

Synchronized Skating Bridge Program

Skating schools can use either the Basic Skills synchronized skating badges 1-4 curriculum or the beginner competitive program for the bridge program, based on their individual needs.

The Synchro 1-4 badges are for skill development, and contain the fundamentals of each of the five basic synchronized skating elements: the circle, line, block, wheel and intersection. They start very simple and get progressively more difficult as skaters acquire the skills.

Please see your U.S. Figure Skating Basic Skills Instructor's Manual for tips and detailed instructions on how to teach each element.

The beginner competitive program builds from the Synchro 1-4. It is not necessary to complete Synchro 1-4 prior to starting the beginner competitive program. Rather, the beginner competition requirements are actually a "summary" of what skaters learn in the badge program.

Depending upon the amount of time, ice, and desire of your skaters, you can successfully run a bridge program for synchronized skating by just teaching the skills in Synchro 1-4, or by "pasting together" those elements into a program which follows the rules for beginner 1, 2 or 3 (depending upon age).

For a group of skaters that want to do an exhibition or even a competition, it is suggested that you put together a program that fits the requirements of Beginner 1, 2 or 3.

This manual contains the following information:

- Skill progression chart from the synchro badges, through beginner, all the way to juvenile. This will give the instructor an understanding for what should be expected at the basic skills level, and how it will prepare the skaters for the future.
- An overview of how skaters would move through the U.S. Figure Skating pipeline from beginner through intermediate.
- A summary of the competition rules for Beginner 1, 2 and 3
- A FAQ sheet about the beginner competition program

Please be sure to go back to your U.S. Figure Skating Basic Skills instructor manual for the detailed Synchro 1-4 curriculum.

SYNCHRONIZED SKATING SKILL PROGRESSION / Basic Skills - Juvenile

	Synchro 1-4	Beginner 1	Beginner 2	Beginner 3
Program length, Age, number	Skill Development Only No age requirements	1 ½ - 2 minutes ➤ Majority of under 9 ➤ 8 – 16 skaters	1 ½ - 2 minutes +/- 10 sec. ➤ Majority 9-11 ➤ 8 – 16 skaters	2 – 2 ½ minutes +/- 10 sec. ➤ Majority at least 12 ➤ 8 – 16 skaters
Program requirements	<p><u>Circle</u>: Begins with forward pumps in Synchro 1, advancing to include a very basic 'step sequence' in Synchro 4</p> <p><u>Line</u>: Begins with a forward line in Synchro 1, advancing to a transition from forward to backward by Synchro 4.</p> <p><u>Block</u>: Begins with 10 steps forward in Synchro 1 to changing axis by Synchro 4.</p> <p><u>Wheel</u>: Begins with a 4 spoke or 2 spoke with pumps, advancing through all basic wheels.</p> <p><u>Intersection</u>: Begins in Synchro 2 with two lines, two feet, advances to two lines, one foot glide at point of intersection.</p>	<p><u>Circle</u>: Include a two foot turn* and a forward inside or outside edge*</p> <p><u>Line</u>: Any shape, cover ice, all forward skating.</p> <p><u>Block</u>: Cover ice, only 1 configuration allowed.</p> <p><u>Wheel</u>: 4-spoke or "S" with backward pumps.</p> <p><u>Intersection</u>: Two lines facing each other, 2-foot glide at point of intersection.</p> <p><i>* See element C in Basic 3</i> <i>* See elements A & B in Basic 4</i></p>	<p><u>Circle</u>: Include combination move from Basic 8*</p> <p><u>Line</u>: Any shape, cover all ice, may include backward & forward skating.</p> <p><u>Block</u>: Cover ice, must have either 1 or 2 configurations.</p> <p><u>Wheel</u>: Wheel of choice with backward pumps.</p> <p><u>Intersection</u>: Two lines facing each other, 2-foot or 1-foot glide at point of intersection.</p> <p><i>*Forward inside Mohawk, step down, cross behind, back cross-over, step forward to an inside edge. (Not necessary to repeat, do only in one direction.)</i></p>	<p><u>Circle</u>: Include combination move from Basic 8*</p> <p><u>Line</u>: Any shape, cover all ice, must include forward & backward skating.</p> <p><u>Block</u>: Cover ice, must include 2 or 3 configurations.</p> <p><u>Wheel</u>: Wheel of choice.</p> <p><u>Intersection</u>: Two lines facing each other, 1-foot glide or forward lunge point of intersection.</p> <p><i>*Forward inside Mohawk, step down, cross behind, 1 back cross-over, step forward to an inside edge. (Not necessary to repeat, do only in one direction.)</i></p>
Expected skater skill	Skaters should feel comfortable executing skills from Basic 3 – Basic 8, depending on level.	Skaters should be approximately Basic 4 – Basic 8. No skaters higher than preliminary, majority "no test"	Skaters should be approximately Basic 5 – Free Skate 2. No skaters higher than preliminary, majority "no test".	Skaters should be approximately Basic 5 – Free Skate 2. No skaters higher than preliminary, majority "no test"
Notes	The instructor manual gives in-depth information on keys to teaching. Main points are learning holds, guiding, shadowing, making the shapes, and <u>introducing the concepts</u> of two important <u>features</u> : point of intersection (i.e., one-foot glide) and a "step sequence" incorporating skills the skater is working on individually (Combination element in Basic 8)	<p>This level reviews and repeats important concepts of Synchro 1-2, and puts everything together in a program. In addition to the focus of Synchro 1 & 2, skaters should learn to skate to music and link of the elements together with transitions.</p> <p>Important concepts include mastering the fwd edge gliding in a circle (the entry edge for a Mohawk or 3-turn), the point-of-intersection, and incorporating skills from the Basic levels.</p>	<p>This level reviews and repeats important concepts of Synchro 2, 3 & 4. In addition skaters should learn to skate to music and link of the elements together with transitions.</p> <p>Important concepts include mastering the idea of a "step sequence" to music (i.e. the combination move) and building upon skills learned earlier.</p> <p>When opportunity is there, incorporate other skills from the Basic levels into the synchro elements.</p>	<p>This level reviews and repeats important concepts of Synchro 2, 3 & 4. In addition skaters should learn to skate to music and link of the elements together with transitions.</p> <p>Important concepts include mastering the idea of a "step sequence" to music (i.e. the combination move) and building upon skills learned earlier.</p> <p>When opportunity is there, incorporate other skills from the Basic levels into the synchro elements.</p>

