

Ice Skating Brand Comparison Chart

Test Level	Skill Level	Skate Recommendations
RECREATIONAL ONLY	Occasional ice skating, non-competitive skating. Basic steps, swizzles, gliding, stopping, forward stroking, basic edges	Riedell: 110 RS Jackson Softskate Plus, Glacier 520 GAM: Fantasia
ISI: Tot 1,2,3,4 Pre-Alpha and Alpha USFSA: Snowplow Sam 1-3 Basic 1-3 SKATE CANADA: Canskate 1-3 SKATE UK: Skate UK 1-4	Basic steps, swizzles, gliding, stopping, forward stroking, basic edges, forward crossovers, two foot spin	Jackson: Glacier 520 (Tots Sizes), Artiste, Mystique GAM: Fantasia (Tot size ONLY), Horizon Riedell 110RS (Toddler Sizes ONLY), 121RS , 115RS Risport: Etoile Harlick: Classic
ISI : Alpha, Beta, Gamma USFSA : Basic 4,5,6 SKATE CANADA: Canskate 4-7,Pre Free Skate SKATE UK: Skate UK 5-8	Backward stroking, back crossovers, three turns, simple footwork such as Mohawks, hockey stop, T-stop.	Jackson: Classique, Marquis GAM: Horizon, Astro, Zenith Riedell: 133TS, 255TS Risport: Etoile Harlick: Classic
ISI : Delta , Freestyle Test 1,2 USFSA: Basic 1-6, Freestyle 1, 2 SKATE CANADA: Jr. Bronze Free Skate SKATE UK: Skate UK 9-10	Advanced stroking, crossovers, forward one foot turns, consecutive edges, lunges, shoot the duck, bunny hops, half-jumps, one foot spins.	Jackson Freestyle, Premier(boot only) GAM Zenith, Celebrity Riedell 133TS, 255TS, 910LS Risport RF4 Harlick Classic
ISI: Freestyle Test 3,4 USFSA : Freestyle 3,4, Pre Free, Juv Free, Pre&Juv Synchro SKATE CANADA: Sr. Bronze Free Skate	Simple jumps such as waltz jump, salchow, and toe loop, Basic spins such as two-foot and scratch, spirals, simple footwork.	Jackson Competitor (blade only),Premier (boot only) GAM Celebrity, Spectra Riedell 435TS, 1310 LS Risport RF4, Excellence Harlick Competitor
ISI : Freestyle Test 4,5 USFSA: Freestyle 5, Juv Free, Int Free USFSA: Int Pairs, Nov/Jr Dance, Int Synchro SKATE CANADA: Jr. Silver Free Skate	Singles through Lutz, Combination jumps, Axel, Sit and Camel spins, more complex footwork, spiral sequence.	Jackson Elite GAM Spectra, Ultra, Performance Riedell 1310 LS, 435TS Risport Excellence Harlick Competitor Plus
ISI: Freestyle Test 6,7,8 USFSA: Freestyle 6, Nov Free, Jr Free USFSA: Nov Pairs, Sr/Gold Pairs, Sr Dance, Nov-Sr Synchro SKATE CANADA: Sr. Silver Free Skate	All single jumps, all double jumps, combination doubles, lower level triples, flying spins, complex footwork.	Jackson Elite Plus GAM Performance, Montreal Riedell 875TS, 2010 LS Risport RF3 Super Harlick High Tester
ISI: Freestyle Test 9,10 USFSA: Senior Free USFSA: Senior/Gold Pairs SKATE CANADA: Gold Free Skate	Triples, quads, combination triples, all spins, complex foot work.	Jackson Elite Supreme GAM Montreal Riedell HLS 1500, 2010 LS, 875TS Risport RF2 Super Harlick Finalist

Beginner Freestyle & All Purpose Blades

These blades are recommended for: **USFSA** Snowplow Sam - Basic 6 ,**ISI** Skate Levels Pre-Alpha - Freestyle Test 3

