



The Bloomington Ice Garden Skate School



Lesson Information Packet

We are pleased to welcome you to the Bloomington Ice Garden Skate School. We are proud to offer the Learn to Skate USA program for all ice sports. Participation in the program will enable skaters of all abilities and ages to learn the fundamentals of ice skating. The curriculum is designed to be fun, challenging, and rewarding for everyone!

Please read the following information to make your learning experience more enjoyable.

BE PREPARED:

- **Arrive:** 15 minutes prior to class time
- **Skates:** Properly fitted & laced with blades sharpened - no double blades/runners
- **Apparel:** Warm & comfortable – don't forget **mittens or gloves**. **Helmets** are optional, but are highly recommended, especially for younger skaters
- **Locate:** **Lesson Schedule Poster** hanging on the glass inside the rink
- **Find:** Your child's name, time and class color on the **Lesson Schedule Poster**
- **Lessons:** Direct skater to corresponding class color signs with the instructors' names hanging on the glass out on the rink. Please allow enough time for beginner skaters. Instructors and helpers will assist the beginner skaters to their classes.
- **Re-Check:** The **Lesson Schedule Poster** weekly as we will only notify you of class **time** changes.
- **Read:** This information and the parental section carefully. Also, read the main white board in the hall outside of the rink. all signs posted in the hall and /or around the **Lesson Schedule Poster** for important reminders and notices.
- **Practice:** In the coned-off section of the rink (near blue line to end). See below for specific information.

CLASS PLACEMENT:

- **Based On:** Ability and age. It may be difficult to place students in classes based on friendships, but we'll try! Friends may skate together in the practice area before and after class. This is a great opportunity to meet new friends as well!
- **Changes:** May be made weekly. Check the **Lesson Schedule Poster** weekly as we will notify you only if your child's class **time** has changed.

PARENTS ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY: You can help us with providing the best learning environment possible just by following a few simple guidelines:

- **Read:** This important information, the class schedule poster, and any hand-outs and posted signs.
- **Rules:** Be familiar with these, and help your child understand them.
- **Watch:** **From above the ice and not in the hockey boxes**. Skaters become distracted easily by **ANY** person sitting in this area and lack the ability to focus on the instructor. We will ask you to move if you sit in this area. **PLEASE DO NOT SIT IN THE HOCKEY BOXES!**
- **Assistance:** Please **do not walk on the ice surface** to help your child. Let us help your child. Shoes are **not** allowed on the ice.
- **Practice Area:** Do not leave your child unattended either during practice time or during lesson time.
- **Questions:** Our instructors are scheduled back-to-back for lessons, so they may not be able to answer questions between classes. The Skate School Coordinator, Rene, can answer your questions.

PRACTICE AREA RULES:

- **Participants:** Practice in the coned-off section of the ice during skate school hours. **Non-Registered Skaters** are **NOT ALLOWED**. Parents and siblings may skate **ONLY** if they register with the skate school coordinator, Rene, and pay a \$20 fee which is good July 1st- June 30th. Any unauthorized skaters will be asked to leave the ice immediately.
- **Horseplay:** **NOT ALLOWED!** NO weaving in and out of cones, playing tag, etc. **No** hockey sticks, pucks or balls are allowed. Anyone disobeying the rules will be asked to leave immediately. No kicking the ice, making holes, or gouges in the ice.
- **Open Skating:** Registered skaters will receive free open skating passes within the first 2 weeks of class. Check with the main office of the rink or the city website for the open skating schedule.

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IMPORTANT DATES & HOW TO SIGN UP FOR THE NEXT SESSION:

- **Holidays:** Check the skate school brochure and the lesson schedule poster.
- **Refunds:** **None**, unless a class is cancelled. You may be able to move to another session, however.
- **Make-Ups:** **Not available.**
- **Registration:** Online up to 2 days prior to class start. You may register
- **Time Changes:** Please check the white board in the hall and the skate school brochure weekly for any changes.
- **Ice Show:** Registration begins in **November** – watch for signs and handouts. All levels and ages may participate!
The annual ice show is in March.

INSTRUCTORS, EVALUATIONS & TESTING:

- **Instructors:** Combined, the Skate School Staff has over 100 years of training and coaching experience, and are all members of U.S. Figure Skating. Coaches are registered with Learn to Skate USA and undergo background checks. The majority of the Skate School coaches are coaches in the Figure Skating Club of Bloomington and its Junior Club Program. All of the Club coaches are members of the Professional Skaters Association, and have many coaching achievements and accreditations.
- **Evaluations:** We provide valuable feedback on each child's performance during the session. During the last few weeks of each session we prepare a written evaluation for each skater who has attended at least 4 classes. Please be aware that there may be down time to allow for this important process. The evaluation form will also inform you as to which level to register for in the next session.
- **Absence:** If a skater misses 4 or more lessons and **no** evaluation is done, the skater will need to retake the class.
- **Badges:** A badge is given to those students who pass their class level. It will be included with the evaluation. If you lose a badge there is a **\$2.00 fee** to replace the badge.
- **Distribution:** Evaluations are handed out the last day of each session. If you miss this class, your evaluation will be mailed.

CONTINUATION OF LESSONS:

- **Online Registration:** **Online registration. Plan ahead!** You need to create a household account prior to registering if you have not yet created one. It takes 1-2 days for the account to be set up in the system after you create your account online.

<https://webtrac.bloomingtonmn.gov>

Class descriptions are available on-line. www.BloomingtonMN.gov

QUESTIONS/SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS ARE WELCOMED: The instructors are scheduled back-to-back with lessons. However, you can certainly talk to them before classes begin or when they are not in a lesson. **Email Rene Gelecinskyj, Skate School Coordinator, for any further information rgelecinskyj@BloomingtonMN.gov** if you do not find her on the rink or in the skate school office across from rink 2. We welcome your suggestions, comments or questions. Our goal is to provide you with a fun and wonderful learning experience!

