



# FIGURE SKATING GLOSSARY FOR THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST

Singles Skating • Pairs Skating • Ice Dance • Synchronized Skating



**PERFORMING ARTS**  
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP



**ORTHOPAEDIC SECTION**  
AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION



American Physical Therapy Association  
*The Science of Healing. The Art of Caring.*

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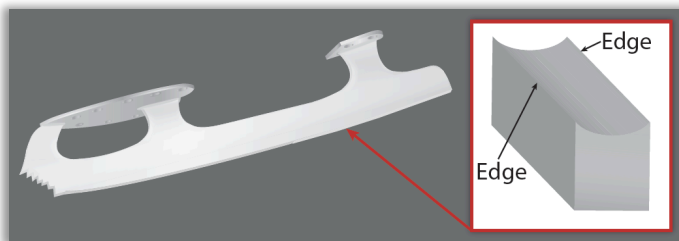
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## EQUIPMENT

- **BOOT** – One component of the ice-skate formed traditionally by many layers of leather and may include synthetic materials to improve the overall fit and decrease weight. The boot provides the mounting surface on the sole and heel for the blade of the ice skate.



- **BLADE** – One component of the ice-skate that is typically 3/16" thick and composed of tempered steel and chrome. The blade has a number of components including the toe pick to assist primarily with toe jumps (see "Toe Jumps") and footwork (see "Footwork"), contains a radius or a curve if viewed from the side called a "rocker" that is important for spins, and is hollowed to create two distinct edges for stroking (see "Stroking"), edge jumps (see "Edge Jumps"), and various edges and turns. The blade component of an ice dancer's skate is approximately one inch shorter than a regular blade with a smaller toe-pick to improve intricate footwork.



## STROKING & STOPPING

### STROKING

- **CROSSOVERS** – Crossovers are used to negotiate corners and gain speed by crossing one foot over the other. In a forward crossover, to turn toward the left the right foot is crossed over the left and just the opposite is true when turning to the right. Crossovers are also done while skating backward using the same method as moving forward.
- **SCULLING (SWIZZLES)** – A basic two-foot propulsion method used by beginners where the feet are pushed in and out on the inside edges of the blade to move forward or backward.
- **STROKING** – Stroking is a fundamental skating move, which is used to gain speed either forward or backward. In stroking, the skater does alternating pushes using the inside edges of the skate blade.
- **SWIZZLES** – see "Sculling."

### STOPPING

- **HOCKEY STOP** – A stop on the ice where the feet are placed parallel to each other and perpendicular to line of motion and the torso inline with the direction of motion.

- **SNOWPLOW STOP** – A stop on the ice where the knees are bent and both feet are placed in a pigeon-toe position while pushing both heels out away from each other.
- **T-STOP** – A stop on the ice where the blades of the skate are placed in a “T” position. The middle of one skate blade should be placed perpendicular at the heel of the other skate blade. This stop can be performed with either foot leading.

## **EDGES, TURNS & MOVES**

### **EDGES**

- **EDGES** – Edges are a foundational skating move performed either forward or backward. Edges are a series of lobes (see “Lobes”) performed on a straight line using either the outside or inside edge of the blade. For example, to perform forward outside edges begin in a “T” position facing perpendicular to the line on the ice. Lead with the right foot and create a lobe while staying on the right foot outside edge of the blade. When returning to the line push onto a left outside edge. This is continued in a series along the line. Edges are performed on forward and backward outside and inside edges on both the right and left feet.
- **LOBE** – A pattern created on the ice while performing an edge that forms an arc of a circle beginning and ending on an axis.

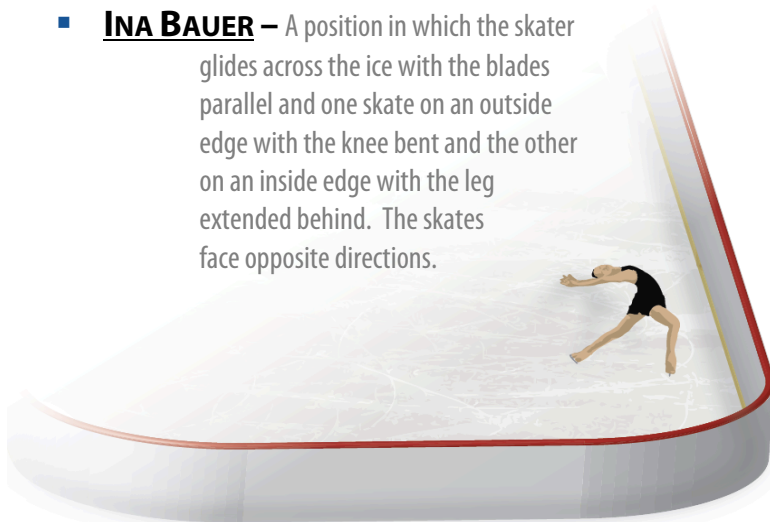
### **TURNS**

- **BRACKET** – A turn on one foot in which the skater turns counterclockwise from either forward to backward or backward to forward and moving from either an outside to an inside edge or inside to an outside edge. (Example: In a right forward outside bracket the skater begins on a right forward outside edge and turns counterclockwise to a right backward inside edge).
- **CHOCTAW** – A two-foot turn in which the skater turns from same edge on one foot to the opposite edge on the alternate foot. (Example: In a rocker-like choctaw the skater transfers from a right forward inside edge to a left back outside edge. The opposite is true for a counter-like choctaw).
- **COUNTER** – A turn on one foot in which the skater turns counterclockwise from either forward to backward or backward to forward and maintains either an outside or an inside edge. (Example: In a right forward outside counter the skater begins on a right forward outside edge and turns counterclockwise to a right backward outside edge).
- **MOHAWK** – A two-foot turn in which the skater turns from same edge on one foot to the same edge on the opposite foot. (Example: In an inside mohawk the skater transfers from a right forward inside edge to a left back inside edge).

- **ROCKER** – A turn on one foot in which the skater turns clockwise from either forward to backward or backward to forward and maintaining either an outside or an inside edge. (Example: In a right forward outside counter the skater begins on a right forward outside edge and turns clockwise to a right backward outside edge).
- **THREE-TURN** – A turn on one foot in which the skater turns from either forward to backward or backward to forward and moving from either an outside to an inside edge or inside to an outside edge. (Example: In a right forward outside three-turn the skater begins on a right forward outside edge and turns to a right backward inside edge).