Model	Brand	Rocker (ft.)	ROH (in.)	Blade Style	Sizes	Comments
Mirage	Jackson Ultima	8'	1/2"	Parallel	7" - 11"	Straight cut pick.
Jubilee	John Wilson	7'	3/4"	Parallel	7"-12"	Straight cut pick.
Majestic	John Wilson	7'	5/8"	Parallel	5.75"-12.75"	Straight cut pick.
Double Star	MK	7'	1'	Parallel	7"-12.5"	Straight cut pick.
Sterling	ISE	7'		Parallel	8" - 12"	Straight Cut Pick. Heal Lift: 0.87"

Intermediate -Advanced Blades

These blades are recommended for: **USFSA** Freestyle 1-6, Preliminary Free, Juvenile Free, Intermediate Free, Adult Bronze Free, Adult Silver, Intermediate Pair, **ISI** Levels Freestyle 3-6,

Model	Brand	Rocker (ft.)	ROH (in.)	Blade Style	Sizes	Comments
Lite UB70	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Parallel	8 1/4" - 11"	15%-20% lighter than all other blades.
Legacy	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Parallel	7" - 11"	Cross Cut picks.
Matrix Legacy	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Parallel	7" - 11"	Cross Cut picks. Aluminum Chassis (super lightweight) Stainless Steel Runner (longer blade life)
Protege	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Parallel	7" - 11"	Straight Cut Picks
Coronation Ace	John Wilson	7'	7/16"	Parallel	6.75"-12.5"	Cross cut picks. Available in Parabolic and K-Pick.
Coronation Comet	John Wilson	8.5'	7/16"	Parallel	7"-12.25"	Straight Cut Pick. Available in Parabolic and K-Pick.
Four Aces	John Wilson	7'	7/16"	Parallel	7"-12.25"	Straight Cut Pick. Available in Parabolic.
Professional	MK	7'	7/16"	Parallel	7"-12.5"	Cross Cut Pick. Available in Parabolic or K-Pick.
Vision	MK	7'	7/16"	Parallel	7.25"-12.25"	Straight Cut Pick. Available in Parabolic.
Stealth	ISE	7'		Parallel	8"-12"	Raked toe Pick.
G3	GAM	7'	1.634	Parallel	7 3/4"-12"	Straight Cut Pick
G4	GAM	7'	1.634	Parallel	7 3/4"-12"	Cross Cut Pick
G10SS	GAM	8.5' - 10'	1.734	Parallel	8 1/4" - 11"	Straight Cut Pick
Paramount 1085	Paramount	9'	4mm	Parallel	8 1/4" x 10"	Cross Cut Pick

Advanced-Elite Blades

These blades are recommended for: **USFSA** Novice Free, Junior Free, Senior Free, Adult Gold Free, Senior Gold Pair, **ISI** Skate Levels Freestyle 8-10

Model	Brand	Rocker (ft.)	ROH (in.)	Blade Style	Sizes	Comments
Elite	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Parallel	8 1/4" - 12"	Straight Cut Picks. E-X-T Technology.
Matrix Elite	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Parallel	8 1/4" - 12"	Straight Cut Picks. Aluminum Chassis (super lightweight) Stainless Steel Runner (longer blade life)

