



# 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. Pre-CanSkate is typically 30-minutes in duration, once per week. Unparented.

**CanSkate** is a program for skaters that are 5-15 years of age OR have completed the Pre-CanSkate program. No prior skating experience is required. This program will build on the fundamental movements of skating through an interactive group lesson format using circuits and a FastTrack. Skaters will progress at their own rate, through 6 stages of skills in the areas of Agility, Balance, and Control. The CanSkate program will prepare skaters for recreational, hockey/ringette, and/or figure skating. CanSkate is typically 45-minutes in duration, once per week.

**Adult-CanSkate** is for the young at heart that wish to develop their fundamental skating skills and movement through an interactive group lesson format using circuits and a FastTrack. Skaters are on the ice for 45 minutes, once per week. This class is for skaters 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 skating ability and age. Skaters may be moved between groups at the Program Coordinator's discretion to allow for the best skater development and safety.

The Derrick Skating Club also offers **Inclusive Skating** for skaters with physical and/or intellectual disabilities to support these skaters within our programs. If you would like to learn more about Inclusive Skating, please contact our office at [office@derrickskating.ca](mailto:office@derrickskating.ca).

## Age requirements

We receive many requests to override our age requirements for Pre-CanSkate. Our coaches have skated with thousands of little ones, and we 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 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 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.



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## Graduating from CanSkate. What's next?

Our coaching team continuously monitors the progress of skaters and will use their discretion to move skaters into 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 are distributed electronically at the end of all sessions just 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 after their class. We ask parents to refrain from interrupting coaches during lesson time. Reaching out to the office is another option if catching your skater's coach at rink side is not possible before or after class.

## Skating Equipment

**Skates.** Skaters in our Learn to Skate programs may use hockey or figure skates.



We advise the purchase of skates with laces so that they can be tied to give optimal ankle support. **We do not recommend moulded plastic skates with buckles OR skates that have an adjustable fit** as the poor quality of the skate and blade and will hinder the progress of your skater.

Skates should be tied snugly from toe to ankle with extra laces neatly tucked away.

At the end of every skating session, please wipe skate blades dry. Please also ensure that skate blades are sharpened regularly, at least once per season.

You can also help your skater by ensuring their skate are comfortable and fit properly. Toes should be able to wiggle slightly, and the heels should be able to lift only slightly as well. We would recommend purchasing skates and helmets from United Cycle or Sport Chek. When purchasing skates, please ensure the skates are sharpened.



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**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 a figure skater, they should start in a figure skate with a toe pick!

**HELMET.** All skaters (including adult skaters) are required to have a CSA approved 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 coach.

Please note that the glue from 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. 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!

## **Safety**

Concern for the safety of all our 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 and siblings are never welcomed to sit on the tops of the boards in the players boxes, 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 potty 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.**



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## **Communication**

We will use email to send all registered skaters' pertinent information regarding their classes and 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 pertinent 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 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 \$44 and a \$25 Administration fee will be retained in all cases.

## **Volunteer Requirements**

There are NO volunteer requirements of our Learn to Skate families.

## **Fundraising Requirements**

There are NO fundraising requirements of our Learn to Skate families.

**Have questions?** If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to speak with your skater's coach or email us in the office. We are happy to assist.