

Buying Skates

Most department and sports stores sell skating equipment in a variety of prices and quality ranges. Before buying skates, check carefully for: Proper Fit; Firm Ankle Support ; Good Quality Leather; and Correct Blade Placement.

Places we recommend for purchasing skating equipment:

1. Figure 8 - Hockey 1 – Industrial Road – they sell used skates as well – 613-731-4007
2. The Hockey Store – Bank Street
3. Blades 'n Things – (currently changing locations – check the bulletin board for more information)
4. If you are comfortable with fitting your skater yourself, you can try Canadian Tire or Play It Again Sports.

When shopping for skates:

1. Avoid buying a larger size skate in anticipation that the skater will "grow into it" - poor fitting equipment will cause discomfort, discouragement, poor results and can cause injury.
2. Molded plastic skates should be avoided as should the 'speed skate' style blade. They are inflexible and make it difficult for skaters to bend their knees and push off, and the 'speed skate' style blade is the wrong shape and balance point for our program. Plastic becomes very cold and stiff on the ice, and makes the skater's feet cold.
3. Look for blades that are screwed onto the boot rather than bolted or riveted on, so that the blade can be moved if necessary. If the blade is bolted or riveted, make sure it is on straight and centered for your body. The blade should feel centered under the foot, and the foot should not fall to one side or the other.
4. A leather boot is preferable to vinyl. Vinyl does not have enough support and gets colder in the arena. Leather will conform to your child's foot.
5. Makes sure the boot does not have any wrinkles.

How a Skate Should be Fit

- Wear only one pair of tight fitting socks or tights, preferably the same type that will be worn when skating.
- With skate undone, slide foot into boot;
- Slide foot forward so toes touch the front but are not cramped;
- Stand with weight equally distributed over both feet and bend knees;
- Space at the back of the heel should be no more than a pencil in width, if your finger fits, the skate's too big!;
- Bang the heel of the skate against a wood or padded surface to force the heel all the way back in the boot;
- Pull tongue out slightly;
- Stand straight with knees and ankles straight;
- There should be no space to put anything in the outside or inside of the boot near the arch or ball of the foot;
- Tie laces snug over the toe and the front of the boot through to the arch;
- From the arch/instep to the ankle the skate should be tied tighter;
- At the top of the ankle the laces should be secure but do not need to be tight;
- Do not wrap extra laces around the ankle. Cut the laces to fit;
- There should be no looseness or creases in the foot area of the boot. Creases at the ankle should work with the shape of the skaters' ankle and should not have cracks or be too deep;
- The tongue should be well padded and wide enough to cover the front of the ankle and stay in place;
- Walk around off the ice, the skates should feel comfortable.

Sharpening your Skates

1. Sharpen skates as soon as they are purchased, whether second hand or brand new;
2. Use a good skate sharpening company;
3. Re-sharpen you skates after approximately 30 hours of skating;
4. For Figure Skates, and Recreational Figure Skates, do not remove the bottom toe pick. The pick is part of the design of figure skates and is essential to proper balance, not just for jumps.

We Recommend the Following Skate Sharpening Companies

1. Joe Baker – joe_baker1@hotmail.com – 613-868-0929
2. Vince's Precision Sharpening – Boundary Road – 613-822-1570
3. Figure 8 - Hockey 1 – Industrial Road – 613-731-4007

Taking Care of your Skates

1. Always wear protective guards when not on the ice, even if there is rubber matting, it still dulls the blades;
2. Loosen skates sufficiently before removing them so the back of the boot will not break down nor the tongue rip;
3. Dry blades and sole plate completely with an absorbent cloth after each use;
4. Do not put rubber or plastic guards on skates that aren't on feet, you can get cloth blade protectors;
5. Air out boots after each use to prolong the life of the boot.