



LEARN TO SKATE USA ***FUN AND GAMES MANUAL***





Here are a few ideas from skating instructors who truly enjoy teaching group lessons. Remember that if you are having fun, your students probably are as well!

Our priority is to foster a love of skating in these beginning skaters, not to just play with toys on the ice. Toys and games should enhance the learning process, not detract from it. Try to incorporate some of these ideas into your class as a means to reinforce the mastery of each skill while having fun practicing them.

Using these games properly in your instruction will help skaters retain information and encourages participants to step outside of their comfort zone. Inspire your students to learn through play and fun!

Use a variety of traffic patterns while teaching the skills in each class to make use of your teaching space. This also helps class time to be more entertaining than the traditional back and forth method of teaching.

Be mindful of safety! These games can be altered to fit any skill and every age. Keep in mind the range of skills that your students are capable of and customize appropriately.



SNOWPLOW SAM SAYS

The instructor will take on the role of Snowplow Sam, giving the skaters instructions of actions to complete (e.g., “Snowplow Sam says do six backward wiggles” or “Snowplow Sam says do a one-foot glide for three seconds”). Skaters should follow the instructor commands only if it is prefaced with the phrase “Snowplow Sam says.” Instructors can tailor the commands to match the level of the skater, making the elements more difficult or giving multiple commands quickly back-to-back. Snowplow Sam says is great for building listening skills and can be used as an overall recap of skills.



FISHING

Skaters start in a circle, each holding a pretend fishing pole. Dip down to get a worm from the ground, place on hook, and have everyone cast into the water. Pretend to reel it up and each child says what they caught (octopus, dolphin, goldfish, mermaid). When the instructor says “shark” then everyone must wiggle or swizzle backwards as fast as possible to avoid the shark. The kids then form their circle again when the instructor says the shark swam away. Start the game again with another worm. To add more variety to this game, assign a skill to each sea creature and have the skaters perform them when they catch one.





BUBBLE GUM/BALLOON

The instructor will have all skaters standing in a circle around an imaginary bubble gum dish. The game begins with all participants singing the bubble gum song: “Bubble gum, bubble gum, in a dish! How many pieces do you wish?” The instructor can ask the students how many pieces of gum they wish for as well as their favorite flavor. The instructor will lead the students through a backward skill: wiggles, sizzles, backward one-foot glide, for whatever number the group of students chose. After moving backward away from each other and completing the skills, skaters will pop their bubble gum with a clap. The instructor can incorporate a two-foot hop or a fall and getting up during this time depending on skater’s skill.

The same format can be themed as the balloon game. Starting in a circle, reach in your pocket and pull out an imaginary “balloon.” Ask the kids what color it is and if it has any decorations. You will be surprised by how they decorate it! Prompt your class to blow it up and have everyone perform wiggles or backward swizzles away. The first one to fall POPS the balloon or if the circle is getting too large, clap your hands over your head to POP it yourself. When it pops, everyone must fall down. Everyone skates together again using forward swizzles and the game starts over with a new balloon. Any combination of forward and backward skills can be used.

SLEEPING BEAR

The instructor will start in the middle and play the role of the sleeping bear. Place toys around the circle where the instructor is pretending to be asleep — **be theatrical!** Skaters will “sneak” into the circle to carefully grab a toy. After giving the skaters an opportunity to collect a toy, the instructor will “wake up” and chase the skaters. If they get caught, they must return the toy to the middle. After everyone has been caught, the bear will go back to sleep and the game starts again.



HUNGRY HIPPOS

The instructor will place toys in the middle of the class area and set each skater up equal distance away from the toys. Each skater will have a hula hoop placed on the ground as their home base. On “Go,” skaters will move to the middle of the circle to collect a toy before quickly bringing it back to their station and dropping it in the center of their hula hoop. This will continue until no toys are left. The skater who collects the most toys is the winner.



