

2024

CSDSC Competition Manual



COMPETITIONS ARE MORE THAN WINNING THE GOLD MEDAL.

It's a way to show off your skills, receive feedback to continue improving and drive competitive spirit. Most importantly, it's fun! There are competitive opportunities almost every weekend across the nation offering a full range of figure skating events, including all levels and age groups, from the grassroots to the senior level in varying disciplines. When registering for a competition, take a moment to look at the event announcement and explore the events offered. Skaters can enter multiple events to make the weekend and the dollars spent more worthwhile. Typical events include free skate levels, compulsory moves, showcase events, solo dance events and more. The competition announcement breaks down each event offered with program length guidelines and required elements. The announcement also includes practice ice information, hotel and travel information and application deadline. When you and your skater have decided on which events to enter, you will register based on the competition's instructions. Application deadlines are strict, so be sure to enter early (there are no guarantees for late entries, and you may be charged a late fee). Event schedules are sent out to competitors about two weeks prior to the event. Competition schedules are tentative, so keep this in mind and plan around it.

My skater wants to compete. Where do you start?

The first step on starting to compete is to talk to a coach. The coach can walk you through all the steps, which can be confusing. The initial steps for competition is to determine the skater's level (coach can tell you) and pick music. You will then cut the music to the correct length (or have it done) and the coach will choreograph the skater's program. At this point the skater will need competition lessons.

Eligibility

Competition is open to ALL skaters who are current members in good standing with their home club and applicable national figure skating entities. National entities may include Learn to Skate USA and/or those who are members of the U.S. Figure Skating. Members of other organizations are eligible to compete but must be a current registered member of Learn to Skate USA or a full member of U.S. Figure Skating.

How Do I Sign Up?

There are several competitions around the area, emails are sent out to competition skaters of competitions the club is planning to go to. The registration window for each competition will vary, but usually opens 2-3 months before a competition and closes about a month before the competition. You'll register for the competitions online using either Entryeze (<http://www.entryeeze.com/>) or US Figure Skating's EMS (<https://www.usfsonline.org/EMS#>). Your coach should be able to provide the correct link. The competitions normally fall into the \$60-1\$00 range for a single entry and for more than a reduced amount for 2 or more events. The coaches need to tell you what level your skater is competing at when you register.

On the registration page, you can access the "announcement." You will want to download the announcement as this document explains all aspects of the competition including, but not limited to, events offered, cost of events, hotels with blocks of rooms, contact information, address of rink, and many other important details.

You will need your USFSA number to login. If you have questions on what to register for, please reach out to your coach.

Practice Ice

You'll want to buy practice ice time (around \$20). Sometimes the practice ice is available to purchase immediately, and others it doesn't become available until later. Practice ice is typically 15min -20min time slot for the skaters to see how the ice feels and run through their program. Only a small number of skaters are allowed on the ice at time for this, and you'll reserve your skaters specific time slot once the competition schedule is released... about 10-14 days before the competition.

Events

Different events can be offered at different competitions based upon the decision of the LOC. Below highlights the common events that skaters within CSDSC compete in.

Elements/Compulsory

- Each Skater will perform each element of their level when directed by a judge/referee.
- Skater will perform one element at a time in a specific order.
 - Example: All skaters perform first element before moving on to the next and so on.
- To be skated on 1/3 to ½ ice (determined by LOC)
- No Music

FreeSkate (Program w/Music)

- To be skated on full ice WITH music
- The skater may use elements from a previous level
- A 0.2 deduction will be taken from each element performed from a higher level. Bonus skills from the same level or below are allowed but will not be judged elements.

Showcase Events

- Showcase costumes are permitted if they do not touch or drag on the ice. Costuming and makeup for showcase should enhance the feeling created by the performance and reflect the meaning of the story or theme. Ornaments and hair accessories must be secure (a deduction of 0.1 will taken if something falls off). Props and scenery must be placed and removed by unaided singles and duet competitors within one minute on and off the ice (.01 deduction will be taken if over time).
- Performances will be judged from an entertainment standpoint for theatrical qualities. Technical skating skills and difficulty will not be rewarded as such. Showcase Categories may include:

Emotional (formerly Dramatic Performance) Performance

- Programs should portray a story, expressing conflict, resolution and/or depth of emotion. Skater should provoke an emotional response with the audience – through related skating movements, gestures, and choreographic processes. The entire

spectrum of emotions should be considered when selecting the theme (i.e., love, loss, longing, fulfillment, happiness, sadness,)

- Lip synching is not permitted
- Props and Scenery are permitted
- No Technical Limitations

Character Performance

- Skaters will impersonate a character, original or adapted on the ice. Performances as a character from a movie, musical, book, original adaptation are all welcome here.
- Lip synching is required
- Props and scenery are permitted
- No Technical Limitations

Lyrical Pop

- Perform to your favorite song containing lyrics, without lip-synching
- Lip synching is not permitted
- No Technical Limitations

Interpretive

- The Organizing Committee will pre-select a song for this event. During the warm-up skaters will hear the selection of music twice. Following the warm-up, all skaters except the first skater will be escorted to a soundproof locker-room or another area of the arena. The first skater will hear the music one more time and then perform a program to the music. As each skater performs the next skater in line will be allowed to hear the music for the third time before they perform to the music. The listening skater will not be allowed to view the performing skater.
- Skaters are judged on originality, pattern, technical (the ability to include jumps and spins) and music interpretation/expression. Spins and jumps performed must be appropriate to competition level
- There is to be no instruction allowed during this event from coaches, parents, or fellow skaters. Staging area must be kept clear except for ice monitor and listening competitor.

