest whether a skater is ready to compete in an event but it is up to the parent to decide whether their child will enter.

### **Competition Registration:**

Registration forms will be provided by the Competition Info Rep of the Board by email or posted on the bulletin board. The skaters compete at a level based on what tests they have passed and generally by age. The coach will advise for which events at what level each skater can register in each competition.

The Registration forms must be completed in full and signed by the Club Rep (generally the Competition Info Rep or another Board Member) as well as the coach. Often the club will arrange for all forms to be sent together. If forms are late or missing information, they may not be accepted and the skater may not be able to compete. Once a skater is registered, no refunds are generally given unless due to injury.

### **Competition Fees:**

All costs associated with competitions are the responsibility of the skater and parents. This includes entry fees (per event), coaching fees and coaches travel and accommodation costs as well as personal travel and accommodation costs (hotels, meals, etc.).

Entry fees typically range from \$50 to \$125 per event (singles, pairs or teams). Competitions are held from Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon and depending on location, overnight stays are sometimes required. The coach will charge their time to each skater they coach in each event the skater participates, and they will split their expenses (for hotel, mileage and meals) between the skaters they are coaching at the competition.



## **Test Day and Competition Expectations:**

Skaters registered in these events will be notified of skating days and times usually one to two weeks prior to the event. Skaters must arrive at the arena at least one hour ahead of their scheduled ice time. Events can run ahead of schedule and they **do not** wait for late arrivals. Skaters must report to registration and/or Ice Captain upon arriving at the arena.

Skaters must bring their music with them to competitions and check in two copies of the CD's for each event in which they are competing, prior to each event. If skaters forget to bring their music, they may not be able to compete. Generally for test days, the coach will make arrangements for your music.

Test days and Competitions are quite formal events with dress and appearance requirements, as well as behavioral expectations when representing our Club. Attire for these events should be "like new" condition (skates polished and laces washed). Skate laces are to be tucked in. Skating attire should be neat and fitted to show bodylines. Tights (for girls) should be beige and hair must be neatly pulled back, away from the face.



## **Athlete Code of Conduct**

The FSC strives to promote a safe, supportive environment that encourages all athletes to be their best and support one another regardless of any differences, sharing a common vision that promotes team spirit and individual growth of all members of the Club.

All skaters should demonstrate high standards of ethics and sportsmanship and promote the development of good character and other important life skills.

To be a member in good standing, skaters must act in accord with the following:



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## **TRUSTWORTHINESS**

- Be worthy of trust in all you do.
- Live up to high ideals of ethics and sportsmanship and always pursue victory with honour; do what's right even when it's unpopular or personally costly.
- Live and compete honourably; do not lie, cheat, steal or engage in any other dishonest or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Strive to fulfill commitments; do what you say you will do, and aim to be on time for practices, competitions and tests.

## **RESPECT**

- Treat all people with respect at all times and require the same of others.
- Understand that being punctual to a session will maintain and promote respect for fellow athletes and coaches.
- Live and skate with class; be a good sport and be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity; compliment extraordinary performance and show sincere respect in pre and post-skating rituals.
- Do not engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including profanity, obscene gestures, and offensive remarks of a sexual or racial nature, taunting, boastful celebrations, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport.
- Treat all Officials with respect and do not complain about, or argue with any decisions during or after a skating event or test.
- Treat all Volunteers and Board Members with respect both within the Club, and at competitions and events outside the Club.
- Treat all Coaches with respect both within the Club, and at competitions and events outside the Club.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

- Remember that participation in sports is a privilege, not a right and that you are expected to represent your club, coach and yourself with honour, both on and off the ice. Consistently exhibit good character and conduct yourself as a positive role model.
- Recognize the importance of safeguarding your health; do not use any illegal or unhealthy substances including alcohol, tobacco and drugs, or engage in any unhealthy techniques to gain, lose or maintain weight.
- Be punctual for all skating sessions, lessons, stroking sessions, and off-ice classes. Let a coach or board member know beforehand if you cannot make these time commitments.

## **FAIRNESS & CARING**

- Live up to high standards of fair play; be open-minded and always willing to listen and learn.
- Demonstrate concern for others and never intentionally injure any athlete or engage in reckless behaviour that might cause injury to yourself or others.