## MOVES

- **INA BAUER** – A position in which the skater glides across the ice with the blades parallel and one skate on an outside edge with the knee bent and the other on an inside edge with the leg extended behind. The skates face opposite directions.



- **PIVOT** – An element in which the skater places one toe pick in the ice and rotates around that central point either forward or backward on either an inside or outside edge.



- **SPIRAL** – An element in which the skater extends the non-skating leg behind them in an arabesque position either forward or backward on either inside or outside edges of the skate blade.

- **SPIRAL SEQUENCE** – A sequence of various spirals in a pattern across the ice either forward or backward and may include both inside and outside edges of the blade.



- **SPREAD EAGLE** – A position in which the skater glides across the ice on both skates on either an inside or an outside edge with the heels facing each other and the toes pointing in opposite directions.

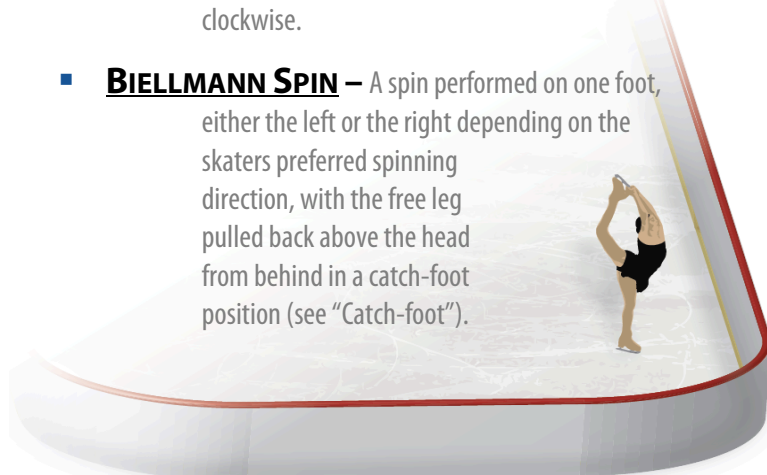
- **STEP SEQUENCE** – A sequence of steps immediately following one another that are choreographically related to each other.

## **SINGLES SKATING**

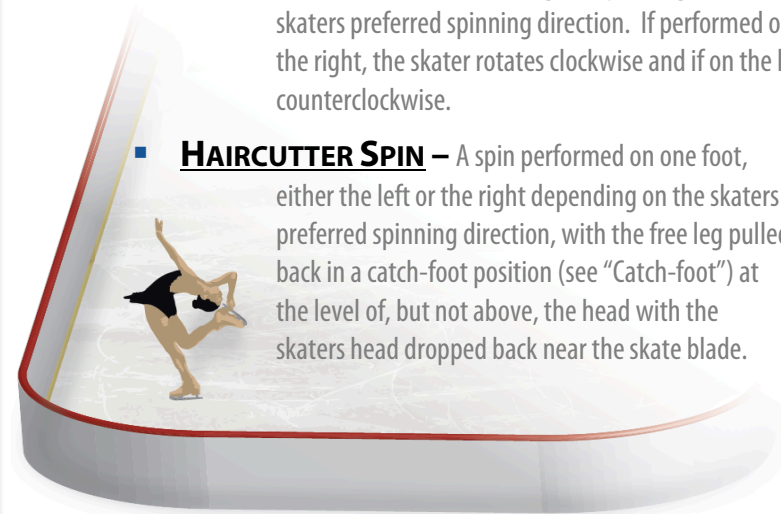
- **SINGLES SKATING** – A discipline in figure skating where an individual male or female performs a variety of jumps, spins, footwork, and other figure skating elements.

## **SPINS**

- **BACK SPIN** – See “Back Upright Spin”
- **BACK UPRIGHT SPIN (ONE FOOT SPIN)** – A spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction. If performed on the right, the skater rotates counterclockwise and if on the left the skater rotates clockwise.
- **BIELLMANN SPIN** – A spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction, with the free leg pulled back above the head from behind in a catch-foot position (see “Catch-foot”).



- **CAMEL SPIN** – A spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction, with the non-skating free leg extended in the air parallel to the ice in a spiral or arabesque position (see “Spiral”).
- **FORWARD UPRIGHT SPIN** – A spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction. If performed on the right, the skater rotates clockwise and if on the left counterclockwise.



- **HAIRCUTTER SPIN** – A spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction, with the free leg pulled back in a catch-foot position (see “Catch-foot”) at the level of, but not above, the head with the skaters head dropped back near the skate blade.



- **LAYBACK SPIN** – A spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction, where the back is extended and the head and shoulders parallel to the ice.

- **ONE FOOT SPIN** – See “Forward Upright Spin”
- **SCRATCH SPIN** – see “Forward Upright Spin”
- **SIT SPIN** – A spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction, while in a “sitting” position. The skating knee is bent and the non-skating free leg extended.



- **TWO-FOOT SPIN** – A spin that is performed on two feet on the ice parallel to each other approximately shoulder width apart.

## FLYING SPINS

- **DEATH DROP** – See “Flying Camel Sit Spin”
- **FLYING CAMEL SIT SPIN (DEATH DROP)** – A flying spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction, with an entry similar to an Axel jump (see “Axel Jump”) with the skater kicking the take off leg backward and landing on the opposite foot in the “sitting” position for a backward sit spin.

