

Teaching a Non-Skater to Teach Beginning Skating

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Nancy Fleming is an operator in California and has been an RSA member for over 20 years. She competed as an artistic skater for over 10 years, placing at both regional and Gold Skate Championships. She married her husband, David in 1979. She began her teaching career in 1980, and only recently retired after 25 years. Nancy has always been a success at organizing and running class programs and teaching young energetic individuals the art of teaching classes.

CLASS GOALS

The purpose of class is to promote session skating at your center. Let the skaters know of upcoming events at the center and theme your class to promote it. Add games and styles of skating to keep the class current with the activities at your center. The skaters will attend more sessions if they skate better. Class should be a rewarding and fun experience for both the teacher and skater.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU START

- Nametags help the teacher recognize returning skaters. The skaters also get to know each other faster. This creates skating friendships that stay for session.
- When welcoming the skaters each week say the name of the center. Ex: I want to welcome everyone to Skateland and our skill class.
- Teach every class as though *every skater is new*.
- *Explain and demonstrate every technique as though every skater is new.*
- Acknowledge every skater every class. ***Touch the shoulder*** of the skater while encouraging or critiquing. This validates their existence and effort.
- Be in charge of the class. Expect respectful behavior from you class. Fun with no discipline creates unruly kids. Not fun for the teacher or rink operator!

SUPPORT TECHNIQUES FOR

- THE “FEET FLYING” CHILD

An adult should assist a child by walking along side them having the child hold onto the adult index finger. The adult should keep their hand and arm relaxed so the child will feel comfortable and achieve balance on their own.

This technique works well because the adult can clutch their fingers over the child’s hand if they begin to fall and keeping them from getting hurt.

- THE “STIFF QUIVERING” ADULT

The teacher assists an adult by skating along side them. Hold the adult under their upper arm with one hand (just above the elbow) and with your other hand grasp the hand of the supported arm. The skater will be able to maintain balance while the teacher has control.



LESSON ONE, WEEK ONE

Line up the “feet flyers” and “Quivering adults” at the most convenient wall or railing for them.

CLASS BEGINS

Introduce yourself and welcome the class to the skating center (use the name of the center). Let them know about special public sessions and if you will theme your class the following week.

- Instruct the skaters let go of the wall or railing and stand still on both feet with knees slightly bent. Make sure they stand up straight with their arms out to the sides or in front of them for balance.
- Instruct the skaters to keep their eyes on the teacher, not on the floor. The body will go where the eyes are looking.

GETTING UP AFTER FALLING

Once they are all balanced, have them “squish” all the way down until their fanny touches the back of their skates, a.k.a. the “cannonball”. Have them stand back up and repeat the squish to “cannonball”, then fall or sit to the floor. Now you can show them two different ways to get up when they fall. Make sure to demonstrate each one first.

Have the skaters sit with their legs in front of them:

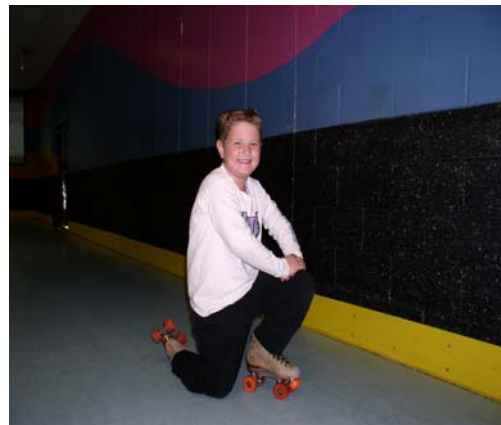
1. Instruct them to get onto their hands and knees. While keeping their hands on the floor, place one skate under them then the other, putting them in the “cannonball” position. Once balanced have them stand up. Every one cheers. Repeat.
2. Instruct them to get onto their hands and knees. Place one skate under them, sit up straight and place their hands on top of their leg. Next, push on the leg, quickly placing the other skate under them as they continue to stand up. Every one cheers. Repeat.
- 3.

Have the skaters choose their technique and see if they can get up before the teacher counts to 10, or if they can get up faster than the teacher.

FALLING SAFETY

Crouch position: (To regain balance) Skates underneath the body, knees bent, body slightly bent forward and arms in front.

