



Skates are obviously a very important piece of equipment in the sport of figure skating; therefore, choosing the right skate and maintaining them properly is necessary. Here are some tips for making sure that your skater is ready to hit the ice with style and grace.

- Talk to your coach for a recommendation as to what style of boot and blade is appropriate for your level.
- Skates should fit snug, not be too loose, offer good support, and laces should be in good condition. Skates made for advanced skaters, in particular, will often run 1 ½ to 2 sizes smaller than street shoe size. Be sure your fitter measures both for length and width of the skater's foot.
- If possible, put skates on after arriving at the arena. Wearing skates, even with guards on, outside can allow salt and debris to become lodged in the guards, creating nicks and dulling your blades prematurely.
- While at the rink, guards should be worn while not on the ice. Even though the floor may be rubber or have rubber mats, it is not guaranteed to be free of dirt and debris.
- After taking skates off, take time to properly wipe the blades and skates dry. It does not hurt to do this more than once, as moisture is not a friend of the boot or blade.
- Skates should not be stored with a hard plastic or rubber style guard as they will not wick any moisture away and can cause rust. Cloth or soaker style blade covers work much better for storing your skates.
- Take your skates out of your bag and allow them, along with your guards and cloth/soakers, to dry so that the moisture will not harm your skates. This does not have to be done every day, but it will help your skates and blades last longer.
- Be sure to check your guards periodically to make sure that dirt and debris are not down in the blade resting area. Clean them as needed.
- Inspect blades for nicks and dullness. Have them sharpened as needed