## **ON-ICE RULES**

- Skaters are to be continually moving and skating while on the ice at all times. If you have fallen, you must immediately get up to keep the ice clear for the other skaters. If you are injured, immediately call for a coach to assist you. If you are not skating you should go to the skater's box.
- All conversations must happen only at the boards, nowhere else on the ice. This is a training environment and socializing must be done elsewhere.
- Skaters will not disturb their coach if the coach is in a lesson with another skater. Wait until your coach is free or talk to another available coach.
- When practicing, all skaters must learn to pay attention to what is happening on the ice, and adjust and execute their skills around lessons, programs, etc.
- When practicing single moves like a camel spin or backward spirals where you require extra room or you have a blind spot pay extra attention to those around you and ensure you can complete it safely! Politely calling out "excuse me" or "heads up" when needed.
- All language, body language and gestures on the ice must be polite and respectful. Any foul language may result in loss of Club privileges.
- Skaters must ask or let a coach know before exiting the ice surface during a session. This is for safety and attendance reasons.
- Skaters must clear the ice in a timely manner when session has ended.
- Sitting on the board is not permitted.
- Proper attire is to be worn - Skaters may not wear loose-legged pants during their ice time for safety reasons. They may, however, wear them to PA or for any other CanSkate ice function.
- Hair must be tied back. Headbands are not considered tied or clipped back.
- Coaches will ask skaters to immediately leave the ice to rectify any clothing or hair situations before the skater can continue that session.
- Skate guards must be worn when not on the ice, to protect the blades.
- Coaches may request that a skater either sit in the box for 15 minutes or leave the ice for that day after 3 warnings for breaking rules.





## Right of Way Priorities

1. A skater, whose music is being played – all other skaters, including coaches with skaters in a lesson, must move out of their way to avoid accidents.
2. A skater who is in a lesson – skaters should not interrupt those lessons by talking or skating through their lesson.
3. Skaters who are practicing

## GENERAL RINK BEHAVIOUR

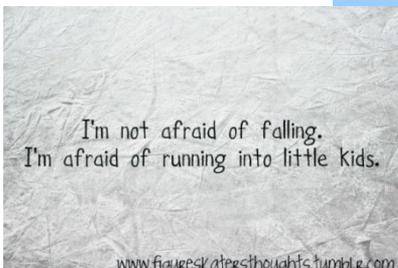
- Only tissues and water bottles are permitted on or around the ice area. No gum, candy or food will be allowed on the ice surface. Please snack either before or after ice time.
- Due to insurance reasons, only Skate Canada members are allowed on the ice, except in a medical emergency.
- Any skater causing damage to the ice arena or anyone else's property will be asked to appear before the board for disciplinary measures. The FSC will require the skater to pay 100% of the repair work necessary to restore the facility back to its original state.

All skaters are expected to follow the above rules or any other rules that may come into effect during the skating season. **Failure to abide by these rules could result in a non-refundable suspension from the FSC.**

Figure Skater Problem #7294

Excuse me, I was going to do  
my jump there..

[figure-skater-problem.tumblr.com](http://figure-skater-problem.tumblr.com)





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## ***Music and Music Player***

Once skaters start to test and compete, they require music programs to be created for any Freeski or Interpretive programs. The coach will work with the skater to cut music that is appropriate for them. The coach will bill skaters for the cost to produce the CD copies that are required for competitions and test days.

Music is an integral part of our skating program and paramount to the advancement of our skaters. Because many skaters will be working on multiple programs (Free Skate and Interpretive) as well as Ice Dance tests, these all require music to be played during all practice sessions. As such, our club requires someone to play music during most Test Level and Prelim Prep ice times. This ensures that skaters have their music played during each session, requiring them to practice their programs and dances with the music.

Each year, the FSC hires a student to play music during most Test Level and Prelim Prep ice times, paid at the prevailing minimum wage. A monthly music schedule will be prepared based on the proportion of time your skater skates and emailed to parents and posted on the board. It is up to each parent whether they choose to play the music themselves on their allotted day or pay the music player instead. The Music player will bill each family monthly for any sessions they work for you.