<u>Freestyle</u>	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Parallel	8 1/4" - 12"	Cross Cut Picks. E-X-T Technology.
<u>Matrix Freestyle</u>	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Parallel	8 1/4" - 12"	Cross Cut Picks. Aluminum Chassis (super lightweight) Stainless Steel Runner (longer blade life)
<u>Supreme</u>	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Dovetail	8 1/4" - 12"	Cross Cut Picks. E-X-T Technology.
<u>Matrix Supreme</u>	Jackson Ultima	8'	7/16"	Dovetail	8 1/4" - 12"	Cross Cut Picks: Aluminum Chassis (super lightweight) Stainless Steel Runner (longer blade life)
<u>Phantom Special</u>	MK	7'	7/16"	Dovetail	8.25"-11.75"	Straight Cut Picks. Available in Parabolic.
<u>Phantom</u>	MK	7'	7/16"	Tapered	7"-12"	Straight Cut Picks. Available in Parabolic and K-Pick.
<u>Gold Star</u>	MK	7'	7/16"	Tapered	8"-12.25"	Cross Cut Picks. Available in Parabolic and K-Pick.
<u>Pattern 99</u>	John Wilson	8'	7/16"	Parallel	8"-12.75"	Enlarged top toe pick. Available in Parabolic and K-Pick.
<u>Gold Seal</u>	John Wilson	8'	5/16"	Taper	8"-12"	Available in Parabolic and K-Pick.
<u>Storm</u>	ISE	7'		Parallel	8" - 12"	Racked toe picks.
<u>Shadow</u>	ISE	7'		Parallel	8" - 12"	Elliptical pattern laser cut runner. Lighter
<u>G14SS</u>	GAM	8.5' - 10'	1.734	Parallel	8 1/4" - 11"	Cross Cut Pick
<u>G18SS</u>	GAM	9.3' - 10'	1.796	Parallel	8 1/4" - 11"	Double Thick heel plate for triple jumps. Pick similar to K-pick.
<u>440GS</u>	Paramount	8'	3.8 mm	Taper	8.5" - 11"	Cross Cut Pick: Aluminum Chassis (super lightweight) Stainless Steel Runner (longer blade life)
<u>P420</u>	Paramount	8'	4 mm	Parallel	8.25" - 11"	Enlarged Top Toe Pick. Cross Cut Pick ,Aluminum Chassis/Stainless Steel Runner
<u>PH420</u>	Paramount	8'	4mm	Taper	8.5" - 11"	Cross Cut Pick : Aluminum Chassis/Stainless Steel Runner

Dance Blades

Model	Brand	Radius (ft.)	ROH (in.)	Blade Style	Sizes	Comments
<u>Dance UB115</u>	Jackson	8'	7/16"	Parallel	8 1/4" - 12"	E-X-T tech. Reduced weight toe plate.
<u>Super Dance 99</u>	John Wilson	8'	5/16"	Parallel / Slimline	8"-11.5"	Available in Parabolic. Rounded Tail.
<u>Coronation Dance</u>	John Wilson	7'	7/16"	Parallel	8"-12"	Available in Parabolic. Cross Milled toe Rake.
<u>MK Dance</u>	MK	7'	5/16"	Parallel / Slimline	8"-12.5"	Available in Parabolic
<u>Sabre Dance</u>	ISE	8'		Parallel / Slimline	8"-12"	.75 heel lift.
<u>Paramount Dance</u>	Paramount	8'	3 mm	Parallel / Slimline	8.25" -11"	Rounded Tail

Synchronized Skating Blades

Model	Brand	Radius (ft.)	ROH (in.)	Blade Style	Sizes	Comments
<u>Synchro UB 60</u>	Jackson	8'	7/16"	7/16"	8 1/4" - 11"	Pick format reduces scratch. Straight cut pick.
<u>Wilson Precision</u>	John Wilson	8'	7/16"	7/16"	7"-12"	Available in Parabolic. Re-angled toe rake to avoid tripping.
<u>Vision Synchro</u>	MK	7'	7/16"	Parallel	7"-12"	Angled drag pick. Available in Parabolic. Shorter Tail.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT TO ORDER?

Ordering a boot is a decision that should be made in consultation with the skater's coach as well as the skate technician. It is best to begin by determining which stock boot will best meet your needs and then selecting modification options only if the changes will improve the boot you require.

Many factors need to be considered when selecting a boot.

- What is the age, size, height and weight of the skater?
- What discipline of skating will the boot be used for?
- What skill level is the skater currently at?
- How many hours per week will the boot be used?
- What make/style is currently being used and are there fit and/or function issues that should be resolved?
- How long does a pair of boots usually last?

Stronger skaters or larger adult skaters might want to move up to the next higher level boot, lighter or younger skaters might want to move down to the next lower level but purchase a higher level blade. This is especially true for young girls skating at higher skill levels, but their physical size can't justify a figure skate boot built for a senior lady. When in doubt consult your coach or instructor.

