

Free Skate

Each free skate level is comprised of a variety of progressive skating skills, transitions, spins and jumps — all of which build on the previous skill, providing skaters a strong foundation of all elements. These levels will be taught in a positive and interactive group format such as a bridge program, circuit classes or as an introductory training program. Instructors will focus on quality and mastery of skills.

Pre-Free Skate (combination of Basic 7 and 8)



Skating Skills:

- A. Forward inside open mohawk from a standstill position (R to L and L to R)
- B. Backward crossovers to a backward outside edge glides (landing position), clockwise and counterclockwise

C. Backward outside edge to a forward outside edge transition, clockwise and counterclockwise

D. Two forward crossovers into a forward inside mohawk, step down and cross behind, step into one backward crossover and step to a forward inside edge, clockwise and counterclockwise

Spins:

E. One-foot upright spin, optional entry and free-foot position (minimum three revolutions)

Jumps:

F. Mazurka (R and L)

G. Waltz jump

★ Bonus Skill: Backward inside pivots, clockwise and counterclockwise

Free Skate 1



Skating Skills:

- A. Forward power stroking, clockwise and counterclockwise
- B. Basic forward outside and forward inside consecutive edges (four to six consecutive edges)
- C. Backward outside three-turns (R and L)

Spin:

D. Upright spin, entry from back crossovers (min. four to six revolutions)

Jumps:

E. Half flip

F. Toe loop

★ Bonus Skill: Waltz jump-side toe hop-waltz jump sequence, or waltz jump-ballet jump-toe loop sequence

Free Skate 2



Skating Skills:

- A. Alternating forward outside and inside spirals on a continuous axis (two sets)
- B. Basic backward outside and backward inside consecutive edges (four to six consecutive edges)
- C. Backward inside three-turns (R and L)

Spin:

D. Beginning back spin (up to two revolutions)

Jumps:

E. Half Lutz

F. Salchow

★ Bonus Skill: Variation of a forward spiral, skater's choice

Free Skate 3



Skating Skills:

- A. Alternating backward crossovers to back outside edges - Four sets
- 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

Spin:

D. Advanced back spin with free foot in crossed leg position (min. three revolutions)

Jumps:

E. Loop jump

F. Waltz jump-toe loop or Salchow-toe loop combination

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

Free Skate 4



Skating Skills:

- A. Forward power three-turns (R and L), 3 sets each
- B. Waltz eight, clockwise and counterclockwise

Spins:

C. Forward upright spin to backward upright spin (3 revs., each foot)

D. Sit spin (minimum three revolutions)

Jumps:

E. Half loop

F. Flip

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

Free Skate 5



Skating Skills:

- A. Backward outside three-turn, mohawk (backward power three-turns), clockwise and counterclockwise
- B. Five-step mohawk sequence, clockwise and counterclockwise

Spins:

C. Camel spin (minimum three revolutions)

Jumps:

D. Waltz jump-loop jump combination

E. Lutz jump

★ Bonus Skill: Loop-loop combination

Free Skate 6



Skating Skills:

- A. Forward power pulls (R and L)
- 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)

D. Layback or attitude spin or cross-foot spin (three revolutions)

Jumps:

E. Waltz jump-half loop-Salchow jump sequence

F. Axel

★ Bonus Skill: Backward outside pivot, entry optional

Note: The Skating School has the authority to add classes to continue skater development under the umbrella of Learn to Skate USA beyond Free Skate 6. Sample lesson plans and programming ideas are available in the Skating School Administrative Tool.

