



What is Figure Skating and What Does it Entail? *Parent Education Resource for the DFSC by Coach Maegan*

Learn To Skate

This is where children learn the basics/fundamentals of skating and ice etiquette. Students are in groups and put into levels based on age and skill. Some examples of the group levels are Snowplow Sam, Basic 1-6, and Freeskate 1-6. Classes that are also offered are Adult classes and Learn to Play Hockey, but this varies based on club programming and rink availability.

Private Lesson Coaches – Picking a Coach

The Deep Freeze Skating Club encourages beginning skaters to participate primarily in group lessons. If your skater needs supplemental or “booster” lessons to help pass a level, or if they decide to begin competing, then you will want to seek out a coach for private lessons.

When looking for a coach to set up regular private lessons with, be sure to do your homework and take your time. The decision should be approached like any other major purchase. This person will spend hours interacting with your child and will shape their attitude about skating and life. Watch how coaches interact with their skaters on and off the ice. Narrow your choices down to two or three coaches and set up a time to speak with them to see how you and your child interact with them. This is a person you will see regularly, so it is important that you like them! Discuss payment options and charges up front. While you may know their on-ice lesson rate, most coaches charge for fees that take up their time off-ice, such as music editing, and competition fees. Will you pay monthly or per lesson?

**** Each coach has a bio posted at the rink on the right of the wall when you enter through the doors. ****

Once you pick a **PRIMARY** coach you as a parent need to continue proper rink etiquette. This means **EVERYTHING** goes through your primary coach. A coach may decide a skater is not right for them or that the skater needs to work with another coach for specific needs of the skater. Junior Coaches are anyone who has tested/competed juvenile level and up and should only be coaching beginning skaters. (Learn to Skate Basics through Preliminary)

- Our goal as a club is to get everyone to at least the juvenile level and achieve an axel, the first extra half rotated forward jump.

Testing Levels

Moves in the Field and Freestyle testing levels are as follows:

- Pre-Preliminary
- Preliminary
- Pre-Juvenile
- Juvenile
- Intermediate
- Novice
- Junior
- Senior

****Once a skater has tested both moves and freestyle, they are considered a Gold Medalist****

Competitions

If you're interested in competing you should first talk with your primary coach. Competitions are exciting and are for all ages and levels! You can find competitions in your area by going to the following website:

<https://comp.entryeze.com/findcompetition.aspx> then selecting your state

Skaters will need to be a Learn to Skate USA member or a USFS Member in order to compete. A skater's primary coach will pick the skaters competition level that reflects their last passed freestyle test. An example of pricing and events offered for a competition is as follows:

U.S. FIGURE SKATING EVENTS			
SINGLES	IJS/6.0	1 st EVENT	2 nd EVENT
Excel Free Skate (Preliminary Plus, Pre-Juvenile Plus, Juvenile, Juvenile Plus, Intermediate, Intermediate Plus Novice-Senior.)	IJS	\$130	\$85
Excel Free Skate (Beginner, High Beginner, Pre-Preliminary, Preliminary, Pre-Juvenile)	6.0	\$115	\$60
Well Balanced Short Program (Open Juvenile-Senior)	IJS	\$130	\$85
Well Balanced Free Skate (No Test & Pre-Preliminary)	6.0	\$115	\$60
Well Balanced Free Skate (Preliminary thru Senior)	IJS	\$130	\$85
SPECIALTY	JUDGING	1 st EVENT	2 nd EVENT
Compulsory Moves (No test - Open Juvenile)	6.0	\$115	\$60
Excel Compulsory Moves (Excel Beg.–Excel Prelim.)	6.0	\$115	\$60
Jumps Challenge (Beginner–Senior)	6.0	\$115	\$60
Spins Challenge (Beginner–Senior)	6.0	\$115	\$60
Showcase	IJS	\$130	\$60

Well Balanced vs. Excel Events

Once a skater has tested USFS, there are two different types, or ‘tracks,’ of competition in figure skating. The **Well-Balanced Event (WB)** has been around since the beginning; however, it just has a new name. In the past, a skater entered at their level and exhibited their skills. There were few requirements as to what could be done at each level. Some coaches would ‘sand bag’ by holding their skaters back levels to win the competition, even though the skater could and should have competed at a higher level. USFS created the Excel Series that has Test Track and Excel Plus within the series, with hopes to retain skaters who might be discouraged by the high technical difficulty of some of the elements. This type of competition has more restrictions about what is allowed at each level, so the competition is more at level playing field. Skaters are offered opportunities for success in a competitive atmosphere and stay excited about their abilities.

A skater may begin competing at non-qualifying events before they have tested into the official USFS levels. These TT events are called Beginner, High Beginner, and No Test. Typically, skaters competing at these levels are at the USFS Free Skate levels 1-6, or just starting to enter the competition arena, and have not yet landed their axel. Skaters that would like to compete in qualifying events, such as Regionals and Sectionals, would enter the more competitive WB Event at the Juvenile level, and some regions offer non-qualifying Test Track events at all levels. Skaters competing at the Juvenile and Intermediate levels can qualify to the US Junior Championships, and Novice, Junior and Senior competitors can qualify to the US Championships, often called Nationals. There are international events at the Junior and Senior levels. You see senior level skaters competing at the World Championships and Olympic Games. There are also non-qualifying and qualifying competitions offered at the Adult Levels, and each year there is an Adult National Championship!

IJS

Competitors accumulate points based on the degree of difficulty (base value) of each technical element and how well each element is executed (grade of execution, or GOE). Skaters also earn points based on their overall skating ability and performance level through program component scores.

The 6.0 Judging System

The 6.0 system has been the longstanding judging system for figure skating. Today, U.S. Figure Skating uses it for Compete USA events and many nonqualifying competitions, particularly at the pre-juvenile level and below.

The basic principle of the 6.0 system is a “majority” system. Each event is judged by an odd number of judges, and the winner of the event is the skater placed highest by a majority of these judges.

For all singles and pairs events and the free dance, judges award two marks: one for technical merit and one for program presentation. The technical merit mark expresses a judge's evaluation of the quality of the required elements skated. The presentation mark reflects a judge's assessment of the program as a whole — its composition, originality, use of ice, skater's style and expression of the music.

The Scoring Scale

Each judge will award marks ranging from 0.0 to 6.0, based on the following scale:

- 0 - not skated
- 1 - very poor
- 2 - poor
- 3 - mediocre
- 4 - good
- 5 - very good
- 6 - outstanding

How Do IJS & 6.0 Differ?

The IJS is based on cumulative points rather than the 6.0 standard of marks and placement. The IJS focuses on the skaters and not the judges. Judges don't have to use their memory to compare all aspects of every skater and figure out where to place them, but simply evaluate the qualities of each performance.

Skating Apparel & Skates – How to Find Them

Our club has a plethora of used skates and dresses, feel free to ask around before purchasing anything brand new. We highly recommend NOT purchasing skates through Amazon. There are two places suggested to buy fitted ice skates and get skates sharpened

- Precision Edges by Rich
precisionedgesbyrich.com (all appointments booked on website only)
7208 Grand Avenue, Neville Island PA 15225
(located by RMU)
- Skaters Edge
5648 Mayfield Rd, Cleveland Oh 44124
(440) 995-3343 (call for appointment)