Figure skating boots should fit snugly like a glove, like they're molded to your feet. There should be no movement at all in the heel. Here is a list of a few common ill-fitting symptoms:

- **Too Big (length or width):** The boot will form creases near the toes and blisters will form from feet slipping.
- **Too Small (length or width):** The skater will need to recognize that the boot is too small. The toes will often curl on top of each other (width) or the toe knuckles will curl up and rise (length). Boots that are too small may be "relasted" (stretched) one half size to release the length/width to accommodate the skater's feet. For specific pressure points the boot can be molded to release pressure (outside toes, ankles, navicular bones [arches]).
- **Boot Twisting:** Boot twisting is usually caused by the pronation of the skater's feet. This may be reduced by, choosing a custom fit boot and using an Orthotic correction (Dr. Orthotic, Harlick Skating Orthotic, Inside Wedge, and/or Asymmetrical Lacing).
- **Arch Cramping:** When the skater's navicular bone, arch muscle, and/or low/flat arches do not match the shape of the arch counter of the boot, the skater will experience pain and cramping in the arch and plantar muscle. This may be corrected by, choosing a custom fit boot and using an Orthotic correction (Dr. Orthotic, Harlick Skating Orthotic, Inside Wedge, and/or Asymmetrical Lacing).
- **Slipping Heels:** Heels will slip when the shape of the foot is narrower in the heel area of the boot than the shape of the boot. To correct this problem the skater needs a custom fit boot (boot is built more narrow in the heel area) or a combination width stock boot (only one size difference from ball to heel is available in stock boots). In custom boots Heel Hugger and Achilles tendon padding may also be added to the boots to help prevent the heels from slipping.

ICE SKATE BLADE INFORMATION SECTION

Buying new blades

- The blade length is the measurement from the front of the sole plate to the back of the heel plate. Measure the length of the sole from toe to heel and fit blades which are 1/4 inch less in length.
- The most expensive blade isn't going to make you a better skater. Purchase the blade needed for your skate level and upgrade equipment as your needs change. For example, a skater may need to upgrade skates when they move from basic skating to their first jumps or from double to triple jumps.
- Top of the line blades are designed for very advanced skaters. They have a longer radius, larger toe picks and the portion of the blade that is used for spinning is much shorter than on intermediate blades. So, unless you are perfectly balanced and positioned going into and during the spin you will start rocking on the blade. Intermediate blades like the MK Professional or Coronation Ace, etc. provide you more "room" to make corrections and continue spinning even if you are slightly off balance.

Mounting Blades

Improperly mounted blades are almost impossible to skate on. The blade must be correctly positioned and aligned on the boot. The boot heel & sole contours must be flush with the blade mounting surfaces to avoid twisting the blade.

Check For Mounting Problems

Check the blades to make sure they are straight, properly sharpened and mounted perpendicular to the sole. Have someone watch to see if your blades "make snow" as you try to skate on an edge. If they do, this may be a mounting problem and can be corrected by a slight shift of the blade mounting. You will need to tell the person remounting your blades which edges you are having trouble with.

K-pick

The K-pick design consists in a set of extra 3-4 picks to the standard toe-pick. This feature is supposed to provide more control and better anchorage to the ice on toe-jumps. According to blade manufactures, the jump height can increase by 5-10% and the jump length by about 20% on toe loops and flips. No significant improvements in height and length have been reported for the Lutz, although the improved stability on the take-off supposedly makes for more consistent jumps.

Parallel - Parabolic - Tapered Blades

- **Parallel:** Most skating blades have the same constant width along its full length the edges are Parallel.
- **Parabolic:** Parabolic blades are thinner in the middle section and thicker at both ends. This increases bite angle for reduced slippage on the ice. You can tell side honed blades because reflections appear inverted.
- **Tapered:** Tapered blades are thicker at the front near the toe picks and thinner at the tail, i.e. the edges are not parallel. Tapered blades reduce drag or friction on the ice. Some models or custom made blades can be both side-honed and tapered.

Heel Lift

The clearance of the toe pick off the ice is determined by the heel lift. Knowing where your toe pick is in regards to the ice is one of the basics of ice skating. Many a skater has learned that tripping over their toe pick is NOT FUN! Higher heel lifts provide more clearance between toe picks and the ice, whereas lower heel lifts result in less clearance.