PRE-FREE SKATE LESSON PLAN

PRE-FREE SKATE			
SKILL	OBJECTIVE	FOCUS	TEACHING TIPS
Forward inside open Mohawk from a stand-still position, Right to Left & Left to Right	Students will turn a forward inside open Mohawk in both directions without losing speed.	ALTERNATING FEET, WEIGHT TRANSFER	Review "shoulders against hips" action. If needed, a diagram can be drawn on the ice for students to visually see the step. To begin, students can drag the free foot toe pick on the ice, then push the heel forward and step down while picking up the skating foot.
Backward crossovers to backward outside edge glides (landing position), clockwise and counter clockwise	Students will skate several backward crossovers then step onto a backward outside edge and hold landing position for a count of six in both directions.	STRENGTH OF EDGES, BODY POSITION	Review backward crossovers and backward outside edges. Demonstrate proper backward outside edge position for a landing. Have students practice position on the barrier.
Backward outside edge to forward outside edge transition on a circle, Right & Left	Students will hold a backward outside edge and step forward to a forward outside edge with good control and hold forward outside edge for a count of six.	EDGE QUALITY, BALANCE	Review forward and backward outside edge. Review proper body position and go over which muscle groups need to be isolated in order to control the edges.
Two forward crossovers into forward inside Mohawk, step down and cross behind, step into a backward crossover and step to forward inside edge, repeat three times, clockwise and counter clockwise	Students will combine several elements to form a footwork sequence. Sequence will be repeated three times in each direction.	BALANCE, COORDINATION	Review each step: forward crossovers, inside Mohawk, step down, cross behind, backward crossovers, forward inside edge. After review, put all steps together and walk through without moving. Progress to moving sequence. Students should be introduced to a rhythm for this sequence.
One foot upright spin, optional entry & free foot position	Students will spin on one foot for a minimum of three revolutions without losing balance or falling. The free foot does not need to cross at this point - the goal is to have a solid spin on one-foot.	BALANCE	The instructor should review the basic two-foot spin, as well as forward inside pivots. Also, the instructor should remind skaters that the one-foot spin will be on the backward inside edge.
Mazurka, Right and Left	Students will perform a mazurka and hold forward landing position for a count of four.	JUMPING, TWISTING IN AIR	Review bunny hop. Demonstrate mazurka as sideways bunny hop. Remind students that hips do not twist until after free foot passes in front of skating foot. Jump can be taught at a stand still then moved to a moving backward outside edge.
Waltz jump	Students will perform a waltz jump from a backward outside edge and hold a proper landing position for a count of six.	BALANCE, EDGE CONTROL, JUMPING	Review forward outside edge, backward outside edge and backward outside edge landing position. Review one foot spin to see which way is natural for skater to spin. Also have skater jump and turn on two feet to see natural rotation. Students can be taught to enter the jump from traditional backward crossovers or by using crossovers in opposition to the jump and then pushing into correct position (question mark).
*Bonus Skill: Backward inside pivots, clockwise and counterclockwise	Students will rotate a minimum of three times in a backward inside pivot position without coming to a complete stop, both directions.	EDGES, BODY POSITION	Review two foot spin and one foot spin. Demonstrate proper body position, pivot knee bent, other leg straight, back straight, head up, arms out.

