

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

Created by Emily Rausa, figure skating instructor for Sugar Land Ice and Sports Center

Snowplow Sam 1

Warm up: Walk around off-ice in skates and make sure they are tied well and comfortable. Fall down and get up off-ice.

1. Make sure skater can fall down and get up independently on the ice.
2. Get on the ice and march in place. Do this for at least 10 steps. Skaters should focus on holding the body still and upright, hands out in front of them on an imaginary table for all the skills.
3. March/walk around the rink using both feet, working on making both feet push equally. – Try to walk as much as possible. Try to go around the entire rink many times.
4. Stop moving feet after marching in order to produce a glide. The goal is to glide for at least 4 seconds or longer. Try this at least 10 times. Feet should be placed underneath the body, weight evenly distributed so the glide goes straight forward. Skaters must focus on keeping the body still for gliding.
5. Do a few dips standing still, getting used to the sitting position. Hips/bottom go back, chest and head stay up. Do this at least 5 times.

Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, more practice can be done. Playing with friends on the ice for beginners is beneficial because it lets skaters get comfortable on the ice and have fun, and not feel nervous or scared.

Tip: Knee pads, elbow pads, padded shorts and helmets are strongly recommended for this level. For all levels, gloves that cover all fingers/hand should be worn.

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Snowplow Sam 2

Warm up: Walk around off-ice in skates and make sure they are tied well. Fall down and get up off-ice and off-ice.

Snowplow Sam 2 skills:

1. March/walk using both feet, working on making both feet push equally. Try to walk as much as possible. Try to go around the entire rink many times. Skaters should focus on holding the body still and upright, hands out in front of them on an imaginary table for all the skills.
2. Stop moving feet after marching in order to produce a glide. The goal is to glide for at least 4 seconds or longer, or 2 times the height of the skater. Try this at least 10 times. Feet should be placed underneath the body, weight evenly distributed so the glide goes straight forward. Skaters must focus on keeping the body still for gliding.
3. Do a few dips standing still, getting used to the sitting position. Hips/bottom go back, chest and head stay up. Do this at least 5 times. The goal is to sit so the hips are as low as the knees. It's OK if beginners are not that low yet. They can try to improve every time they skate.
4. Do at least 3 moving dips, holding for 4 seconds each, trying to get hips as low as the knees. Do this by gliding first and then dipping while gliding. Weight should be evenly distributed among both feet so the glide will go straight.
5. Backward wiggle for five seconds at a time, practice five times. Feet should go back and forth in a zigzag motion, keeping weight a bit forward, close to the toes. Arms should move back and forth to help with the wiggle motion. Arms move as if the skater is running.
6. Forward swizzles - focusing on pushing down into the ice for the first part of the swizzle and squeezing feet and legs together on the second part of the swizzle. Do 6 in a row, and practice at least five times. Once the skater feels comfortable with the movement, they should try and do short glides between swizzles and not stop completely in between them.
7. Two foot hops (optional skill) – practice five times. Hands should stay down and in front of skater. Knees bend before and after the hop.

Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, more practice can be done. Playing with friends on the ice for beginners is beneficial because it lets skaters get comfortable on the ice and have fun, and not feel nervous or scared.

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Snowplow Sam 3

Warm Up:

1. March/walk around the rink using both feet, working on making both feet push equally. – Try to walk as much as possible. Try to go around the entire rink many times.
2. Stop moving feet after marching in order to produce a glide. Keep feet close together on the glide, about 2 inches apart. The goal is to glide for at least 4 seconds or longer. Try this at least 10 times.
3. Do at least 3 moving dips, holding for 4 seconds each, trying to get hips as low as the knees. Do this by gliding first and then dipping while gliding. Weight should be evenly distributed among both feet so the glide will go straight.

Snow Plow 3 skills:

1. Forward swizzle - focusing on pushing down into the ice for the first part of the swizzle and squeezing feet and legs together on the second part of the swizzle. Do 6 in a row, and practice at least five times. Once the skater feels comfortable with the movement, they should try and do short glides between swizzles and not stop completely in between them.
2. Backward swizzles - focusing on the same concepts as forward swizzles, pushing down into the ice with inside edges on the first half of the swizzle and squeezing feet and legs back together for the second half of the swizzle. Make sure the waist does not bend during these or the toe picks will scratch the ice, slowing the skater down. Do 6 in a row, and practice at least five times. Once the skater feels comfortable with the movement, they should try and do short glides between swizzles and not stop completely in between them.
3. 1 foot glides- practice five times on each foot, trying to hold for at least 1-2 seconds, gliding in a straight line. Blade and ankle must be held vertically for this to happen. Skater should put feet together first closely and feel flat edges/vertical blades before attempting the lift a foot.
4. Make snow on the ice by pushing skate outward to the side to prepare for stops.
5. Do moving stops at least 3 times, focusing on stopping completely, not bending the waist forward, and preparing to stop by bending the knees.
6. Curves- Skaters use body lean to curve on the ice – try to make S patterns after getting enough speed to glide, five times.

Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, more practice can be done. Playing with friends on the ice for beginners is beneficial because it lets skaters get comfortable on the ice and have fun, and not feel nervous or scared.

Tip: At this level, skaters should have their own high quality skates and no longer use rental skates for the best results in learning the skills.

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

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Snowplow Sam 4

Warm Up:

1. March/walk around the rink using both feet, working on making both feet push equally. – Try to walk as much as possible. Try to go around the entire rink many times.
2. Stop moving feet after marching in order to produce a glide. Keep feet close together on the glide, about 2 inches apart. The goal is to glide for at least 4 seconds or longer. Try this at least 10 times.

