



## Canskate Information Package

### Welcome!!

We are delighted to welcome you to our Pre CanSkate and CanSkate programs, where the joy of skating begins! Whether this is your first time on the ice or you are returning to continue your skating journey, we are thrilled to have you with us.

This CanSkate information package is your guide to navigating our programs. You will find everything you need to know about our Pre CanSkate and CanSkate sessions, including equipment & attire, how sessions will run, and general information.

### CANSKATE OVERVIEW

CanSkate is Skate Canada's official learn-to-skate program and has been designed to address the development of skating skills and elements in preparation for all ice sports. Based on Skate Canada's long-term athlete development (LTAD) principles, CanSkate and Pre-CanSkate centers on physical literacy and the fundamental skills needed to take part in any skating sport or to skate as a recreational activity. Aylmer Skating Centre is proud to have all programs taught by professional coaches who are specially trained and certified through the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP).

### What can you expect?

The CanSkate learning environment is enhanced through fun, music, teaching aids, props, along with praise and group/individual feedback from coaches and Program Assistants. Lessons are given in a group format with a coach-to-student ratio of a maximum of 1:10. Badges, ribbons and other incentives are used to benchmark skaters' progress and reward effort and participation. The CanSkate program is organized into three Fundamental areas and divided into six stages of learning.

The Fundamental areas are:

- Balance: Focus on forward skills, pushing technique and edges.
- Control: Focus on backward skills, stopping and speed elements.
- Agility: Focus on turning and jumping skills.

CSA Certified Hockey Helmets are mandatory for CanSkate until Stage 5 is completed.



**CanSkate Excellence  
Achieved Standard**

## WHAT IS PRE-CANSKATE?

Pre-CanSkate groups are a component of CanSkate and not a program on its own.

Participants who have never skated before or who are not confident with their balance on the ice are considered Pre-CanSkaters (regardless of age, however, age range is typically 3-6 years old). We work on the essential skills with them to prepare them for Canskate (balance, getting up by themselves, moving forward, etc). Once skaters are mobile and able to get up on their own, their group rotates to the different learning stations as well.

CSA Certified Hockey Helmets are mandatory for Pre-CanSkate.

**\*\*Note:** minimum age is 3 years old by the start of the registration season.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

CanSkate progress reports are evaluation tools used by our coaches and developed by Skate Canada to track the development of skaters in the CanSkate program.

These reports document skaters' achievements, provide feedback on their strengths and areas needing improvement, and use a checklist to indicate which skills have been mastered. This structured approach helps skaters see their progress, set goals, and stay motivated

One progress report is given out at the end of each skating term (December & March).

An example of a progress report can be found on the Canskate Information section on our website.

## AWARDS

The CanSkate program has 18 ribbons and 6 badges to recognize the skater's achievements. This allows skaters to receive incentives/recognition for their achievements on a more frequent basis. The awards consist of:

- 18 ribbons (1 Balance, Agility and Control ribbon for each level).
- 6 badges (1 badge per stage).

To receive a badge, skaters must achieve all ribbons (Agility, Balance and Control) from the corresponding stage. The skill requirements for each Fundamental area are indicated on the report card.



## SESSION FORMAT

Skate Canada professional coaches teach this 40 minute program, with the help of program assistants (PA's). Children are separated into colour coded groups based on their ability. Skaters have fun at various stations while working on the skills needed for the different badge levels.

CanSkate lessons include a group warm-up and cool-down using the full ice.

- The first 5-6 minutes consists of a warm-up for all skaters lead by our coaches and program assistants. The skaters are then separated into their groups.
- Skaters, in their groups, will rotate through the three fundamental areas, each for 9-10 minutes, each with a different coach.
- The three fundamental areas are Agility, Balance, and Control/Challenge Zone and going around the perimeter of the ice is called the Fast Track (marked by pylons).
- The Challenge Zone provides engaging activities and includes teaching aids and visual impact to help keep skaters' interest and motivation high.
- The session ends with a 10 minute cool-down led by program assistants and coaches.
- Professional coaches assess each skater's skill level during lessons every week, awarding ribbons promptly upon achievement.



## PROGRAM ASSISTANTS

Who are Program Assistants?

Program Assistants (PAs) are current skaters at Aylmer Skating Centre who have been trained by our coaches to assist in the delivery of the Skate Canada CanSkate Program.

Program Assistants are easily recognizable by their ASC vests, making them another resource for skaters seeking guidance or assistance during sessions. Their assistance not only helps maintain a high standard of instruction but also fosters a supportive and collaborative community within the school.

### What is the role of a Program Assistant?

- Assisting or leading warm-ups, group activities, or cool-downs.
- Assisting with the set-up of circuits and stations.
- Leading circuits and rotations.
- Leading skaters to and from each circuit.
- Demonstrating proper execution of skating skills.
- Assisting skaters who may need additional assistance.
- Providing general assistance to the coaches during the session.

Once your skater has completed the Canskate Program, they are eligible to become a program assistant if they wish! We are always looking for new PA's to join the team!

Please talk to Head Coach Cheryl or email [info@aylmerskatingcentre.ca](mailto:info@aylmerskatingcentre.ca).

## REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Helmets: At any age, helmets are mandatory to be worn in CanSkate up to and including Stage 5 for all events, competitions, ice shows, and any other special on-ice activities throughout the season.

Helmets worn must be a CSA-approved hockey helmet and must not be expired.