## ***Skater Fundraiser Account***

This program is set up so that Test Level skaters and coaches (and in some cases Prelim Prep and Affiliates) and their families can earn money to directly offset their own skating expenses. The Board will determine which fundraisers will be available for the Skater Fundraiser Program and which will be for the club in general. Generally, fundraisers for the Skater Fundraiser Account are activities like working a shift at the entry gate for the Millarville Market, Races or Rodeo.

Each Skater (or family member/friend) who participates or works a shift will earn credits into their own personal account as tracked by the Club that the skater can draw from to cover eligible skating expenses. Eligible expenses include skates and apparel, competition and registration fees, clinics and seminars designed to improve skating, courses and clinics needed for coaching and Music Player's fees. Coaching expenses are not eligible.

Should a skater leave the club, the skater will have a two year period in which to claim any unused credits. After two years, any unused credits will revert to the control of the club to be used at the Club's discretion. The Club may draw on a skater's personal account to cover fees unpaid if the skater has left the club owing any monies to the Club or to Club coaches.



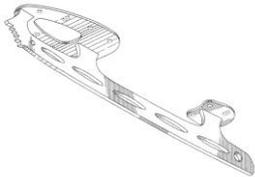
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## **Equipment Care**

You (or your parents) spend a lot of money on your skates. How do you protect that investment? Poorly maintained skates are more likely to hinder your skating than help it along. The following sections take a look at the best things you can do for your Blades, Boots, and Laces separately.

### ***Caring for Your Blades***

Your blades are your only contact with the ice. You want that contact to be as effective as possible. Good care will help to ensure this. **Keep them sharp -- but not too sharp:** A sharp blade grabs the ice better than a dull one. Sharpen your blades when they start to slide uncomfortably during landings and deep edges. Keep a log of the number of hours you skate between sharpenings. After a while you'll figure out how many hours you can average between sharpenings, and this will help you to avoid surprises at inconvenient times.



You want a balance here - if you wait too long, the change when you get them sharpened is pretty dramatic and you can also suffer. If you do it too often, you'll wear down the blade too soon, and this can be costly.

Sharpen responsibly too -- be careful of who you trust with your blades. If the place you go doesn't have a specialist in figure skates, be careful. Figure skates are sharpened with very different goals than hockey skates. Figure skates are ground with a "hollow" in the bottom (to give them those "edges" you hear so much about). **NEVER have them done by one of those automatic machines you find in some rinks.**

**Treat them well, on your feet:** Remember that even though steel is hard, it still wears down. The thin whisker of steel that forms those all-important edges can be nicked and worn down very easily.

Blades are made to slide on ice, not walk on floors. When you have to walk on floors, put "hard guards" on the blades. If you can't wear guards, try to tip up your feet and walk on the toe picks instead of the fragile edges (but be very selective about the surfaces you try this on -- rubber floor mats or carpet are ok, but don't try it on concrete, tile, or your mom's good wood floors!).

When you get on and off the ice, be careful of the "threshold" on the entry door. It's often made of steel, and because people don't think about it, it's responsible for an awful lot of nicks on blades. Step **OVER** the threshold **NOT ON**, it as you get onto the ice.



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Stopping is a part of skating. But those stops are much harder on the blades than straight skating (think about it -- what do you do to purposely wear them down a little when you get them back from the sharpener "just a little too sharp"??) You obviously can't avoid stopping, but you can try to vary the nature of your stops during practice sessions. Different stops stress the blade a different way, and a good mixture will help to prolong your sharpening interval.

**Treat them well, off your feet:** Off the ice, the biggest killer of blades is rust. Rust is much softer than steel, and once a part of your blade is rusted you can never change that part back to "the good stuff". The rusted spot will never hold an edge again. Do your very best to avoid water damage!

Always dry off your blades when you get off the ice. Slide your fingers along both sides to remove "snow" as soon as you get off -- before you slip on those hard guards. Carefully run your finger along the length of the hollow (your skin oil can help to repel moisture).

When you're done for the day, be sure to wipe them down with a towel. Be sure to get the blade area and the mounting surfaces. The screws rust too, and will loosen much more easily when they're rusted or the can get leather rotten. If you've got the time (while you're changing your clothes, perhaps), let them sit for a couple minutes and wipe them down again before you put them in your bag. You'll almost always see some condensation as they warm up.