	Preliminary	Pre-Juvenile	Open Juvenile	Juvenile
Program length, Age, number	2 minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Under 12, majority under 10 ➤ 8 – 16 skaters 	2 minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Majority under 12 ➤ 8 – 12 skaters 	2 ½ minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Majority under 19 ➤ 8 – 12 skaters 	3 minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Under 13 ➤ 8 –20 skaters
Program requirements	Circle Line Block Wheel Intersection: Forward only	Circle Line Block Wheel Intersection: Forward only	Circle Line Block Wheel Intersection	Circle Line Block Wheel 2 Intersections
Expected skater skill	There are no skill requirements or restrictions on this level. However, it is recommended that skaters are at the Basic Skills free skate levels – the preliminary MITF test.	There are no skill requirements or restrictions on this level. However, it is recommended that skaters are at the Basic Skills free skate levels – the pre-juvenile MITF test.	Skaters at the open juvenile level must have passed the pre-preliminary MITF test to go to sectionals. However, skaters should be working on skills through the juvenile test.	Skaters must have passed at least the preliminary MITF test. However, skaters should be comfortable skating elements through the juvenile test.
Notes	<p>This level is the next step up from beginner 1 or 2 (depending on age). A 2-minute program in either of those levels will adequately meet the requirements for preliminary.</p> <p>Continue to focus on the basic skills and important concepts from beginner, but layer each element with slightly more difficulty. For example, changing hold, changing rotational direction in the circle.</p> <p>Continue to introduce the concept of a step sequence in the line, circle and block elements. Focus on executing a Mohawk and/or 3-turn with a clear entry and exit edge. Incorporate moves and turns from the Basic 3 – 8 levels.</p> <p>In addition to guiding, shadowing and unison concepts from Synchro 1-4, encourage strong basic skating skills: knee-bend, posture, flow, power and extension.</p>	<p>This level also builds on the beginner levels. Most likely, a Beginner 2 team will progress to pre-juvenile. A 2-minute beginner 2 program will adequately meet the requirements for pre-juvenile.</p> <p>Continue to focus on the basic skills and important concepts from beginner, but layer each element with slightly more difficulty. For example, changing hold, changing rotational direction in the circle.</p> <p>Continue to introduce the concept of a step sequence in the line, circle and block elements. Focus on executing a Mohawk and/or 3-turn with a clear entry and exit edge. Incorporate moves and turns from the Basic 3 – 8 levels.</p> <p>In addition to guiding, shadowing and unison concepts from Synchro 1-4, encourage strong basic skating skills: knee-bend, posture, flow, power and extension.</p>	<p>This level builds on the beginner 3. Whereas the skills are almost the same as preliminary and pre-juvenile, the skaters are older, stronger and must be at least pre-preliminary MITF level. A beginner 3 program that is 2 ½ minutes adequately meets the requirements for open juvenile.</p> <p>Continue to develop the basic concepts from beginner, but introduce features such as changes of hold, changing rotational direction in the wheel and circle and increasing the difficulty of the intersection (perform a backward intersection or a more challenging point of intersection).</p> <p>Focus on the step sequence feature and executing multiple 3-turns and Mohawks on correct entry and exit edges.</p> <p>Continue to encourage strong basic skating skills.</p>	<p>Juvenile is the first competitive level in synchronized skating that advances to the U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships.</p> <p>Juvenile builds upon the skills learned in preliminary and pre-juvenile. Continue to emphasize strong basic skating skills.</p> <p>The program should focus on the six required elements, but there may be time to add an additional element, such as a movement in isolation.</p> <p>In the line, circle and block, focus on adding a step sequence that has a few well-executed turns (primarily 3-turns, Mohawks and double threes).</p> <p>Introduce traveling in the circle and wheel, backward intersections and more difficult elements at the point of intersection.</p> <p>The goal for this level is to develop skills to help the skater be successful at intermediate or novice.</p>

