

JRFSC Competitor

Handbook



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**COMPETITIVE TRAINING AND PRIVATE LESSONS**

**Competitive Training**

Competitive training is ice time set aside for the skaters to practice the various skills they are being taught. This is also the time that is used by the coach to teach private lessons and to help skaters prepare the programs that they will need to pass their tests and to compete in competitions. Lessons are generally 15 minutes and are charged to the skater by the coach. These private lesson fees are not covered in the general registration.

In order to sign up for the competitive training packages offered by JRFSC, the skater must be in Basic 7 or above and plan on attending at least one non-qualifying (non-basic) competition during the season. The skater must also be registered with the USFSA and abide by the club’s rules listed in the Rink Rules and the Code of Conduct.

**Private Lessons**

Skaters signed up for a competitive training package will fill out a calendar indicating how many lessons they want each week in each area: free skate, dance, and moves in the field. The coach can give a recommendation on the number of lessons to sign up for each week. Hours the skater will be at the rink to skate need to be highlighted on the calendar, so the coach knows when to schedule lessons. Skater should put down as many hours as possible so that the coach will be able to accommodate the skaters’ requests. The coach will then make a schedule of lessons. These will be given to the skaters and will also be posted on the bulletin board. If a skater misses a lesson without notifying the coach, the lesson will be charged to the skater anyway. Lessons can be switched with another skater, but the coach needs to be notified. If more lessons are requested than time allows, skaters may not receive all the lessons that they requested.

**Information**

Important information regarding competitive training, competitions, and testing will be posted on the bulletin board, emailed to skaters and parents, or put in the skaters’ folders in the black file box. The skater and the parent will need to read all information given to them regarding competitions, testing, motel arrangements, etc. The coach, any board member, and competition/test chairperson will gladly answer any questions that the skaters or their parents want to ask.

Each competitive skater will have a folder in the black file box. This file box will be located at the side of the rink during competitive training hours. Notes and information for the skaters will be put in their folders. The skaters will also be able to turn in the completed registration forms, testing applications, calendars indicating number of private lessons desired, etc., in this file box. Skaters should check their folders daily!

**USFSA Rules**

In order to participate fully in any sport, participants must know the rules of the game. Figure skating is no different. Participation is governed by a set of rules established by The USFSA and ISU (International Skating Union) and published yearly in its official rulebook. The rules govern every aspect of the sport but are primarily concerned with testing and competition.

A copy of the rulebook is in the boutique for use, but **it may not be removed from the boutique**.

**EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR PRACTICES**

**Skate Bag**

Many skaters use a skate bag to transport their equipment. Every skate bag should contain a towel and screwdriver. Skater should use the towel to dry their blades and soles and the screwdriver to tighten the blades after each practice.

**Skates**

There are many brands of boots available. What is most important is a proper fit and quality of leather. Once skaters get their boots, it is important to waterproof the soles before the blades are mounted and also to keep them polished and dry. There are many types of blades available for boots. With less expensive skates, blades will already be attached to the boots. Some aspects of skating (e.g. figures, dance) require a special blade design, consequently, some skaters have more than one pair of skates.

Proper care of skates is needed after skating. Skaters should be sure to allow skates to dry after every skating session. Skates should be taken out of the skate bag and allowed to thoroughly dry inside and out.

**Guards and Soakers**

Skate guards are plastic or rubber strips that fit over the blade to prevent the steel from becoming nicked or damaged when walking off the ice. Because blades are colder than the locker room temperature, water droplets form on the blade, even after skaters wipe them off. If skaters leave guards on their skates while they are being stored, blades may become rusted. Soakers are blade covers (made from absorbent material) placed on blades for protection while store in skate bags.

**Clothing**

In general, skaters should dress neatly and athletically. Skaters must be able to move every muscle of their body freely and easily. It is best to wear tight-fitting clothes made of fabric that stretches. Skaters should not wear jeans or baggy clothing.

**Harness**

A harness is a training device used by a coach to assist a skater during a jump. Skaters are attached to a cable/pulley by strapping on a belt. The cable is then operated and controlled by the coach.

**Ice Etiquette and Safety Guidelines**

Skating is basically an individual sport, and activities during most practice sessions are pretty unstructured. It is important to know some basic safety guidelines to ensure that skaters can make effective and safe use of their ice time.

**Courtesy**

The first and foremost rule is courtesy. It is essential to respect the rights of other skaters and be constantly aware of who is around a skater. It a skater seems to be surrounded by skaters of significantly greater or lesser skills, that skater needs to be especially careful. Strive to avoid collisions!

**“In Lesson” and “On Program” Get Priority**

The skater who is currently “in lessons” with the coach and the skater who is “on program” (skater whose music is playing) have the right of way at all times. Others skaters are expected to always yield to these skaters and give them free maneuvering room.

**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 (unless there are a lot of clockwise jumpers in the club). Skaters should strive to avoid long-term practice activities in these corners and be especially aware of their surroundings in those locations. The approach to a Lutz is long and blind. The skater doing the Lutz is not likely to see other skaters.

**Dangerous Single Moves**

When skaters are practicing elements like camel spins and back spirals, they need to be especially aware of the danger their exposed blade poses to other skaters. Once skaters have started the element, it will be hard to see those around them. Skaters need to take a good look at their expected “space” before they start the element and abort if it looks like they could cause a problem.

**Falls and Injuries**

If skaters fall, they should get up quickly. Other skaters will have a harder time seeing them if they are down low on the ice. Skaters who have fallen should not stay there any longer than they have to. While falling, skaters should remember to keep their fingers away from their blade and learn to fall properly, so they can protect their head as much as possible. Skaters should learn to keep “loose” when falling, and this will help them avoid breaking things. If skaters see someone else who has fallen and may be injured, other skaters should not drag them off the ice without being certain that doing so won’t hurt them further. If skaters suspect someone is seriously hurt, the best thing to do is, 1) have someone stand “guard” over them, and 2) alert the coach of other adult.