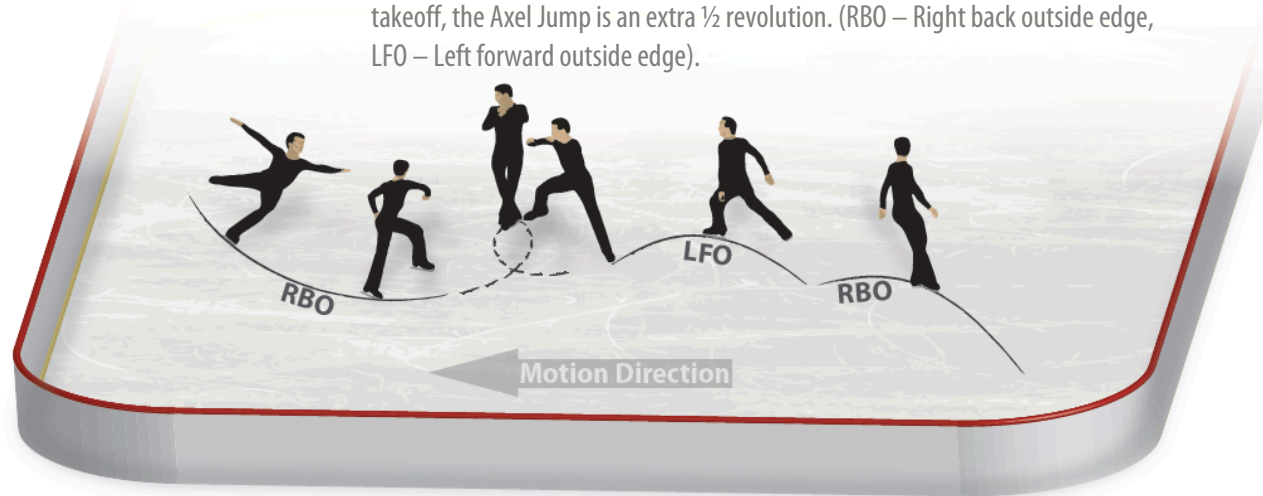
- **FLYING CAMEL SPIN** – A flying spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction beginning in a forward camel spin (see “Camel Spin”) and jumping to change feet to begin spinning on the other leg in a backward camel spin.
- **FLYING REVERSE SIT SPIN** – A flying spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction, with an entry similar to a flying sit spin (see “Sit Spin” or “Flying Sit Spin”) but the skater jumps in the air and lands on the opposite foot in the “sitting” position for a backward sit spin.
- **FLYING SIT SPIN** – A flying spin performed on one foot, either the left or the right depending on the skaters preferred spinning direction, with an entry similar to a sit spin (see “Sit Spin”) but the skater jumps in the air and lands on the same foot in a “sitting” position for a forward sit spin.

## JUMPS

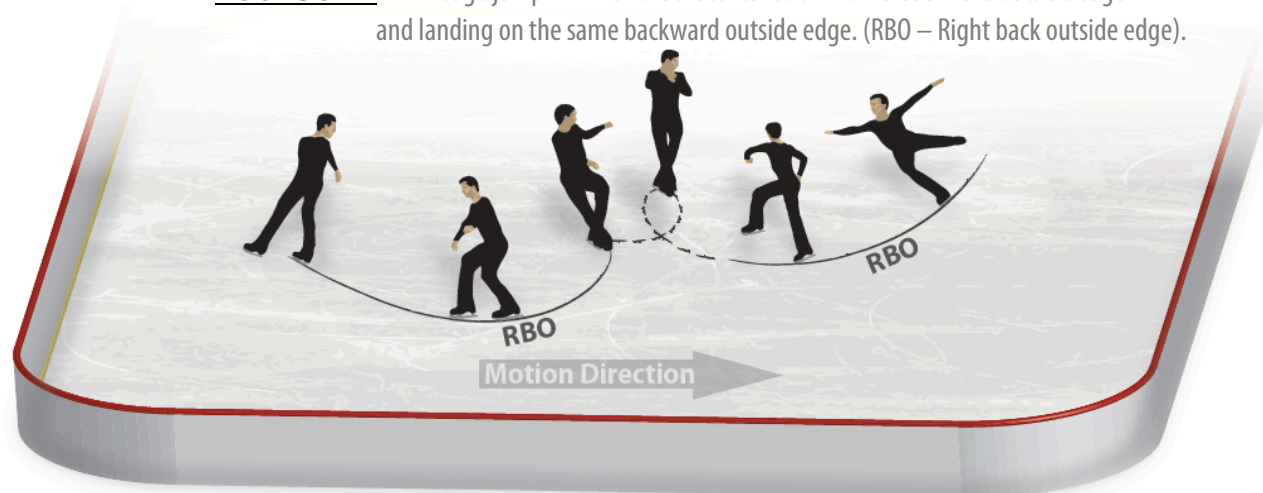
- **BUNNY HOP** – A basic jump in which the skater takes off forward on the blade of the left skate, landing forward on the right toe pick and back on the blade of the left skate without any revolutions.
- **COMBINATION JUMP** – A series of two or more jumps typically performed without a change in feet or a turn.

## EDGE JUMPS

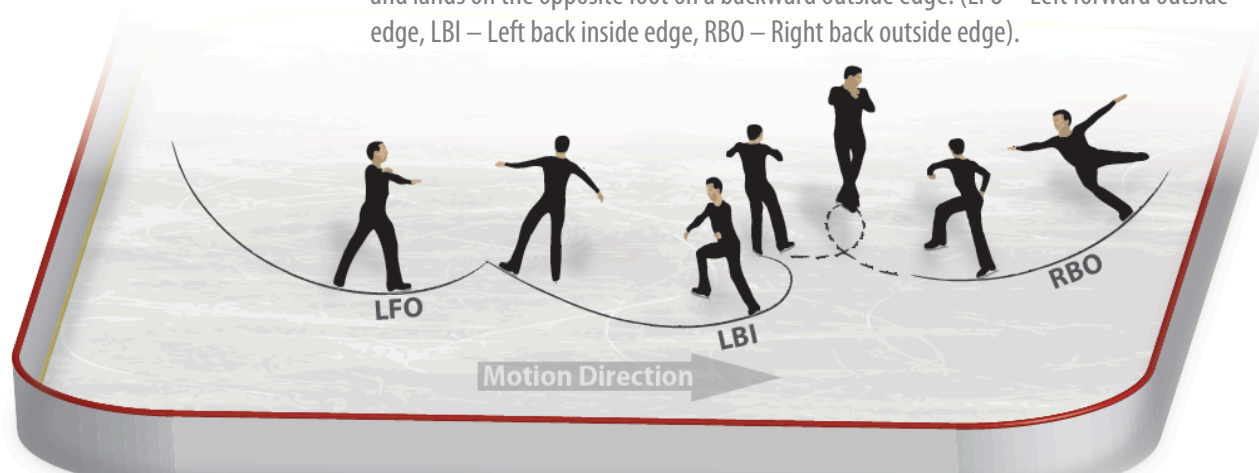
- **EDGE JUMP** – A jump in which the skater takes off from either the inside or outside edge of the blade. Common edge jumps include the Salchow, loop, and Axel jumps.
  - **AXEL JUMP** – An edge jump in which the skater takes off from a forward outside edge and lands on the opposite foot on a backward outside edge. Because of the forward takeoff, the Axel Jump is an extra  $\frac{1}{2}$  revolution. (RBO – Right back outside edge, LFO – Left forward outside edge).



