

Olds Figure Skating Club

Handbook

Important Information for STARSkate Skaters

Welcome to the Skate Canada STARSkate program offered thru OFSC. The purpose of this handbook is to provide parents and skaters with answers to some commonly asked questions as well as provide you with information on Skater Etiquette and a glossary of common skating terms.

What does the Skate Canada Test Program involve?

The Skate Canada Test Program offers opportunities for skaters to develop basic skating skills in four different areas with the option of taking Skate Canada tests while earning awards and incentives designed for this group of skaters. Figure Skating skills are taught in group and/or in private lesson format in the following areas: Interpretive, Dance, Free Skating and Skating Skills, which are grouped into three levels: Primary, Intermediate and Senior.

Primary Level Tests

- **Skating Skills:** Preliminary, Junior Bronze
- **Free Skating:** Preliminary, Junior Bronze
- **Dance:** Preliminary, Junior Bronze
- **Interpretive**
: Introductory

Intermediate Level Tests

- **Skating Skills:** Senior Bronze, Junior Silver
- **Free Skating:** Senior Bronze, Junior Silver
- **Dance:** Senior Bronze, Junior Silver, Dance Variation, Bronze Rhythm Dance
- **Interpretive**
: Bronze

Senior Level Tests

- **Skating Skills:** Senior Silver, Gold
- **Free Skating:** Senior Silver, Gold
- **Dance:** Senior Silver, Gold, Diamond, Silver and Gold Interpretive Dance



Skating

Skating Skills: The Skating Skills program consists of six levels beginning with Preliminary (the first level) and ending with Gold (the final level). Skating Skills are exercises containing edges, turns and field movements skated to prescribed music. They are designed to teach fundamental movements to skaters at all levels. The basic components of all disciplines of figure skating are incorporated into the program. The objective of the Skating Skills program is mastery of the basic fundamentals of skating (e.g. edge quality, control, power and speed).



Dance: In addition to skating skills and free skating, test skaters can also hone their skills in ice dancing. Consisting of seven levels of tests (from Preliminary to Diamond), the Dance Test Program teaches timing, musicality, rhythm, interpretation, structure as well as basic skating skills such as edges, flow, control and unison.



Interpretive Skating: Interpretive skating (formerly known as Artistic) was introduced into the Skate Canada Test Skate program in order to encourage creativity and movement to music, and to provide an opportunity for those skaters wishing to explore the performance aspect of skating without focusing on technical elements.



Free Skating: There are six tests in the Skate Canada Test program: Preliminary, Junior Bronze, Senior Bronze, Junior Silver, Senior Silver and Gold. Each test consists of Elements in isolation and a free program.

The elements in isolation portion of the Free Skating tests consists of stroking exercises, jump and spin elements, field movements and step sequences. The Free Program portion of the test is a program of specified length, set to music and the candidate's choice. The program must contain certain elements (successfully completed) in order to pass the test.

What is the fee structure?

Skaters are responsible for the following costs:

1. **Ice** - This is paid directly to the club and varies depending on the number of hours skated/week. Currently, our club offers 2 hrs./4 hrs./6 hrs per week.

2. **Private lessons** - Skaters must procure the services of a private coach and make arrangements re: fee payment. Coaches are required to provide their skaters with a list of coaching fees and other related expenses. Lesson fees vary depending on the coach's qualifications and experience. The club can provide a list of Club Coaches to interested skaters. N.B. Though most skaters will arrange for private lessons, other options (eg. Semi-private and small group) are possible depending on the coach.

3. **Test Fees** - These are set by the club to cover the Skate Canada Test Fee and other expenses such as the cost of ice for a test day and evaluator mileage. Because ice and evaluator fees vary, the test fees also vary from one test day to the next.

4. **Partnering Fees** - At the Preliminary and Junior Bronze Level, the coach or another amateur skater may be the partner. Coaches may include this service as part of their coaching fee but it is wise to confirm this before committing to a test. Amateur skaters can not be paid due to their amateur status and are usually thanked with a small gift or flowers. For Senior Bronze and higher dances, a professional dance partner is usually used. This individual will charge a partnering fee plus mileage (if applicable) for each dance tested. A similar fee is charged for any practices prior to the test day. Check with your coach regarding using a professional dance partner. Skate Canada does not require all dances to be partnered. Check with you coach regarding which dances do not require partnering. However, working with a professional partner is a valuable component to a skater's progress.

How do I find a coach?

The Club can provide a list of Club Coaches from which you can choose. Factors to consider include qualification, years of coaching experience as well as areas of specialty eg. Dance, Freeskate, Pairs. Coaching fees may also be a factor in your decision. It is also important to discuss the skater's goals re: tests, competitions, level of commitment etc. Personality also plays a role. The coach, parents, and skater need to work together as a team so it is important that there be good communication.

How many lessons should there be in a week?

The number of lessons/week varies depending on a number of factors eg. Financial resources, available coaching time, the skater's goals and level of commitment etc. Generally, skaters receive a minimum of three 15 minute lessons/week, one in each of the 3 disciplines i.e. freeskate, dance, skating skills. Some skaters prefer to have two freeskate lessons/week to enable them sufficient time to work on the individual elements as well as a solo routine. Other skaters may only have one or two lessons/week. It really depends on each skater's situation. Parents and skaters should discuss this fully with their coach.

