

Your First Day of Skating Lessons

We hope you are as excited to learn to skate as we are to teach you. Being prepared for your first day of class will ensure that the experience is a good one.

Before you leave the house:

- * Warm comfortable clothes are a must! It is always winter inside the rink.
- * We recommend layers! Snow pants or two layers on the legs along with two or three layers on the upper body makes a great combination.
- * Gloves or mittens are very important. Falling is normal & trying to avoid placing bare hands on the ice can make the fall more painful.
- * The rink has helmets to borrow, but if you have one that fits well, we recommend bringing it.
- * If you plan to wear a hat, wear one that fits under a helmet without compromising the fit of the helmet.
- * Thick socks are NOT recommended. Skates need to be snug. Thick socks will diminish the skate fit and will limit the ability to learn to skate (notice that surgeons don't wear thick gloves...you want to be able to guide the blade!). If you have ample clothes on the rest of your body and your skates fit well, your feet will not get cold.

When heading to the rink the most important thing is to BE EARLY!!!

Please try to arrive at the rink 15 minutes before class is scheduled to start, especially if you are renting skates.

Registration table:

The registration table will be at the entry of the rink. At this table, you or your parent will:

- * Complete any unfinished registration. (We highly recommend completing registration and payment online.)
- * Fill out & sign a liability waiver.
- * Receive a name tag. It is very important to wear your name tag each week so all of the coaches know who you are. Please leave the name tag with an instructor or assistant at the end of class.

Skates:

Thanks to Douglas-Doran Grant funding, rental skates are included in the cost of your skating lesson. The rink staff and JSC coaches can help you with proper fitting and lacing of your skates.

- * Your skate size will be smaller than your shoe size. It is very difficult to skate in the wrong size skates or in loosely tied skates. If the skates you are given feel too big or too small, **they probably are**. Take them back and trade them for a size that fits better. It seems like a lot of work at the time, but **it is worth it**.
- * To properly tie ice skates, start at the very base of the laces (by the toes) and pull the laces snug. Continue to pull the laces tight, one eyelet at a time, traveling slowly to

the top of the skate. When finished, the skate should feel snug but not tight. The toes should wiggle but there should be no side to side movement of any part of the foot within the skate. You should be able to bend forward at the ankle but you should not be able to easily stick a finger under the laces around the base of the ankle or by the toes.

- * Wrap extra lace back and forth on the hooks of the skate. It is NOT recommended to wrap extra lace around the skater's ankle. Make sure the ends of the laces don't hang down so far that you can skate over them.
- * For more information on fitting and lacing skates, please, read our "What to look for in a Skate" pdf.
- * If you have questions or would like assistance lacing or fitting skates, PLEASE, ask one of our instructors before class starts. When a new skater has difficulty learning the basics of standing and moving on skates, the majority of time, it is because the skates don't fit or are improperly tied.

Heading out on the ice:

After a quick orientation and introduction of the instructors, we will head out on the ice.

- * It is important to make sure that you don't have any food or gum on the ice, or anything on your clothes or in your pockets that could fall out onto the ice.
- * There will be coaches and helpers to assist you onto the ice. However, if you have never skated before, the best approach is small steps, keeping your hands and elbows in front of the body. If you feel yourself losing your balance, bend your knees & reach forward toward the ice.
- * On the ice you will see rows of cones set up. These cones separate the ice into sections where each group will receive instruction or practice skills in the practice area. The instructors will tell you where your group meets on the ice. It is important to skate in your section of the ice and not interrupt other classes.

During Class:

Each hour is split into two halves. One 30-minute section will be instruction time and the other will be supervised practice. Practice time gives each skater the opportunity to work on what they are learning, perfect what they already have learned, and to practice their skills playing supervised games. It may look like your child is "playing" rather than "practicing", but experience has shown us that skaters learn more when the entire hour is not spent in a formal class. All movement on the ice adds up to "learning to skate", and the body is developing the muscle memory necessary to balance and move across the ice. There is always an instructor available to assist in the practice area.