Snow Plow Sam 4 skills:

1. Scooter pushes – skater can use one foot at a time, open the foot up at a diagonal, and use the inside edge of the blade to push themselves forward. The important thing is to NOT use the toe pick to push anymore. They should bend their knees before the push and feel the inside edge pushing down into the ice as the leg straightens to push. Do both feet all the way down the length of the rink, switching half-way.
2. Backward swizzles - focusing on the same concepts as forward swizzles, pushing down into the ice with inside edges on the first half of the swizzle and squeezing feet and legs back together for the second half of the swizzle. Make sure the waist does not bend during these or the toe picks will scratch the ice, slowing the skater down. Do 6 in a row, and practice at least five times. Once the skater feels comfortable with the movement, they should try and do short glides between swizzles and not stop completely in between them.
3. Rocking horse – this is a forward swizzle and backward swizzle done one right after another. Students should do 10 of these.
4. Two foot turns - do at least 5 times each direction, focusing on rocking up to the toe pick on the turn, and feeling a twist over the body to start the turn. The turn should be quick.
5. 1 foot glides- practice five times on each foot, trying to hold for at least 3-4 seconds, gliding in a straight line. Blade and ankle must be held vertically for this to happen. Skater should put feet together first closely and feel flat edges/vertical blades before attempting the lift a foot.
6. Two foot hops – practice five times. Hands should stay down and in front of skater. Knees bend before and after the hop.

Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, more practice can be done. Playing with friends on the ice for beginners is beneficial because it lets skaters get comfortable on the ice and have fun, and not feel nervous or scared.

Tip: At this level, skaters should have their own high quality skates and no longer use rental skates for the best results in learning the skills.

Once skaters pass Snowplow Sam 4, they will enter either Basic 2 or Basic 3 depending on their skill level. An instructor will advise the best placement.

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Basic 1 Practice List

Warm up: Walk around off-ice in skates and make sure they are tied well and comfortable. Fall down and get up off-ice.

Basic 1 skills:

1. Make sure skater can fall down and get up independently on the ice.
2. March/walk around the rink using both feet, working on making both feet push equally.
3. Stop moving feet after marching in order to produce a glide. The goal is to glide for at least 4 seconds or longer.
4. Do a few dips standing still, getting used to the sitting position. Hips/bottom go back, chest and head stay up.
5. Do at least 5 moving dips, holding for 4 seconds each, trying to get hips as low as the knees.
6. Forward swizzle for at least the length of the rink, focusing on pushing down into the ice for the first part of the swizzle and squeezing feet and legs together on the second part of the swizzle. Skater should do a smooth two foot glide in between swizzles.
7. Backward wiggle for five seconds at a time, practice five times.
8. Make snow on the ice by pushing skate outward to the side to prepare for stops.
9. Do moving stops at least 5 times, focusing on stopping completely, not bending the waist forward, and preparing to stop by bending the knees.

Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, more practice can be done. Playing with friends on the ice for beginners is beneficial because it lets skaters get comfortable on the ice and have fun, and not feel nervous or scared.

Tip: Knee pads, elbow pads, padded shorts and helmets are strongly recommended for this level. For all levels, gloves that cover all fingers/hand should be worn.

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

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Basic 2 Practice List

Warm Up:

1. Skate around the rink using both feet, working on making both feet push equally.
2. Do at least 3 dips, holding for 4 seconds each, trying to get hips as low as the knees.
3. Forward swizzle for at least the length of the rink, focusing on pushing down into the ice for the first part of the swizzle and squeezing feet and legs together on the second part of the swizzle. Skater should do a smooth two foot glide in between swizzles.
4. Make snow on the ice by pushing skate outward to the side to prepare for stops.
5. practice moving stops at least 3 times, focusing on stopping completely, not bending the waist forward, and preparing to stop by bending the knees.

Basic 2 skills:

1. One foot glides- practice five times on each foot, trying to hold for at least 3 seconds, gliding in a straight line. Blade and ankle must be held vertically for this to happen. Skater should put feet together first closely and feel flat edges/vertical blades before attempting the lift a foot.
2. Scooter pushes – skater can use one foot at a time, open the foot up at a diagonal, and use the inside edge of the blade to push themselves forward. The important thing is to NOT use the toe pick to push anymore. They should bend their knees before the push and feel the inside edge pushing down into the ice as the leg straightens to push. Do both feet all the way down the length of the rink, switching half-way.
3. Backward swizzles at least the length of the rink, focusing on the same concepts as forward swizzles, pushing down into the ice with inside edges on the first half of the swizzle and squeezing feet and legs back together for the second half of the swizzle. Skater should do a smooth two foot glide in between swizzles. Make sure the waist does not bend during these or the toe picks will scratch the ice, slowing the skater down.
4. Practice stops whenever the skater needs to stop.
5. Two foot turns - do at least 5 times each direction, focusing on rocking up to the toe pick on the turn, and feeling a twist over the body to start the turn. The turn should be quick.
6. Backward two foot glides – skater should do some backward swizzles, generate power, and freeze the feet underneath their bodies to hold a glide for at least four seconds. Skaters should focus on correct technique for the swizzles, keep good posture with the back tall, keeping the head and eyes forward. The knees should bend and straighten as they swizzle. Skaters must stay very still in the two foot glide and not move while gliding backward.

For ALL elements in Basic 1 and 2, skaters should practice looking forward, not at their feet or the ice, and keep straight posture, not bending at the waist. Bending at the waist increases bad habits, accidents and falling.

Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, more practice can be done. Playing with friends on the ice for beginners is beneficial because it lets skaters get comfortable on the ice and have fun, and not feel nervous or scared.

Tip: At this level, skaters should have their own high quality skates and no longer use rental skates for the best results in learning the skills.

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

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Basic 3 Practice List

Skaters should go through this entire list and if they still have energy, repeat elements they want to or have the most trouble with. Over time as skills are mastered, the practice should change, removing some of the very easy elements and putting in more difficult ones.

