

# Choosing a Program



## Why Join The Learn to Skate USA Program?

- It is the only skating program endorsed by the national governing bodies -U.S. Figure Skating, USA Hockey and US Speedskating
- The road to the Olympics
- Highest quality instruction
- Fun, challenging and rewarding skating curriculums for all ages and abilities
- Bridge to U.S. Figure Skating testing and competitive structure
- Promotional materials available for skaters, parents and facilities
- Manuals, videos and workshops for all instructors
- Sports accident insurance coverage
- All for a \$12 annual membership fee!

## Curriculum

The curriculum (PDF) is designed to keep skaters enthusiastic about learning from the time they begin lessons until the time they reach their goals. Whether your goal is to achieve Olympic fame or simply enjoy the recreational benefits of skating, Learn to Skate USA is for you! The entire Learn to Skate USA program has special classes for many facets of skating including free skate, pairs, synchronized skating, choreography (Artistry in Motion), hockey and more! There are more than 1,000 programs and 122,000 skaters registered across the United States in the Learn to Skate USA program.

In order to join the Learn to Skate USA Program, you need to register individually through the direct registration link on the Learn to Skate USA website or through one of the 1,000 programs across the country. Session costs will vary from program to program. Once you find a program in your area, you will be on your way to enjoying one of the greatest sports around!

## Where Do I Go?

Learn to Skate USA is endorsed by the national governing bodies of figure skating, hockey and speedskating. We have established skating programs in more than 1,000 facilities across the nation. Visit [www.learntoskateusa.com](http://www.learntoskateusa.com) to search for a facility near you and to ask about its Learn to Skate USA group class schedule, registration information and the price of lessons. Most group beginner lessons are structured in six- or eight-week sessions, and there is usually room available for classes that meet your current ability.

## What To Expect?

Follow these simple tips to get the most out of your skating lessons:

1. Listen attentively. Try the skill, ask a question if you don't understand, and try it again. Your instructor should be able to show you the skill, break it down into easy steps, and offer a few suggestions for quick mastery.
2. Be a courteous skater, watch where you are going, and always skate in control.
3. Be prepared for your lesson with correct fitting skates, warm attire and gloves or mittens.
4. Be on time! Arrive at least 15 minutes before class time.
5. Relax, smile and have fun!

## What Will I Get?

When you register for the Learn to Skate USA Program, you will receive:

- An official Learn to Skate USA membership card
- A brightly colored record book with stickers to track your progress through the lessons
- Sport Accident Insurance
- General information about ice skating
- An instructor's manual (for all instructors, assistants and directors)
- Learn to Skate USA The Magazine
- Access to the Kids page and resources on the Learn to Skate USA website

## What About Skates?

The boots should provide a snug fit. A skate needs to be an extension of the foot, fit snugly, and be laced up properly. Look for these three factors in picking out a skate that fits you properly: your size and weight, skating ability and how many times a week you plan to skate. If the boot does not fit properly or is too “broken in,” it will not provide adequate support. Proper fit is essential for success in skating!

Basically, the fit should be snug, with the lacing pattern constant from toe to ankle. When you push your foot forward to touch your toe to the end of the skate, if you can put a finger inside the skate between the back of your foot and end of your skate, it is too big.

It is not always necessary to buy new skates, especially when first learning to skate. Used skates can be a great bargain...if you know what to look for. If you are unsure of the quality of a pair of used skates, please ask the skating director or your instructor for some tips.

When purchasing new equipment, go to a reputable pro shop or sporting goods store and take the time to find a pair. Skates, like most sporting equipment, get more sophisticated as your ability increases. Most manufacturers produce a beginning boot that comes with a beginning blade.

If you choose not to invest in your own skates, rental skates will do just fine, too. When renting skates, ask for a pair of firm boots with adequate support and sharp blades.

## What Do I Wear?

Whether skating indoors or outdoors, dress for warmth by layering your clothing. Most indoor arenas are kept between 50 and 60 degrees, so jackets are recommended. As you get warm, you may wish to discard a layer. Comfort and ability to move freely are also very important. We suggest close-fitting but not tight pants. Sweatpants or warm-up pants are ideal. Your feet will feel best if you wear one pair of lightweight socks or tights. Bulky or thick socks may limit the support provided by your skates and create “bumps” inside your boots, making them uncomfortable. Make sure when fitting your skates that your toes can wiggle but your heel does not slide up and down or around once your foot is properly laced in the skate.

Protective head gear is recommended for children under the age of 6 and all beginner skaters. Contact a local sporting goods store for proper fit and information regarding safety helmets. The Consumer Products Safety Commission offers guidelines for the type of helmet to wear for different activities. Although a helmet standard does not exist specifically for ice skating, until such standards are written, wearing one of the listed types of helmets may be preferable to wearing no helmet at all. For ice skating, the recommended helmets are: ASTM F1447; Snell B-90A, B-95, N-94. When buying a helmet, check the fine print for certifications.

Remember gloves or mittens! Learning to fall is an important part of ice skating, and your hands will feel much better if you are wearing gloves or mittens. If you forget to bring them along, check with the rink’s lost and found and borrow a pair.