FREE SKATE LESSON PLAN

FREE SKATE 1			
SKILL	OBJECTIVE	FOCUS	TEACHING TIPS
Forward power stroking, clockwise and counter-clockwise	Students will be able to complete 4-6 powerful strokes down the length of the ice with 2-4 forward crossovers along the width of the ice. Layout may vary depending on ice available.	WEIGHT TRANSFER, BODY POSITION, SPEED	Review forward stroking using correct use of blade. Demonstrate the objective. Remind students that they need to gain speed with each push.
Basic forward outside and forward inside consecutive edges, four to six edges	Students will be able to control their edges from start to finish with good balance and edge control.	EDGE CONTROL, BALANCE	Explain what part of the blade they need to be balanced over. Demonstrate the objective while talking them through what you are doing. Show the students the Moves in the Field pattern from the Record Book.
Backward outside three turn, Right & Left	After moving on a circle, the students will perform the three turn, optional leg position in the turn. Entry and exit edges will be held the skater's height.	BALANCE, EDGES, SHOULDERS AGAINST HIPS	Demonstrate the objective stressing shoulders against hips rotation before and after turn. Help the students individually by letting them hold your hands while trying the turn for the first time.
Upright spin, entry from backward crossovers, minimum of four to six revolutions	Students will do crossovers into the entry of the spin, which is a controlled forward outside edge. The spin begins as balance is achieved on a backward inside edge. The students will gain gradual acceleration by placing the free foot toward the top of the skating knee and pulling the arms in close to the body. The spin must be held for a minimum of four to six revolutions.	BALANCE, BODY POSITION	Review basic one foot spin. Proper one foot spin entry should be reviewed. Student will take two to three backward crossovers, stop, rotate arms, T-position, push, hold edge, three turn, free leg comes around in control, point toe in, push hips back. This is a good skill to use a diagram on the ice to explain. Show students that the three turn points back to the edge they step in on. Students can be over the middle part of the blade.
Half Flip	Students will perform a half flip from either a forward Inside Mohawk or a forward outside three turn.	JUMPING, TWISTING IN AIR	Go over position that the student should be in prior to jumping (skating arm in front, free arm extended back with free leg). Explain vaulting action after toe tap into the ice. Explain that they will land on the toe of the opposite toe that vaulted them into the air, immediately stepping into a glide on the opposite foot and holding that position on an inside edge. Demonstrate the objective.
Toe loop	Students will be able to perform a toe loop with correct edges into and out of the jump and holding the landing edge for two times their height.	TIMING, JUMPING, TWISTING IN AIR	Review inside edges and make sure that all students are doing them in a controlled manner. Show the students where the free leg toe will tap into the ice and demonstrate the action of the skating leg as it lifts off the ice. Demonstrate this element.
*Bonus Skill: Waltz jump-side toe hop-waltz jump sequence or waltz jump-ballet jump-toe loop sequence	Students will perform a waltz jumpside toe hop-waltz jump or a waltz jump-ballet jump-toe loop sequence from a backward outside edge after doing crossovers with more speed and hold a proper landing position for a count of six.	BALANCE, EDGE CONTROL, JUMPING	Review side toe hop, ballet jump and forward outside edge, backward outside edge and backward outside edge landing position. Review one foot spin to see which way is natural for skater to spin. Also have students jump and turn on two feet to see natural rotation. Students can be taught to enter the jump from traditional backward crossovers or by using crossovers in opposition to the jump and then pushing into correct position (question mark).

