

# NEW CANAAN WINTER CLUB GROUP SKATING EQUIPMENT, ATTIRE, SKATE SHARPENING



The Winter Club is an outdoor rink. It is essential that your child dress in warm comfortable layers. (Gloves/mittens are almost always a must.) It is club policy that *all children under age 8 must wear a helmet*. If your child is not properly dressed, he/she may not be allowed to skate.

Helmets: **All children in Learn to Skate Classes MUST wear helmets in class.** Children in Hockey Skating Skills classes should have a certified helmet with a cage.

Gear: Skaters participating in Power Skating Classes may wear full gear, or at the least should have: shin pads, elbow pads, certified hockey helmet, gloves, and stick.

Skate Care: Quality skates that are properly fitted with blades that are properly set are absolutely essential to your child's success whether figure or hockey skating. It is always a good idea to carry an extra towel and always wipe your blades after each use. Why? Blades get dull and will eventually rust, especially when you don't wipe them. Soakers or soft blade covers should be used in between use. Skate blades should **never** be stored with wet or damp *hard guards*.

Sharpening: *Figure skates* should be sharpened **every 20 skating hours**  
*Hockey skates* should be sharpened after **every 5 (five) skating hours**.

As long as care is taken to avoid damage from stepping on metal, concrete or any other hard or abrasive material. Pond ice may contain dirt and stones. One accidental step on concrete will probably ruin the last sharpening. Hard guards and soakers can be used to protect the blades while walking to and from the ice and when the skates are carried in a bag.

Skates need sharpening when they start to slide sideways too easily. An experienced skater can often tell when the skates are getting dull but beginners can't, so look for feet skidding sideways when pushing or doing crossovers.

Although skating on the pond is good fun, this can un-sharpen skates very quickly and is not recommended right before a competition or hockey game. Before a special event, allow at least one week of skating on newly sharpened figure skating blades

## Can I tell if my skates have been sharpened correctly by looking at the blades?

You can compare the radius of the hollow with the edge of a penny. If the penny fits exactly, the radius is  $3/8$ ". If it can roll back and forth a bit, the radius is greater than  $3/8$ ". If it touches at both sides but doesn't reach the bottom, it is less than  $3/8$ " and a beginner will have a lot of trouble stopping. You can also check the levelness by balancing a pen or pencil across the blade. If the pen slopes toward either side, the edges are not level. Two other easy things to check are to make sure the bottom of the blade curves smoothly from front to back with no sub-curves and that the bottom toe pick hasn't been ground off.

**Figure Skates:** Our professional figure skating staff recommends that you purchase your skates and have them sharpened through the following skate experts:

### George Knackle:

George works out of his home in Norwalk (near Stew Leonard's) and he knows all the tricks for fitting and sharpening skates. Skates can be dropped off at his house for sharpening. George also sells and fits skates. Call for an appointment at 203-857-4670, or cell phone at 203-803-3874.

### Skater's Landing:

Chris Bartlett and Mark Magliola manage Skater's Landing, 242 Mill Street, in Greenwich. The phone number there is 203-542-0555.

**Hockey Skates:** Many area rinks have skate shops inside. Blue Line inside the Darien Ice Rink, or Stamford has Red Line. Sono Ice House also offers sharpening. The most common approach is to ask around.

### **Used skates/equipment:**

If you have a pair of gently-used skates that you would like to sell, or if you are looking for some, check out the "Exchange" on the NCWC website. You can post sales to this site, as well as make contact with others who want to sell their equipment. The staff just recommends that you make sure any used skates are fitted properly and in good shape before you buy them.