Comedic Impressions

- A humorous performance intentionally designed to achieve continuous/multiple chuckles, laughs, or audible rises from viewers.
- Performance is projected outward towards audience and entertaining through skating movements, gestures and physical actions deemed comedic.
- Lip synching is permitted.
- Props and Scenery are permitted.
- No Technical Limitations

[For more information on showcase events.](#)

Hotels

Once you've registered, you'll want to see if there is a hotel the competition has a group rate at or reserve your own room someplace else. Depending on what time your skater competes you may want to stay the night before or after the competition.

Music

Music must be uploaded to the registration site by the deadline stated within the announcement. If skater fails to submit music, there may be a late fee required to pay.

Each skater is responsible for their own music. CSDSC does not provide music for individual skaters for competition. Music must be cut to the correct length of time for each event. You can find times in the USFSA Competition Handbook or talk with your CSDSC coach.

All music must be approved by your coach. You can cut your own music, or you can reach out to a business such as Tikiman Entertainment to cut music. CSDSC does not set prices for Tikiman Entertainment, and the cost will be between skater and business. You can also find other places/businesses to cut music. The coach must receive a .mp3 formatted file of the cut song for practice and backup for competition(s) should there be an error in the uploading of music.

Skating Dress

One of the most fun parts of competing for the girls is picking and showing off their costumes. The costumes can be new or used. There are a lot of websites that sell new dresses. You don't need to break the bank on a costume that costs hundreds of dollars, especially if your child is little. Comfort and warmth can sometimes be more important in the early days. Many experienced skaters bring a "backup" outfit to every competition. Emergencies do happen and it's nice to have an option available. If you don't bring a spare outfit, girls should at least bring a few spare pairs of tights, and all skaters should have spare laces available. Besides the dress the girls will also require skating tights. Having 2 pairs is optimal so if one tears you have a backup.

You may also want nude colored leotard for under the skating dress because of the way the dress is cut. Reminder – you do not want underwear sticking out, your skater will be deducted.

No feathers allowed on dresses! You do not want anything on your dress that could fall off. Dresses for Compulsory/Elements and FreeSkate must be above your knee.

Hair and Makeup

Hair needs to be pulled back off the face, but other than that there aren't requirements. Most girls have a bun, braid, or ponytail. Do not use bobby pins – there is a chance they could fall out.

Makeup should be used in moderation. Judges want to be able to see the skater's face.

Excel vs Well Balanced

For competition there are 2 tracks that can be used, Excel and Well-balanced/Competitive. The Excel track has easier requirements and is judged using the 6.0 system. The well-balanced requirements are more difficult and use the IJS judging, which is what is used in the national competitions. If a skater wants to compete in districts/regionals, etc. it would have to be the well-balanced track. It is up to the coaches/parents what track is used.

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. These events do not lead directly to any National or World competition but do provide 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 judged 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 Competition 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 Bronze skater would be permitted to skate in a Pre-Silver event). And most frequently, events will be available which are not part of the standard rulebook.

Will I have to miss any school?

Probably. Most competitions run over a weekend. But because of the number of entries that most get, many must start before Saturday. Sometimes Friday, occasionally Thursday too. Each competition is different, and every schedule is different. Sometimes basic levels will go first and sometimes they won't be scheduled until later. So, if this is an early competition for you the chances are pretty good, you'll miss a little bit of school...

Who will you compete against?

You will compete against other skaters of approximately similar experience. You may or may not be competing against skaters of similar age. The basic separation is by test level, but specific events, skaters may be grouped by multiple levels higher or lower than that skater. Many competitions allow skaters to "skate up" one level (skate in a level that is one test more difficult than they have passed), but no competition will let skaters skate in a level below where they have passed.

Of course, even within a test level, you will find people of widely varying experience and ability.

Generally, you 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 separate events. Usually if this is done, the flights are grouped according to the skater's ages.

When should you get dressed? When should you get on the ice?

Again, your host club or your pro may tell you their own special expectations. However, the general rule is that you should be fully dressed and ready to check in when the flight before yours actually "takes the ice". Usually there will be an Ice Monitor standing somewhere near the skater's "entry door" (usually

with a clipboard in their hand). You should find the Ice Monitor at this time and tell them who you are and that you are present and ready. Then don't go too far away, but don't hover too close and bother everybody either... The Ice Monitor will tell you when it's time for your flight's warmup.

Generally, you should say your "good-byes" to your parents up in the bleachers, then report to the Ice Monitor along with your coach. The coach can usually stay with you up to and during your event. Your parents should not.

What's a Warmup?