FREE SKATE LESSON PLAN

FREE SKATE 2

SKILL	OBJECTIVE	FOCUS	TEACHING TIPS
Alternating forward outside and inside spirals on a continuous axis (two sets)	Students will be able to hold a spiral position for a distance equal to two times the skater's height, changing on the axis for a total of two outside and two inside spirals.	BALANCE, LEG STRENGTH, BODY POSITION	Explain and walk through a spiral position on a standstill (holding on to the barrier) before having the students attempt the skill. Explain where they should be on their blade and their upper body position as well. Demonstrate.
Basic backward outside and backward inside consecutive edges, four to six edges	Students must be able to perform backward consecutive edges on a continuous axis.	WEIGHT TRANSFER, BODY POSITION, EDGE CONTROL	Explain/review a back push off. Demonstrate that the free leg will go in front of the skating leg after push off and the motion of the free foot moving from the front to the back of the skating heel. Explain arm and head positions for both outside and inside edges.
Backward inside three turn, Right & Left	Students will be able to perform a moving backward inside three turn in both directions while holding well-balanced edges.	EDGES, BALANCE, BODY POSITION, KNEE ACTION	Explain free foot and body position of the backward inside three turn. Reiterate "shoulders against hips" and knee action of a three-turn. Demonstrate.
Beginning Back Spin, minimum of one to two revolutions	Students must be able to perform a balanced back spin with optional free foot position for a minimum of one to two revolutions.	BALANCE	First, make sure the student is spinning in the direction that he/she feels most comfortable. Review back pivots (entry into spin). Explain/review the concept of balancing over one side and spinning on the ball of the foot. Go over arm position and the concept of centripetal force. Demonstrate. the objective.
Basic backward outside and backward inside consecutive edges, four to six edges	Students must be able to perform backward consecutive edges on a continuous axis.	WEIGHT TRANSFER, BODY POSITION, EDGE CONTROL	Explain/review a back push off. Demonstrate that the free leg will go in front of the skating leg after push off and the motion of the free foot moving from the front to the back of the skating heel. Explain arm and head positions for both outside and inside edges.
Backward inside three turn, Right & Left	Students will be able to perform a moving backward inside three turn in both directions while holding well-balanced edges.	EDGES, BALANCE, BODY POSITION, KNEE ACTION	Explain free foot and body position of the backward inside three turn. Reiterate "shoulders against hips" and knee action of a three-turn. Demonstrate.
Beginning Back Spin, minimum of one to two revolutions	Students must be able to perform a balanced back spin with optional free foot position for a minimum of one to two revolutions.	BALANCE	First, make sure the student is spinning in the direction that he/she feels most comfortable. Review back pivots (entry into spin). Explain/review the concept of balancing over one side and spinning on the ball of the foot. Go over arm position and the concept of centripetal force. Demonstrate. the objective.
Half Lutz Jump	Students will be able to perform a half Lutz jump with proper edges and body position into and out of the jump.	TIMING, JUMPING, TWISTING IN AIR	Explain that the jump must be take off from a back outside edge. Review the half flip in Free Skate 1 for explanation of jump position. Demonstrate.
Salchow	Students must be able to perform a Salchow jump with proper technique and a controlled landing edge.	JUMPING, BODY POSITION, STOPPING ROTATION	Give the student a choice for the entry (Mohawk or three-turn). Explain the entry edge needs to be a back inside edge with free leg and arm extended behind with skating arm in front of the body. Demonstrate the action of the free leg and arm into the jump. Demonstrate the jump as a whole.
*Bonus Skill: Variation of a forward spiral, skaters choice	Students will perform a variation of a forward spiral, their choice.	EXTENSION, BALANCE AND POSITION	Review the general spiral position and encourage the skater to create a variation of the spiral and demonstrate.

FREE SKATE LESSON PLAN

FREE SKATE 3			
SKILL	OBJECTIVE	FOCUS	TEACHING TIPS
Alternating backward crossovers to backward outside edges, four sets	Students must perform the skill on a continuous axis maintaining the speed needed.	SPEED, BODY POSITION, EDGES	Use the length of the ice to do this skill. Explain to the class that they must always come back to the "axis line" before pushing into the next crossover. Demonstrate so they understand the pattern.
Alternating Mohawk/crossover sequence (Right to Left and Left to Right)	Students will perform alternating forward Mohawk/crossover, step forward into opposite Mohawk/crossover sequence, one full set.	BODY POSITION, EDGES, ROTATION	Students will perform a right forward inside Mohawk, cross right foot in front while gliding backward, then step forward into a left forward inside Mohawk, cross left foot in front while going backward and then step forward onto right forward inside edge
Waltz threes, clockwise and counterclockwise	Students will be able to do a six count three turn with free leg extended throughout while holding each edge for the count of three.	EDGES, RHYTHM, EXTENSION, UPPER BODY POSITION	Explain the counting pattern of the waltz three. Demonstrate leg and body position. Explain/review the concept of "shoulders against hips".
Advanced back spin with free foot in crossed leg position minimum of three revolutions	Students must be able to perform a balanced back spin with the free foot crossed over in front for a minimum of three rotations. Entrance is optional with back outside edge exit.	BALANCE	First, make sure the student is spinning in the direction that he/she feels most comfortable. Explain/review the concept of balancing over one side and spinning on the ball of the foot. Go over arm position and the concept of centripetal force. Demonstrate.
Loop Jump	Students must be able to perform a full rotation in the air and hold the landing for two times the skater's height.	BALANCE, JUMPING, ROTATION IN THE AIR	Explain that the take off foot is the same as the landing foot with free leg lifting in front and rotating one full turn in the air. Demonstrate the action of the arms and point out that they must help lift the student off of the ice and pull in as in a spin. Demonstrate the jump.
Waltz Jump/Toe Loop or Salchow Jump/Toe Loop Jump combination	Students must be able to perform a combination jump with no extra steps in between and with proper body position.	BODY POSITION, STOPPING ROTATION, JUMPING	Let the student decide if they want to do a waltz jump or Salchow before the toe loop. Review toe loop from Free Skate 2. Explain the toe loop entry from the landing edge of either jump – waltz jump or salchow. Demonstrate.
*Bonus Skill: Toe step sequence, skater's choice, using a variety of toe steps	Students will perform a sequence using a variety of toe steps, their choice.	POSITION, CONTROL, ROTATION	Review examples of toe steps used in choreography and step sequences. Show students how to connect various toe steps and have them create a sequence of steps, showing variety and creativity.