- **LOOP JUMP** – An edge jump in which the skater takes off from a backward outside edge and lands on the same backward outside edge. (RBO – Right back outside edge).



- **SALCHOW JUMP** – An edge jump in which the skater takes off from a backward inside edge and lands on the opposite foot on a backward outside edge. (LFO – Left forward outside edge, LBI – Left back inside edge, RBO – Right back outside edge).

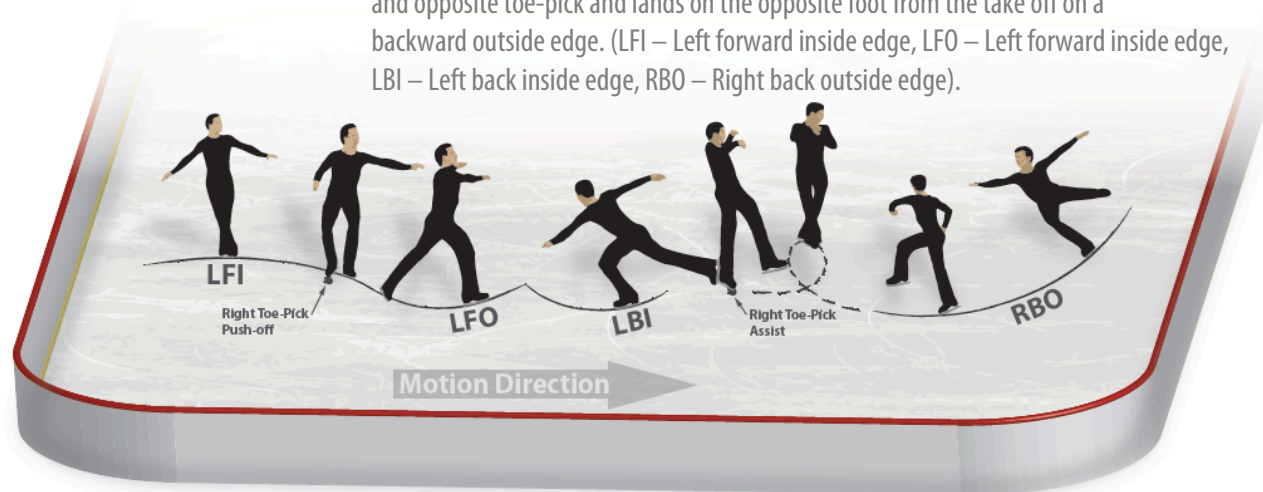


- **WALTZ JUMP** – A basic edge jump in which the skater takes off on forward outside edge and rotates only  $\frac{1}{2}$  revolution and lands on the opposite foot on a backward outside edge. (RBO – Right back outside edge, LFO – Left forward inside edge).

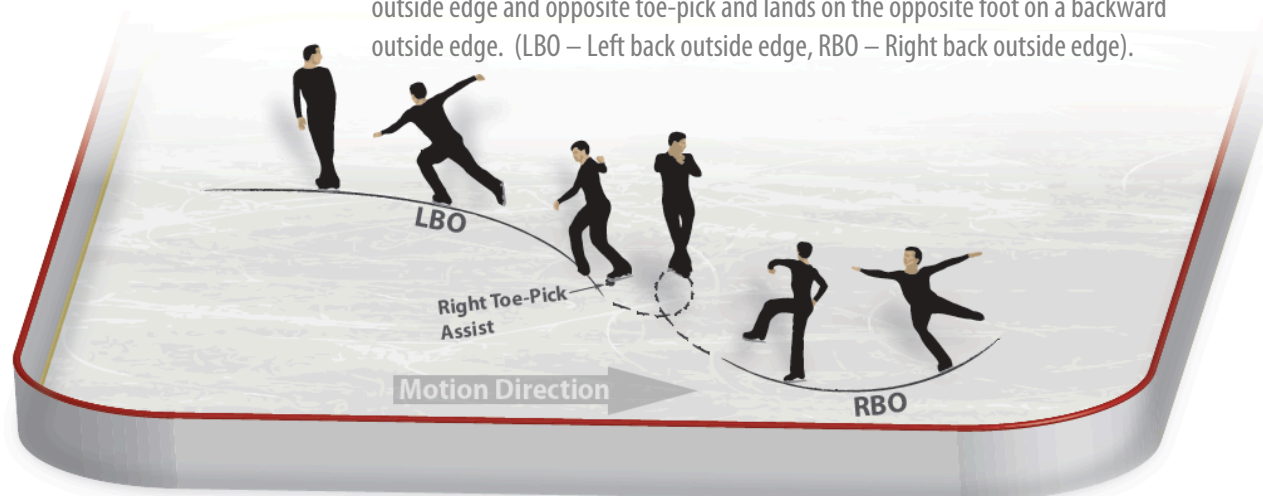


## TOE JUMPS

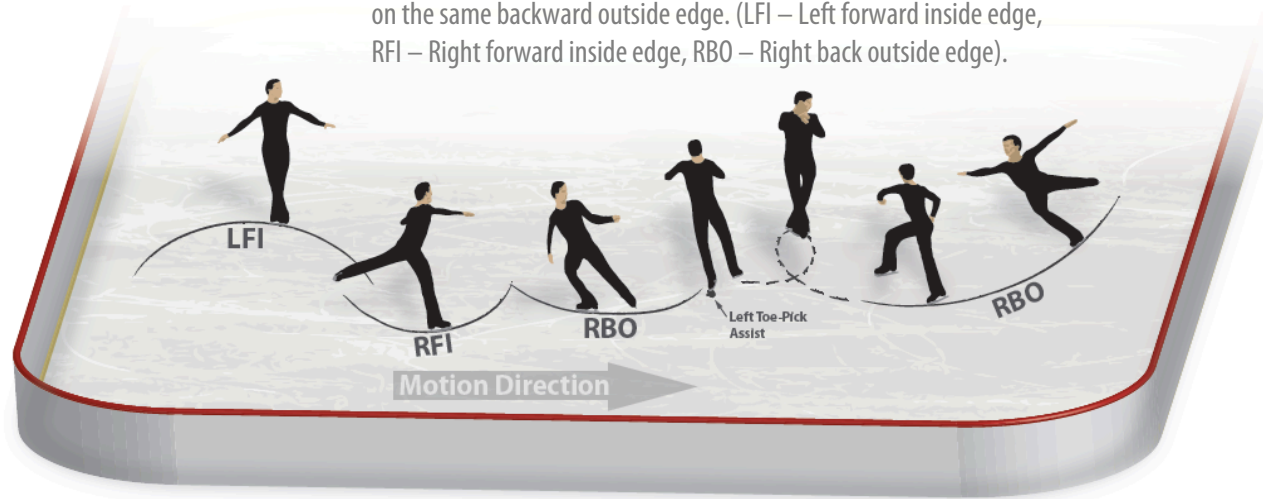
- **TOE JUMP** – A jump in which the skater uses the toe-pick of one skate and the blade of the other skate for the takeoff of the jump. Common toe jumps include the toe loop, Lutz, and flip jumps.
- **FLIP JUMP** – A toe-pick assisted jump in which the skater takes off from backward inside edge and opposite toe-pick and lands on the opposite foot from the take off on a backward outside edge. (LFI – Left forward inside edge, LFO – Left forward inside edge, LBI – Left back inside edge, RBO – Right back outside edge).