Warm Up with Basic 1 and 2 skills:

1. Skate forward (for at least half the rink to get used to the ice)
2. Dip (3 times, 3 seconds each)
3. Forward swizzles (for at least half the rink)
4. Snowplow stop (3 times, and then whenever needed)
5. Forward one foot glides – R and L (5 times each foot, 3 seconds long each, going straight)
6. Backward swizzles – (for at least half the rink)
7. Backward two-foot glide from backward swizzles (5 times, 3 seconds long each, going straight)
8. Two-foot turn from forward to backward in place (5 times each direction)
9. Scooter pushes (for at least half the rink per foot)

Basic 3 skills:

1. Forward stroking, showing correct use of blade. (for at least half the rink)
Skaters should think back to scooter pushes and really use the inside edge to push. The legs should go diagonal back behind the skater and the leg pushing should straighten and point as it leaves the ice. The other leg should remain bend on the ice during the stroke. Posture should be straight up, eyes forward.
2. Forward half swizzle pumps on a circle – 6–8 consecutive clockwise and counterclockwise (5 circles each direction) Keep posture up, eyes forward. Head should be placed on top of circle. Knee on circle should bend as other foot swizzles. Only ONE FOOT should swizzle.
3. Moving forward to backward two-foot turn – clockwise and counterclockwise (5 times each direction). Twist upper body first as much as possible while keeping lower body still. Then release lower body and turn 180 degrees. Beginners should glide slowly while going into this element.
4. Backward one-foot glides – R and L (5 times each foot, At least 1-2 seconds long each, going straight). Skaters must have good posture, stand up tall, and align themselves on top of the skating foot. The free foot should be placed near the ankle of the skating foot.
5. Forward slalom (for at least half the rink). Skaters should bend and straighten knees, keep feet together, posture fall, and make a zig-zag pattern down the ice.
6. Backward snowplow stop – R and L. Practice at least five times after gliding backward. Skater should make sure she's on inside edges before pushing the

blade into the ice to stop. The toe will turn out diagonally and push back on an inside edge to stop. Master one foot, then try the other.

7. Forward pivots (bonus skill) - practice 5x both directions. Skater should place toe pick in the ice and then do a forward swizzle with the opposite foot only. Head should stay on top of toe that's in the ice, staying very straight and aligned.

Tip: It's recommended that skaters purchase high quality skates and stop wearing rental skates starting at Basic 2. As the skaters move up in levels, the more important it is that they have their own high quality skates.

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

Created by Emily Rausa, figure skating instructor for Sugar Land Ice and Sports Center

Basic 4 practice list

General practice recommendations. Skaters can alter this depending on time restraints. Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, she can do more practice. For the current level the skater is in, the skater should only attempt the element once it has been learned, meaning, all elements in Basic 4 are listed here, but the skater may not have learned all of the elements when beginning to use this practice list. The skater should try to remember the key corrections from instructors and attempt to improve with every practice.

Warm Up (fairly easy elements for the skater, to get comfortable when first getting on the ice):

- 1 foot glides, both feet, 4 seconds on a straight line -3x each foot
- Backward two foot glides from backward swizzles, at least four seconds long – 3x
- Forward pumps on a circle – 2 circles each direction
- Any other simple element the skater would like to do.

Practice previously learned elements:

- Forward Stroking – 1 time around the rink
- Forward Slalom – 1 time around the rink
- two foot spins – 5x, one direction only
- backward 1 foot glide – 5x, each foot, straight line
- moving two foot turns on a circle, 5x, both directions
- backward stops – 5x each foot

Note: the “previously learned elements” could be considered 'warm up,' but skaters still needs to actively practice these elements to improve them. They're building blocks to more advanced moves in higher levels, so skaters cannot forget them or regress on them or they will face more challenges in the future.

Basic 4

1. forward outside edges – 5 times, four second long glides. Make sure the body is erect and very still before lifting the outside foot. The body should lean slightly towards the circle before lifting the foot and placing it on the ankle of the other foot. The torso should be twisted so that the belly and chest face towards the circle, and arms over the circle.

2. forward inside edges – 5 times, four second long glides. Make sure the body is erect and very still before lifting the inside foot. The body should lean slightly away from the circle before lifting the foot and placing it on the ankle of the other foot. The torso should be twisted so that the belly and chest face towards the circle, and arms over the circle.
3. forward crossovers – 5 circles, both directions. Skaters need to be able to do the inside and outside edges before attempting crossovers. The first push is a stroking push with the outside foot. (skill from basic 3). Then the other foot should stroke UNDER the leg that just stroked. Crossovers consist of two pushes. The second push is difficult and does not need to be strong at this level. As long as skaters can lean enough on the outside edge when doing the first push to allow the second to slide underneath without severe toe pick scratches, it is good enough to pass this level.
4. Backward one-foot glides – R and L (5 times each foot, At least 1-2 seconds long each, going straight). Skaters must have good posture, stand up tall, and align themselves on top of the skating foot. The free foot should be placed near the ankle of the skating foot.
5. backward half swizzle pumps on a circle – 5 circles, both directions. A lot of the same concepts for forward half swizzle pumps are the same here. The head should stay over the circle and non swizzling foot. However now the head should be turned to look in the direction of travel. Arms should be up over the circle, torso twisted towards the circle. Good posture is necessary and will help the skater not grind toe picks into the ice which is a common error.
6. Two-foot spin (5 times, one direction only). Skaters use pivot skill to generate power for a spin. One foot stays in place and forms an axis. The other foot swizzles forward and joins the other foot, and arms should be open and then close when the feet come back together. Posture should be upright and held strongly.
7. Forward lunge (Bonus Skill)– 5x, only one foot/side required mastery. Skater's body stays upright as one leg and foot goes behind the body, straight, in order to lunge, that foot turned so the inside of the foot/boot is on the ice. The blade of that skate should NOT be on the ice. This is while the other skate is in the front gliding forward, with the knee bent.

Tip: It's recommended that skaters purchase high quality skates and stop wearing rental skates starting at Basic 2. As the skaters move up in levels, the more important it is that they have their own high quality skates.

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

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Basic 5 practice list

General practice recommendations. Skaters can alter this depending on time restraints. Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, she can do more practice. For the current level the skater is in, the skater should only attempt the element once it has been learned, meaning, all elements in Basic 5 are listed here, but the skater may not have learned all of the elements when beginning to use this practice list. The skater should try to remember the key corrections from instructors and attempt to improve with every practice.

