



# STARSKATE FAQ

## **What is STARSkate?**

STARSkate is Skate Canada's Figure Skating program. It stands for Skills, Tests, Achievements, Recognition. STARSkate is where skaters learn figure skating specific skills, take figure skating tests, and compete at regional competitions. From STARSkate, skaters can choose to move into the Competitive stream where they will focus on competing at a national level

Skating disciplines (freeskate, skills, dance) are divided into levels labelled STAR 1-10 with set requirements for each level.

## **Who is a private coach?**

Private coaches are Skate Canada Certified Professional Coaches. They are trained and registered with Skate Canada and complete a background screening and first aid certification every 3 years.

## **How does my skater get placed with a private coach?**

When your skater is ready for STARSkate, you will receive an email from our Director of Programs (DoP). The DoP will also send out an email to the club coaches (coaches who are approved by the club Board of Directors to take on new skaters from our CanSkate and/or STARSkate Development program) to let them know who the potential new STARSkaters are.

Coaches respond to the DoP with a list of any skater names they would be interested in taking on as students. When deciding to put their name forward, the coaches consider if they have time for a skater at the level/ability of the new STARSkater, and if they feel they would be a good fit for the skater.

Once all coaches have responded, you will get a second email with a list of the potential coaches for you to choose from. You will get a small piece of information about each coach and a few notes on things to consider when making your choice.

When you have made your choice, you will respond to the DoP's email and let her know your selection. A formal email will then be sent to the coach with you copied so you can move forward with planning.

Once placed, your coach will become your main contact for anything to do with your skater's training. The DoP can still be your contact for club specific questions.

### **How do fees work?**

Fees paid to clubs cover ice, club led activities (i.e. stroking & off-ice), and other required registration fees (i.e. Skate Canada registration). Coaching is paid directly to your private coach.

### **Will my skater be with his/her coach for the entire ice time for a session?**

No. STARSkate requires skaters to work on their own approximately half of the time they are on the ice. STARSkaters start to train this skill in STARSkate Development and better hone it with help from their coach. Coaches teach skaters how to read the session schedule, how to read the discipline boards and give them personalized lists when needed.

### **Can I set a lesson budget?**

Absolutely. Most new parents wait a few months to get a better idea of what a bill is like and to give time for the coach to make sure enough time is given to the skater so that s/he feels comfortable on the ice.

### **What is the approximate coaching bill amount?**

The total is based on a few factors:

- 1) How many days/week your skater skates
- 2) How many other skaters your coach has on the session
- 3) The level of your skater
- 4) Your coaches' rate (on average ranges from \$20-\$44/hr)

Coaches understand that being involved in skating adds a new expense for parents. They do their best to do semi-private lessons as much as possible. This helps maximize lesson time while keeping the cost to you as low as possible (for example: In a 30 minute semi-private lesson with one other person, your skater would get 30 minutes of lesson, but only pay for 15 minutes). A rough estimate would be \$50-\$150/month. You speak to your coach directly if you would like to set a budget.

### **How do I pay my private coach?**

Your coach will bill you directly at the end of each month. They will specify if there is a payment type they prefer but most take cash, cheque or e-transfer. If you require a different billing or payment schedule, you can speak to your coach.

### **What equipment is needed for STARSkate?**

1. Figure skates suitable for entry level jumps up to an axel. Talk to your coach for recommendations on where to go for fittings
2. A towel to properly dry skates after each session
3. Soft guards to protect the blade while inside the skater's bag
4. Hard guards to wear when walking around off the ice
5. Multiple pairs of gloves and/or mittens
6. Appropriate skating clothing (ie. Yoga pants, no hoodies)

7. Skipping rope to do a proper off-ice warm-up
8. Competition clothes (dress, jumpsuit, skating pants, appropriate shirt, etc.) will be needed eventually but isn't an immediate necessity to join the program. Your coach will give you more direction when the time comes

### **What does a STARSkate session look like?**

STARSkate sessions are divided into specific times for the disciplines of skating – skills, dance, spins, freeskate, and an additional time for stroking. This is done to help the skaters manage their time, especially when they aren't with their coach.

### **How do session levels work?**

Session levels are sorted by test points. Levels are currently 0-3 test points (i.e. new STARSkaters up to skaters who have earned 3 test points. Sometimes referred to as "Juniors"), 4-10 test points (sometimes referred to as "Intermediates"), and 11+ test points (sometimes referred to as "Seniors"). Test point divisions may change based on operational requirements.

### **How are test points calculated?**

Test points are calculated at:

1pt per skill test level

1pt per completed freeskate level (.5pt for elements & .5pt for program)

1pt per 3 dances complete

### **How do the skating seasons work?**

Figure Skating is divided into 3 seasons:

- 1) Fall/Winter – early September to late March
- 2) Spring – early April to mid June
- 3) Summer – early July to late August

Although it is surprising to many, figure skating does continue through summer and is an incredibly important training time. Skaters attend up to 5 days in a row which is invaluable for muscle memory development. Unlike fall/winter and spring, summer is divided into weeks instead of one large season. This allows for skaters to continue with their training while still being able to have a life outside of the rink.

### **What is a program and when will my skater get one?**

A program what you see skaters do on TV. Your skater will get their own piece of music (with selection help from your coach) and specific choreography. Skaters will need a program when they get to the STAR 2 level, but may get one before based on your coach's recommendation.

### **When do tests happen?**

STAR 1-5 tests are assessed by your coach. STAR 1-4 tests are done on one of your skater's regular sessions. STAR 5 tests are done on empty ice. This may happen during one of your skater's regular sessions, or your coach will arrange separate ice.

STAR 6-10 tests are assessed by trained Skate Canada evaluators at a special Test Day. Test Days generally happen one or twice per season with your coach giving you notice of the exact day at least a month prior to the Test Day.

### **When do competitions happen?**

There are 3 competitions for all STARSkate levels in Nova Scotia and 1 for STAR 5+. The exact location for these competitions can change from year to year.

- 1) Fall Skate – mid-November
- 2) Rob McCall Memorial – early February
- 3) STARSkate Provincials – late February
- 4) Atlantic Skating Championship – early April (the top 6 skaters of STAR 5+ from NS, NB, NFLD & PEI)

### **What are some of the terms I will hear a lot?**

#### Freeskate

The discipline that includes jumps, spins and a skater's program.

#### Dance

The discipline that brings ballroom dance on the ice. Skaters will learn pre-set dances to specified music.

#### Skills

The discipline that covers edges, turns, and basic skating skills.

#### Stroking

A group practice generally done at the end of a session. It is led by a professional coach and focuses on basic skating development and cardio.

#### Elements

A term that covers any group of moves from the disciplines of skating (i.e. the required jumps, spins and other moves for a program are called elements).

#### PA

Short for Program Assistant, PAs are trained skaters who volunteer on CanSkate.

#### Skate Canada

Skate Canada is the governing body of professional skating development in Canada. Halifax Skating Club is a Skate Canada sanctioned club and delivers programs that adhere to their delivery requirements and standards.