



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

More than 11 million people in the US went ice skating at least once in 2023.



Try ice skating this winter

This sport is a great way to stay active in cold weather.

Ice skating has been a popular activity in the US for decades, and you don't need much more than a pair of skates to participate. Whether you're brand-new to ice skating or have skated a handful of times, you can follow a few steps to getting more comfortable on the ice and having fun. Here are some suggestions.

Choose your skates

The two main types of ice skates are figure skates and hockey skates. They have slightly different blades at the bottom, and beginners can use either one to skate around a rink. Most skating rinks rent skates for a small fee, or you could try borrowing a pair from a friend or relative. If you think you may be skating regularly, you could talk to an adult about whether it's worth buying a pair, either new or secondhand.

Follow guidelines

Experts suggest wearing a helmet when you go ice skating. Many people wear a ski or snowboarding helmet or a bike helmet. Elbow and knee pads can also provide protection if you fall. Even if the rink is indoors, gloves will keep your hands warm. (For more tips on what to wear, see the box at right.) Follow all

the rules of the rink to protect yourself and others from accidents. Never skate on a frozen pond unless it has been cleared for safety and adults are present.

Get your balance

Once you're on the ice, start by getting comfortable. Most rinks have a railing you can hold onto when you step onto the ice. While holding the railing, push one foot forward about six inches, stand on two feet, and then push your other foot forward. Next, try going from one foot to the other without stopping in between as you move along the ice. Once you feel ready, step away from the railing. Keeping your knees slightly bent to help with your balance, push one foot forward and then another.



Lace up for fun!

Start gliding

Next, practice gliding on skates. Gliding is when you move forward on the ice without moving your feet. Push off on one foot and then the other to gain some speed. Then keep both feet on the ice and see if you have enough momentum to glide. To stop, point your toes inward and slightly angle the blades of your skates down into the ice. If you fall while practicing, don't worry! Push yourself up to standing, and try again.

Ways to stay warm



Protect yourself from the cold while skating with these tips.

Dress in layers Start with a base layer, such as leggings and a long-sleeve shirt. Then add a sweatshirt. Finally, put on snow pants and a winter coat.

Add accessories Add a hat, gloves, and long socks. Tuck leggings into your socks, and put gloves on before your coat.

Take breaks When your fingers or toes get cold, your nose starts running, and your cheeks feel red, head indoors for a break. Take off any wet and cold clothing so your skin can get dry. You can also drink a warm beverage, such as hot chocolate!