Sharpening

- Take your skates to a pro shop or ask some regular skaters at your rink where they get theirs sharpened. Skate sharpening is NOT a do-it-yourself project! Skates are expensive and it only takes one bad sharpening to turn them into scrap metal!
- Skates properly sharpened will have a smooth concave grind accurately centered along the length of the blades, edges squared (parallel to the bottom of the boot) and level with each other (inside edge at same height as outside edge) for the length of the blade. Proper sharpening will maintain the correct rocker for the life of the blade.
- Beware of how some shops do their sharpening: Some shops flat-grind the blade first, and then hollow grind. This wears the blade at an accelerated rate. Also be aware that some sports stores sharpen blades using techniques for hockey skates, which are not useful for figure skates and it can take only 1 bad grinding to ruin a pair of expensive blades.

Maintenance

- Always wear plastic guards should be worn any time you step off the ice. Even "safe" rubber mats or carpets accumulate dirt and grit from the shoes of pedestrians, which will nick and round off the fine edges of your blades much faster than gliding across the ice. Do not leave them on your skates between sessions as they will trap water and cause your blades to rust.
- The cloth soakers are put on after you have removed your skates and wiped them dry with a rag. They protect your blades from bumping in transit and wick away any condensation so your blades won't rust. If you still have problems with rust or want to store your skates, rub a drop of oil or Vaseline along the bottoms of the blades.

CARE OF BOOTS AND BLADES

Boots

- Always wipe moisture from the interior and exterior of your boots after every use and let your boots dry between skating sessions.
- Never place the boots near a heating vent. This will dry the natural oils in the leather, causing it to dry and crack.
- Loosening the laces and pulling the tongue open allows greater air circulation and better drying.
- Removing footbed or sock liners, especially for those that skate barefoot, help the boots to dry faster.
- Do not store boots in the trunk of a car, the extreme temperatures will cause premature breakdown in the boots.
- Always remove skates from skate bags once they have been transported. This allows the leather to dry and helps prevent the growth of mold and mildew, causing the leather to deteriorate.
- Periodically treat your boots with a water repellent (such as SnoSeal or bees wax); making sure boots are dry first. Complete no sooner than 12 hours after your last skate.

Blades

- Wear guards while wearing your skates, any time you are not on the ice. Cement, wood and dirt can deteriorate your blades.
- Remove excess snow when you step off the ice and before you put your guards on. Blades can rust in less than 20 minutes in wet guards.
- Dry blades and mounting surface with a heavy cotton towel. As the skate warms up, condensation will occur on the blades, and they should be dried again. Use soakers on blades before transporting to protect blade and absorb extra moisture.
- Remove soakers from blades once they have been transported.
- Check screws periodically to make sure they are tight. Carry a screwdriver in your skate bag.
- Have blades sharpened when they start to slide uncomfortably. Keep a log of how long you skate between sharpening to make sure you sharpen before the blade is too dull, but not too often to wear out your blades. Only take your skates to a reputable Figure Skate sharpener.
- Periodically apply a thin film of light oil to the sharpening edge of the blades to prevent rust and corrosion.

BREAKING IN NEW SKATES

Breaking in new skates can be uncomfortable, but should not be painful. The leather used in skates is stiff and needs to soften to your foot shape. Proper fit is essential to performance .

If your skates are heat moldable and you require additional assistance in obtaining the proper fit, your skate technician can assist. Your skates will be heated at a carefully controlled temperature and molded to your feet without breaking the skate down.

- Do not walk on boots that do not have a blade mounted.
- For the first few sessions, the skates should not be laced too tight and the top hook should be left unlaced. This gives the foot a chance to settle properly into the boot. It may be necessary to retie your boots as the boot conforms to your foot and ankle area and as the laces stretch.
- Gel socks, sponges or moleskin can be used to prevent blisters caused by the breaking in process.
- Begin slowly and go easy on your new boots. Limit jumps and spins, gradually increasing the amount of time on the ice using your new boots.
- Blades are generally mounted on your new boots so that minor adjustments can be made before permanently placed. Within 2-3 sessions you should know if your blade needs to be adjusted. Once the final proper blade placement is obtained, permanent screws need to be mounted, leaving some screw holes unused on the sole plate for future positioning adjustments or alternatives if original holes become enlarged through wear.

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