A proper fitting helmet sits no more than 1 inch above the brow line, has straps that are shaped like a V around the ears, and has no more than 1 finger space under the chin.

Be sure skaters can see - all excess hair should be pulled back out of the way.

Incentive stickers should not be placed on a helmet as some adhesives may compromise the integrity of the plastic and void the manufacturer's guarantee.

See the Helmet Use Policy on Skate Canada's Info Center for more information.

\*CSA approved hockey helmets can be purchased at Canadian Tire or SportChek locations\*

### Approved Helmets

Must be CSA approved  
hockey helmet (with or  
without cage)



### Not Approved

Ski/Bike/Multi Sport will not  
be accepted and you will  
not be allowed on the ice



## REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Equipment is a very important component for safety and success in skating for all levels. Please read through the following information carefully.

**Skates:** When looking for skates, whether hockey or figure skates, the following tips should be kept in mind:

- Fit well and provide ankle support.
- Fit around ankle should be snug and the top is a bit looser to allow the ankle to bend.
- Any extra lace should be tied or tucked in to avoid tripping or stepping on the lace.
- Sharpen skates before use (new skates do not come sharpened) and continue to sharpen every 15-20 hours.
- Sporting goods stores and arena pro shops are fine for sharpening hockey skates, but should not be used for figure skates.
- Figure Skates must be sharpened by a professional or they will be damaged.
- Use hard guards to protect sharpening when walking (off the ice).
- **Wipe off snow after skating and dry with a soft towel.**
- **Never store skates with guards on as it creates rust.**

**Not Recommended:** Poor ankle support, poor fit= less control



**Recommended:** Good support and fit= faster progress and good ankle support



### Hard Guards



### Soft Blade Covers





## Clothing:

- Should be warm, but not restrictive.
- Dress in layers.
- Ensure skates are secure, with nothing hanging down or touching the ice.
- Avoid wearing long scarves or pants that are too long or that flare at the bottoms
- Mittens or gloves are mandatory- not just for warmth, but protection from the ice & sharp skates!

**Note: Parents/guardians are asked to remain in the arena in case of skater injury/illness, or to take their skater to use the washroom.**

**Coaches and Program Assistants are not able to take your skater to the washroom or off the ice.**

## FAQ's

### **What happens if I need to leave the arena while the session is in progress?**

All skaters must have a designated parent/guardian/adult that is in attendance throughout the session for emergencies, injury, washroom breaks, etc. Guardians must stay in the arena for all skaters under the age of 12 years old. You can ask another parent/guardian present to mind your skater in your absence- be sure to advise your skater who this. Coaches and Program Assistants are not able to take your skater off the ice or to the washroom.

### **What happens if I think my skater is in the wrong group?**

What if I have a question during the session? If you have any questions, please direct them to Cheryl, our Head coach and Program coordinator at [info@aylmersskatingcentre.ca](mailto:info@aylmersskatingcentre.ca). We will assess your skater and provide an explanation as to their group placement or move the skater as needed. Skaters are grouped by ability.

### **Can I film or take pictures of my skaters on the ice?**

Parents are not allowed to record another child that is not their own unless they have consent from the child's parent. Additionally, parents will not use technology or social media to disrespect or exploit others. While we understand the desire to capture your child's progress, we cannot monitor who is being filmed, by whom, or which children are included in the video or picture.

## Next Steps

Is your child interested in figure skating or power skating?

After level 3 Canskate is achieved - we offer skaters to go to figure skating or our pre power group.

### Figure Skating -

#### **IntermediateStar Sessions ( see our website for details)**

Canskate level 4, 5 &, Star 1& 2 (with lessons)

This program is an introduction to Figure Skating. All skaters must have passed CanSkate Stage 3. These sessions run with group instruction from a professional coach with help from Program Assistants. Canskate levels 4,5 & 6 will be taught with the use of circuits. StarSkaters will be working on Stroking, Skating Skills, Dance, Artistic, Synchro, and Freeskate. Skaters at this level may obtain a Professional Coach for private instruction (refer to Private lesson information and our Professional Coaching Staff information & contact page). Next Steps after Intermediate: StarSkate - see website for details.

## Power Skating

### **PrePower Program**

This session is designed for those children who can already skate forwards, backwards and stop. In these classes the skaters develop better balance, power, agility, speed and endurance, using edges, crossovers, lateral moves and fast forward/backward starts. No Hockey Sticks. Participants must be working on CanSkate level 3, must wear a CSA Certified hockey Helmet.

### **Advanced PowerSkate**

#### *Spring Only Program*

The PowerSkate program is designed to develop 15 essential skills across three core areas: Balance, Control, and Agility. Since skating is a key foundation for hockey and ringette, this program offers focused skill development outside of games and practices. It allows flexible progression and intensity to match each skater's level. Participants are assessed on a development scale indicating early, moderate, or advanced skills. The program's primary goal is to teach and refine proper skating technique. Note: PowerSkate is not a learn-to-skate program.

All skaters must have completed Stage 4 of the CanSkate program or equivalent. Required equipment includes hockey skates, gloves, a stick, and a CSA-certified helmet. Full equipment is mandatory. Coaches may conduct assessments to confirm eligibility.

### **Contact Information:**

**Coach Cheryl:** [info@aylmerskatingcentre.ca](mailto:info@aylmerskatingcentre.ca)

**Website:** [aylmerskatingcentre.ca](http://aylmerskatingcentre.ca)

**Facebook:** Aylmer Skating Centre



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