



Learn to Skate **Skater & Parent Guide**

Pre-CanSkate is a program designed for skaters who are 3-5 years of age who have limited to no skating experience. This program introduces fundamental skating skills such as balance and glide by using fun, interactive games, and activities in a group format. Upon mastering the skills in this program, skaters will move into Skate Canada's flagship CanSkate program. This program is unparented.

CanSkate is a program for skaters who are **5–15 years of age** or have graduated from the **Pre-CanSkate** program. No prior skating experience is required. This program builds on the fundamental movements of skating through an interactive group lesson format using circuits and a FastTrack. Skaters are grouped by age and ability and work on two or three stages at a time, progressing at their own rate through six stages of skills in the areas of agility, balance, and control. The CanSkate program prepares skaters for any ice sport pursuit, including recreational skating, hockey, ringette, and figure skating.

Adult-CanSkate is for the young at heart who wish to learn and develop their fundamental skating skills and movement through an interactive group lesson format using circuits and a FastTrack. No experience is needed. This class is for skaters who are 16 years of age and older. There is no age limit!

*All the above programs have multiple stages of skills and are designed for repeat registrations while the skater progresses at their own rate through the stages. Skaters are divided into smaller peer groups by their skating ability and age. Skaters may be moved between groups at the LTS Coordinator's discretion to allow for the best skater development and safety.

*Learn to Skate programs are designed for repeat registrations, allowing skaters to progress through multiple skill stages at their own pace. Skaters are grouped by age and ability and may be reassigned by the LTS Coordinator to support optimal development and safety. Progress is tracked, and ribbons and badges are awarded in accordance with current Skate Canada program guidelines.

The Derrick Skating Club also offers **Inclusive/Adaptive Skating** for skaters with physical and/or intellectual disabilities to include them into our programs. If you would like to learn more about Inclusive Skating, please contact our office at office@derrickskating.ca.

Age requirements

We have received many requests to make exceptions to our age requirements for Pre-CanSkate. Our coaches have skated with thousands of little ones and know that those under 3 years of age do not generally fair well, unparented. The ice surface is a big, cold, and intimidating place when you are little and away from the familiarity of family. We strictly enforce that all skaters are 3



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years of age at the start of their first (unparented) Pre-CanSkate class. Our goal is to set all skaters up for a happy and positive skating experience so that they want to come back to the rink weekly.

Coaches may graduate skaters from Pre-CanSkate to CanSkate prior to 5 years of age when it is determined that the skater can handle the additional 15 minutes of class time in both maturity and skill level.

Graduating from CanSkate. What's next?

Our coaching team continuously monitors and tracks the progress of skaters and will use their discretion to move skaters to the appropriate level or program for their skill level, maturity, and safety. From the Pre-CanSkate program, skaters may graduate into CanSkate, and CanSkaters may graduate into our Introductory Figure Skating Academy (IFSA) programs depending on the skater's interest and ability.

Skater progress is individual, and all skaters are encouraged to reach their own milestones and successes along the way. Progress reports/evaluations are distributed electronically at the end of all sessions, shortly after the last class.

Our coaches will look to have conversations with parents during the graduation process, however, should you have any questions regarding your skater, please feel free to chat with your skater's coach or Class Manager after their class. We ask parents to refrain from interrupting coaches during lesson time. Emailing the office is another option if catching your skater's coach at the rink side is not possible before or after class.

Skating Equipment

SKATES. Skaters in our Learn to Skate programs may use either hockey skates or figure skates. The most important factor is that **skates fit properly** and provide good ankle support.





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We recommend **skates with laces**, as they provide the best fit and support. We **do NOT recommend adjustable skates or moulded plastic skates with buckles**, as their quality can limit skating development.

Skates should be tied snugly from the toe to the ankle, with excess laces tucked away. Skate blades should be wiped dry after each session and sharpened regularly (at least once per season).

When fitting skates, toes should be able to wiggle slightly, while the heel should have very little movement. Please ensure new skates are sharpened before use.

Hockey vs Figure skates? Either option is fine. There is no one option that is easier to first learn on. However, switching from hockey to figure can be a challenging transition. So, if the family has any ideas of the skater being interested in figure skating, they should start in a figure skate with a toe pick!