Warm Up (fairly easy elements for the skater, to get comfortable when first getting on the ice):

- Forward Stroking – 1 time around the rink
- Forward Slalom – 1 time around the rink
- Any other simple element the skater would like to do.

Practice previously learned elements:

- forward crossovers – 5 circles, both directions
- backward stroking/backward one foot glides – 1x down the length of the rink
- forward outside 3-turns – 5x both directions
- two foot spins – 5x, one direction only, then progress to 1 foot spin as seen below

Note: the “previously learned elements” could be considered 'warm up,' but skaters still needs to actively practice these elements to improve them. They're building blocks to more advanced moves in higher levels, so skaters cannot forget them or regress on them or they will face more challenges in the future.

Basic 5 skills:

1. Backward outside edge on a circle – 5x, R and L, (both directions). Skaters should use the same concepts for forward edges as the backward – meaning the torso is twisted towards the circle, arms on the circle. Body leans towards the circle as the outside foot lifts and is placed on the ankle.
2. Backward inside edge on a circle –5x, R and L, (both directions). Skaters should use the same concepts for forward edges as the backward – meaning the torso is twisted towards the circle, arms on the circle. Body leans away the circle as the inside foot lifts and is placed on the ankle.
3. Backward crossovers, 5 circles, both directions. Skaters must master the backward inside and outside edges before attempting or mastering the backward crossovers. The skater can use similar concepts for forward crossovers as backward – such as leaning into the circle during the cross, and torso twisted

towards the circle, arms over the circle. However, for backward, the foot crossing over will not leave the ice. (the outside foot) It will do half a backward swizzle pump and then maneuver around the other foot, curving the heel around as the other foot pushes underneath, away from the center of the circle. Posture should remain tall and controlled, head turned to look in the direction of travel.

4. Hockey stop – 5x, one direction required. Hips should turn quickly while bending knees, the shoulders twisted opposite direction at the same time to stay squared towards the direction of travel. Skater must sit back a bit while doing this move.
5. forward outside 3-turns – 5x both directions. Skaters should warm this up with two foot turns. The same techniques are used; the skater just needs more balance to complete it on one foot. Skater should be twisted in towards the circle just like every other skill on the circle so far, have the outside foot do a stroking push then put the foot on the ankle. Bend and rise up towards the toe and use hip and foot muscles to release the lower body and complete the turn. Skater will then be on a backward inside edge and hold balanced, arms on the circle, torso facing in, posture erect.
6. Advanced two foot spin – Skater will use same techniques they learned before but keep practicing to complete at least 4 revolutions.
7. Side toe hop (Bonus Skill) – 5x, both directions

Tip: It's recommended that skaters purchase high quality skates and stop wearing rental skates starting at Basic 2. As the skaters move up in levels, the more important it is that they have their own high quality skates.

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

Created by Emily Rausa, figure skating instructor for Sugar Land Ice and Sports Center

Basic 6 practice list

General practice recommendations. Skaters can alter this depending on time restraints. Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, she can do more practice. For the current level the skater is in, the skater should only attempt the element once it has been learned, meaning, all elements in Basic 6 are listed here, but the skater may not have learned all of the elements when beginning to use this practice list. The skater should try to remember the key corrections from instructors and attempt to improve with every practice.

Warm Up (fairly easy elements for the skater, to get comfortable when first getting on the ice):

- Forward Stroking – 1 time around the rink
- Forward Slalom – 1 time around the rink
- Any other simple element the skater would like to do.

Practice previously learned elements:

- Forward crossovers – 5 circles, both directions
- Backward crossovers – 5 circles, both directions
- 3-turns – 5x, both directions
- 2 foot spin – 5x, skater's dominant direction
- Hockey stops – 5x, one direction required only
- Side toe hops – 5x both directions

Note: the “previously learned elements” could be considered 'warm up,' but skaters still needs to actively practice these elements to improve them. They're building blocks to more advanced moves in higher levels, so skaters cannot forget them or regress on them or they will face more challenges in the future.

Basic 6 skills:

1. Forward Inside 3 turns – 5x each direction – same concepts as the outside 3 turn, but on an inside edge.
2. Moving backward to forward two foot turns – 5x each direction. Pump backward on the circle and glide on two feet on the circle, backwards. Skater will face the chest/belly towards the outside of the circle for the first time on the circle. Bend the knees, putting weight on the heels instead of the balls of the feet. Then turn forward.
3. Backward stroking – Go all the way down the rink. Alternate backward half swizzles on the straight line and lift each foot off the ice as it finishes the half swizzle. The leg should be straight as it lifts.

4. T stop – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery. Skater will take one foot, open up the toe so it's completely facing the side. It will go behind the other foot, flex the foot so the blade is leaning away from the skating foot. Foot will be placed behind skating foot to stop momentum.
5. Bunny hop – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery. Free leg swings forward in a pendulum motion while the other foot pushes up through the toe to jump. That same foot will land on the toe, pushing onto a one foot glide on the other foot.
6. Forward spiral – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery in this level, will need both mastered in higher freeskate levels. Eyes should stay forward, back arched, shoulders up. Skaters should skate on the back of their skates so they don't trip over the toe pick. The waist must be bent 90 degrees at the crease of the hips.
7. Beginning one foot spin – 5x. Skater will do a two foot spin and then lift the pumping foot and place it next to the ankle of the other foot.
8. Shoot the duck (Bonus Skill) – 5x

Tip: At this level of skating, skaters should be wearing high quality skates. Rental skates or purely recreational skates may inhibit the learning of skills or be dangerous for the skater due to the lack of ankle support needed.

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

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Pre-Freeskate practice list (Sugar Land Ice splits PreFreeskate into two classes)

General practice recommendations. Skaters can alter this depending on time restraints. Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, she can do more practice. For the current level the skater is in, the skater should only attempt the element once it has been learned, meaning, all elements in PreFreeskate are listed here, but the skater may not have learned all of the elements when beginning to use this practice list. The skater should try to remember the key corrections from instructors and attempt to improve with every practice.