LOVE FIGURE SKATING, HOCKEY, or OTHER ICE SPORTS? Try out the **Figure Skating Club of Bloomington, www.FSCBloomington.org**. Contact the Skate School Coordinator, Rene, for more detailed information. Please call the Bloomington Ice Garden for additional information about the wonderful **hockey programs** in Bloomington. See www.ci.bloomington.mn.us key word "ice garden" for links.



Thank you for your participation in the Bloomington Ice Garden Skate School!

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Apparel, Skate & Blade Information



- ☑ **APPAREL:** Mittens, gloves and warm, comfortable clothing. Jeans and bulky jackets are not recommended if they restrict movement.
- ☑ **HELMETS:** Optional, but **highly recommended** especially for children 5 and younger.
- ☑ **SOCKS:** Lightweight and thin.
- ☑ **SKATE BOOT:** Should be a similar size to shoe size while wearing thin socks. Purchasing large skates to accommodate growing feet while using thick socks **WILL NOT** work. The skate boot must fit snug to the actual foot. You must make sure that the boot offers good support and is made from quality material such as leather. We recommend General Sports in Edina and Pierce Skate and Ski in Bloomington and Instant Replay.
- ☑ **BLADES:** Must be sharpened properly and done so about every six to eight weeks. Skating on outdoor rinks and lakes dulls blades much faster due to debris commonly found on outdoor ice surfaces. The blades should be made of stainless steel and mounted with screws. **NO double blades/runners allowed.** **Do not** walk on any surfaces except the ice and rubber flooring without guards on your blades. Do not store your skates with the rubber guards on them – it will promote rusting. Store them with soft fabric protection (“soakers”).
- ☑ **LACES & PROPER LACING TECHNIQUES:** Make sure laces are in good shape and can tie up the entire skate. As you lace up the skate, make sure that the tongue is in the middle of the boot. Pull up on the laces to make sure the skate is snug. The most important part of the lacing of the skate is the ankle. Pull tightly in this area and then relax the lacing a bit as you continue up the skate - no slack. Once at the top, tie a secure bow. If ends are too long, wrap the laces through the hooks again and tie a bow. Please tuck in the loops or your child may get their feet caught. “Weak ankles” in skating is a myth. If you invest in a good pair of skates and tie them correctly, you will not have weak ankles.
- ☑ **FIGURE VS. HOCKEY SKATES:** It is much easier to learn the basics of skating wearing figure skates. Hockey skates (blades) have a radius that allows less blade on the ice surface and produces more of a “rocking” motion that is more difficult for beginner skaters to control. They also have no toe picks. Beginner skaters who intend on playing hockey should wear figure skates initially and complete the basic skills classes through at least Basic 2. You will be a much better skater and player. The transition from figure to hockey skates is generally an easy one once the child has mastered the basics.
- ☑ **PREVIOUSLY OWNED SKATES:** It is not always necessary to buy new skates. Look for clean, firm, fully lined boots with good support. Also, look at the soles to ensure they have not rotted. Check the blades for deep nicks and make sure there is still enough good steel left on the blade for sharpening.
- ☑ **NEW SKATES:** Most skate shops carry beginner through the most advanced boots and blades. As you advance, you may want to consider specialty boots and blades if your intentions are to continue with skating. However, you don't have to spend a lot to learn how to skate.
- ☑ **RENTED SKATES:** The Bloomington Ice Garden provides **free** rental skates to registered skaters! Request a pair with firm boots and sharp blades.
- ☑ **RECOMMENDATIONS:** For your child's benefit and ability to learn, we may suggest that you look for different skates if we feel the skater is not getting the support they need from the boot or blade. It is very difficult to learn to skate with skates or blades that are not in good condition. Also, do not walk on any surfaces except the ice and rubber flooring without guards on your blades.



Snowplow Sam Participant Information

Welcome to the Bloomington Skate School Snowplow Sam program

- **Locate** the **Lesson Schedule Poster** to find your child's class time, color, and instructor.
- **Check-in** by the entrance of the ice surface. Class helpers and coaches will bring your skaters to class.
- **Do not** attempt to bring your child onto the ice – we will assist your child.
- **Assignments** will be made to one of the 4 "Snowplow Sam" levels depending on your child's ability. During the first few weeks of each session, we may make changes to classes based on the ability of skaters. Please check the lesson schedule poster weekly to see if your child has been assigned a new class color.
- **Snowplow Sam classes** are designed to teach your child to skate by him/herself free of parental help.
- **Unwilling** children or children just not ready to skate yet may be asked to shift their registration to a later session to allow for further development. Since our lessons are intended for group learning, we cannot spend excessive time with children who are unwilling to try to skate and partake in the class. We definitely try our best to provide instruction for each and every child in class.
- Through our many years of teaching, we've experienced that having a parent on the ice usually **hinders** the child from learning instead of helping.
- **Read** the "Skate School Lesson Info Packet" to familiarize yourself and your skater with practice area rules, testing and evaluations, parents' role & responsibility.
- **The Annual Ice Show** is held each spring and is a wonderful experience for **ALL** of the skaters. It is a lot of fun and each skater gets to keep their own costume. Registration for the show starts in November. **All ages and abilities participate!** Our all boy number in the show is always a huge hit!
- **Questions** should be directed to: **Skate School Coordinator, Rene Gelecinskyj @ rgelecinskyj@BloomingtonMN.gov**

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