SAMPLE LEVEL PROGRESSIONS:
Progressing from Beginner to Competitive Synchronized Skating in U.S. Figure Skating

ALL AGES: Use the U.S. Figure Skating Basic Skills program Synchro 1-4 badges to develop skills

UNDER 9:



AGE 9-11:



12 OR OLDER:





BEGINNER SYNCHRONIZED SKATING 2008-09 SEASON

No skaters may have passed higher than preliminary and the majority of the team must be “no test”.

LEVEL	AGE	MUSIC	CIRCLE	LINE	BLOCK	WHEEL	INTERSECTION	RESTRICTIONS
<i>BASIC SKILLS</i> Beginner 1	Majority <u>under</u> 9	1:30 – 2:00 +/- 10 sec. No restrictions	<u>1 circle:</u> Include a 2 foot turn and a forward inside and / or outside edge	Cover ice, all forward skating	Cover ice, only 1 configuration	4-spoke or “S” with backward pumps	2 lines facing each other, forward 2- foot glide at point of intersection	*No additional elements * Holds = Shoulder & hand only. * No changes of rotational direction & traveling within elements. * No steps or moves above Basic 5 * Everything in Rule 4669
<i>BASIC SKILLS</i> Beginner 2	Majority 9-11	1:30 – 2:00 +/- 10 sec. No restrictions	<u>1 circle:</u> Include the combination move (1 direction only) from Basic 8	Cover ice, may include backward & forward skating	Cover ice, must have 1 or 2 configurations.	Wheel of choice with backward pumps	2 lines facing each other, forward 2- foot or 1-foot glide at point of intersection	* No additional elements * Holds = Shoulder & hand only. * No changes of rotational direction & traveling within elements. * No steps or moves above Free Skate 1. * Everything in Rule 4669
<i>BASIC SKILLS</i> Beginner 3	Majority <u>at least</u> 12	2:00 – 2:30 +/- 10 sec. No restrictions	<u>1 circle:</u> Include the combination move (1 direction only) from Basic 8	Cover ice, must include backward & forward skating	Cover ice, must have 2 or 3 configurations.	Wheel of choice	2 lines facing each other, forward 1-foot glide or forward lunge at point of intersection	* Changes of rotational direction & travel within elements. * Everything in Rule 4669

BASIC SKILLS BEGINNER SYNCHRONIZED SKATING 2008-09

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Do all skaters need to be members of U.S. Figure Skating to participate?

A: Skaters may be either regular members or members of the U.S. Figure Skating Basic Skills Program.

Q: What if our rink doesn't have a U.S. Figure Skating Basic Skills program?

A: You may start one by registering your team or program (group of teams) as a Basic Skills synchronized school. It is free to register the program, and you can get a form from U.S. Figure Skating Headquarters. List the head coach as the "Skating Director." Once you do this, you may register each skater into the Basic Skills program for \$7.50 per skater/year. The team(s) will then represent this school at competitions.

Q: Can we change levels or move up during the year?

A: YES! Teams can change levels at any point during the season. In fact, the beginner requirements were specifically designed to allow a team to move up to either preliminary, pre-juvenile or open juvenile during the season and still skate the same program! The beginner level teaches the skaters the foundation of skills they need for higher levels. Teams are encouraged to move up when they are ready.

Q: Do we have to do all three beginner levels?

A: NO! The levels are divided by age – the skill is the very similar. The beginner team should enter the level where their age puts them. While a Beginner 1 team may want to move to Beginner 2 before jumping to the U.S. Figure Skating standard levels, it is not required. Coaches should determine the team's progression based on their ability and goals.

Q: Do teams have to register with U.S. Figure Skating?

A: Yes. You fill out a Synchronized Team Registration form in the fall and get a U.S. Figure Skating number, which you will need for competitions throughout the season. This will cost \$10/year, and you will then be included in all information that goes out to teams during the season.

Q: Why the Beginner program vs. other low-level synchronized programs?

A: The U.S. Figure Skating beginner program is the only program to give coaches specific structure and rules to follow – making the playing field completely fair and making it simple for the coach to choreograph a technically sound program. The requirements were specifically designed to give beginner skaters the skills they need to make a simple, seamless and successful transition into standard U.S. Figure Skating synchronized levels.