Warm Up (fairly easy elements for the skater, to get comfortable when first getting on the ice):

- Forward Stroking – 1 time around the rink
- Forward Slalom – 1 time around the rink
- Any other simple element the skater would like to do.

Practice previously learned elements:

- Forward crossovers – 5 circles, both directions
- Backward crossovers – 5 circles, both directions
- 3-turns, inside and outside – 5x, both directions
- 1 foot spin – 5x, skater's dominant direction
- Hockey stops – 5x, one direction required only
- Side toe hops – 5x both directions
- Moving backward to forward two foot turns – 5x each direction
- T stop – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery
- Bunny hop – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery
- Forward spiral – 5x, begin practicing on both feet
- Forward lunge – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery

Note: the “previously learned elements” could be considered 'warm up,' but skaters still needs to actively practice these elements to improve them. They're building blocks to more advanced moves in higher levels, so skaters cannot forget them or regress on them or they will face more challenges in the future.

Pre-Freeskate skills – perform each skill 5x.

1. Advanced forward and backward crossovers – Skaters improve speed, body positions, push technique, etc.
2. Forward inside open Mohawk from a standstill position – R to L and L to R. Skaters should keep arms over the circle, torso towards the center of the circle

just like three turns. Skater will stay on inside edges and switch feet at the top of a half circle pattern. Skater should maintain erect posture and avoid toe pick scratches. Foot that steps down should half heel right at the center of the other skate, in front of the instep.

3. Backward outside edge to forward outside edge transition on a circle – R and L. Skaters will glide backward on the circle, and either do a landing position or hold the free-leg at the back of the skating leg, rotate the body towards the outside of the circle and stroke forward.
4. Backward crossovers to a backward outside edge glides (landing position), clockwise and counterclockwise. Free leg will be in a stroking position in the air, straight, pointed. Skating leg will be bent.
5. One-foot upright spin, optional entry and free-foot position – skater needs to master the balance and power with the free foot next to the ankle of the skating foot first before attempting a scratch spin (ankles crossed). Skater should first enter spin with a pump and then lifting of a foot (technique taught in Basic 4-5).
6. Mazurka – R and L. Skater will start on a backward outside edge on one foot. Other foot will tap diagonally behind using inside of the big toe, drawing the free leg/foot towards it. The body begins to rotate and foot being drawn back will rotate forward as it leaves the ice. A jump will occur and the landing will be similar to a bunny hop landing.
7. Backward inside pivots (Bonus skill) – R and L. Same concept as forward pivots but done backward.

Tip: At this level of skating, skaters should be wearing high quality skates appropriate for jumps. Entry level skates are generally not recommended once skaters are performing jumps.

Basic Skills Practice Lists (Entry level – PreFreeskate)

Created by Emily Rausa, figure skating instructor for Sugar Land Ice and Sports Center

Pre-Freeskate Advanced/Plus practice list

General practice recommendations. Skaters can alter this depending on time restraints. Skater can do more or less of each element depending on mastery of the element. Struggling elements should be practiced more. If the skater has more energy, she can do more practice. For the current level the skater is in, the skater should only attempt the element once it has been learned, meaning, all elements in PreFreeskate Advanced/Plus are listed here, but the skater may not have learned all of the elements when beginning to use this practice list. The skater should try to remember the key corrections from instructors and attempt to improve with every practice.

Warm Up (fairly easy elements for the skater, to get comfortable when first getting on the ice):

- Forward Stroking – 1 time around the rink
- Forward Slalom – 1 time around the rink
- Any other simple element the skater would like to do.

Practice previously learned elements:

- Forward crossovers – 5 circles, both directions
- Backward crossovers – 5 circles, both directions
- 3-turns, inside and outside – 5x, both directions
- 1 foot spin – 5x, skater's dominant direction
- Hockey stops – 5x, one direction required only
- Side toe hops – 5x both directions
- Moving backward to forward two foot turns – 5x each direction
- T stop – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery
- Bunny hop – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery
- Forward spiral – 5x, begin practicing on both feet
- Forward lunge – 5x, only one foot/side required mastery

Note: the “previously learned elements” could be considered 'warm up,' but skaters still needs to actively practice these elements to improve them. They're building blocks to more advanced moves in higher levels, so skaters cannot forget them or regress on them or they will face more challenges in the future.

Pre-Freeskate Advanced/Plus – perform each skill 5x.

1. Combination move: Forward crossovers (2) into forward inside Mohawk, cross behind, step into backward crossover (1) and step to forward inside edge
2. One-foot upright spin, T-position push entry, optional free-foot position – skater needs to master the balance and power with the free foot next to the ankle of the

skating foot. Scratch spin is not required for this level. Skater should lead with the same shoulder as the foot they will be spinning on, lean onto an outside edge, bend the knee to initiate a three-turn which will begin the spin. The free leg stays behind until the three-turn. Then the free leg should be pulled in and squeezed next to the skating leg. Once this is mastered, the skater can begin moving the free leg in front on the entrance and then crossing the ankles to perform a scratch spin.

3. Waltz jump. Skater will push forward on a slight outside edge, pulling free leg and arms back, leading with skating side. Free leg will swing through similarly in the way the bunny hop did. Skater will jump using the skating foot. A half turn will happen in the air and skater will land in the landing position for at least 3 seconds. After learning from a standstill, skaters perform it from backward crossovers.
4. Mazurka from backward crossovers– R and L. Skater will start on a backward outside edge on one foot. Other foot will tap diagonally behind using inside of the big toe, drawing the free leg/foot towards it. The body begins to rotate and foot being drawn back will rotate forward as it leaves the ice. A jump will occur and the landing will be similar to a bunny hop landing.
5. Advanced forward inside and outside 3 turns – Skaters should review 3 turns and be able to perform them on larger circles at faster speeds.
6. Backward inside pivots (Bonus skill) – R and L. Same concept as forward pivots but done backward.

