

Figure Skate Selection Guide, Clothing and Equipment

Below are suggested charts for figure skates based upon an individual's skill level - according to Skate Canada.

Four factors to consider when purchasing your boot are: your weight, how often you skate, your skating level and your foot width. Stronger skaters or larger adult skaters might want to move up to the next higher level boot, lighter or younger skaters might want to move down to the next lower level but purchase a higher level blade. This is especially true for young girls skating at higher skill levels, but their physical size can't justify a figure skate boot built for a senior lady. When in doubt consult your coach.

Test Level	Skill Level	Skate Recommendations
RECREATIONAL ONLY	Occasional ice skating, non-competitive skating. Basic steps, swizzles, gliding, stopping, forward stroking, basic edges	Riedell 110 RS Jackson Softskate Plus, Jackson Glacier 520 GAM Fantasia
SKATE CANADA Canskate 1-3	Basic steps, swizzles, gliding, stopping, forward stroking, basic edges, forward crossovers, two foot spin	Jackson Glacier 520 (Tots) Jackson Artiste, Jackson Mystique GAM Fantasia (Tots) GAM Horizon Riedell 110RS (Tots) Riedell 121RS, Riedell 115RS Risport Etoile Harlick Classic
SKATE CANADA Canskate 4-7 Preliminary Free Skate	Backward stroking, back crossovers, three turns, simple footwork such as Mohawks, hockey stop, T-stop.	Jackson Classique, Marquis GAM Horizon, Astro, Zenith Riedell 133TS, 255TS Risport Etoile Harlick Classic
SKATE CANADA Jr. Bronze Free Skate	Advanced stroking, crossovers, forward one foot turns, consecutive edges, lunges, shoot the duck, bunny hops, half-jumps, one foot spins.	Jackson Freestyle GAM Zenith, Celebrity Riedell 133TS, 255TS, 910LS Risport RF4 Harlick Classic
SKATE CANADA Sr. Bronze Free Skate	Simple jumps such as waltz jump, salchow, and toe loop, Basic spins such as two-foot and scratch, spirals, simple footwork.	Jackson Competitor, Premier GAM Celebrity, Spectra Riedell 435TS, 1310 LS Risport RF4, Excellence Harlick Competitor

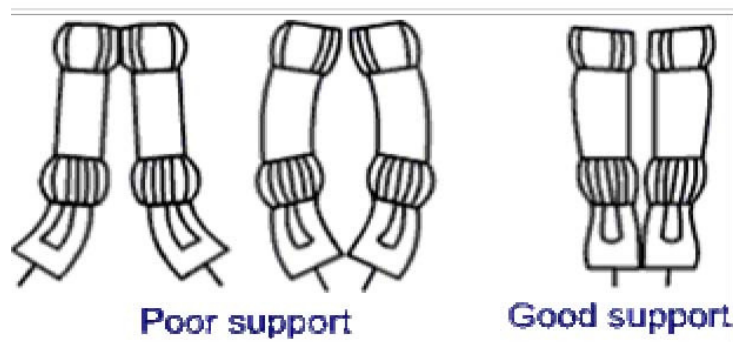
SKATE CANADA Jr. Silver Free Skate	Singles through Lutz, Combination jumps, Axel, Sit and Camel spins, more complex footwork, spiral sequence.	Jackson Premier, Elite GAM Spectra, Ultra, Performance Riedell 435TS, 1310 LS Risport Excellence Harlick Competitor Plus
SKATE CANADA Sr. Silver Free Skate	All single jumps, all double jumps, combination doubles, lower level triples, flying spins, complex footwork.	Jackson Elite Plus GAM Performance, Montreal Riedell 875TS, 2010 LS Risport RF3 Super Harlick High Tester
SKATE CANADA Gold Free Skate	Triples, quads, combination triples, all spins, complex foot work.	Jackson Elite Supreme GAM Montreal Riedell HLS 1500, 875TS, 2010 LS Risport RF2 Super Harlick Finalist

BOOT SUPPORT

The first decision to be made before going to the store is what style of skates [figure or hockey] is more appropriate. For a first time skater, this decision is not really critical. Kids will outgrow skates long before the type of skate has a significant effect on performance.

The more important factor is the quality and support of the boot.

