



## LEARN TO SKATE USA

# Let's Get Started

### HOW DO YOU LEARN TO SKATE?

Learning to skate is easy and fun. Whether your goal is to skate backward, spin fast, score a goal or win a race, we've got the place for you to start! Every champion had to begin with a few lessons – just like you!

### SIGN UP FOR LESSONS

Contact your local facility and ask about class schedules, registration information and public skating. Start learning to skate, earning badges and having fun on the ice! Learn to Skate USA, powered by Toyota, is the only skating program endorsed by U.S. Figure Skating, USA Hockey and US Speedskating, with support from Special Olympics, the Professional Skaters Association and the U.S. Ice Rink Association.

### GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR SKATING LESSON

#### BE ON TIME

Arrive at least 15 minutes before class, so you have time to rent skates, check-in, get your skates on and prepare.

#### BE PREPARED

Becoming a successful skater doesn't require fancy equipment. But it's important to have well-fitting skates, warm, comfortable clothes, a hat or safety helmet and gloves or mittens.

#### BE ATTENTIVE

Try the skill, try it again and always ask questions if you don't understand. Your instructor should break the skill down into a few easy steps, demonstrate and offer suggestions for improvement. People usually learn by seeing, hearing or doing. By knowing the most effective way you learn, you can get what you need from every group lesson.

#### BE SMART

Watch where you're going, and always skate in control. Be aware of other students in your class as well as surrounding classes. Stay inside the boundaries of your class and outside another's. Remember, group classes are about learning and developing basic skills and building a solid foundation for achieving your skating dreams.

### PROPER ATTIRE

Whether skating indoors or outdoors, dress warmly by layering your clothing. As you get warm, you can discard a layer. Most indoor arenas are between 50 and 60 degrees, so wear a jacket. Comfort and ability to move freely are also important. Wear close-fitting, but not tight, pants. Sweatpants or warm-up pants are ideal.

### SKATES

Skates must fit properly. Uncomfortable or ill-fitting skates will be frustrating. Find a pair that offers adequate support and fits comfortably. Practice walking in your skates before taking the ice.

#### FITTING

Find pair in which your feet – especially the heel – don't move inside your boots once it's properly laced. Your heel should be as far back into the boot as possible. The boots should feel snug but not pinch your toes. You should also have some wiggle room. You're seeking a snug fit and comfort.

Support is another essential feature in finding the right skates. Skates lacking adequate support can't hold you up. You'll use a lot of muscle power just staying upright.

Your feet will feel best if you wear one pair of lightweight socks or tights. Bulky, thick socks may limit the support your skates provide and create uncomfortable bumps inside your boots.

Keep trying on skates until you find a pair that fits. Rental skates aren't made to fit everyone; skate size is not always the same as shoe size.

#### LACING

The way your skates look laced up offers clues as to how well they fit. Use these tips to properly lace your skates:

- Tap your heel as far back into the boot as possible
- Pull the tongue up gently, and secure it straight up and down before tucking it beside your foot
- Starting with the second or third set of laces from the bottom, pull them tightly, one pair at a time, so the boot closes well over the front of your foot

Laces should be snug through the ankle

area and bottom two sets of hooks. The top two can be looser to allow flexibility. Cross extra lace over the hooks neatly – don't wind it around the skates. Free flying bows can cause accidents.

Properly laced skates should provide enough room to stick a finger between the back of the boot and your leg, with the ankles flexed. If your foot hurts or is uncomfortable, re-lace, and adjust.

#### TAKING CARE OF YOUR SKATES

Take proper care of your skates and keep them in good condition.

- Never walk on hard surfaces or concrete with uncovered blades. Wear hard guards off the ice to protect your blades.
- Dry off your blades with a towel before storing them in your bag. Wet blades may rust, and rusted blades will not glide very well.
- Keep your blades sharp. Sharp blades grab the ice better than dull ones. Ask your director or instructor for local skate sharpening places.

### SAFETY HELMETS

Learn to Skate USA recommends a helmet for all beginner skaters. It should sit level on your head, not tilted back or pulled too low over your forehead. Securely buckle the chin strap so the helmet doesn't move, which can be vital during a fall. When buying a helmet, try it on in the store to ensure a proper fit.

- Wear the helmet low in front to protect the forehead
- Replace your helmet immediately if it shows any visible signs of damage
- Clean it only with mild soap/water
- Store it in a cool, dry place

A hockey, bicycle, skateboard or ski helmet (multisport) is suitable for beginning ice skaters. These helmets are designed to withstand more than one moderate impact. Replace any type of helmet if damaged. Consult the manufacturer's instructions for guidance on when to replace a helmet.

For more information on skating lessons and how to get started, visit [LearnToSkateUSA.com](http://LearnToSkateUSA.com).

### SKATE TO GREAT, ONE BLADE AT A TIME!

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