**Predictability**

As skaters skate more, they’ll recognize that a practice session has a certain “rhythm” to it. People tend to do pretty “expectable” or “predictable” things. Skaters can usually guess where other skaters are going, based on what they’re doing (the normal approaches to each jump or spin are pretty recognizable). If skaters are clockwise jumpers, they should be aware that other skaters will probably guess wrong about their intentions. If there are clockwise jumpers on the rink, other skaters should adjust their expectations accordingly. Skaters should try not to skate or behave in a way that would surprise other skaters. If skaters are standing near the boards, they shouldn’t enter the flow of skaters without checking to make sure they’re not going to get into someone else’s way.

**Don’t Stand Around**

Skater should refrain from standing around and visiting on the ice. This wastes expensive ice time and presents an additional hazard for other skaters to avoid.

**The Spectrum of Skating**

**Moves in the Field**

Moves in the field are a series of tests of basic freestyle skating without jumps and spins. These tests are based on figures and consist of set patterns of edges, steps and turns. Field moves are designed to emphasize power, edge quality, extension and line as well as quickness and precision of skating movement.

**Free Skating**

Free skating consists of a wide variety of skills including jumps, spins, footwork and other connecting moves such as spirals. These elements are usually set to music and combined in what is called a “program.” If skaters do a free skate program without music, this is known as a “compulsory” program. The music selected and the length of time depends on the type of event and level of skater. Free skating helps to develop athleticism, grace and performing skills.

**Ice Dancing**

Ice dancing is a form of skating based upon ballroom dancing performed by a couple. At the beginning level, skaters learn compulsory dances (e.g. Dutch Waltz, Canasta Tango, Hickory Hoe-Down) which consist of designated pattern of edges and turns done in specific rhythms to dance music. Because of a shortage of boys doe partners, many skaters practice “solo dancing” and can compete in non-qualifying competitions without partners. An ice dancing couple does not jump or spin, but they are permitted to perform small lifts and create dances in the original and free dance events. Ice dancing helps develop rhythm, expression, execution of footwork, quality of edges and partner unison.

**Pairs Skating**

Pairs skating is freestyle skating in which a couple performs jumps and spins and basic skating movements in unison, either side-by-side or mirror. Various maneuvers such as lifts, throws and death spirals may be performed. Pair skating helps develop athleticism, grace, performance skills and partner relationship.

**Figures**

Figures are set, geometrical patterns that are skated on one foot by the skater. Traditional compulsory figures are comprised of figure eights (two circles) and “serpentines” (three circle). Figures help develop balance and control as well as instill discipline and concentration.

**Team Skating**

Team skating consists of groups of 12-24 skaters performing intricate formations such as clocks, circles, lines and pinwheels in unison. Team skating provides skaters with an opportunity to work together with other skaters their own age and ability while improving their basic technique.

**Parents’ Responsibilities**

The most important thing for skating parents to remember is that skaters are people first and skaters second. Also, in all probability, the “person” in the skater is a young one, still growing, still maturing. Sometime skaters seem so grown up, so easily able to handle pressure situations, parents forget they are still kids.

**Some things for parents to think about as they approach the sport:**

* **Balance:** Make sure there is balance in your skater’s life. Allow time for school and personal growth. Very few skaters make skating their life career. Don’t put so much focus on your child’s skating that you forget they’ll have to function in a “normal world” when they grow up. School is important. Social development is important. Being a kid is important.
* **Helping set goals:** Help your child to set their goals in skating, Help them be realistic about those goals, but also make them challenging enough to make the sport fulfilling. Make sure the goals are your skater’s goals, not yours. Help to achieve these goals by setting targets, plotting progress, etc. Be willing to reevaluate when necessary.
* **Learning about the sport:** Learn enough about skating to recognize the elements. Know enough to know when something is done well and when it is done less well. Recognize progress. Be interested and listen when you skater talks about progress or problems.
* **Supporting your coach:** Pay your bills on time and get your skater to the rink on time. When you can’t be there, make sure to tell the coach in advance. Listen to the coach’s advice and instructions and help ensure that your skater follows those instructions when practicing or during off-ice activities.
* **Watching:** Don’t use the rink as a babysitter. Stay and watch your skater during practice and lessons, at least sometimes. They need to know you’re interested.
* **Being a good sport:** Remember that every skater is someone’s child and that all skaters deserve to be treated fairly and with respect. Be willing to recognize other skaters graciously. When someone else is skating in a competition, don’t walk back and forth in the bleachers or be noisy or disruptive.
* **Supporting you skater:** Remember, your skater is still maturing. Offer praise when appropriate, but be realistic with that praise; recognize progress toward goals, but be willing to acknowledge when more work is needed without making that a ”bad thing.” Never destructively criticize, especially in from of others. Resist the urge to compare your child against another. Some learn faster and some learn slower.
* **Supporting you club:** Pay your bills on time. Help with club activities. Most clubs are run by volunteers and they need all the help they can get. Be willing to work on committees or serve on the Board or Directors, if needed.

**Questions for Parents**

If you answer yes to one or more of these questions, you may be pressuring your child. It is important to remember that as parents, your role is to be supportive at all times to ensure a positive experience for your child.

1. Do you want your child to win more than they do?
2. Do you show your disappointment if they have a poor result?
3. Do you feel you have to “psyche” your child up before competition?
4. Do you feel that your child can enjoy the sport only if they win?
5. Do you conduct “postmortems” immediately after competition or training?
6. Do you feel that you have to force your child to go to practice?
7. Do you find yourself wanting to interfere during training or competition, thinking that you could do better?
8. Do you find yourself disliking your child’s opponents?