Modern skates provide firm support around the ankles. To accomplish this, the skate manufacturer installs stiff leather inserts between the outer and inner layers of the boot. Old skates may lack this stiffness; in used skates, it may be broken down from use or abuse. With the skates laced up snugly, the ankles should be straight so that the skate becomes a natural extension of the leg. If the skater's ankles lean inward or outward, the skater will have difficulty balancing (particularly on one foot).



Molded plastic skates are NOT a good choice. They provide a lot of support but they cannot be 'broken in'. This prevents the boot from flexing properly to allow the skater the required range of motion.

The plastic skates with buckles instead of laces may be convenient but they often come loose leaving the skater with no support whatsoever.

Fitting

Skates should fit more snugly than regular shoes, particularly around the heel. A properly fitting skate should have no more than 1/2 inch of space at the toe. The skater should be able to wiggle toes inside the boot, but the heel should not move at all in the skate.

The ball of the foot should come just ahead of the point where the sole starts to cut in for the arch. This ensures the proper positioning of the arch and is extremely important.

The front opening of the boot should be sufficiently wide to pull the laces tight. The tongue should be sufficiently wide so that it will stay in place and it should be well padded to prevent laces from cutting into the foot.

Skates should be worn with one pair of thin socks. Thick or extra socks may appear to fill up the space in a skate that is too big. But as soon as the skater tries to exert pressure against the boot, the extra thickness compresses and the skate doesn't provide the needed support.

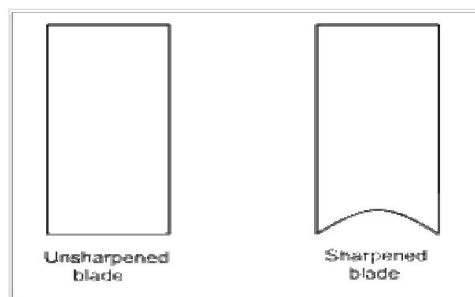
Here is a list of a few common ill-fitting symptoms:

- **Too Big (length or width):** The boot will form creases near the toes and blisters will form from feet slipping. Skates that are too big do not provide sufficient ankle support. They may even cause blisters due to rubbing inside the boot.
- **Too Small (length or width):** The skater will need to recognize that the boot is too small. The toes will often curl on top of each other (width) or the toe knuckles will curl up and rise (length). Skates that are too small will be very uncomfortable for the skater and feet will tend to get cold very quickly
- **Boot Twisting:** Boot twisting is usually caused by the pronation of the skater's feet. This may be reduced by, choosing a custom fit boot and using an orthotic correction.
- **Arch Cramping:** When the skater's navicular bone, arch muscle, and/or low/flat arches do not match the shape of the arch counter of the boot, the skater will experience pain and cramping in the arch and plantar muscle. This may be corrected by, choosing a custom fit boot and using an orthotic correction.
- **Slipping Heels:** Heels will slip when the shape of the foot is narrower in the heel area of the boot than the shape of the boot. To correct this problem the skater needs a custom fit boot (boot is built more narrow in the heel area) or a combination width stock boot (only one size difference from ball to heel is available in stock boots). In custom boots Heel Hugger and Achilles tendon padding may also be added to the boots to help prevent the heels from slipping.

If you have chosen the right boot and skate several times a week, then it should take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks to break them in. If your feet are killing you after 3 months then you probably picked the wrong boot for your skating level.