- **LUTZ JUMP** – A toe-pick assisted jump in which the skater takes off from backward outside edge and opposite toe-pick and lands on the opposite foot on a backward outside edge. (LBO – Left back outside edge, RBO – Right back outside edge).



- **TOE LOOP JUMP** – A toe-pick assisted jump in which the skater takes off and lands on the same backward outside edge. (LFI – Left forward inside edge, RFI – Right forward inside edge, RBO – Right back outside edge).

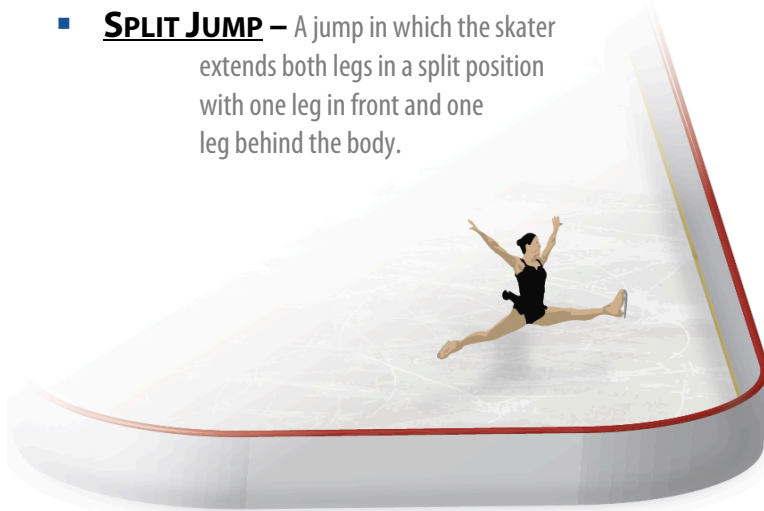


## SPLIT AND STAG JUMPS

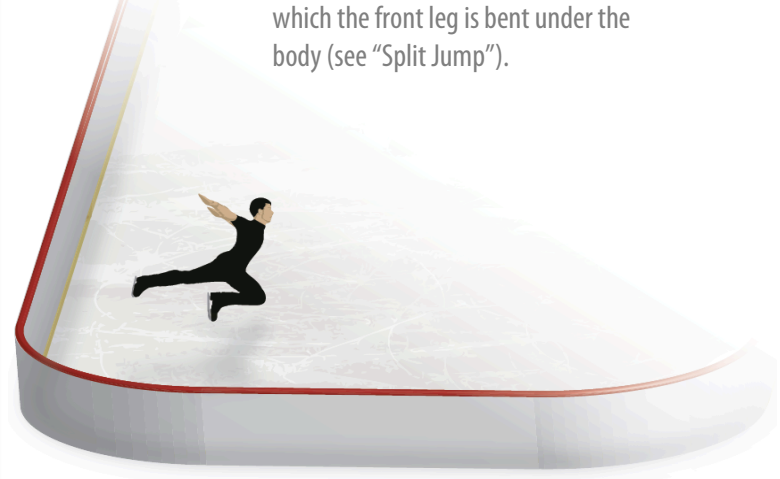
- **RUSSIAN SPLIT JUMP** – A jump in which the skater extends both legs in a split position in front of the body.



- **SPLIT JUMP** – A jump in which the skater extends both legs in a split position with one leg in front and one leg behind the body.



- **STAG JUMP** – A type of split jump in which the front leg is bent under the body (see “Split Jump”).



## PAIRS SKATING

- **PAIR SKATING** – A discipline in figure skating in which a pair, typically a man and a woman, complete overhead lifts, side-by-side elements, pairs spins, and throw jumps.

# LIFTS

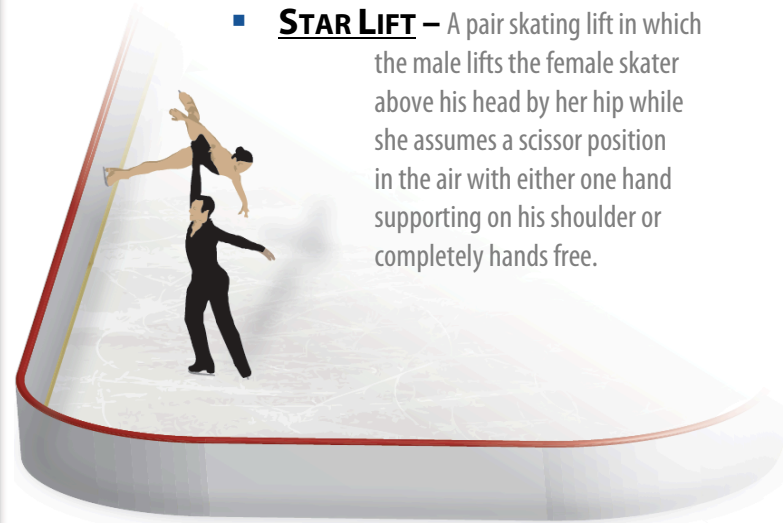
- **PAIR LIFT** – A pairs skating element in which one skater, typically the male, lifts the other skater over their head with his arms fully extended and are categorized based on the grip and position.