**Website that may be of interest:**

James River Figure Skating Club:

 <http://www.jamesriverfsc.org/>

 U.S. Figure Skating Association home page:

 [www.usfsa.org](http://www.usfsa.org)

 Figure Skater’s Website

 [www.sk8stuff.com](http://www.sk8stuff.com)

**USFSA TESTING INFORMATION**

**USFSA Tests**

USFSA tests are conducted according to USFSA standards found in the rulebook and are judged by individuals who have qualified to be judges with USFSA. There are generally 3 judges required to judge each test level. If 2 out of 3 judges pass a skater on their elements, a skater will pass that level. These tests are conducted periodically by various skating clubs. There is a fee of $10-60 to take each test. Testing is done in Moves in the Field, Free Skate, Dance, Pairs, etc. When testing Dance, there is also a dance partner who charges a fee for practice ice and the test. Some of these tests will be skated to music.

**Deciding to Test**

The decision of when to test and what tests to take will be made between a skater and their coach. If a skater decides to test at a test session, they will be required to fill out a registration form and submit the form along with testing fees to the coach. The coach will collect all registrations and fees and turn them in to the testing chairperson, who will mail them to the club hosting the testing session.

**How USFSA Tests are Conducted**

A skater will probably be scheduled in a grouping with several other skaters taking the same or similar tests. Their group will be scheduled for a “warm-up” time, followed immediately by the skating of the tests within that group. Usually a skater will be the only one on the ice during their actual test, but for some tests (some moves in the field and the pre-preliminary free skate), skaters may share the ice with others.

There will be judges there to evaluate a skater’s performance. Usually there are 3 judges for all tests. For some tests (lower-level), it is acceptable for a single high-level judge to judge the test. The judges are usually off the ice in a hockey box or similar area and will usually have clipboards with test papers on them. Usually there will be one judge called the “judge-in-charge.” If the skater’s test requires instruction (i.e. if the judges need to talk to the skater), then it is this judge who does the talking.

When it is time for the skater’s test, the judges or an announcer will inform the skater of their opportunity. If this is a Free Skate or a Dance test, the skater should skate to their starting position and wait for the music to start. If it is a Moves test of Pre-Preliminary Free Skate test, the skater should go to the judges for instruction on how they want to conduct the test.

When a skater finishes a test, they should stay on the ice until the judges “dismiss them.” The skater should approach the judges, but not “too close.” The judges might ask the skater to “reskate” an element or two from the test. If this is done, it is because that element was “not quite right.” And they want to give the skater another chance to try it. Usually, they will tell the skater what it was about the element that they would like to see improved. If the skater is asked to reskate an element, the skater will be given the opportunity to “warm it up” before they do it for real. If the skater does want to warm it up, they need to tell the judges beforehand that they are doing a warm up.

After the skater is dismissed, they will need to wait for results. Usually the judges will complete judging a group of skaters before handing in their paperwork. Eventually though, the skater will get copies of their “Test Papers.” These will have the judge’s comments on the skater’s performance and at the bottom will have an indication of the “Pass” or “Retry” status. With a 3-judge panel, the skater must receive a passing mark from at least 2 judges in order to pass the test. If the skater does not pass a test, they are required to wait a minimum of 28 days before retrying the test (see Rulebook).

**What to wear**

The skater should dress somewhat formally. A dark-colored dress with long sleeves is preferred (but not required) to show the body line.

**A Note About Judges**

Judges are not terrible, horrible people and they don’t bite! Judges are often skaters themselves, past skaters or parents of skaters. They have skaters’ best interests at heart and really want skaters to pass. They will not, however, pass a skater who is not adequately prepared. Skaters should not be afraid of them or let judges make skaters feel nervous. Skaters should just skate their best and show the judges what they can do.

**Tests and Skating Levels**

The USFSA defines a system of “Tests” which allows skaters to progress through a sequence of logical steps in their competitive development. The tests also establish a benchmarking structure for competitive purposes. All USFSA sanctioned competitions group skaters according to levels of tests passes. This allows skaters of similar abilities to compete against each other. These tests are judged by USFSA-appointed judges at formal “test sessions.” The results are forwarded to the USFSA, which keeps official records of each skater’s test accomplishments.

The official tests of U.S. Figure Skating may be taken by all figure skaters who are members of a member club or collegiate club or individual members who are currently registered with the U.S. Figure Skating and are otherwise qualified under these rules. Each candidate must present a current registration card before taking a test. Tests can only be taken under the auspices of a member club. Fees are involved and very by club. Sessions are organized and run under procedures outlines in the U.S. Figure Skating rulebook. Any person who is interested in participating in the U.S. Figure Skating testing structure is encouraged to purchase a rulebook. The rulebook addresses such questions as coaching and conduct of candidates at test sessions.

Tests are marked on a “pass” or “retry” basis. Some tests have numeric marks associated with them that determine if the test is a “pass” or “retry.” These are used to establish a “passing” average and judged use this number as a basis for the quality of the test. Different tests have different standards for “pass” and “retry,” along with different procedures for freeskating elements in a test. For details, candidates should consult the rulebook for the particular test to be taken. If a test is marked “retry,” a skater may not retake the test prior to the 27th day following the date of the original test.

**Kinds of Tests**

There are several classes of tests in the U.S. Figure Skating structure:

1. Moves in the Field (standard track and adult)
2. Free Skating (standard track and adult)
3. Pairs (standard track and adult)
4. Compulsory Dance (standard track, solo, adult and masters)
5. Free Dance (standard track and masters
6. Synchronized
7. Figures (standard track)

The order in which tests are taken is important. According to the rulebook: A candidate shall not be eligible to take a higher-level test until all of the preceding tests in the same category have been passed or completed except as otherwise specified in these rules. A certificate or other satisfactory evidence of the highest test previously passed or completed shall be presented before taking a test. It is necessary for all skaters to take and pass the Moved in the Field (MIF) test associated with a particular level before taking the Free Skate test at that level. Moves in the Field is a technical discipline designed to improved skaters’ abilities in areas such as stroking, turns, edge work, etc. The order of test levels are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Singles Free Skate** | **Moves in the Field** | **Dance** |
| Pre-Preliminary | Pre-Preliminary | Preliminary |
| Preliminary | Preliminary | Pre-Bronze |
| Pre-Juvenile | Pre-Juvenile | Bronze |
| Juvenile | Juvenile | Pre-Silver |
| Intermediate | Intermediate | Silver |
| Novice | Novice | Pre-Gold |
| Junior | Junior | Gold |
| Senior | Senior | Junior International |
|  |  | Senior International |

This following information is provided only as an OVERVIEW of the tests; while the elements are mentioned, the detailed description and explanation of the elements is not. It is important to refer to the U.S. Figure Skating rulebook in order to understand all of the test rules and expectations before testing. Further description of the element of each test is available in the rulebook.