*** Never buy skates too big so they will last another season ***

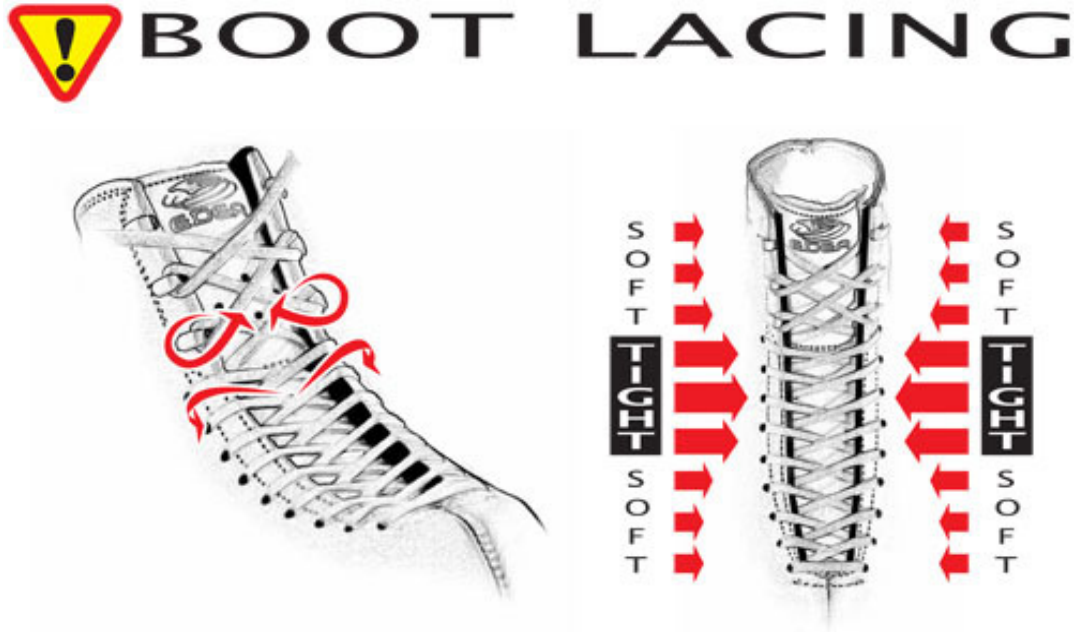
Blade Profile



BOOT LACING

A correct boot lacing is fundamental:

For keeping the foot in its natural position inside the boot For letting the boot work in a proper way, with no folds or wrong tongue displacements.



Method of Lacing:

Skates should be laced fairly loosely over the toe and front of the foot, but snugly over the ankles. Laces should be hooked securely with sufficient tension to permit one finger down the back of the boot. Laces should be long enough to be tied in a double bow and tucked in. Never wrap laces around the top of the boot! Be sure the tongue is centered and pulled all the way up.

The lacing from exterior, which means inserting the lace from up the hole, from outside to inside the boot, gives the following advantages:

- The lace makes no direct pressure on the foot instep
- It fastens the boot homogeneously
- The lace becomes self blocking.

At the hooks area we suggest to lace around the hooks from top down, resulting in:

- a better function of the hook
- lace self blocking
- featuring a lace 'V' shape to help flexions.

Anatomically, our feet are not symmetric. The inner part has larger volume, while the outer part, with withdrawn ankle has less volume. In all shoes the function of the tongue is protecting the foot instep and helping the leg flexions. In case of non correct lacing, it is natural that the tongue follows the anatomical foot shape, sliding outwards. There are two ways of using the loop:

- both laces go through the loop
- only one lace goes through the loop and then twisted

Skate Guards:

Hard skate guards should be worn when walking to and from the ice. Skate guards are necessary because they protect the edges of the blade, prolong the life of the skates, and are a safety factor when walking on various surfaces. Permanent damage can be done to a blade by walking on concrete without guards. Skate guards should be removed from the blades when the skates are stored. This is to prevent the blades from rusting.

Care of Equipment:

- After each wearing, blades should be dried with a cloth and stored without guards. Guards should be washed out or replaced occasionally.
- Have a skate bag to keep skates, guards, soft guards, wipe cloths, extra laces, helmets, etc. organized and at hand.
- Boots and laces should be kept clean.
- While removing skates make sure that they are sufficiently unlaced so that the back of the boot will not break down.
- Blades are sharpened properly on a regular basis. This is very important as the blade is the contact that makes the edges enabling a skater to do jumps and spins. Better quality steel requires less frequent sharpening. Each blade is hollow ground, giving both the inside and outside edges. A poor sharpening can ruin the blade forever and affect their skating ability. It may cost a bit more, but having them done by an experienced technician will increase the blade's longevity.
- The bottom pick should NOT be removed from a beginner's figure skates. The bottom pick may take a bit of getting used to, but it is important for jumping, footwork and balance.

Skating Clothing:

Gloves or mitts should be worn for warmth and safety. Snowsuits should not be worn as they tend to be bulky and slippery. Gloves or mitts should be worn for warmth and safety. If a skater wears a toque or headband, please ensure that it stays up on the head and doesn't slip down over the eyes. Long scarves and large hats should be avoided as they can be dangerous.