



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS -FIGURE SKATING

Q #1: How should a skate fit? When is it too big? When is it too small?

- A. We first need to examine the shape of the foot -look for a wide or narrow heel and fore foot, thickness of the foot through the arch, etc.? Now you can determine the type of boot that will properly fit the foot. For length, you can loosen the laces and push the foot forward to the toe as far as possible. This allows you to see the space available behind the heel. To fit properly for a growing foot there should be about a pencil width of space, which equals approximately one size. If the foot is not growing there should be little or no room behind heel.

Q #2: What skate or boot should my child be wearing?

- A. As indicated in an answer #1, we first need to determine the type of boot that fits the individual foot. A number of factors like weight, height, aggressiveness and their technical ability are used to help determine the level! quality of boot that is required. Using all information available, the proper boot can be fitted. A qualified boot fitter can help to fit the proper boot to the individual.

Q #3: What kind of blade should I get?

- A: Blades are generally classified as beginner, intermediate, and advanced. The type of blade to be used can be determined by their technical ability (e.g. single, double, or triple jumps) and sold accordingly.

Q #4: Should a boot crease at the ankle? When is a boot broken down?

- A: Yes, a boot should crease at the ankle. When a skater bends their knees while skating, their ankle flexes forward. If the boot is too stiff, it limits the amount of forward movement and can affect skating ability. After a period of time, the boot may become badly creased in the ankle and the boot leather becomes soft making it difficult to keep the boot tight. At this point, the boot may be broken down and you should consult a qualified boot fitter to determine if a new boot is necessary.

UNITED

FIGURE SKATING

What kind of sharpening should _____ have?

A: There are generally three kinds of sharpening -combination, free skate, and dance. Beginner skaters will use a combination sharpening because the hollow in the blade is not as deep. As the skater develops more skills and starts to do more jumps, a free skate sharpening would be used to allow the skater more edge to jump with. The hollow is deeper in the blade on a free skate sharpening. These are just guides as any type of sharpening can be done on any blade. A dance sharpening can be done on blades being used for dance.

How often should I get my skates sharpened?

A. Not everyone likes their skates the same sharpness. It also depends how well you look after your skate blades. If you find that you are slipping or losing an edge when skating, it is good indication the edge is gone. If you can feel rough edges, or burrs, on the blades when you run your fingers gently down them, it is a good sign they need to be sharpened.

Why do you want to get your skates sharpened by a trained professional.

A: Getting your skates sharpened by a trained professional gives you some guarantee your blades are sharpened properly. This means that the sharpening is square on the blade, and that the proper technique has been used. Some skate shops work primarily with hockey skates and may not be accustomed to sharpening figure skates. Without proper training and experience, figure skate blades can be damaged.

Q #8: What is the importance of keeping a skate sharp?

A: Keeping the skate sharp helps with the quality of edges that the skater has. Therefore, helping the skater with their jump take offs, landings, spin~, etc.

Q #9: What is a rocker, and how does it help?

A A rocker is the curve on the blade. This curve varies depending on the blade. It is there to help the skater with the different skating techniques. such as edges. jumps. spins. etc.

Q #10: Is there anything I can do to help my boots last longer?

A: Never leave your skates in your skate bag when not in use. They should be taken out of the bag and hung to dry. Skates that are not allowed to dry out will prematurely break down because of the moisture that gets into the leather.

Q #11: What can I do to look after my blades?

A: Always use hard guards when walking from the change rooms to the ice surface. Never step off the ice without putting on your hard guards. When you take off your skates, wipe the blades dry, and put soft guards to protect the blades when they are in your bag. Again never leave your skates in a skate bag with the hard guards on. Take them off to allow the blades to dry properly.

Q #12: Do blades bend?

A: Yes, due to the nature of the sport (umps), blades will bend. That is why it is important to learn what to look for to make sure they are straight before test and competitions. Come in and talk to a qualified skate sharpener and have them show you what to look for.

Q #13: How do you tell when the blade needs to be replaced?

A: When you look at a new blade, on the bottom edge you will see a different colored material (steel). Generally, the blade can be used until the different colored material is sharpened off. At this point, the first toe pick will also become more prominent, slightly changing the balance point.

Q # 14: Which blade is best for a slow twitch take off, and which is best for a fast twitch take off?

A: The blade is not what really makes a difference; it all depends on the skater's technique of jumping. A different coach, or skater could prefer a different blade. However, all blades will be adequate (~ in quality).

Please note these are general answers and that individual skaters will have different preferences, foot attributes and needs. Should you have any questions or experience any skate difficulties, please visit one of the Figure Skate Professionals at United Cycle for further information and assistance.