**Moves in the Field**

The standard Moves in the Field tests are divided into eight classes to be taken in the following order: pre-preliminary, preliminary, pre-juvenile, juvenile, intermediate, novice, junior and senior. Furthermore, there are also adult levels of the moves test: pre-bronze, bronze, silver and gold

As stated in the rulebook, moves in the field tests may be taken and passed independently of the free skating, pair and dance tests. A skater may take and pass moves in the field test higher then the corresponding free skating levels and still be qualified to compete in qualifying and non-qualifying competitions in free skating events at the level defined by the highest free skating test passed. Competitors should refer to test and age requirements in the rulebook.

**Pre-Preliminary Moves in the Field Test (PPM)**

The purpose of this test is to encourage beginning skaters to learn the fundamentals of ice skating. No great deal of technical ability, carriage or flow is expected. The candidate much show knowledge of the steps, fairly good edges and some evidence of good form.

* Forward Perimeter Stroking
* Basic Consecutive Edges
* Forward Right and Left foot Spirals
* Waltz Eight

**Preliminary Moves in the Field Test (PM)**

The purpose of this test is to continue the encouragement of beginning skaters to learn the fundamentals of ice skating. The candidate must show knowledge of the steps and a good sense of power (speed and flow). Attention should be given to depth of edges and proper curvature of lobes.

* Forward and Backward Crossovers
* Consecutive Outside and Inside Spirals
* Forward Power 3-Turns
* Alternating Forward 3-Turns
* Forward Circle Eighter
* Alternating Backward Crossovers to Backward Outside Edges

**Pre-Juvenile Moves in the Field Test (PJM)**

The fundamentals of ice skating must be demonstrated, although not necessarily mastered. Good edges, flow, power, extension and posture are required and must be strongly emphasized.

* Forward and Backward Perimeter Crossover Stroking – Counterclockwise onlu
* Forward Outside/Back Inside 3-Turns in the Field
* Forward Inside/Back Outside 3-Turns in the Field
* Forward and Backward Power Change of Edge Pulls
* Backward Circle Eights
* Five Step Mohawk Sequence (one side only)

**Juvenile Moves in the Field Test (JM)**

Candidates must skate the correct steps and turns on good edges, with good form, flow, power and preciseness to their steps.

* Stroking: Forward Power Circle
* Stroking: Backward Power Circle
* Eight Step Mohawk Sequence
* Forward and Backward Cross Strokes
* Backward Power 3-Turns
* Forward Double 3-Turns

**Intermediate Moves in the Field Test (IM)**Strong, true edges, smooth turns, correct posture and effortless flow are expected of the candidate.

* Backward Double 3-Turn
* Brackets in the Field Sequence
* Forward Twizzles
* Inside Slide Chassé Pattern
* Spiral Sequence

**Novice Moves in the Field Test (NM)**

The candidate must give a performance that is generally good. The preciseness of the footwork should be nearly flawless, the body motion wll timed and the flow and power very good. No major consistent erros should be in evidence.

* Back Inside/Forward Inside 3-Turns/Rocker Choctaw Sequence
* Forward and Backward Outside Counters
* Forward and Backward Inside Counters
* Backward Rocker Choctaw Sequence
* Backward Twizzles
* Forward Loop

**Junior Moves in the Field Test (JRM)**

The candidate must give a performance that is generally very good in all respects. Focus should be on power, flow, edge quality and line and footwork control.

* Forward and Backward Outside Rockers
* Forward and Backward Inside Rockers
* Power Pulls
* Choctaw Sequence
* Backward Loop Pattern
* Straight Line Step

**Senior Moves in the Field Test (SRM)**

The candidate must give excellent performance, displaying power, strong edge control and depth, extension and precise footwork control.

* Sustained Edge Step
* Extension Spiral Step
* Backward Outside Power Double 3-Turns to Power Double Inside Rockers
* Backward Inside Power Double 3-Turns to Power Double Inside Rockers
* Serpentine Step Sequence

**Free Skating Tests**

The standard free skating tests are divided into eight classes to be taken in the following order: pre-preliminary, preliminary, pre-juvenile, juvenile, intermediate, novice, junior and senior. The standard Moves in the Field test of the same level is the prerequisite to a standard free skating test. There are also four classed of adult free skating tests to be skated in the following order: pre-bronze, bronze, silver and gold.

**Pre-Preliminary Free Skating Test (PPF)**

The purpose of this test is to encourage beginning skaters to learn the fundamentals of free skating. No great deal of technical ability, carriage or flow is expected. The candidate must show knowledge of the elements, fairly good edges and some evidence of good form. The skater shall successfully complete the following required elements:

 Jumps

* Waltz jump
* Salchow
* Toe loop
* ½ flip – land on either foot
* ½ Lutz – land on either foot

Spins

* One-foot spin (minimum of 3 revolutions) optional free leg position toward knee level

**Preliminary Free Skating Test (PF)**

The purpose of this test is to continue the encouragement of beginning skaters to learn the fundamentals of free skating. The candidate must demonstrate knowledge of the elements and a good sense of power (speed/flow). A relationship with the music should be attempted in the program. The following elements are requires:

 Jumps

* Waltz jump
* Salchow
* Loop
* Flip
* One jump combination – waltz jump, toe loop (no turn or change of foot between jumps)

Spins

* One-foot upright spin, optional free foot (3 revolutions)
* One-foot backspin, entry optional (3 revolutions)
* Sit Spin – in recognizable sit position (3 revolutions)

Steps

* Connecting moves and steps should be demonstrated throughout the program

Duration: Ladies and Men – 1 ½ minutes to music of skater’s choice.