Tip: At this level of skating, skaters should be wearing high quality skates appropriate for jumps. Entry level skates are not recommended once skaters are performing jumps.

Practice list – free skate levels, by Emily Rausa, ice skating instructor

ALL FREE SKATE LEVELS (Freeskate 1-6):

Note: At this level, it's highly encouraged that all skaters take private lessons in addition to group. Each coach has their own style and philosophy for the skating skills, and may provide their own warm ups, practice regimens, etc.

Warm Up suggestions (before skating)

- Off ice – 5-10 minutes of cardio exercise/dynamic stretching, such as jumping jacks, high knees, butt kickers, jump rope, burpees, twists, squat jumps, leg swings. Keep core engaged throughout all exercises.

On Ice

- Forward and backward crossovers - several circles each
- Any other skating movements that helps the skater get comfortable, like the exercises taught in stroking class: cross rolls, Mohawk crosses, etc.

Cool Down (after skating)

- STRETCH all major muscle groups, holding for 45-60 seconds each. Do all main body parts, especially lower body, for approximately 5-10 seconds each stretch. Most important: Hamstrings, quads, calves, Achilles, hips, hip flexors, groin, inner thighs, obliques, glutes, piriformis. If time allows, also stretch the upper body: shoulders, upper back, triceps. Foam rolling and/or massage is also recommended.
- Make sure you're drinking plenty of water.

Strength training (off-ice) – Recommended programs

- Yoga (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Pilates (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Ballet (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Basic traditional exercises to strengthen the body- squats, lunges, pushups, planks, crunches. Ideally, these exercises will be done three times a week, with at least 1-day rest between days. Exercises must be done with correct form to avoid injury, so it's best to work with a professional.

Freeskate 1

Practice previously learned elements:

Three turns, mohawks, lunges, spirals, backward stroking, T stops, shoot the ducks, any anything else that needs work.

Skating Skills – Do each move approximately five times successfully. Always try to improve on form, holding your core muscles tight. Over time, start adding more speed to jumps with stronger stroking/crossovers into them:

A. Forward power stroking, clockwise and counterclockwise – *must be 4-8 strokes down the sides, evenly placed. At least 3 forward crossovers must be done on the ends. Do both directions. Good posture, inside edge pushes and no toe pick pushes are a must.*

B. Basic forward outside and forward inside consecutive edges (four to six consecutive edges) – *start all patterns on the right foot. 4-6 lobes must be done down the short axis of the rink, equal sizes.*

C. Backward outside three-turns (R and L) – *warm up with the two foot backward to forward turn. Turn must happen on the back of the blade (heel). A slight knee bend should occur to initiate the turn.*

Spin:

D. Upright spin, entry from back crossovers (min. four to six revolutions) –*Skater should bring in arms and leg to skating foot or crossed in front of skating leg, ankles together, depending on if the skater is ready for a scratch spin or a 1-foot spin. Exit with a strong landing position, body checked facing inside the circle.*

Jumps:

E. Half flip – *Enter with either a three turn or Mohawk entrance. Make sure whichever one, it pushes onto a backward inside edge for the take off. The skating side arm should be in front of the body, with the free leg stretched back, toe pointed. Free arm should align over the free leg. Reach and grab with the toe pick behind and draw the skating foot next to the toe pick (pivot) and then push off toe, lift free knee to get into the air. Bring hands together. Half turn, then land on the toe pick (land forward) and glide out on the opposite foot on an inside edge, free leg extended, arms out.*

F. Toe loop – *Free leg will toe in slightly inside the circle to initiate a backward outside pivot. Once the free leg passes the skating foot/toe, it should lift up with the knee while pushing off the ice with the toe like a waltz jump, and land like a waltz jump. (All jumps that land backward have the exact same landing.)*

«Bonus Skill: Waltz jump-side toe hop-waltz jump sequence, or waltz jump – *Complete the first waltz jump, then allow the body to uncheck and open up, facing outside the circle. Side to hop and then push immediately into a second waltz jump.*

ALL FREE SKATE LEVELS (Freeskate 1-6):

Note: At this level, it's highly encouraged that all skaters take private lessons in addition to group. Each coach has their own style and philosophy for the skating skills, and may provide their own warm ups, practice regimens, etc.

Warm Up suggestions (before skating)

- Off ice – 5-10 minutes of cardio exercise/dynamic stretching, such as jumping jacks, high knees, butt kickers, jump rope, burpees, twists, squat jumps, leg swings. Keep core engaged throughout all exercises.

On Ice

- Forward and backward crossovers - several circles each
- Any other skating movements that helps the skater get comfortable, like the exercises taught in stroking class: cross rolls, Mohawk crosses, etc.

Cool Down (after skating)

- STRETCH all major muscle groups, holding for 45-60 seconds each. Do all main body parts, especially lower body, for approximately 5-10 seconds each stretch. Most important: Hamstrings, quads, calves, Achilles, hips, hip flexors, groin, inner thighs, obliques, glutes, piriformis. If time allows, also stretch the upper body: shoulders, upper back, triceps. Foam rolling and/or massage is also recommended.
- Make sure you're drinking plenty of water.

Strength training (off-ice) – Recommended programs

- Yoga (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Pilates (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Ballet (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Basic traditional exercises to strengthen the body- squats, lunges, pushups, planks, crunches. Ideally, these exercises will be done three times a week, with at least 1-day rest between days. Exercises must be done with correct form to avoid injury, so it's best to work with a professional.

Freeskate 2

Practice previously learned elements:

Three turns, mohawks, lunges, spirals, backward stroking, T stops, shoot the ducks, all freeskate 1 elements, any anything else that needs work.