FREE SKATE LESSON PLAN

FREE SKATE 4			
SKILL	OBJECTIVE	FOCUS	TEACHING TIPS
Forward power three turns, (Right & Left), 3 sets each	Students will perform two to three consecutive sets of the skill, on each foot.	PATTERN, BODY POSITION, CONTROLLED BODY POSITION	Explain the pattern to your skaters. Demonstrate the connecting steps (wide step, power push). Explain/demonstrate the controlled arm positions during each transition. Review the concept of weight transfer.
Waltz Eight	Students must be able to complete the waltz eight pattern both directions with one transition.	PATTERN, BODY POSITION, STOPPING ROTATION	Show the waltz eight patterns to the skaters. Explain the timing of the pattern and where to step down on the circle. Demonstrate.
Forward Upright Spin to Back Upright Spin, (three revolutions on each foot)	Students must be able to perform a centered spin on both feet with strong core body balance.	CORE BALANCE, BODY POSITION, SPEED	Review forward upright spin. Introduce the pivot action stepping over the skating side of the opposite foot for the transition. Have student practice the transition without doing a full spin. After they have mastered the transition, have them perform the full skill. Demonstrate.
Sit spin, minimum of three revolutions	Students will be able to perform the spin for three revolutions while maintaining the proper position.	BALANCE, LEG EXTENSION, SPEED	Demonstrate while explaining the position of the spin on the barrier. Enforce to the skaters that speed must be maintained throughout the spin. Reinforce the concept of centrifugal force, keeping all limbs in tight. Demonstrate.
Half loop jump	Students will be able to perform a half loop jump with proper edges and body position into and out of jump.	TIMING, JUMPING, TWISTING IN AIR	Explain that the jump take off must be from a back outside edge, lands on the opposite foot on the back inside edge. Demonstrate.
Flip jump	Students must perform the skill with a controlled upper body and controlled landing position.	JUMPING, ROTATION, SPEED, BODY POSITION, BALANCE	Review half flip to remind the students of the correct entry edge/position. Review landing position. Explain to them that they will do a full rotation and land/rotate around on the same foot that picked into the ice. Explain and demonstrate the arm position into and out of the jump. Demonstrate.
*Bonus Skill: Split jump, stag jump or split falling leaf	Students will perform the jump with either an extended front leg or stag. Skater must maintain speed into and out of jump.	BODY POSITION, EXTENSION, SPEED	Explain the difference between stag jump, split jump and falling leaf. Have student enter jump either from a forward three turn, a forward Mohawk position or a backward outside edge. Explain/demonstrate take off from backward toe tap. Explain the inside three turn on the landing. Demonstrate.