**Pre-Juvenile Free Skating Test (PJF)**

The fundamentals of free skating must be demonstrated, although not necessarily mastered. Good edges, flow, power, extension and posture are required for all of the elements of free skating (jumps, spins, as well as connecting moves). The program should utilize the ice surface and demonstrate some relationship with the music. The following elements are required:

 Jumps

* Loop
* Flip
* Lutz
* One jump combinations – choice of above with a loop jump (no turn or change of foot between jumps). The loop jump must be the second jump.

Spins

* One camel spin (minimum 3 revolutions)
* One combination spin: camel spin to sit spin. No change of foot (minimum of 6 revolutions in positions)
* Front scratch to back scratch – exit on spinning foot (minimum 4 revolutions on each foot)

Steps

* Connecting moves and steps should be demonstrated throughout the program

Duration: Ladies and Men – 2 minutes to music of skater’s choice

**Juvenile Free Skating Test (JF)**

The candidate must skate the selected elements (jumps, spins as well as connecting steps) on good edges, with good form, flow, power and preciseness. The candidate must also skate to the music and utilize the ice surface. The following elements are required:

 Jumps

* Three different single jumps, one of which must be an Axel
* One jump from the following: split jump, falling leaf, half loop jump
* One jump combination consisting of two single jumps (no turn or change of foot between jumps)

Spins

* Forward sit spin (minimum 4 revolutions in position)
* Ladies: Layback or attitude spin (minimum 4 revolutions in position). Men: Forward camel spin (minimum 4 revolutions in position)
* One spin with one change of foot, change of position optional (minimum 4 revolutions each foot). Must include one of the following positions: camel, sit or attitude

Steps

* Connecting moves consisting of spirals, strong edges, etc., should be demonstrated throughout the program

Duration: Ladies and Men – 2 ¼ minutes to music of the skater’s choice.

**Intermediate Free Skating Test (IF)**

Strong, smooth edges and turns, combined with correct posture and effortless flow, utilizing the music and the ice surface are expected of the candidate in all types of free skating elements (jumps, spins as well as connecting steps). The following elements are required:

 Jumps

* Single loop, flip or Lutz
* Axel
* One double jump: double Solchow, double toe loop or double toe Walley
* One jump combinations consisting of two single jumps (no turn or change of foot between jumps)
* One jump combination of either one single and one double jump or consisting of two double jumps (no turn or change of foot between jumps)

Spins

* Sit spin to change foot sit spin (minimum 4 revolutions on each foot in position)
* Flying camel spin (minimum 5 revolutions in position)
* Spin combination consisting of one change of foot and one change of position (minimum 4 revolutions on each foot)

Steps

* Connecting moves consisting of spirals, spread eagles, etc., should be demonstrated throughout the program

Duration: Ladies and Men – 2 ½ minutes to music of skater’s choice

**Novice Free Skating Test (NF)**

The candidate must give a performance that is generally good. The preciseness of the footwork should be nearly faultless, body motions well timed with the music and the flow and power very good in all free skating elements (jumps, spins as well as connecting steps). The program should fully utilize the ice surface and no major or consistent errors should be in evidence. The following elements are required:

 Jumps

* Double Salchow
* Double toe loop
* Double loop
* One jump combination consisting of two double jumps (no turn or change of foot between jumps)

Spins

* Choice of camel spin, sit spin or layback spin (minimum 6 revolutions in position)
* Camel spin to backward camel spin (minimum 4 revolutions on each foot in position)
* Spin combination consisting of one change of foot and one change of position (minimum 5 revolutions on each foot)

Steps

* One straight-line step sequence consisted of steps and turns in the field such as threes, brackets, spirals and spread eagles, etc.
* Connecting moves and steps should be demonstrated throughout the program

Duration: Ladies – 3 minutes to music of skater’s choice; Men – 3 ½ minutes to music of skater’s choice

**Novice Free Skating Test (JRF)**

The candidate must give a performance that is generally very good in all respects. Focus should be on the power, flow, edge quality, line and footwork control. The program should demonstrate a good, harmonious composition that is skated to the music with rhythm and expression, while utilizing the full ice surface. The following elements are required:

 Jumps

* At least three different double jumps, one of which must be a double flip
* One jump combination consisting of two double jumps (no turn or change of foot between jumps)
* One jump sequence consisting of small jumps, followed by any double jump

Spins

* Flying sit spin or flying change (reverse) sit spin (minimum 6 revolutions in position)
* Layback or crossfoot spin (minimum 6 revolutions in position)
* Spin combination consisting of three positions and one change of foot (minimum 5 revolutions on each foot)

Steps

* One circular step sequence of advanced difficulty, covering the ice surface, consisting of steps and turns in the field such as spread eagle, spiral combinations, three turns, brackets, etc.
* Connecting moves and steps should be demonstrated throughout the program

Duration: Ladies – 3 ½ minutes to music of skater’s choice; Men – 4 minutes to music of skater’s choice

**Senior Free Skating Test (SRF)**

The candidate must give an excellent performance displaying power, strong edge control and depth, extension and precis footwork control in all aspects of the selected elements. The program should fully utilize the ice surface, have a change of pace and superbly express the mood and rhythm of music.