Skating Skills – Do each move approximately five times successfully. Always try to improve on form, holding your core muscles tight. Over time, start adding more speed to jumps with stronger stroking/crossovers into them:

A. Alternating forward outside and inside spirals on a continuous axis (two sets) – *First practice inside and outside spirals. Once these are strong, then attempt them consecutively on an axis. During the transition, bring feet together, and initiate a strong stroking push to begin the next spiral.*

B. Basic backward outside and backward inside consecutive edges–*Push off perpendicular from the axis for the next lobe. Lobes are half circles. Four to six edges required, all as close to the same size as possible.*

C. Backward inside three-turns (R and L). *Rotate body towards the outside of the circle, bend and turn on heel. Make sure to check afterward by pressing the back shoulder.*

Spin:

D. Beginning back spin (up to two revolutions) – *Start with a backward inside pivot. Spin on the opposite foot than the forward spin, but rotating in the same direction. Align your body over this outside edge. Cross over the free leg so the ankles are crossed. Keep upper body stable and still. Exit by lifting the free knee and pushing it back into a landing position, arms open into landing position as well.*

Jumps:

E. Half Lutz Begin with backward crossovers around the circle. *Push onto a strong backward outside edge. The backward edge should be still and controlled. Land forward on toe and then glide out on other foot onto an inside edge. Arms out.*

F. Salchow – *Entrance either from a Mohawk or outside three turn.*

«Bonus Skill: Variation of a forward spiral, skater's choice – *Can attempt holding the blade/skate during a spiral.*

ALL FREE SKATE LEVELS (Freestyle 1-6):

Note: At this level, it's highly encouraged that all skaters take private lessons in addition to group. Each coach has their own style and philosophy for the skating skills, and may provide their own warm ups, practice regimens, etc.

Warm Up suggestions (before skating)

- Off ice – 5-10 minutes of cardio exercise/dynamic stretching, such as jumping jacks, high knees, butt kickers, jump rope, burpees, twists, squat jumps, leg swings. Keep core engaged throughout all exercises.

On Ice

- Forward and backward crossovers - several circles each
- Any other skating movements that helps the skater get comfortable, like the exercises taught in stroking class: cross rolls, Mohawk crosses, etc.

Cool Down (after skating)

- STRETCH all major muscle groups, holding for 45-60 seconds each. Do all main body parts, especially lower body, for approximately 5-10 seconds each stretch. Most important: Hamstrings, quads, calves, Achilles, hips, hip flexors, groin, inner thighs, obliques, glutes, piriformis. If time allows, also stretch the upper body: shoulders, upper back, triceps. Foam rolling and/or massage is also recommended.
- Make sure you're drinking plenty of water.

Strength training (off-ice) – Recommended programs

- Yoga (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Pilates (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Ballet (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Basic traditional exercises to strengthen the body- squats, lunges, pushups, planks, crunches. Ideally, these exercises will be done three times a week, with at least 1-day rest between days. Exercises must be done with correct form to avoid injury, so it's best to work with a professional.

Freestyle 3

Skating Skills:

A. Alternating backward crossovers to back outside edges – Four sets – *Skaters begin a back outside edge, which can be a landing position or open landing position, on an axis. Lobes should be the same size.*

B. Alternating mohawk/crossover sequence (R to L and L to R)

C. Waltz three-turns (forward outside three turn, backward outside edge glide), *clockwise and counterclockwise – Skater should do the turn with a waltz count.*

Spin:

D. Advanced back spin with free foot in crossed leg position (min. three revolutions) – *Skaters should review the previous way to enter the spin if having trouble finding the balancing point. The body should be aligned over the pinky toe. Now the skater must enter from an inside edge. After at least 3 revolutions, the free knee must lift quickly and then aggressively push into a landing position, arms opening to a landing position as well.*

Jumps:

E. Loop jump – *skaters will have the most success with this jump the more comfortable they are with the back spin because of the close relation between the two. Skaters must take off on an outside edge. Counter-clockwise rotation skaters will take off on a right backward outside edge. The landing is the same as all other single rotation jumps.*

F. Waltz jump-toe loop or Salchow-toe loop combination – *After landing the first jump with a strong check out position, the free leg should reach into the circle with a pointed toe, grab the ice with the top of the toe pick and draw back for the toe-loop.*

«Bonus Skill: Toe step sequence, skater's choice, using a variety of toe steps

ALL FREE SKATE LEVELS (Freeskate 1-6):

Note: At this level, it's highly encouraged that all skaters take private lessons in addition to group. Each coach has their own style and philosophy for the skating skills, and may provide their own warm ups, practice regimens, etc.

Warm Up suggestions (before skating)

- Off ice – 5-10 minutes of cardio exercise/dynamic stretching, such as jumping jacks, high knees, butt kickers, jump rope, burpees, twists, squat jumps, leg swings. Keep core engaged throughout all exercises.

On Ice

- Forward and backward crossovers - several circles each
- Any other skating movements that helps the skater get comfortable, like the exercises taught in stroking class: cross rolls, Mohawk crosses, etc.

Cool Down (after skating)

- STRETCH all major muscle groups, holding for 45-60 seconds each. Do all main body parts, especially lower body, for approximately 5-10 seconds each stretch. Most important: Hamstrings, quads, calves, Achilles, hips, hip flexors, groin, inner thighs, obliques, glutes, piriformis. If time allows, also stretch the upper body: shoulders, upper back, triceps. Foam rolling and/or massage is also recommended.
- Make sure you're drinking plenty of water.

Strength training (off-ice) – Recommended programs

- Yoga (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Pilates (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Ballet (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Basic traditional exercises to strengthen the body- squats, lunges, pushups, planks, crunches. Ideally, these exercises will be done three times a week, with at least 1-day rest between days. Exercises must be done with correct form to avoid injury, so it's best to work with a professional.

