



Helmet Use Policy

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The following policy applies to skaters, parents/guardians/caregivers and coaches of the Arctic Edge Skating Club. AESC follows the Skate Canada Helmet Use Policy, as required by Skate Canada.

Background:

On July 1, 2011 Skate Canada implemented a Helmet Use policy. This policy was implemented as a proactive safety measure to help protect members who are learning how to skate. If you would like more information on helmet use and injury prevention we recommend you visit "Think First".

Policy:

All Skate Canada member clubs and skating schools who offer a CanSkate program must ensure all CanSkate and Adult CanSkate participants up to and including CanSkate Stage 5 must wear a CSA approved hockey helmet while on the ice. Clubs and skating schools must ensure this policy is enforced during all skating activities including competitions, ice show days or any other special on ice activities throughout the season for this level of skater.

Any skater arriving without a CSA approved hockey helmet will be refused entry onto the ice surface. Any skater who enters the ice surface without a CSA approved hockey helmet will be asked to leave the ice surface. A coach cannot be reprimanded for enforcing Skate Canada Rules and Policies within a club.

This policy is a minimum standard. A skater beyond a CanSkate Stage 5 level who chooses to wear a CSA approved hockey helmet during a competition or test day will not be subjected to any deductions in relation to the use of a CSA approved hockey helmet.

Additional Information:

How should the CSA approved hockey helmet fit?

- A hockey helmet should fit snug to prevent any shifting and maximize protection. Make sure the chinstrap can be adjusted so it gently makes contact under the chin when fastened.
- For an adjustable helmet, open it to the largest setting and gradually begin to downsize the helmet until a comfortably snug fit is achieved. The helmet should rest on the head so that the rim is one finger width above the eyebrow and making contact with the top of your head.

- Although most helmets are lined with protective foam, some helmets will feel better than others. Try on different brands of helmets for fit and comfort.
- All CSA certified helmets have a sticker indicating their certification and expiry date.

Why only CSA approved hockey helmets?

- Hockey helmets are designed to help protect against head injuries occurring on ice, whether from a fall or collision. A bicycle helmet, for example, is designed to protect against head injuries should a fall occur while riding a bicycle. It is important to ensure that when a skater is on the ice, they are protected with equipment designed for their sport or activity.

How can I identify a hockey helmet that is CSA approved? Where will the logo appear on the hockey helmet?

- The CSA approved logo will be found on the back of the hockey helmet affixed to the outer shell of the helmet. For more information about CSA standards visit www.csa-international.org.

Are used hockey helmets acceptable?

- Hockey helmets and face protectors sold in Canada must meet safety standards set by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).
- The CSA sticker must be present with a date of manufacture label.
- Hockey helmets normally last for about three to five years.
- Hockey helmets must not be used if previously subjected to a major impact or if older than five years or if showing visible signs of damage or if parts are missing.

Are face masks required as well?

- Face masks are not mandatory; however young skaters may benefit from the added protection.

Can a parent sign a waiver absolving the club from any liability and allow their child to participate without a helmet?

- The requirement to wear a helmet is a Skate Canada Policy and all clubs and members must abide by our policies.
- In order to participate in the CanSkate program all skaters who have not achieved Stage 5 in the CanSkate program or who lack good balance and control must wear a CSA approved hockey helmet while on the ice.

Why has up to and including Stage 5 been selected as the benchmark for helmet use?

- Skaters who lack good control/balance when skating forward, backward and have difficulty stopping, as well as maneuvering around obstacles on the ice are at a higher risk of being unable to control a fall, regardless of their age.
- The CanSkate program has been developed to introduce basic skating skills to beginners in a safe and sequential manner. The learning progressions leading to and included in Stage 5 allow skaters to gain the necessary skills (balance, agility, and control) required to safely participate on the ice.
- While it may be likely that many Stage 5 skaters can skate reasonably well, ice surfaces can be very unpredictable and there is always a risk of falling, no matter what stage a skater is at.
- CanSkaters participate in a group environment with other skaters on the ice of different levels who may fall and cause other skaters to fall.

What other tips could you provide regarding prevention of falls and head injury?

There are several ways to avoid head injury, in addition to wearing a helmet. The following are some basic guidelines:

- Use quality equipment - skates with good support, proper fit, laced correctly and sharpened regularly help the skater maintain control on the ice - therefore less chance of falling
- Dress appropriately - no scarves, overly bulky snowsuits, or hair in the face as this may restrict movement, vision
- Warm up and cool down appropriately - to avoid muscle strain and stress on the joints