Harmonious steps and connecting movements in time to the music should be maintained throughout the program. The following elements are required:

 Jumps

* At least four different double or triple jumps, one of which must be a double Lutz. If the skater elects to perform triple jumps, only one may be repeated in combinations or jump sequences.
* Two different jump combinations consisting of two double jumps or a double and the triple jump (no turn or change of foot between jump)

Spins

* At least four different spins (solo spins must be minimum 6 revolutions in position)
* One must be a flying spin
* One must be a spin combination consisting of at least two positions and at least one change of foot (minimum 10 total revolutions)

Steps

* One serpentine step sequence of very advanced difficulty with complex sequence of turns in the field that cover the entire ice surface and include counters and rockers
* Connecting moves and steps should be demonstrated throughout the program

Duration: Ladies – 4 minutes to music of skater’s choice; Men – 4 ½ minutes to music of the skater’s choice

**Compulsory Dance Test**

Moves in the field tests are not required as a prerequisite for compulsory dance test; however, prior to entering dance competitions, competitors must have taken and passed at least the equivalent level moves in the field test. This rule does not apply to adult dance competitors. All of the dances in a dance test need not be taken at the same test session. Those dances that are passed shall be credited toward the completion of the test. For information on partnering and details about the test, please see the rulebook.

**Preliminary Dance Test**

DANCES: Dutch Waltz (DW), Canasta Tango (CT), Rhythm Blues (RB)

**Pre-Bronze Dance Test**

DANCES: Swing Dance (SD), Cha-Cha (CC), Fiesta Tango (FIT)

**Bronze Dance Test**

DANCES: Hickory Hoedown (HH), Willow Waltz (WIW), Ten-Fox (TF)

**Pre-Silver Dance Test**

DANCES: Fourteenstep (14S), European Waltx (EW), Foxtrot (FT)

**Silver Dance Test**

DANCES: American Waltz (AW), Tango (T), Rocker Foxtrot (RF)

**Pre-Gold Dance Test**

DANCES: Kilian (K), Blues (BL), Paso Doble (PD), Starlight Waltz (SW)

**Gold Dance Test**

DANCES: Viennese Waltz (VW), Westminster Waltz (WW), Quickstep (QS), Argentine Tango (AT)

**International Dance Test**

DANCES: Australian Waltz (AUS), Cha Cha Congelado (CON), Golden Waltz (GW), Midnight Blues (MB), Ravensburger Waltz (RW), Rhumba (R), Silver Samba (SAM), Tango Romantica (TR) and Yankee Polka (YP)

**COMPETITION INFORMATION**

Skaters’ first competition will probably be one of the most exciting, most confusing and most stomach-churning days they will ever experience in skating! They need to remember they are doing this for fun, so they should get out there, show off a little and enjoy the experience. They should do their best job but always remember to keep an even perspective on the day. Parents, too should remember how much courage it takes to get out there all alone on that huge sheet of ice in front of all those people. Parents should make sure their child knows about that fluttery feeling of pride parents feel in their chest when they see their skaters out there.

**A Little Bit of Philosophy**

An important thing to remember as skaters go into a competition is that they are skating against themselves, not the other skaters. It’s great to “win” or to earn a medal and we all want to strive for that as a goal, but if that is the only goal, skaters are bound to come away disappointed very often. It’s important to remember that skaters can control how well they skate, but they have no control over who they are competing against. At any given competition, skaters might face competitors who are more advanced, equally advanced or less experienced than themselves. Skaters’ final position will be greatly affected by the level of that field. Skaters could skate exactly the same performance in two different competitions and end up in first place one day and last place the next, depending on the abilities of the other skaters. Skaters should strive instead to always “better” their last performance. Every time skaters go out on that competition ice, they should try to do just a little bit better than they did the last time. If they do that, the medals will take care of themselves. If skaters can come off the ice feeling good about their performance, knowing that they’ve done their best job, then they should be happy.

**Competition Costs**

An entry fee of $80-$95 is charged for the first even and $20-35 for each additional event. Practice ice usually costs around $10. The coach will charge the skater for coaching services provided during practice ice and events skated. The coach’s expenses for hotel, food and mileage for each competition will be divided among those skaters attending that competition. Skaters and/or their families are responsible for their own lodging and meals. For each competition, the club will have a block of rooms held under the JRFSC name at a hotel. Each family needs to call the motel to reserve a room from the block at least one month before the competition. Motels vary on cancellation policies. At least one family member is encouraged to attend competitions with their skater. If they cannot, arrangements need to be made with another family to chaperone the skater.

**Competition Registration**

When an announcement for a competition is available, the coach will distribute the announcement to the competitive skaters. If the skater plans on attending the competition, the skater will need to fill out the registration form. The coach will collect all registration forms and fees about one week prior to the deadline (6-8 weeks before the competition) and mail them to the host club. Skaters should be sure to read all instructions before filling out the registration form. When turning them into the coach, skaters include all requested information and forms (including self-addressed stamped envelope if requested). Also, skaters should turn all forms in by the deadline, so that forms may be mailed to the host club on time. Some clubs have online registration for competition or practice ice, in which case the skaters are responsible for completing their registration online by the deadline.

**When at Competitions**

A schedule of competitions dates will be given to all competitive skaters. Most competitions are run from Friday to Sunday.

**Events and Levels in Which to Compete**

This is a decision made between the skater and the coach. All levels from beginner (for skaters who have not taken any USFSA test) to senior are offered at competitions. Skaters generally skate at their test level but may compete at one level higher. Most competitions do not limit the number of events in which skaters may participate; however, a skater may complete in only one level of a given category. Possible events offered at a competition include:

 Free Skate - This is a program skated to *music* that contains elements and connecting footwork appropriate for the level competed. Each lever has different time requirement. Beginner is usually one minute in length. Music cannot have words in it.

 Compulsory – This is a program skated *without music* for Beginner to Pre-Juvenile levels and with music for Juvenile and above. The compulsory event has *required elements* that are skated with a time limit. The list of required elements to be skated at each level is listed in the competition registration packets. Each competition may have different elements, so the skater may have to change their compulsory for each program.

 Artistic – This is a program skated to *music*. Music may contain words and should fit the skater’s personality. Artistic feeling and presentation are stressed more than technical difficulty. Costuming should fit the music. No props are allowed and all hats and caps must be securely fastened. Judging will be based upon originality, creativity, quality of edges, footwork, flow and musicality.