What kind of skates should be used?

A better quality boot and blade are required for skaters in the Test Program in order for skaters to perform the many skills they are learning. The boot and blade are often sold separately. It is very important for the boot to be fitted properly and the blade to be mounted properly. A professional skate shop is recommended. One thing to consider when buying boots is the quality of leather. "Full grain" leather is the best quality and is the most durable. The quality of blade varies and a higher quality is required as skaters progress to more advanced levels of skating. Initially, a general purpose blade is sufficient. Coaches can often recommend a specific brand of boot and blade. Some common brands of boots are Wifa, Riedell, and Jackson.

What do skates cost?

The cost of boots and blades ranges widely depending on the brand and the needs of the skater. Professional skate shops often have good used skates available for a reduced price.

When can skaters take a test?

Test days are held throughout the year. The Club Test Chair organizes the Test Day at the request of the coaches. Often it is necessary to travel to a nearby club since there are a limited number of Test Evaluators available. It is generally left to the discretion of the coach to determine when a skater is ready to test. However, it is important for the parent, skater, and coach to communicate in this regard. Coaches are responsible to communicate with skaters and parents re: date, location, tests to be taken. But it is always a good idea to be pro-active as a parent and find out what is happening. As a club we do our best to include this information in newsletters or posted on bulletin boards. Coaches give the Test Chair a list of possible tests ~3 - 4 weeks prior to a Test Day. The coach must make a final decision 2 weeks prior to the Test Day. This is called a "pull date". Skaters who withdraw after this are expected to pay for the test since the fees have been set based upon the expected number of skaters testing. Exceptions may be made for medical reasons. Sometimes the "pull date" is only 1 week prior to the actual test day and thus a confirmed schedule and test fees are often not available until 3 - 5 days before the Test Day. The Club Test Chair posts the schedule and fees as soon as it is available.

These are some of the most commonly asked questions but you may have others. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact one of the executive members listed on the bulletin board or one of the Club Coaches.

Skater Etiquette

Guidelines for keeping skating fun and safe!

For the benefit of the many new junior skaters and as a reminder to our more experienced skaters.....

Safety

- * **Skate with your head up!** Make sure you can see where you are going. When skating backwards, look over your shoulder so you don't run into someone.
- * **Keep moving!** If you fall, get up as quickly as possible and move to the boards to catch your breath or recover. The ice is cold and if you stay there too long you might get run over by other skaters.
- * **Keep visits with other skaters short and ONLY by the boards.** DO NOT stand around on the ice surface. You risk getting run into by other skaters.
- * **Fill ice pick holes!** If you make a big hole in the ice fix it right away and please take a few moments BEFORE leaving the ice to check for other holes or large grooves. The arena staff leaves an ice bucket and trowel by the ice entrance for fixing holes.
- * **Follow the ice schedule.** Please do not practice jumps and spins during dance and skating skills time.

Music Requests

- * **Skaters may request music but the coaches and dance partner have first priority.** Your request might get bumped. Keep skating and practicing and the music player will play your request as soon as they are able to. Ask the music player to call you when they are able to put on your music rather than standing around waiting for it. When there are many requests, the music player may only be able to play your request for 1 or 2 rounds of the pattern and then may have to stop and go on to the next request. However, freeskate solos will be allowed to finish before moving on to the next request.

Other

- * **Skaters receiving lessons or doing their freeskate solo have the 'right of way'.** If you see them coming then move quickly to get out of their path. If a skater shouts "out of my way", it's not to be rude, just to get your attention and avoid crashing into you.
- * **Have a plan!** If you're not sure what to work on once your lesson is finished, talk to your coach about having a practice plan posted for you or ask your coach to help you devise a practice plan. This is especially helpful for young skaters and new juniors who may require more structured practice guidelines. You will get the most out of your ice time if you know what to practice and how many times eg. 5 waltz jumps, 3 times around the rink forwards, 3 times backwards etc.
- * **Show respect to other skaters, coaches, arena staff, and parents.** Make every effort to be on the ice on time. If you need to leave the ice surface then please let your coach know. Rude and inappropriate language or

behaviour is not acceptable on the ice or in the dressing rooms. No food or drinks other than water are allowed on the ice. Please use proper containers for any used kleenex and leave the dressing rooms neat and tidy.

* **Have FUN!**

Figure Skating Terms

Jumps-

- 1) **Waltz Jump:** Generally the first rotational jump that skaters learn. The skater takes off from a forward outside edge, completes $\frac{1}{2}$ revolution in the air, and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot.
- 2) **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.
Neat fact: The 1965 World Champion and 1964 World and Olympic bronze medallist Petra Burka became the first woman to complete a triple jump in competition - the triple Salchow - performed at the 1962 Canadian Championships in Toronto, Ontario.
- 3) **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, and 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.
- 4) **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, $\frac{1}{2}$ loop (a one rotation jump in which the skater lands on the back inside edge of the opposite foot from take-off)
- 5) **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.
- 6) **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.
- 7) **Axel Paulsen:** The skater takes off from the forward outside edge of the skate, completes $1\frac{1}{2}$ 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 sit spin
- the camel spin

There are many variations within each of these categories.

- 1) **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.
- 2) **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.

- 3) **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.