Freeskate 4

Skating Skills:

A. Forward power three-turns (R and L), 3 sets each – *Skater will perform and outside three turn balanced over the skating side, followed by a balance position, a shifting push, and then a backward crossover.*

B. Waltz eight, clockwise and counterclockwise – *A large figure 8 will be skated on. Each circle is divided into thirds. The first third is an outside three turn. Then a backward outside edge, followed by a forward outside edge. Skater will immediately push into other circle to repeat steps on the opposite side.*

Spins:

C. Forward upright spin to backward upright spin (3 revs., each foot) – *Skater will come out of a forward scratch spin, pivot and pump for the back spin. Same pivot/pump entrance as the Freeskate 2 backspin entrance.*

D. Sit spin (minimum three revolutions) – *skater will enter with the same entrance as the scratch spin, but as the spin hooks, the skating knee will bend deeper over the middle toe as opposed to straightening (as in a scratch spin). The thighs will snap together and hands come together with straight arms, hands below sternum.*

Jumps:

E. Half loop – *Skater will jump the same way into a regular loop, but land on the other foot with an outstretched free leg in a landing position. Landing knee should be bent, arms over the circle.*

F. Flip – *Skater will enter either from an outside three turn or a Mohawk. Skater will land in the same position as other single jumps.*

«Bonus Skill: Split jump, stag jump or split falling leaf

ALL FREE SKATE LEVELS (Freeskate 1-6):

Note: At this level, it's highly encouraged that all skaters take private lessons in addition to group. Each coach has their own style and philosophy for the skating skills, and may provide their own warm ups, practice regimens, etc.

Warm Up suggestions (before skating)

- Off ice – 5-10 minutes of cardio exercise/dynamic stretching, such as jumping jacks, high knees, butt kickers, jump rope, burpees, twists, squat jumps, leg swings. Keep core engaged throughout all exercises.

On Ice

- Forward and backward crossovers - several circles each
- Any other skating movements that helps the skater get comfortable, like the exercises taught in stroking class: cross rolls, Mohawk crosses, etc.

Cool Down (after skating)

- STRETCH all major muscle groups, holding for 45-60 seconds each. Do all main body parts, especially lower body, for approximately 5-10 seconds each stretch. Most important: Hamstrings, quads, calves, Achilles, hips, hip flexors, groin, inner thighs, obliques, glutes, piriformis. If time allows, also stretch the upper body: shoulders, upper back, triceps. Foam rolling and/or massage is also recommended.
- Make sure you're drinking plenty of water.

Strength training (off-ice) – Recommended programs

- Yoga (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Pilates (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Ballet (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Basic traditional exercises to strengthen the body- squats, lunges, pushups, planks, crunches. Ideally, these exercises will be done three times a week, with at least 1-day rest between days. Exercises must be done with correct form to avoid injury, so it's best to work with a professional.

Free Skate 5

Skating Skills:

A. Backward outside three-turn, mohawk (backward power three-turns), clockwise and counterclockwise – *Review backward outside 3-turns, forward inside mohawks and backward crossovers separately, both directions. Be aware of body position, extension, and "shoulders against hips" concept.*

B. Five-step mohawk sequence, clockwise and counterclockwise - *Be sure individual steps are strong before putting together in entire sequence.*

Spins:

C. Camel spin (minimum three revolutions) – *Review spiral position. Knee action is used to gain speed into and in the spin along with where the shoulders/ arms need to be.*

Jumps:

D. Waltz jump-loop jump combination – *Review waltz jump and loop jump. Skaters need to “stop the rotation” between jumps as well as hold the free leg in front before jumping into the loop. Body should be balanced over the skating side in order to do the loop.*

E. Lutz jump – *Take off edge is a backward outside edge.*

«Bonus Skill: Loop-loop combination – *Review loop jump. Skaters need to “stop the rotation” between jumps as well as hold the free leg in front before jumping into the second loop. Body needs to be balanced over the skating side in order to do the second loop jump.*

ALL FREE SKATE LEVELS (Freeskate 1-6):

Note: At this level, it's highly encouraged that all skaters take private lessons in addition to group. Each coach has their own style and philosophy for the skating skills, and may provide their own warm ups, practice regimens, etc.

Warm Up suggestions (before skating)

- Off ice – 5-10 minutes of cardio exercise/dynamic stretching, such as jumping jacks, high knees, butt kickers, jump rope, burpees, twists, squat jumps, leg swings. Keep core engaged throughout all exercises.

On Ice

- Forward and backward crossovers - several circles each
- Any other skating movements that helps the skater get comfortable, like the exercises taught in stroking class: cross rolls, Mohawk crosses, etc.

Cool Down (after skating)

- STRETCH all major muscle groups, holding for 45-60 seconds each. Do all main body parts, especially lower body, for approximately 5-10 seconds each stretch. Most important: Hamstrings, quads, calves, Achilles, hips, hip flexors, groin, inner thighs, obliques, glutes, piriformis. If time allows, also stretch the upper body: shoulders, upper back, triceps. Foam rolling and/or massage is also recommended.
- Make sure you're drinking plenty of water.

Strength training (off-ice) – Recommended programs

- Yoga (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Pilates (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Ballet (offered at the rink – inquire with skating director for more information)
- Basic traditional exercises to strengthen the body- squats, lunges, pushups, planks, crunches. Ideally, these exercises will be done three times a week, with at least 1-day rest between days. Exercises must be done with correct form to avoid injury, so it's best to work with a professional.

Free Skate 6

Skating Skills:

A. Forward power pulls (R and L) - *Skaters can generate power focusing on knee action and weight placement on the blade.*

B. Creative step sequence, skater's choice, using a variety of three-turns, mohawks and toe steps

Spins:

C. Camel-sit spin combination (minimum two revolutions each position) – *Review camel and sit spin individually before attempting to combine.*

D. Layback or attitude spin or cross-foot spin (three revolutions) – *Attitude position/spin should be understood before attempting layback.*

Jumps:

E. Waltz jump-half loop-Salchow jump sequence – *In a half loop, skater will rotate a full turn to land on the opposite leg on the back inside edge.*

F. Axel – *skaters will learn how to take off, air position and landing, and use a stand still entry or backward crossovers. The goal is for the skater to understand the concept of the axel and work towards landing the jump.*

«Bonus Skill: Backward outside pivot, entry optional