Falling: Bend knees as much as possible and slide onto your side.



LESSON ONE CONTINUED

FORWARD MARCHING (FLAT-FOOTED STEPS)

The teacher demonstrates that skating is not like walking (heel to toe push) because the skate will roll out from under you. Skating is also not like skateboarding (pushing with one foot). Skating is rolling/gliding from one foot to the other. For the beginner “feet flyers”, “stiff quivering adults” and “rollers”, marching is the best technique to begin with.

- Start the class with marching in place (flat-footed steps). Have them lift up one foot for a count of two, set it back in place, then lift up the other foot for a count of two, set it back in place and repeat. Emphasize standing up straight while marching in place with the arms in front or out to the sides for balance.
- To begin moving, start with the skates in a “V” position with the heels together and toes out.
- Take small marching steps forward across the skating floor. The skates will straighten as they go. However, no “V” no Go

FORWARD ROLL & CANNONBALL

The best part of skating is the rolling. You just keep moving while doing nothing! The teacher demonstrates by skating a few steps, puts his/her skates close together then lets the skates do their job rolling.

- Have the class skate across the floor as fast as they can, then rolling. Repeat skating then rolling, skating then rolling.
- Now, have the skaters roll while in the cannonball position.

Play the limbo game to practice the cannonball.

FORWARD SKATING (ROLLING & GLIDING)

Teaching the marching steps to roll and glide:

- The skaters begin with the forward roll.
- Next, while staying balanced on the left skate, the skater pushes the right skate down and out to the side until it rolls off the floor and then brings it back to the forward roll.
- Then, while balancing on the right skate, the skater pushes the left skate down and out to the side until it comes off the floor and then brings it back to the forward roll.

Repeat the process: left push, glide, back together...right push, glide, and back together.



LESSON ONE CONTINUED

STOPPING WITH THE RUBBER STOPPER (QUAD AND IN-LINE)

The teacher points out where the stoppers are located on the quads (front of the skate), on the in-lines (back of the skate), and has the skaters place ONE rubber stopper on the floor. The teacher then demonstrates the rubber stopper dragging just behind the rolling skate (quad) and pushing the heel stop in front of the rolling skate (in-line). If the teacher is wearing quad skates he/she will have to simulate the in-line stop, or vice versa.

- Quad skaters get up speed and roll on two feet for balance. Lifting up the heel of one skate, placing the toe stop on the floor behind them, dragging it until they stop. Emphasize using ONE stop. Otherwise, a skater will use both stops at the same time and land on their face.
- In-line skaters get up speed and roll on two feet for balance. Lifting up the toe of one skate pushing the heel stop in front of them until stopped.

The red, yellow, green light game is fun for practice! The teacher calls out:

- Green light: The class begins to skate.
- Yellow light: Roll on two feet to get their balance.
- Red light: Stop with rubber stopper.

SPIN (PIVOTING WHILE STAYING IN ONE SPOT)

Have the skaters line up with plenty of space between them. The teacher demonstrates. Do the “helicopter hover”:

- Skaters lift their arms shoulder height for balance and helicopter blades. Engine noise is optional.
- Rotate to the left while staying in the same spot until one or more revolutions are completed.
- Try this now clockwise.

Now your skaters will have more fun participating in the Hokey Pokey.

TWO-FOOT HOP (BOUNCE)

It is very important to explain to keep their muscles strong. Noodle bodies fall down.

- The skaters stand on two feet with their arms out for balance.
- Bend the knees.
- Push off the floor to hop up.
- Land in the “safety crouch” position.
- Now, try this while rolling.

AH HA, now they can skate to “ROLLBOUNCE” and Hokey Pokey!



LESSON TWO, WEEK TWO

Line the class up along the wall and introduce yourself.

Greet the returning skaters and welcome the new additions to the skating center (say the name of the center). Continue to explain and demonstrate as though *every skater is new* and touching every shoulder. Encourage the returning skaters to skate and roll faster.

REVIEW (THE FIRST LESSON)

- Standing away from the wall with arms up to the sides for balance.
- Squish to cannonball.
- Sit or fall onto the floor learning how to get up.
- Getting up in cannonball position then, hands on top of leg position.
- Skating / marching forward.
- Forward roll.
- Forward gliding.
- Safety crouch position and falling slide.
- Stopping with the rubber stopper.