When you do put them in the bag, always put them in "soakers" (soft guards). These help to draw off any remaining moisture, but more importantly they provide a cushion for your edges while the skates bounce around inside your bag. NEVER store your blades in hard guards - they hold moisture and are an almost guaranteed rust job.

**Finally, maintain your guards.** The soakers wear out after a while - they usually get holes at the ends. Replace them when they no longer cover your blade effectively. The hard guards will wear out too -- watch for thin spots or holes in the bottom, and replace them immediately when you see signs of wear. Clean out the insides of the hard guards periodically. They will accumulate grit after a while, and that grit is very abrasive.





### ***Caring for Your Boots***

The boots that hold those blades on your feet are just as important. Take care to break them in properly. You'll find lots of advice on this subject -- trust your pro and your boot fitter for good advice here. Replace your boots when they get too badly broken down -- your safety and the quality of your jumps rely on the consistency of support that only a well-cared for boot can provide.

The leather of your boots is just as susceptible to water damage as the steel in your blades. Keep your boots well-polished all the time -- it makes them look better, but more importantly, it seals the leather and helps it to shed water. This is especially important if you've nicked up the surface quite a bit and unfinished leather is exposed.

As mentioned earlier, always dry off the bottoms (sole) of the boot when you get off the ice. You generate a lot of snow/water when you skate, and it will destroy the soles if you're not careful. This is of special concern around the blade-mounting screws, which need good strong non-rotten leather to bite into.

You might not want to admit it, but your feet probably sweat a little bit when you're skating. That moisture can get pretty well trapped inside the boot and rot it out from the inside. To help avoid this, open up your boot as much as you can when it's off your foot. Loosen the laces as far down as you can. Pull them out of the first couple holes if possible. Pull the tongue up and out from the boot as much as you can to help the inside of the boot breathe. If parents approve, when at home, let your boots live "outside" of your bag for a little while, until they're nice and dry inside. At least unzip the bag to let it air out if you can't clutter the family room with your skates.

**The Mount:** If you look at the bottom of your boot, you'll find that the blade is held to the sole with a bunch of screws. It's really important that you maintain the proper tightness of these screws. Due to the stresses and bending while you skate, they will loosen with time. Loose screws are dangerous and can promote wear of the leather, but tightening them constantly and too tight can also strip the leather.

**Extra Screws:** If you need to replace a lost screw for any reason, make sure you select the proper screw to do the job. You will want to get stainless steel (to slow down the rust). The slotted holes need screws with flat "bottoms", but the round holes want the kind with a little bevel on the bottom. You'll need the appropriate



lengths, too. Too short and they won't get a good bite, too long and the points will come through the leather and poke your foot (ouch!). The best place to get these screws is from the shop that sold you the skates. Otherwise, a well-stocked hardware store can probably supply them. You should have a few spare screws for your "emergency bag".

### ***Caring for Your Laces***

Laces sound pretty insignificant, but a lace that breaks at an inopportune time can cause an awful lot of grief, and possibly can cause injury. Treat them with respect, and replace them when they start to wear or to lose "threads", or when the little plastic thingies ("aglets") come off the ends.

Always keep a few spare pairs of laces in your emergency bag. It is important to use the right "length" of lace. Too long and you'll have huge loops left over, which can drag close to the ice and become a hazard. Too short and you'll have a hard time tying them securely. I usually use an indelible fine-tip magic marker and write the proper length on the mounting plates of one of my blades (right next to my name). That way I'll always know the proper length to get in an emergency.

When it comes to skate maintenance, after a while you'll find a schedule and routine that works for you.





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## ***What to Wear***

Once your skater moves into figure skating, there are different expectations about clothing. Clothing must strike a balance between providing freedom of movement and revealing the “lines” drawn by a skater’s body with warmth and comfort. Skating clothing can usually be purchased off the rack from sports stores that sell skates, although boys’ clothing is harder to find. Some parents prefer to order clothing from the Web. Clothing can also be ordered from local costume-makers who offer custom design and fitting services. Your coach and other parents can also provide suggestions.

### For Girls

- For beginners, warmth and comfort come first.
- As your skater progresses and is able to skate more readily (and generate more body heat), skating dresses and tights become the norm for practice, although some prefer to wear tight-fitting elasticized pants. Clothing must not be bulky or restrictive.
- Layering with an additional sweater or warm-up jacket along with gloves may also be worn, if necessary.
- Undergarments should be hidden under the dress or not worn at all.