 Dance – Two dances from each level are skated. These are done solo without a partner

 Spins – This is a program skated *without music* which consists of different spins and footwork. The skaters sometimes make up the program themselves

 Jumps – This is a program skated *without music* which consists of different jumps and footwork. The skaters sometimes make up the program themselves.

 Team Maneuver – 4-5 individual skaters compete as a team. Each skater is required to perform 1 assigned element.

**Against Whom Will Skaters Compete?**

Skaters will compete against other skaters of approximately similar experience. They may or may not be competing against skaters of similar age. The basic separation is by test level. This means skaters will be competing against other skaters who have tested “no further” than they have. Many competitions allow skaters to “skate up” one level (skate in a level that is one test more difficult than they have actually passed), but no competition will let skaters skate in a level below where they have passed. Generally, skaters will skate in a group of no more than 8-10 skaters. Most clubs try to schedule so that this can happen. If there are substantially more than 10 people entered in a single event, they will break up the group into separate “flights”, which will then be considered completely separate events. Usually if this is done, the flights are grouped according to skaters’ ages. Groups will be given their own medals or trophies.

**Music for Competitions**

The coach or other qualifies individual can cut the music needed for these programs. There is a fee charged for this service. Skaters should have some idea of what kind of music they might want to use. It is best to use CDs for cutting the music. Each skater will need 3 CDs of each piece of music (1 for practice, 1 for backup and 1 for performance).

**What to Wear for Competitions**

Skaters should wear an outfit that suits the even. Artistic and Free Skate costumes should fit the music. Dark colors are generally worn for Dance. Compulsory can be any skating costume. Gloves or mittens may be worn during warmups but usually are not worn during a competition. Warmup jackets or sweaters are appropriate during the warmup but should be removed for competition. Skates should be cleaned and polished for every competition; skaters should make sure laces are in good shape. Hair should be done tidily, securely and in a bun. Bobby pins, scrunchies, rubber bands, etc. should be very securely placed. These items present a hazard to skaters if they should fall off and lie on the ice. Competition outfits at all levels are required by USFSA rules to be modest and appropriate for athletic competition. Except for “Artistic Showcas” type events, they should not be theatrical in nature.

**Event Schedule**

Usually, these will be mailed out from the host club or available online about 10-14 days before the competition. This mailing will list the day and time of each event and other necessary information.

**Warmup**

The “warmup” is a short opportunity (usually 3-4 minutes) for skaters to get out on the ice and warm up their muscles before they compete. The coach may have a few specific things for skaters to work on during this time, but in general, they should use it to stroke around, loosen muscles and get a feel for the ice quality

**Skating Order**

Usually this will be posted on a convenient wall somewhere wall somewhere around the “concourse” of the rink. There will be a sheet for each of the events that will list all the competitors in the order in which they will skate.

**A Skater’s “Skate”**

When it’s a skater’s turn, the Ice Monitor will give the skater instructions to go on the ice. The skater should skate out to wherever they will strike their initial pose and indicate readiness to the judges and the music person. If this is a competition with music, the music person will start the music as soon as they know that both the skater and the judges are ready. If the skater’s program is not done to music, the skater should wait until the announcer said something like “skater, you may begin.” The skater should take a deep breath, relax and skate their best. When the skater is done, they should take their bows and then skate off the ice. If a skater is in a “half-ice” competition and someone else is skating on the other half, the skater should wait until the skater on the other half-ice is finished before the skater skates off the ice.

**Results**

Usually it will take about a half-hour or so for results to be posted. They will generally be posted in the same place where the skating orders were. The results sheet shows final positions and the ordinal (position) marking form each judge.

**Medals, Trophies, Ribbons**

Different clubs do this differently, but usually the top 3 positions will receive a medal or trophy of some sort.

Often “official pictures” are taken as well. If skaters have earned a medal, they should check to see when the award ceremony is and whether or not pictures will be taken. If they do take pictures, skaters will be expected to be in their skating outfit and skates.

**Competition Conduct**

Remember, every child competing is special to someone. Skaters and families should be respectful of all competitors. In the audience, skaters and their families should refrain from entering, exiting or wandering the bleacher area while skaters are performing. There’s plenty of time in between skaters to move around. All should be attentive to and appreciate the efforts of all skaters. Skaters are expected to act maturely no matter what place they receive in a competition. If a skater places and are eligible to stand on the podium for pictures, they are expected to go to pictures immediately.

**Photography/Videography**

For the safety of the skaters, NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY is permitted during competition events at any Figure Skating Competition. Still photos may be taken with available light. Videotaping is usually permitted, as long as courtesy is observed. At most competitions, a professional videographer is available to take videos for a nominal charge. Their professional equipment and operators get better pictures than others can and parents can spend the time watching their skaters perform.

**Judges**

Placement in any one of these competitions is determined by certified USFSA figure skating judges. These are people who (in most instances) were skaters and have been trained by the association to recognize expertise in skating. People aspiring to be judges and those already certified, must attend special training schools every four years and pass an annual written exam. Participation as a judge is on a volunteer basis. Judges are not paid for their services.

**Judging a skater**

Competition judging is very different from test judging. In a testing situation, the skater is compared to a standard which they must achieve in order to pass. In competition, the skater is compared to only the other skaters in their division.