- **ARMPIT HOLD POSITION** – A pair lift in which the male skater places one hand in the armpit of the female skater while the female holds his shoulder and opposite hand. This lift may also be done with both of the male's hands supporting the female under both armpits. The female skater is lifted into the air from a Lutz, flip, loop, or toe-loop jump take off and assumes a split position.

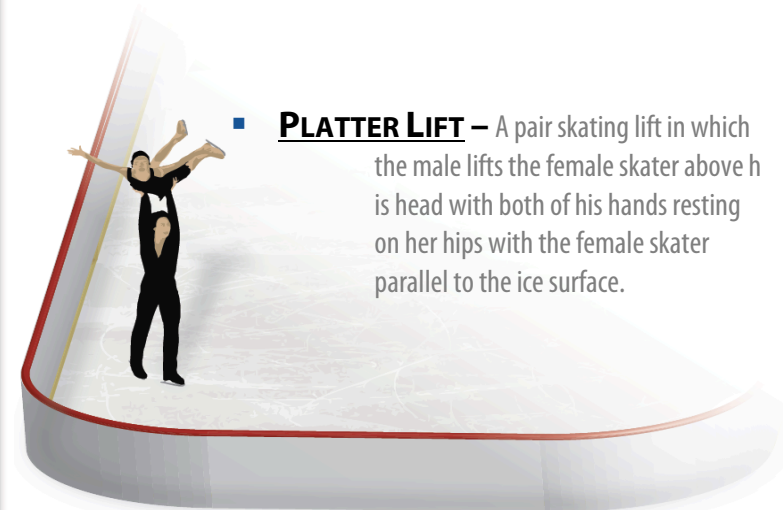


- **HAND-TO-HIP POSITION** – A pair lift in which the male skater places one hand on the female skater's hip with the female holding the male's opposite free hand and shoulder. Examples include the Star Lift and the Platter Lift. (see "Star Lift" and "Platter Lift").

- **STAR LIFT** – A pair skating lift in which the male lifts the female skater above his head by her hip while she assumes a scissor position in the air with either one hand supporting on his shoulder or completely hands free.



- **PLATTER LIFT** – A pair skating lift in which the male lifts the female skater above his head with both of his hands resting on her hips with the female skater parallel to the ice surface.



- **HAND-TO-HAND POSITION** – A pair lift in which the male skater and female skater clasp hands to support the lift. Examples include the Lasso Lift and the Press Lift. (see "Lasso Lift" and "Press Lift").

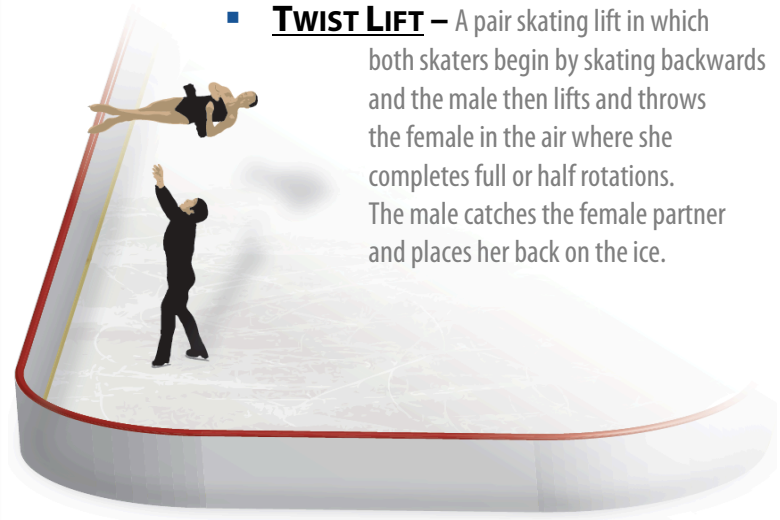
- **LESSO LIFT** – A pair lift in which the male skater and female skater’s hands are clasped together. The female skater must take off from a toe entry, step entry, or an edge entry with either a half or full rotation, depending on entry, prior to the lift position. This can also be done with a one-hand release when the female reaches the fully extended position in the air.

- **PRESS LIFT** – A pair lift in which the male skater and female skater’s hands are clasped with the female holding the male’s shoulder and opposite hand. The female skater must take off from one leg without rotation prior to the lift position.



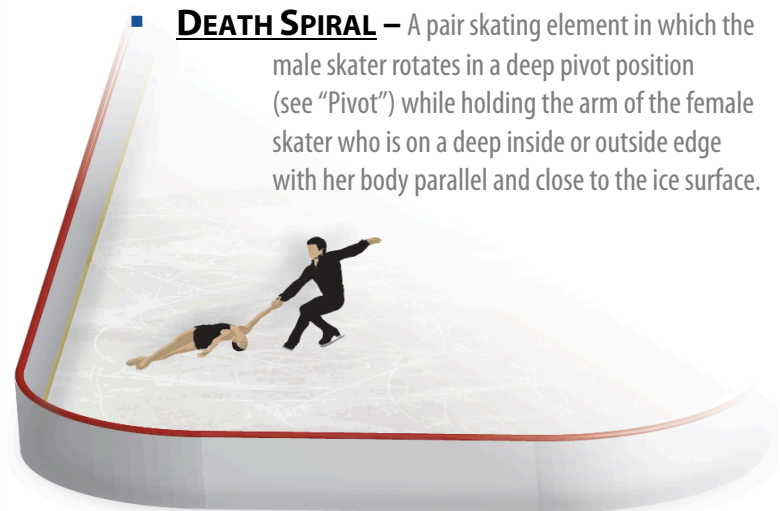
- **WAIST HOLD POSITION** – A pair lift in which the male skater places both hands on the waist of the female skater with the female holding the male’s wrists. The female skater is lifted into the air from a loop jump take off.

- **TWIST LIFT** – A pair skating lift in which both skaters begin by skating backwards and the male then lifts and throws the female in the air where she completes full or half rotations. The male catches the female partner and places her back on the ice.



## OTHER PAIRS ELEMENTS

- **DEATH SPIRAL** – A pair skating element in which the male skater rotates in a deep pivot position (see “Pivot”) while holding the arm of the female skater who is on a deep inside or outside edge with her body parallel and close to the ice surface.