TUG BOAT

You will need a hula hoop, some string or rope, and a ball or toy. To set the game up, tie the string or rope to the hula hoop. Lay the hula hoop flat on the ice on one side of the class zone. Skaters will place their ball or toy on the ice in the middle of the hoop and will hold the other end of the string or rope. When the instructor says go, they will race to the other side of the ice, pulling the hula hoop and toy behind them. The first player to make it to the other side without losing their object out of the hoop wins.



TOY TOSS

This is a great game to utilize as a warm-up while taking attendance. Participants will partner up in groups of two and face each other, starting close together. Using a small toy, skaters will toss the object back and forth. Each time they complete a toss, they must take one backward swizzle away from each other, making the tossing distance increasingly difficult. This game can also be done in a circle with all participants using one toy/object. For higher levels, try completing toy toss while moving on a small circle.



TIC TAC TOE

The instructor will draw a tic tac toe board on the ice. Participants will line up in two teams, representing x's and o's. Line up two rows of cones between the tic tac toe board and the teams. One skater from each team will go through the cones while performing a skill applicable to their level (marches, swizzles, slaloms, power pulls). Each skater will mark their x or o with a toy or object (such as gloves), then go back through the cones to their teammate. The next two players go until one team achieves three in a row.



MINI TAG

Create a barrier using items like cones, pool noodles, or puck barriers. One skater will be "it," their goal is to tag their partner without crossing the line or reaching over the barrier. Skaters can stop and change direction while playing and can get around their circle using a variety of skills. To keep skaters contained in the area, instructors can draw a circle around the barrier that skaters must stay inside of.



RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT

The skaters will stand at one end of the class zone with the instructor in the middle. Instructor yells “green light,” skaters march toward the “stop-light” until the instructor calls “red light.” The skaters must come to a complete stop or get a pretend speeding ticket and go back to the start to begin again. The first skater to make it across the ice gets to be the next “stoplight.” Use different colored lights for different skating elements depending on the ability of the skaters. You can be creative using commands like yellow light = dip, blue light = swizzles, purple light = spin.



SKILL COMPETITION

Instructors will lead their students through a friendly, encouraging competition based on the skills in their level curriculum. The competition can be based on how long a skater can perform the skill (e.g., one-foot glides, spins, spirals, etc.)



WHAT TIME IS IT, SNOWPLOW SAM?

Skaters will begin on one side of the ice with the instructor in the middle. The skaters will ask: “What time is it?” and the instructor will respond with a time (e.g., “It’s four o’clock!”). Skaters will then perform a designated skill for the amount that the instructor called. After a few rounds, the instructor can instead respond that it is “Lunch Time!” This is the cue for skaters to skate away while the instructor chases them. The first person caught can play the role of the next Snowplow Sam or can be the instructor’s assistant if the game is played again.



MUSICAL TOYS

(MUSICAL CHAIRS)

The instructor will set up by placing toys in a circle on the ice. There should be one less toy than skaters participating. Skaters will begin in a large circle around the toys. The instructor will play music or say go and the participants will begin skating forward or backward around the toys, practicing a skill applicable to their level (e.g., marching, swizzle pumps, crossovers). When the music stops, or when the instructor says stop, skaters must find a toy and pick it up. The skater that does not get a toy is out. To avoid skaters standing around for long periods of time we recommend playing this in small groups of 4-5 skaters.



ROCK PAPER SCISSORS

Break into two teams. Teams line up on opposite sides of each other. On “go,” the first two participants will skate toward each other, stopping when they meet in the middle. If stopping is a challenge, the two lines can be parallel to each other. The two participants will challenge each other to a quick round of rock paper scissors. The winner of the round will proceed forward on their path to the other side, the loser steps off the path and returns to the end of their line. The next player in line is up, skating to meet their opponent where they will compete again in rock paper scissors. The first team to have a player make it to the finish wins. This can be tailored to all levels: on a circle using forward pumps or crossovers, moving backward while incorporating two-foot turns, or using different stopping skills depending on skater ability.