HELMET. All skaters (including adult skaters) are required to have a CSA approved hockey or ice-skating helmet. This means the **helmet MUST have the red/blue CSA sticker on it to be considered valid.**

Skaters who come with a **non-CSA approved helmet** such as a bike helmet or a ski helmet will **NOT be allowed on the ice.**



Your skater's CSA approved helmet **MUST** fit snugly. It should not fall over their eyes, and their forehead cannot be exposed if they tilt their head back. If the helmet has movement, it is not a proper fit. Skaters who have an ill-fitting or damaged helmet may be asked to leave the ice at the discretion of the LTS Coordinator/Managing Coach.

Please note that the glue from decorative stickers can compromise the integrity of the helmet. Our coaching team will only give stickers to skaters on their hands or clothing, and we discourage placing them on their helmet.

CLOTHING. Please dress your skater in warm layers without being too bulky or restrictive to movement. Snow pants are a great option to help keep warm and dry (especially for little ones in Pre-CanSkate). Please also remember **mitts/gloves are required** for little fingers to stay warm and be protected from sharp blades!

INCLUSIVE / ADAPTIVE SKATING. If your skater has medical concerns, special needs, learning challenges, or requires additional support, we ask that you contact our Club Office prior to registration each season by emailing office@derrickskating.ca.



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Please do not register before speaking with our Office Manager, as we cannot guarantee that appropriate supports, staffing, or program resources will be available for your skater if registration is completed without prior consultation.

Our goal is to ensure the best possible skating experience for every participant. We will work with families to review individual needs and, where possible, offer a minimum of two program time options that may be suitable for your skater.

Safety

Concern for the safety of all skaters is of utmost priority. All parents/guardians are asked to treat our coaching team with respect always. Verbal abuse of our staff will not be tolerated.

*** Skaters are NOT permitted to have gum, candy, or anything in their mouth during classes.**

*** Skaters and siblings are never welcomed to sit on the tops of the boards in the players boxes while waiting for classes, even with parental supervision.**

*** Under no circumstances are parents/guardians allowed on the ice.**

*** Parents/guardians must remain in the arena area, visible to the coaches, at all times during their skater's class in case of emergency** (and to assist their little ones who may need a bathroom break during their class).

* Parents/guardians are asked to view skaters from the stands. Players boxes must remain empty during class time in case of emergency.

* Parents are asked to refrain from any negative comments or foul language while at the arena and around the children in our programs. We support respectful language and conduct at the arena for a positive environment.

Emergency Evacuation

During an emergency which requires an evacuation, our staff are trained to follow protocol.

- DO NOT meet your skater or try to retrieve them from the ice. Skaters will be led off the ice in their assigned groups, and held either in the lobby of the building, or at a muster point outside.
- Parents can join their skaters at this meeting point, but skaters will not be released until the LTS Coordinator/Managing Coach has completed the mandatory attendance check. Please be patient while we complete our required check-out process.



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Health and Wellness

Please monitor the health of all participants and accompanying persons. We ask that you do not bring anyone to the facility who is demonstrating signs of being unwell.

Communication

We will use email to send all registered skaters' information regarding their classes and any upcoming changes. We try to only email you pertinent information to your skater's class. If you have opted out of our emails, please ensure you check our website for information. If you do not receive our emails, you may miss important information. We ask you to re-consider to be able to keep you informed.

Dressing room assignments are posted on one of the following: the arena lobby boards, our notice stand or dressing room doors. Please check our notice stand every session, as dressing room assignments may change.

If you have any specific questions about your skater, please reach out to their coach if you can catch them rink side for a brief time or email the office. We are happy to answer any questions or address any concerns you may have.

Make Up Classes

It is the Derrick Skating Club's policy to maintain low coach to skater ratios in all groups on all sessions. To help maintain this policy, **we are unable to offer makeup classes to skaters that miss a session** due to illness, travel, etc.

Refund Policy

Fees are non-refundable, except at the sole discretion of the Derrick Skating Club, and if given will be held in the form of a credit to be applied to future registrations. The Skate Canada fee of \$65 and a \$25 Administration fee will be retained in all cases.

Volunteer/Fundraising Requirements

There are NO mandatory volunteer or fundraising requirements of our Learn to Skate families. However, if you would like to become more involved in club activities, we welcome volunteers and have a variety of opportunities available. Please feel free to contact our office.