- **PAIR SPIN** – A pair element in which both skaters spin together on the same axis while holding on to each other in a variety of positions. Example of one pair spin position below.



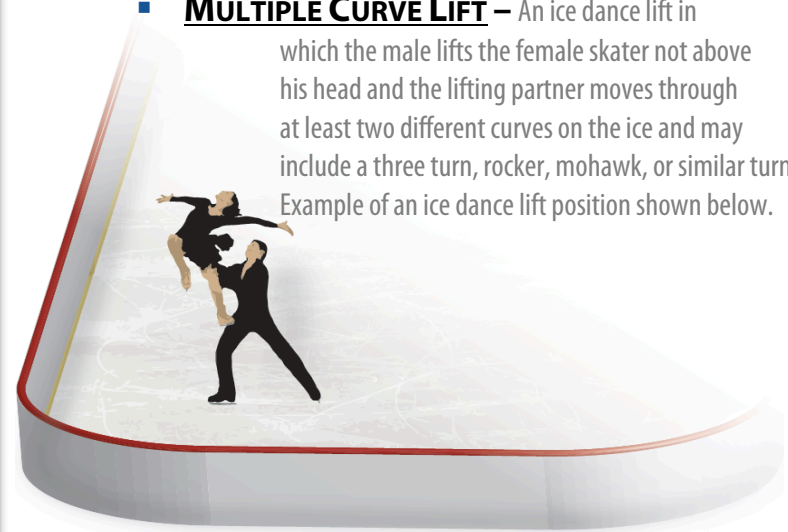
- **SIDE-BY-SIDE SPINS AND JUMPS** – A pair skating element in which single skating jumps and spins are performed in unison next to each other.
- **THROW JUMP** – A pair skating element in which the male skater throws the female skater into the air to complete any type of jump depending on the take off position.

## **ICE DANCE**

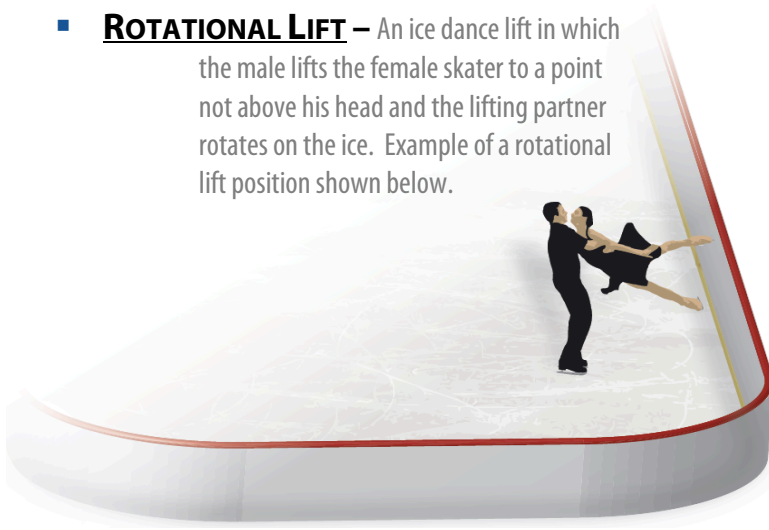
- **ICE DANCING** – A discipline in figure skating in which two skaters, typically a man and a woman, complete dance lifts, spins, twizzles, and step sequences as part of a choreographed dance.

## **ICE DANCE LIFTS**

- **DANCE LIFT** – An ice dance element in which one skater, typically the male, lifts the other skater to a point not higher than his head and is classified as rotational, multiple curve, or combination lifts.
- **COMBINATION LIFT** – An ice dance lift in which the male lifts the female skater to a point not above his head and includes both a rotational lift and multiple curve lift components (see “Rotational Lift” and “Multiple Curve Lift”).
- **MULTIPLE CURVE LIFT** – An ice dance lift in which the male lifts the female skater not above his head and the lifting partner moves through at least two different curves on the ice and may include a three turn, rocker, mohawk, or similar turn. Example of an ice dance lift position shown below.



- **ROTATIONAL LIFT** – An ice dance lift in which the male lifts the female skater to a point not above his head and the lifting partner rotates on the ice. Example of a rotational lift position shown below.



## OTHER ICE DANCE ELEMENTS

- **CHASSE** – An ice dance term used for when the free foot is placed next to the skating foot and the skating foot immediately leaves the ice and becomes the new free foot.
- **DANCE SPIN** – A spin in ice dance where both partners spin along the same axis in a known dance hold.
- **PATTERN** – An ice dance term describing the design of a dance on the ice.

- **PROGRESSIVE (RUN)** – A sequence of steps in ice dance in which the free foot crosses over the skating foot and is placed on the ice becoming the new skating foot and the skating foot lifts and becomes the new free foot.
- **TWIZZLE** – An ice dance element in which the skaters complete a traveling turn across the ice with one or more continuous rotations. Twizzles can also be done in a series of at least two twizzles with up to three steps between each.

## SYNCHRONIZED SKATING

- **SYNCHRONIZED SKATING** – A discipline in figure skating in which a large group of skaters perform together as a unit.
- **BLOCK** – A synchronized skating formation created with two or more lines of skaters creating a block that maintains position and moves across the ice.
- **CIRCLE** – A synchronized skating circular formation in which skaters rotate either forward or backward while linked and perform various stepping patters.
- **INTERSECTION** – A synchronized skating maneuver where one portion of the team moves through another part of the team.

- **LINE** – A synchronized skating formation in which the skaters are aligned side-by-side.
- **WHEEL** – A synchronized skating formation in which the skaters form a line that rotates around a central point.

## **COMPETITION TERMS**

### **OFFICIALS**

- **ACCOUNTANT** – An individual who computes and complies the judges marks at a figure skating competition to determine each skater's placement.
- **REFEREE** – An individual at a figure skating competition who has authority over all aspects of the event.
- **TECHNICAL CONTROLLER** – An individual who supports the technical specialist to correct any mistakes (see "Technical Specialist").
- **TECHNICAL PANEL** – A team of 5 individuals consisting of the technical controller, a technical specialist, assistant technical specialist, data operator, and a video replay operator.