### For Boys

- As is the case for girls, for beginner boys warmth and comfort come first.
- As the skater advances, a snug sweater or warm-up jacket and pants along with gloves may be worn.
- Pants should be made of a stretch material. The leg bottoms should be held in place with a stirrup under the arch of the boot and a hook from the front crease of the pant leg to the laces in the boot. This gives a good line to the leg without distraction from flapping pant cuffs.



## KNOW YOUR SKATING: GLOSSARY OF SINGLES SKATING TERMS

### JUMPS

**Waltz Jump:** Generally the first rotational jump that skaters learn. The skater takes off from a forward outside edge, completes 1/2 revolution in the air, and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot.

**Salchow Jump:** A jump in which the skater takes off from the back inside edge of the skating foot, rotates one rotation in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot. Named after its originator, Ulrich Salchow.

**Variations:** double Salchow, triple Salchow, quadruple Salchow, one foot Salchow.

**Toe Loop Jump:** A toe jump in which the skater takes off from the back outside edge of the skating foot with assistance of the toe of the free foot and turns one rotation in the air, landing on the back outside edge of the take-off foot.

**Variations:** double toe loop, triple toe loop, quadruple toe loop.

**Neat fact:** Canadian Kurt Browning was the first skater to complete a quadruple toe loop in competition at the 1988 World Championships in Budapest, Hungary.

**Loop Jump:** A jump in which the skater takes off from the back outside edge of the skating foot, turns one rotation in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the take-off foot.

**Variations:** double loop, triple loop, 1/2 loop (a one rotation jump in which the skater lands on the back inside edge of the opposite foot from take-off)

**Flip Jump:** A toe jump in which the skater takes off from the back inside edge of the skating foot with assistance from the toe of the free foot, turns one rotation in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the original free foot.

**Variations:** double flip, triple flip.

**Lutz Jump:** A toe jump in which the skater takes off from the back outside edge of the skating foot with assistance of the free foot toe, rotates in the reverse direction one rotation in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot.

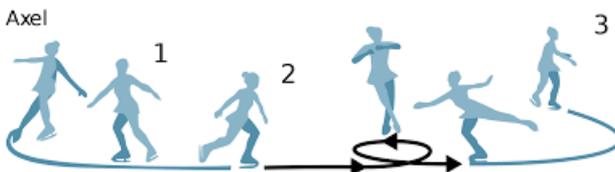
**Variations:** double Lutz, triple Lutz.

**Neat fact:** 1962 – Donald Jackson completes first-ever triple Lutz in competition.

**Axel Paulsen:** The skater takes off from the forward outside edge of the skate, completes 1 1/2 revolutions in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot. Named after its originator.

**Variations:** double Axel, triple Axel, inside Axel, one-foot Axel.

**Neat fact:** Canada's Vern Taylor became the first skater to land a triple Axel in competition at the 1978 World Championships in Ottawa.





## SPINS

There are three main categories of spins:

- the upright spin
- the camel spin
- the sit spin

There are many variations within each of these categories.

**Upright Spin:** A spin where a skater's body stays more or less vertical to the ice. This category includes one-foot spins, backspins, cross foot spins, and the layback spin. The layback spin is a spin primarily performed by female skaters (though more men are performing this difficult spin today) where the back is arched and the free leg is drawn up slightly.

**Variations** include the Bielman position (the skater catches the blade of the free foot in their hands and pulls the free-leg up over their head) and sideways leaning spin in which the skater arches to one side while maintaining an upright position.



**Sit Spin:** As the name indicates a sit spin is classified as any spin in which the skater's body is located close to the ice and the skating knee is bent to allow the skater to appear to be 'sitting'.

**Variations** include flying sit, flying change sit, sit change sit spin and more.



**Camel Spin:** A spin position in which the skater's body is horizontal to the ice except for the leg on which they are spinning.

**Variations** on this spin include a flying camel (change foot in air prior to start of spin) and death-drop (a dramatic flying entry). To increase the difficulty of a camel spin skaters will often perform a forward camel spin on an outside edge, or a back camel on an inside edge. Arm and leg position variations also increase the difficulty of spins and can be very effective from an aesthetic standpoint.

