

Learn to Skate, Hockey & Figure Skating Information

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Polar Palace Learn to Skate program. Your child's first skating lesson is just around the corner and here are some helpful hints to make your first taste of ice-skating a positive and memorable experience.

Ready to wear!

Wear long pants, long sleeve shirt, removable lightweight sweater/jacket, socks (a must have for rental skates), and gloves or mittens for Snowplow Sam and Tot Hockey. All first time skaters will be spending time sitting, kneeling and/or crawling on the ice so all bare skin should be covered until your child gets used to the cold, wet ice! **Safety headgear is highly recommend**, especially if you are worried about your child falling down and hitting their head. Your child's instructor will teach them the proper way to fall and get up, but slips do happen from time to time. If your child does fall, **Do Not Enter** the ice in your shoes! Your slip will probably be worse than your child's.

A stitch in time!

Get to the rink 20-25 minutes early on the first day of class. Be prepared to try on several pairs of skates. The correct skate size will guarantee your child's success on the ice. Arena staff will be on hand to help you with your skates. A proper fitting boot should be able to fit no more than a finger behind your child's heel. Please remember that we have many first time skaters so please use the locker rooms to put skates on. Check the monitor when you first enter the building to see which locker room to use.

Tied up in knots!

Skates should be tied-up tight around the ankle and then a little looser as you move up the hooks. The top hook is tied snug enough to not allow a finger under it, but not so tight that the blood supply is constricted to the foot (it will fall asleep). With correct sizing and lace tightening your child should be able to stand up on the floor **without** the skates falling to the outside/inside. If the boot and blade are not straight up and down something **is not right**. Usually this indicates a boot that is too big.

Ouch.. that hurts!

For first time skaters, be prepared for complaints from your child about their feet hurting. As long as the fit is correct, most of the pain will go away on the ice! Don't be fooled by getting a pair of skates that are too big, which initially makes them less painful but they cause blisters and sore ankles. This is not good for the child's feet or their skating.

I'm late! I'm late!

These are forbidden words in the ice skating world! Being late to class is disruptive to all skaters and puts your child at a disadvantage. They have enough to learn without playing catch-up! Please have your child ready to skate at the beginning of **every** class.

Absence does not make the ice grow fonder!

The first two weeks of your child's skating classes are without a doubt the most important. Attending Public Skating sessions is also encouraged to reinforce what they learn in class.

Car 54-where are you?

Classes may meet their instructor **off the ice** for the first two weeks. Off-ice time can take 5-10 minutes depending on the skaters' ages. Please be patient with off-ice instruction, it is needed to help build the trust and confidence your child will need to step onto the ice! After a week or two (at the instructors discretion) all classes will meet directly on the ice in a pre-designated area.

Look, but don't touch!

As a parent, your joy of skating will be when you watch your child accomplish one new skating maneuver after another. Please enjoy! But remember not to compete with the instructor for your child's attention. You should be visible to your child **but not accessible** to them. Tot parents-should your child begin to cry and cannot be consoled by the instructor, they will be brought back to you for re-assurance and positive re-enforcement. Don't force them to rejoin the class until they are ready. This behavior will pass in most cases and eventually it will be impossible to get them **off** the ice!

Time Out!

Class instructors will not tolerate bad behavior by any skater. Although a very rare occurrence, skaters will be sent off the ice if their behavior disrupts the class. Normally, logic and quick reprimand are all that are needed, followed by positive reinforcement for behaving nicely.

Patience is a virtue!

With all of our planning at the Polar Palace to keep everything smooth and easy for you, sometimes things go wrong. If you experience any difficulties, please let your coach know or the Front Desk. We will address it in the timeliest manner possible. Please keep in mind that the first day of classes will look unorganized. Our goal is not only to provide your child with solid ice skating instruction-but also provide a pleasant and enjoyable experience for you!

I hope this better prepares you for your child's first day of class. Please call if you have any additional questions. See you at the rink!