

Levels

As your child becomes a more skilled skater, they will most likely want to start competing in the sport. Your coach may use terms such as “moves in the field” or “pre-preliminary” and you have no idea what they are talking about. These terms refer to the test structure of U.S. Figure Skating, and it may seem confusing, but will soon be an integral part of your figure skating vocabulary. These tests are a part of the national standard that skaters are measured against in figure skating. They are more formal than the Basic Skills testing (Learn to Skate) and are usually performed in front of a judge rather than just in front of the skater’s instructor.

U.S. Figure Skating tests are offered in the following tracks:

1. Moves in the Field
2. Free Skate
3. Pattern Dance or Solo Pattern Dance
4. Free Dance or Solo Free Dance
5. Pairs

A skater’s competition level in each of these disciplines is determined by the highest test level they have passed. Skating sessions at rinks, camps, and clinics are also often divided by test level. A skater will typically start with a Moves in the Field track as it is often a prerequisite for tests in other disciplines. For example, in order to take a test in free skating, the skater must pass the equivalent test for Moves in the Field.

Moves in the Field tests and Free Skate progress in the following levels:

1. Pre-preliminary
2. Preliminary
3. Pre-Juvenile
4. Juvenile
5. Intermediate
6. Novice
7. Junior
8. Senior

Each level builds off of the one before it. There is no correct amount of time that it should take to progress through these skills. Every skater is different and will progress in their own time. Moves in the Field tests are some of the most important to master in order to be a successful figure skater. They focus on posture, accuracy, strength, power, execution, and more. Free skate is very similar in the fact that each time you progress, more challenging and intricate skills are layered on. In free skate, you are also judged on presentation, and that while there are many skills that are common in each level, it is expected that the skater will perform them at a higher quality and skill than the previous level.