Play games that correlate with your lessons and skating sessions.

SLALOM (CURVES)

Set up soft pylons about four feet apart in a straight line.

The teacher demonstrates. The rolling curve can be accomplished by turning your head, shoulders and hips. Be sure to bend your knees.

Pretend the class is snow skiing.

- Have the class line up single file.
- Have one skater at a time roll ski curves around the pylons, then return to the end of the line. Repeat.

BALANCE (ONE SKATE)

The teacher demonstrates balancing on one skate for the length of the floor.

The arms are out to the sides about shoulder height for balance.

Imitate a tight rope- walker.

- Everyone skates forward lifting up the left skate to balance on the right.
- Repeat with lifting the right skate to balance on the left.

Try this on a straight line. If needed use colored chalk.



LESSON THREE, WEEK THREE

Begin the class as you have the past weeks by introducing yourself and welcoming those returning and new additions. The new skaters may feel intimidated by the returning skaters, so teach as though this is the first time for everyone by explaining each technique completely with demonstrations.

REVIEW (THE FIRST AND SECOND LESSON)

- Balance away from the wall.
- Squish to cannonball, and how to get up.
- Marching/glide skating.
- Forward roll.
- Falling safety.
- Stopping with rubber stopper.
- Balancing on one skate.
- Slalom (curves).
- Two foot spin.
- Roll hop.

Change the games you play this week. Make an obstacle course with the limbo stick the pylons for slalom and play red, yellow, green light as they skate through the course.

T-STOP (A MORE ADVANCED WAY TO STOP)

Class lines up with both skates together. Have the skaters place or roll the right skate at a 90-degree angle behind the left skate forming a capital “T”.

- Class practices standing still, feet together, right “T” position.
- Class skates forward, rolls on two feet then, T-stops dragging the right skate behind the left while balancing on the left.

CROSSOVER (FOR THE CORNERS)

Use a straight line on the floor to demonstrate. Color chalk works well and comes off easily. Demonstrate this by doing the steps down the line.

Basic technique:

- Start with both skates together and arms out for balance.
- Lift the right skate up over the left and set it on the floor.
- Pick up the left foot and return it to the start position (next to the right). Repeat, right over left and left return to start continuing down the line.

Rolling crossover:

- Skate and crossover (counterclockwise) in a big circle.
- Glide down the straightaway and crossover on corners.

The skaters can do the rolling crossover while skating session.



LESSON FOUR, WEEK FOUR

This class is a big review with lots of fun. Remember, to teach as though every skater is new and touch their shoulder when critiquing them.

REVIEW (LESSON ONE, TWO, THREE)

- Standing away from the wall, arms out for balance.
- Squishing to cannonball and getting up.
- Falling safety: the crouch and slide fall.
- Marching, rolling and gliding.
- Stopping with rubber stopper and T-stop.
- Cannonball and slalom.
- Crossovers.
- Spin.
- Roll and Two foot hop.

Blow up one balloon for each skater. Have them hit or kick it across the floor. The skaters will use almost every element taught in trying to keep up with the balloon.

BACKWARD

Line up the class, facing the wall or railing, with skates slightly apart and straight.

Push lightly against the wall to roll backwards then stop. Quad skates: Place one toe stop on the floor to stop. In-lines: Place the right skate just past the left (not directly behind) in T-stop position. Skate back to the wall and repeat.

- Angle the skates in a backward “V”(toes together and the heels apart). Pick up one foot then the other keeping the toes together. Too much of a “V” creates a lot of speed or the splits. Not enough “V” too slow. No “V” no Go.
- For the quicker ones, show them backward scissors. Push the skates to roll out (to about shoulder width), and then pull them in to roll back together. Repeat: out and back, out and back, making a continuous hourglass shape across the floor.

SHOOT THE DUCK

The class begins this skating move in a cannonball position.

- Cannonball position rolling
- Put one leg straight out in front.
- Keep the body leaning against the bent leg.
- Use the leg muscles or the hands to hold up the leg.

Have a shoot the duck contest to see who can hold the position the longest.

