

Ice Etiquette/Safety Guidelines

Skating is generally an individual sport and activities during most practice sessions are individualized and fairly unstructured. It is important to understand that some basic rules must be observed for safety and to ensure that everyone can make effective use of their ice time.

Safety – First and foremost is SAFETY. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH SKATER TO WATCH WHAT IS GOING ON AROUND THEM and TO BE AWARE OF SAFETY ISSUES AT ALL TIMES. It is essential to respect the rights of other skaters and be constantly aware of who is around you. If you seem to be surrounded by skaters of significantly greater or lesser skills, be especially careful! Strive to avoid collisions! Remember to treat ALL skaters with courtesy.

“On Program” and “In Lesson” Get Priority – The skater who is “on program” (whose music is playing and is wearing club high visibility vest or belt) has the right of way and other skaters are expected to give them free maneuvering room. Second in priority are skaters in a jump harness. Always yield to these skaters as well.

Lutz Corners – Because of the nature of the Lutz jump, it is most commonly performed in the 10:00 and 4:00 corners of the rink (clock reference from the rink stands). These corners are informally call the “Lutz Corners”, and can usually be identified by the unusually large concentration of divots in the ice. Strive to avoid long-term practice activities (especially spins) in these corners and try to be aware of your surroundings when you are in them. Remember that the approach to a Lutz jump is long and BLIND. The skater doing the Lutz is not likely to see you.

Dangerous Singles Moves – When you are practicing elements like camel spins and back spirals be especially aware of the danger your exposed blade poses to other skaters. Recognize that once you’ve started the element it will be hard for you to see those around you. Take a good look at your expected space before you start the element and abort it if it looks like you could cause a problem.

Falls and Injuries – If you should fall, get up quickly. Remember that the other skaters will have a much harder time seeing you when you are down low on the ice. Don’t stay there any longer than you have to. While falling, remember to keep your fingers away from your blades and learn to fall properly so that you can protect your head as much as possible. Learn to keep “loose” when you fall and this will help you avoid injury.

If you see someone else who has fallen and may be injured, don’t touch him/her. If you suspect that someone is seriously hurt, the best thing you can do is, 1) have someone stand “guard” over them to make sure other skaters avoid collisions with them, and 2) get a qualified adult to come help them. A blanket or jacket/sweatshirt laid over them might help to keep them warmer while waiting for qualified help to arrive.

Predictability – As you skate more, you’ll get to the point where you’ll recognize that a practice session has a certain “rhythm” to it. People tend to do “expected” or “predictable” things, and you can pretty much guess where somebody else is going based on what they’re doing (the normal approach to each jump or spin is pretty recognizable). If you’re an “opposite direction” skater (clockwise jumper), be aware that other skaters will often be uncertain about your intentions. Try not to skate or behave in a way that would surprise other skaters. If you’re standing near the boards, don’t enter the flow of skaters without checking to make sure you’re not going to get into someone else’s way.

Don’t Stand Around – Refrain from standing around and visiting on the ice! If you are talking with friends, your attention is diverted away from what is happening around you on the ice. This wastes expensive ice time and presents an additional hazard for other skaters to avoid. THIS IS A SAFETY ISSUE and any coach or ice monitor has the authority to ask you to move if you are seen to be visiting/chatting with a group of friends on the ice.