TIME MACHINE

Starting in a line shoulder to shoulder, skaters will stand in a hula hoop. When the instructor says “go,” the skater will bend down, bringing the hoop over their head and placing it in front of them. Skaters will then step back into their hoop and continue the process until they reach the finish line. Skaters can step into the hoop sideways on their toes or walk sideways in a crossover motion. If you do not have enough hoops, this can be done in teams of two with one moving the hoop and one stepping through. You can also play this game in teams of three utilizing a pool noodle or a jump rope: Two of the players will hold either end of a pool noodle/rope with the third participant standing in the middle. The skater in the middle will step or jump over, depending on ability.



ADD A SKILL

The instructor will start the game by picking a skill. After everyone performs the skill together, the instructor will then have skaters add on a different skill of their choice one at a time until everyone has gone.



FREEZE TAG

One participant will be “it.” If they tag another player, that skater must stay frozen in place until another player comes and un-tags them. The last participant remaining is the winner and can be the tagger for the next game. If stopping is a challenge, take extra precautions.



FOUR SQUARE

Divide your class into small groups of four skaters. The instructor will draw a large square on the ice which will be divided into four smaller squares. Each skater will stand in a square. Using a bouncing rubber ball, one player will start the game by serving the ball to another square. Players can allow the ball to bounce once in their square before serving it to another player.



TIMBER

Skaters will line up in small groups. The instructor will stand across from the participants and hold a hockey stick straight up and down with one end balanced on the ice. You can also utilize a wooden dowel, pool noodle or another object of a similar shape. The first skater in line will wait until the instructor lets go and must skate forward to grab the stick before it hits the ground. This skater will then hold the stick for the next skater in line. The process repeats until everyone has had a turn. You can make the game more challenging by standing further away from the participants. This game can also be played individually by giving each participant a hockey stick. They will balance it upright, then let it go by spinning the stick around. The skater must do a spin and catch the stick before it falls.



BALLOON TOSS

Each participant needs a scarf or other light-weight item. Skaters will pair up into groups of two. Standing opposite from each other, each participant will throw the scarf straight up in the air. They will then switch sides with their partner with the goal of catching the other scarf before it hits the ground. Make sure to stagger partners slightly to avoid collisions.



SNOWPLOW SAM IN THE MIDDLE

Skaters will work in teams of three. One player will stand in the middle and the other two will take turns throwing a ball or toy to each other. Their goal is to keep it away from the middle player; the skater in the middle will attempt to intercept it. When the skater in the middle successfully intercepts the object, they then switch places with the last player who tossed the item.



MINI EXHIBITIONS

Give your students a list of four or five elements from their level or from a prior level to connect into a mini program. Give them five minutes each class time to work on their program and then on the last week have everyone perform it in front of the class.



BLOB GAME

One skater will be “it.” This skater will try and tag the other skaters in the class. If a skater is tagged, they will form a group of two, holding hands while they skate. This continues until they have formed a group of four. They then split into two groups of two. This continues until all skaters have been tagged. It is recommended that skaters keep both feet on the ice while playing this game, using swizzles, pumps, slaloms, etc.



SHARKS AND MINNOWS

Skaters will line up on one side of the ice acting as minnows with one skater in the middle being the shark. On go, the skaters will try and reach the other side without being tagged. If they are tagged, they will become a shark. This process repeats back and forth until there is one minnow remaining who can be the shark during the next game.



FOUR CORNERS

This is a variation of freeze tag- One participant will be “it.” If they tag another player, that skater must stay frozen in place until another player comes and un-tags them by performing a spin in front of them. The four corners of the arena or class space are safe zones. If a player goes to the safe zone, they cannot be tagged. The skater who is “it” can get players off the safe zone by performing a spin in front of them. All players at the wall must leave if the tagger does this and cannot return to that corner.