FREE SKATE 5			
SKILL	OBJECTIVE	FOCUS	TEACHING TIPS
Backward outside three-turn, Mohawk (backward power three-turns), clockwise and counter clockwise	Students must perform the skill in a strong free skating position. A continuous circle must be maintained. Repeat 2-3 times, each direction.	SPEED, BODY POSITION	Review backward outside three turns, forward inside Mohawks and backward crossovers separately, both directions. Remind skater of the body position, extension, and "shoulders against hips" concept. Demonstrate.
Five-step Mohawk sequence, clockwise and counterclockwise	Students will perform the sequence with feet close together and free skating posture maintained at all times.	BODY POSITION, EXTENSION, SPEED	Review Mohawks. Explain the pattern in which the student must maintain for the sequence. Break down sequence into individual steps before expecting the skater to perform entire sequence. Demonstrate.
Camel Spin, minimum of three revolutions	Students will perform spin in correct position maintaining enough momentum to rotate three times.	BODY POSITION, EXTENSION, SPEED, KNEE ACTION	Review spiral position. Explain the entry edge into the spin along with the body position leading up to the actual spinning position. Explain the knee action used to gain speed into and in the spin along with where the shoulders/arms need to be throughout. Demonstrate.
Waltz jump-loop jump combination	Students will be able to perform the combination without breaking form between jumps on a continuous line.	JUMPING, BODY POSITION, STOPPING ROTATION, BALANCE	Review waltz jump and loop jump. Explain that they need to "stop the rotation" between jumps as well as hold the free leg in front before jumping into the second loop. Demonstrate the body balance and that they need to be over their skating side in order to do the loop jump. Explain the arm position.
Lutz jump	Students will perform jump from a back outside edge and hold the landing position for two times their height.	JUMPING, BODY POSITION, ROTATION	Explain the take off edge and the arm action before and into the jump. Explain "wind up" concept. Emphasize the free leg extension into the jump as well as weight transfer in the air.
*Bonus Skill: Loop-loop combination	Students will be able to perform the combination without breaking form between jumps on a continuous line.	JUMPING, BODY POSITION, STOPPING ROTATION, BALANCE	Review loop jump. Explain that they need to "stop the rotation" between jumps as well as hold the free leg in front before jumping into the second loop. Demonstrate the body balance and that they need to be over their skating side in order to do the second loop jump. Explain the arm position.

FREE SKATE LESSON PLAN

FREE SKATE 6			
SKILL	OBJECTIVE	FOCUS	TEACHING TIPS
Forward power pulls (Right and Left)	Students will perform forward power pulls on both the Right and Left feet.	EDGES, POWER AND POSITION	Review the breakdown of a power pull and how skaters can generate power, focus on knee action and weight placement on the blade.
Creative step sequence, skater's choice, using a variety of three-turns, Mohawks and toe steps	Students will perform a creative step sequence of their choosing using a variety of three-turns, Mohawks and toe steps.	BODY POSITION, ROTATION, BALANCE	Review various examples of steps including three-turns, Mohawks and toe steps. Demonstrate and encourage creativity.
Camel-sit spin combination (minimum two revolutions each position)	Students will perform the spin combination with good body lines, proper positioning and speed, five revolutions total.	BODY POSITION, SPEED, EXTENSION	Review camel spin and sit spin individually. Explain the transition process between the two. Demonstrate.
Layback or attitude spin or cross foot spin (three revolutions)	Students will perform either a layback, attitude spin or cross-foot spin with good position and proper positioning, three revolutions total.	BODY POSITION, SPEED, EXTENSION, BALANCE	Review the layback, attitude and cross-foot spin positions. Explain weight distribution on the blade. Demonstrate.
Waltz jump-half loop-Salchow jump sequence	Students will be able to perform the combination without breaking form between jumps on a continuous line.	JUMPING, BODY POSITION, STOPPING ROTATION, BALANCE	Review the waltz jump and Salchow jump. Explain that in a half loop jump, the skater will rotate a full turn to land on the opposite leg on the back inside edge. Explain the body positions between each jump and emphasize the extension of the free leg (in front or behind). Demonstrate.
Beginning Axel	Students will learn the axel walk through, preparation exercises, and attempt the axel jump. The student should understand the mechanics of the jump. The skater does not need to land the axel to pass this element or level.	JUMPING, ROTATION, SPEED, BODY POSITION, BALANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk through the Axel jump: take off, air position, landing position • Preparation exercises: waltz jump-loop jump, waltz jump-backspin, half Axel • Jump: attempt the Axel from a standstill and progress to a moving entry
*Bonus Skill: Backward outside pivot, entry optional	Students will perform a backward outside pivot with an optional entry.	POSITION, EDGE, ROTATION, BALANCE	Review balance over the blade and a sustained edge in glide position. Demonstrate. Focus on shoulder rotation into the pivot.