The "Warmup" is a short opportunity (usually about 3-4 minutes) for you to get out on the ice and warm up your muscles before you compete. Your pro may have a few specific somethings for you to work on during this time, but in general you should use it to stroke around and loosen your muscles. Do a couple jumps to get a feel for the ice quality. Try to familiarize yourself with the size and "look" of the rink so that you don't get surprised during the competition if the rink is smaller or larger than your home rink. Visualize where you will start, and where key elements of your program will occur. You should probably not run through your entire program, but you might want to try out a few of its key elements. The judges will not be judging your activities during this period, although some will watch to help them get a general feel for the "level" of skating that they will see in the group.

They will generally sound a horn or make an announcement when you have 1 minute left in the warmup, then tell you to leave the ice when it's over. Don't go too far and try to keep your muscles warm and loose. If you choose to watch the other competitors, you may do so.

Your "Skate"

When it's your turn, the Ice Monitor will give you instructions to go on the ice. Skate out to wherever you will strike your initial pose and indicate your readiness to the judges and the music person. If this is a competition with music, then they will start it as soon as they know that both you and the judges are ready. If your program is not done to music, you should wait until they announce something like "skater, you may begin".

*If the music starts and it is not your song, do not move/skate. This tells the judges that the wrong song is playing. If you start to skate, you must skate to the song.

Take a deep breath, relax, and skate your best...

When you are done, take your bows then skate off the ice. If you are in a "half-ice" competition and someone else is skating on the other half, it would be courteous to wait until they are finished before you skate off the ice.

After Your "Skate"

Stay in your performing outfit (if time allows) and head to the awards area. Once all the scores have been calculated awards will be given out. Most competitions CSDSC attends uses the 6.0 judging system. Skater will accept their award/medal and stand on the awards podium and smile for pictures. If a skater or parent does not agree with the outcome or how the performance went, skater and/or parent will wait at least 48 hours to talk to the coach about the performance. There will be no discussing of events at the competition unless the coach initiates the discussion.

THE 6.0 JUDGING SYSTEM

The 6.0 system has been the longstanding judging system for figure skating. Today, U.S. Figure Skating uses it for Compete USA events and many nonqualifying competitions, particularly at the pre-juvenile level and below.

The basic principle of the 6.0 system is a “majority” system. Each event is judged by an odd number of judges, and the winner of the event is the skater placed highest by most of these judges.

For all singles and pairs events and the free dance, judges award two marks: one for technical merit and one for program presentation. The technical merit mark expresses a judge’s evaluation of the quality of the required elements skated. The presentation mark reflects a judge’s assessment of the program as a whole — its composition, originality, use of ice, skater’s style, and expression of the music

Sportsmanship is a MUST!

U.S Figure Skating officials are trained, certified, and non-bias towards skaters. They have the final say in what place a skater achieves. Good sportsmanship is congratulating other skaters no matter the outcome, taking a picture on the awards podium, and always having a positive attitude. If you as a parent have questions why your skater placed where they did, ask an experienced parent in competition skating or wait and ask the coach after the competition is completed. There are many reasons for the place a skater is awarded. For example, a skater may have forgotten an element required for that event or “fell out of an element. Asking the coach in a respectful and polite manner is acceptable after the completion of the competition.

What happens when you arrive at the rink

On competition day, make sure to have a good breakfast and a great night’s sleep.

1. Arrive at the competition at least 1 hour prior to your event time.
2. Register yourself at the front desk – they will have you confirm all the events you are in.
3. Find your dressing room. If your skater is under the age of 11, they can have one parent of the same sex in the dressing room to assist getting ready.
4. 20-25 minutes before you go on the ice, get your skates on (go to the bathroom now if needed). Be ready to go, if you are late, they will skip you and you will not be able to do your event. Your coach will also be down there helping direct when you go on.
5. The ice monitor will tell you when to go on. If you are waiting for practice ice, go wait by the entry of the rink to get on when your time starts.
6. When it is your turn to skate, skate with the goal of achieving your own personal best.
7. Results will be posted in a timely manner either on a wall or virtually depending on the LOC’s preference.
8. Go to your dressing room and take off skates – gather all your belongings and take them with you. Make sure to clean up around you if you have a mess.

You just completed your first competition and should be very proud of yourself!

Your Packing List

Clothing

- Warm-up jacket
- Gloves
- Clean laces, polished skates
- A dress shirt and pants (for boys)
- Competition dress and beige tights (for girls)
- Extra dress and tights (just in case something happens)
- Sneakers for your off ice warm up and walking around
- Clothes for after competition is over

Equipment/Extras

- Skate guards, soakers, and a towel
- Extra pair of laces
- Spare screws for your blades & a screwdriver
- Skates
- Snacks (not all competitions have concessions)
- Blanket(s)
- Props

Accessories

- Mini sewing kit
- Hairspray and spare clips
- Hair ties
- Brush/Comb and Hair accessories
- Make-up
- Water bottle
- Hockey tape in case you want to tape up your laces
- Band-aids, aspirin, inhaler etc.
- Kleenex

Skates

- Get your skates sharpened (try and plan it so you can skate a few times on the sharpened skates before you compete). Skates should be sharpened every 20 hours of use.