**Competition Hints for Skaters**

1. Polish your skates.
2. Take an extra pair of laces or put new ones in before you go to a competition.
3. Bring safety pins, needle, thread to match outfits, other possible emergency items.
4. Remember your skate guards and soakers.
5. If your skates need sharpening, this should be done one week before the competition.
6. Nylons should be non-shiny and worn tucked inside the boot.
7. Swimming the night before you compete is not recommended.
8. You need 2 CDs of your music. The performance CDs will be handed in at the registration desk when you arrive at the competition. You and the coach will each have a backup CD. Make sure that you have it available at the competition, in case your performance CD malfunctions.
9. The registration booths are usually by the main entrance of the rink in the main hallway. All skaters need to register at the registration desk. You will need to tell them what events (including letter group) you are entered in. They may give you a bag with a program of events in the competition and various other goodies. You will also need to look at the board for your locker room assignments. All Jamestown skaters will be in the same locker room; boys have they own room. If you want practice ice time, this will be sold at the registration desk.
10. All skaters should be at the rink at least 1 hour before they compete. There are times that the competitions do not run exactly as stated in the program. They may be ahead or behind time, so keep track of what is going on.
11. Skaters need to check in with the rink monitor (person standing at the entrance to the ice surface holding a clipboard) about ½ hour before they compete. Skaters should check in with monitor that is on the side of the rink where they compete or enter the ice. If there is a “Z” after skaters’ event number, they enter on the Zamboni end of the rink. If skaters have an “N,” they enter on the north end. These are used for compulsory events when there are two people on the ice at different ends and they enter the ice at two different places.
12. If you are on a Maneuver Team, you will need to designate a team captain to check the team in. Team members should be all together at least ½ hour before they compete.
13. The coach will help you stretch before competing.
14. The JRFSC encourages support from all club skaters at each skater’s competition. We know that it is not always possible to watch everyone’s performance, since sometimes there is a person competing at each rink at the same time. You, as a competitor, also have to gauge what you can do. Do not stay at the rink all day and then be exhausted for your own performance.
15. Don’t forget directions to the rink!

GOOD LUCK!!

**Competition Checklist**

Don’t forget the following when going to a competition:

* Skates (BOTH of them)
* Dress and tights or pants and shirt (for boys)
* A spare set of tights
* Extra scrunchies, bobbie pins, etc.
* Any makeup you will require
* Comb, brush, hairspray
* Sweater or warmup jacket
* CDs (labeled and tested)
* Backup CDs (labeled and tested)
* Guards and soakers
* “Emergency bag” (this should contain spare screws for your blades, a screwdriver, spare laces, band-aids, inhaler, etc.)
* USFSA number
* Know your event number and time
* Directions to the rink
* Video tape and money to pay for taping, if desire; tape should be cued to end

Remember, you’re doing this for fun. Plan ahead to leave enough time to relax a little when you arrive and while you are there.

**Types of Competitions**

**US Competitions – Qualifying vs. Non-Qualifying**

In the USFSA competition structure for eligible (amateur) skaters, there are two categories of competition. Most of the competitions that skaters will enter throughout the year are called “non-qualifying” or “local” competitions. “Qualifying” competitions include Regionals or Sectionals, which are considered to be the qualifying evens or “elimination rounds” preliminary to US National competition.

**Non-Qualifying Competitions**

The local competition is the mainstay of amateur figure skating competitions. Every year, hundreds of non-qualifying competitions are held at USFSA-affiliated clubs throughout the nation. These competitions are created, planned and implemented solely through the work of the club members in the sponsoring clubs. Anyone who is a registered, eligible member of the association may enter and compete. These events do not lead directly to any National or World competition, but do provider skaters the opportunity for experience in the competitive environment, the chance to earn medals and ribbons and the opportunity to preview the work of skaters in other clubs.

Local competitions are judges by USFSA appointed judges, using the same standards as they would for Qualifying competitions. Local competitions, however, have the opportunity to “make their own rules” when they see fit and create unique new events or variations of standard events. They may relax qualification rules if desired to permit skaters the opportunity for growth experiences. For all local competitions, the Club’s Competitions Announcement should be considered the “rulebook” for the competition.

Oftentimes, age restrictions will be relaxed in local competitions. Frequently, skaters will be permitted to skate “one level up” from their current test level (for instance, this means that a Juvenile skater would be permitted to skate in an Intermediate event). Most frequently, events will be available which are not part of the standard rulebook.

**Qualifying Competitions**

Qualifying competition is the broad label which refers to all those competitions which lead to US National and World competitions. Qualifying competitions are held once a year in the fall. Only skaters who meet all the eligibility requirements of age and test level may enter. These competitions start at the Regional level. Successful competitors from Regional competitions advance to Sectional level competition and then to US Nationals or Junior Olympic competition. Only the top four competitors in each division advance to the next level. Qualifying competitions follow the Rulebook format for events and all age and test level qualifications.

**Regionals**

There are nine regions in the US, each of which holds an annual Regional competition. The location for the Regional competitions within each region is established by the USFSA each year on the basis of applications by potential sponsoring clubs and is usually know about a year in advance. Regional competitions are generally held in early October and the application deadline is September 1st.

According to the Rulebook, Regional competitions will hold events at levels ranging from Juvenile to Senior. Organizers are permitted to hold additional events if time permits, however and often, Pre-Juvenile and other non-qualifying events will be included.

There are no requirement other than test level (and for some levels, age) for entered into Regional competition. Any eligible USFSA skater of the appropriate test level may enter his or her region’s Regional competition.

**Sectionals**

These are 3 Sections in the US, each of which holds an annual Sectional competition. The location for the Sectional competition within each section is established by the USFSA each year on the basis of applications by potential sponsoring clubs and is usually known about a year in advance.

Sectional Competition is the second rung on the road to Nationals; skaters qualify to skate in Sectionals based upon performance at Regionals. Sectional competitions are generally held in late November or early December.

**United States Figure Skating Championships (US Nationals)**

US Nationals is held annually in a city whose locations is established by the USFSA each year of the basis of applications by potential sponsoring clubs. The location is generally known 2-3 years in advance and always rotates between sections. US Nationals holds events for Novice, Junior and Senior level skaters.

**US Junior National Championships (CR 70)**

The Junior Nationals is the national level competition for skaters at the Juvenile and Intermediate levels. Qualification for Junior Nationals is through Regional performance. Junior Nationals is generally held in December of each year.

Last revised July, 2018