

Equipment and Safety Guidelines

Congratulations on enrolling your child in a MSC skating program! Having the right equipment will ensure that their experience on the ice is fun, successful and safe. Skates should be comfortable, fit well, and provide firm ankle support. All CanSkate participants up to and including Stage 5 must wear a CSA-approved hockey helmet while on the ice.

Most department, sports and figure skating stores sell skating equipment in a variety of price and quality ranges. The choice is yours.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding equipment for your skater, please speak to someone at the CanSkate table.

CLOTHING

- Clothing should provide warmth, allow movement and provide some protection from falls.
- Avoid clothing that is too bulky, restrictive or not waterproof.
- Turtlenecks and a sweater or jacket on top should be sufficient.
- Snowpants or windbreaker pants over long comfortable pants will keep your skater warm and dry.
- Warm mittens or gloves are a must. Have a backup pair in case they get wet.
- Long scarves are not to be worn.

HELMETS

- Hockey helmets with CSA approval are necessary for skaters of any age up to and including CanSkate Stage 5.
- Fit should be snug. Both the strap and the helmet should be adjustable.
- Face masks or cages are recommended for additional protection.

SAFETY POINTERS FOR SKATERS

- Get up quickly after falling down.
- Look in the direction of travel when skating backwards.
- No pushing, playing tag or bumping into others or the boards.
- No food, gum or candy on the ice.
- CanSkate Director and coaches should be advised if a skater has special medical conditions.

TIPS FOR PURCHASING SKATES

- Wear only one pair of tight-fitting socks or tights (same pair that will be worn when skating).
- Don't buy a larger size for skater to "grow into". If they are too loose, skates will not be supportive.
- A leather boot is preferable to vinyl. Laces and hooks are preferable to buckles. Molded plastic skates are not recommended.

Equipment and Safety Guidelines

HOW TO CHECK FIT OF SKATES

- Partially lace boots through instep.
- Slide foot forward so toes can touch the front but are not cramped.
- Stand with weight equally distributed over both feet and bend knees. The space at the back of the heel should be no more than a pencil width.
- Tie laces loosely over the toe and front of the boot and snugly over the ankle and instep.
- Skates should fit snugly around the ankle and heel.
- Skate should fit the width of the feet – they should be snug but comfortable and allow toes to wiggle.
- There should be no looseness or creases in the boot. The tongue should be well padded and wide enough to cover the front of the ankle and stay in place.
- Walk around in the skates. Skates should feel comfortable. Ankles should not wobble.

HOW TO TIE SKATES

- Be sure the tongue is centered and pulled all the way up.
- Start at the toe of the skate and tighten laces comfortably over the toe and front of the boot.
- Before tightening the hooks, wiggle your toes to make sure the skates feel comfortable.
- Tie laces snugly around the ankle and tie a tight bow or double knot.
- Make sure extra lace is tucked away. Do not wrap laces around the ankle.

CARE OF SKATES

- Always wear protective guards when walking off-ice to protect sharpened blade. NEVER walk on concrete surfaces without skate guards.
- Dry blades and sole plate completely with a cloth after skating to prevent rust.
- Protect blades with soft guards while in skating bag.
- Remove skates from bag and guards from blades after each use. Allow boots and blades to air dry completely.
- Never store skates with hard guards on to prevent rust.
- Unlace skates sufficiently before removing them so that the back of the boot will not break down or rip.

SHARPENING YOUR SKATES

- Sharpen skates as soon as they are purchased. Use a good skate-sharpening company. Some hockey skate sharpening facilities may not sharpen figure skates properly.
- Re-sharpen skates after approximately 30 hours of skating (depending on usage and care).
- More frequent sharpening may be required if the skater walks on concrete, rubber or carpeted surfaces without guards, if the blades are not wiped dry, or if there are severe nicks and rough surfaces on the edges of the blade.
- The bottom pick on figure skates should not be removed. It is essential for proper balance.