## **COMPETITIONS & COMPETITION ELEMENTS**

- **CHOREOGRAPHY/COMPOSITION** – A portion of the overall program components (see "Program Components") describing the arrangement of movements according to the principles of proportion, unity, space, pattern, structure, and phrasing.
- **COMPETITION SCORE/FINAL SCORE** – The total final score for an individual skater that is the summation of the individuals segment scores (see "Segment Score").
- **DRAW** – A process in which skater's names are drawn at random to determine the starting order for a figure skating competition.
- **ELIGIBLE** – A term to describe skaters that meet the requirements and follow the rules of U.S. Figure Skating and the International Skating Union.
- **FREE SKATE** – In the free skate, the skaters are allowed to select their own music and theme and include jumps, spins, and footwork that best display their skating ability. On the senior level the free skate is 4½ minutes in length for men and pairs and 4 minutes for ladies and follows the short program.

- **FREE DANCE** – In the free dance, teams can select the mood and tempo of music and the skaters are allowed to display their technical skills, interpenetration, and inventiveness. On the senior level, the free dance is 4 minutes in length and follows the short dance.
- **GRADE OF EXECUTION** – A range from -3 to +3 given at the judge's discretion for a single element based on the performance of that element.
- **INTERPRETATION** – A portion of the overall program components (see "Program Components") describing the skater's translation of the music to movement on the ice.
- **NATIONALS** – The highest level of competition on the national level used to decide the national champion in each level. In the United States it is called the U.S. Figure Skating Championships.
- **NON-QUALIFYING COMPETITION** – A competition that is not part of the U.S. Figure Skating qualifying structure leading to the U.S. Championships.
- **PAIR FREE SKATE** – See "Free Skate"
- **PAIR SHORT PROGRAM** – See "Short Program"
- **PERFORMANCE/EXECUTION** – A portion of the overall program components (see "Program Components") describing the involvement of the skater's translation of the intent of the music and choreography and the quality of movement and precision.

- **PROGRAM COMPONENTS** – A total of five different components including skating skills, transitions, performance/execution, choreography/composition, and interpretation. Timing is an additional component used in ice dance.
- **PROGRAM COMPONENTS SCORE** – A summation of the factored scores for five the individual program components.
- **QUALIFYING COMPETITION** – A competition that is part of the U.S. Figure Skating structure leading up to the U.S. Championships.
- **REGIONALS** – The first step in the U.S. Figure Skating qualifying structure leading to the U.S. Championships. There are nine regions in the U.S. and the top four of each level advance to sectionals, which is the next step in the structure.
- **SANCTION** – Permission given by U.S. Figure Skating or the International Skating Union to conduct competitions, shows, or events with eligible athletes.
- **SCALE OF VALUE** – Term used to describe the value of each individual element.
- **SECTIONALS** – The second step in the U.S. Figure Skating qualifying structure leading to the U.S. Championships. There are three sections in the U.S. and the top four of each level advance to the U.S. championships.

- **SEGMENT SCORE** – A summation of the technical score and the program component score for a portion of the competition.
- **SHORT DANCE** – In the short dance, teams choose their own music and choreography but must include required elements including dance lifts, spins, twizzles, step sequences, and sections of dance patterns conforming to specified rhythms and precedes the Free Dance.
- **SHORT PROGRAM** – In the short program, the skaters are allowed to select their own music and theme but are required to complete no more than eight required element. On the senior level the short program is 2 minutes and 50 seconds in length for both singles and pairs and precedes the Free Skate.
- **SKATING SKILLS** – A portion of the overall program components (see “Program Components”) describing the overall skating quality including edge control, clarity of technique, and power/speed.
- **STARTING ORDER** – The order in which the athletes will compete in accordance with the draw (see “Draw”).
- **TECHNICAL SCORE (TOTAL ELEMENTS SCORE)** – Summation of the scores for the technical portion of a program.
- **TIMING** – A portion of the overall program components in ice dance (see “Program Components”) describing the couples ability to remain in time with the music.

- **TRANSITIONS/LINKING FOOTWORK AND MOVEMENTS** – A portion of the overall program components (see “Program Components”) describing the footwork, positions, movements, and holds linking various elements.

## **ORGANIZATIONS & PROGRAMS**

- **BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM** – Designed as a beginning program for both the recreational and competitive skater. Basic skills consist of programs for basic figure skating, hockey, ice dance, synchronized skating, pairs, Special Olympics, and many other programs.
- **INTERNATIONAL SKATING INSTITUTE** – A figure skating association that includes tests and levels oriented toward recreational skating with less focus on serious competition as compared to U.S. Figure Skating (see “U.S. Figure Skating”).
- **INTERNATIONAL SKATING UNION** – The official international governing body of figure skating and speed skating. The International Skating Union hosts the World Figure Skating Championships, Four Continents Championships and the Grand Prix of Figure Skating competitions.

- **U.S. FIGURE SKATING** – The official governing body of figure skating in the United States, which includes tests and levels with an aim at improving the skater’s technical and competitive ability. U.S. Figure Skating includes a Basic Skills program (see “Basic Skills Program”) that is oriented toward recreational skating.

## **OTHER TERMS**

- **CATCH FOOT** – A position typically used in a spiral or a spin in which the skater holds their free leg with one or both hands. The skate is usually held behind the skater with their hands as in the Biellmann or haircutter positions (see “Biellmann Spin” or “Haircutter Spin”).
- **CENTERED** – A term used when a spin maintains the same position on the ice. The opposite of travelling (see “Traveling”).
- **CHECK** – Stopping rotation, typically at the end of a jump or a spin.
- **FOOTWORK** – A sequence of steps which the skater completes in either a straight-line, circular, or serpentine pattern across the ice.

- **MOVES IN THE FIELD** – A testing requirement (along with free skating and ice dance) in U.S. Figure Skating (see “U.S. Figure Skating”) and is aimed at enhancing the skaters ability to perform fundamental edges and turns with a focus on edge quality, speed, power, and extension.
- **TESTING LEVEL** – Testing levels allow a skater to enhance and improve their skating ability and determine the level with which the skater can compete. In order to pass up to another level the skater must participate in a testing session and be passed to the next level by a panel of judges. Singles levels include: Pre-preliminary, preliminary, pre-juvenile, juvenile, intermediate, novice, junior, senior. Pair levels include: preliminary, pre-juvenile, juvenile, intermediate, novice, junior, and senior. Dance levels include: preliminary, pre-bronze, bronze, pre-silver, silver, pre-gold, gold, and international.
- **TRAVELING** – A term used when a skater moves across the ice during a spin and is unable to maintain a centered position (see “Centered”).

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