

Let's  
Skate!



# LIMB IMPAIRMENTS COACHING RESOURCE



**Let's Skate is an exciting project from British Ice Skating funded by Sport England, which will deliver opportunities for disabled people to get involved in ice skating – whether that's skating on the ice, volunteering, coaching or officiating.**

**We will be supporting rinks across the UK to deliver inclusive ice skating sessions, led by qualified coaches. British Ice Skating will showcase the impact of the Let's Skate project to celebrate our success and inspire prospective new skaters to try ice skating; with the aim of consistently developing new opportunities for everyone to be involved in the sport.**

**Throughout the project we will be working with rinks, coaches, officials, volunteers and skaters to gather feedback to shape future work and help us realise our potential. Overall, we will make ice skating welcoming, safe and accessible for all – with a view to offering pathways to competition, volunteering, coaching or officiating.**

**You can find out more about the project at [iceskating.org.uk/lets-skate](https://iceskating.org.uk/lets-skate)**

Participation statistics tell us that there is still much work to be done to support disabled people in sport. The number of disabled people taking part in sport or physical activity is significantly lower across all age groups than the overall population.

Inspire and motivate disabled people to continue to play sport and take part in physical activity with the help of this advice:

- Involve disabled people in all of your sessions.
- Recognise a disabled athlete as an individual, not an impairment.
- Have a shared vision with your participants in terms of coaching goals and expectations.
- Communicate and work together to achieve their goals.
- Talk to your disabled participants about their impairment to plan effective coaching sessions and adapt practices.
- Know the sport you coach. Have a passion to develop yourself as a coach.

**This resource has been put together by British Ice Skating in collaboration with Limbpower to support coaches in successfully coaching skaters with a visual impairment.**

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If you have any questions or feedback on the Lets Skate project, please contact [letsskate@iceskating.org.uk](mailto:letsskate@iceskating.org.uk)



# 1 GENERAL INFORMATION ON LIMB IMPAIRMENTS

Impairment-specific awareness tips, in association with Limb Power, to give coaches the knowledge and confidence to support people who have had amputations in their sessions.

No two people with amputations are affected in the same way. Some amputees can function as well as any non-disabled person, while others are severely impaired. This depends on a number of factors, such as level of amputation, number of amputations, cause of amputation, other medical conditions, type of prostheses, prosthetic fit, length of residual limb and scar tissue. As an amputee cannot generate a muscular force to cause the prosthetic joint to rotate, other joints (most frequently the hips) will have to work harder to enable the movement. For instance, a lower-limb amputee will not be able to push the leg from the ankle; rather, they will pull the leg from the hip.

Below are some top tips for coaches to help them support participants in their sessions:

- Prosthetic limbs mimic real limbs in a more simplistic way. The coaching techniques you normally use are a good place to start, but you might have to make adaptations.
- If the participant is limited by their prosthesis, work with them on alternative exercises – keep the approach simple.
- Find out what the participant can do, or what may be preventing them from taking part (eg self- confidence, socket fit, pain, technology).
- Consider the individual's physique, mobility and application. Speak to the participant to understand their personal abilities and desires.
- Check the participant's range of movement as this can vary greatly.
- Participants may have a slower response time when initiating movement on command, due to their prosthesis.
- The participant may have limb movement restrictions. Therefore, they need to improve their basic movement skills, through drills.
- Be aware of any balance and coordination problems, and take these into consideration with any relevant drills or game play.
- Discuss pain threshold and tolerance with the participant in order to have a better understanding of specific issues and concerns, such as their pain management routine (eg use of medication).

# 4 INCLUSIVE COACHING PRACTICE

**It is well understood that multiple methods can be used in coaching. The following information should set out strong fundamental practices and principles that coaches should use through varied methods of coaching.**

## FUN AND ENGAGING

Coaches first must understand their passion for the sport. Having a strong drive for the sport enormously influences your energy and ability to motivate skaters. Passion is contagious. If one skater or one assistant coach comes to practice excited and fired up, that emotion and passion easily is transferred to every other member of the team.

Coaching then is a fine balancing act. Sessions must be fun but also educational. They must be inclusive, encouraging the less competent skaters, but without quashing the innate competitive instinct that everyone thrives on.

Disabled people face numerous barriers when trying to access sport - an ice skating session could provide many life-changing physical and mental benefits.

## ENCOURGING AND SUPPORTIVE

Find something positive to say to every skater at every practice. This satisfies the skaters' need for attention, recognition and appreciation. Be specific with your praise — specific praise is used to reinforce the why of practice. Always attempt to find more positives than negatives while constantly praising effort.

When a skater finally masters a skill or concept don't hesitate to momentarily stop practice to recognise the achievement. Praise their effort and remind your skaters why mastery of the skill is so important.

The majority of disabled people will be trying ice skating for the very first time - support and reassure them throughout sessions to make them feel safe, comfortable and included at all times. Use the dispensation model at your discretion to encourage progress and inclusion.





# 5 INCLUSIVE COACHING PRACTICE: TOP TIPS

Ice Skating should be safe, inclusive and fair. Every effort must be made for participants with broadly compatible physical development in conjunction with ability and/or experience should be able to skate and enjoy their skating journey.

The safety of all participants must be the primary consideration in all participation decisions, overriding all other considerations.

You should have been made aware via the venue, of any individual within your group that has any medical conditions or impairments, if you have to adapt any of your activities, you should:

- Make sure you as the coach read & update the lesson plans and risk assessments every month or when any changes occur.
- Introduce yourself in a “clear and confident” manner.
- Ask if anyone has any prior skating ability.
- Identify learning objectives.
- Make skaters feel at ease, explain how the lesson will progress and what is involved.
- Go through sit and stand (if applicable and safe to do so).
- Go through how to get on and off the ice safely and lead your group in a line onto the ice in a controlled manner one by one.
- Start to build a rapport with the skaters, be approachable, to gain their trust and make them feel safe on the ice.
- Be patient and helpful toward the skaters who have a slower ability to learn.
- Always ask a skater/parent if it is ok touch them/hold them prior to assisting them.
- Be prepared to adapt activities for people of different abilities.



# 6 SKATE UK DISPENSATION MODEL

British Ice Skating Association is committed, as a service provider, to promoting Equality within Ice Skating, eliminating unfair discrimination. We believe that Equality is defined by the terms fairness, justice, inclusion and respect for diversity.

It is about making sure that everyone has an equal chance to participate in and contribute to the aspects of ice skating that interest them, and that no one is discriminated against unfairly for any reason, including – but not limited to – sex, gender, race, disability, age, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, social background, ethnic origin, language, marital or civil partnership status or pregnancy.

Sports Equality is also about recognising and acknowledging that inequalities do exist in sport, taking positive and proactive steps to overcome these inequalities, and making sure that any barriers standing in the way of people who are traditionally not involved in ice skating are removed.

**The Dispensation Model, developed in collaboration with Activity Alliance and built into British Ice Skating's learn to skate program Skate UK, is a key part of our commitment to building Sports Equality. It's designed to make ice skating more accessible for people with disabilities.**



Find out more  
about Skate UK:  
[iceskating.org.uk/skateuk](https://iceskating.org.uk/skateuk)

**Examples of the dispensation pathways options for learning Skate UK skills:**

Exercise	Dispensation A (Reduced skill)	Dispensation B (Aided)	Dispensation C (Combined)
1. MOVING FORWARD	Move forward half distance (i.e half width of rink surface instead of full width)	Move forward aided (i.e full width of rink )	Both A & B
2. MOVING FORWARD (10 steps) & TWO-FOOT GLIDE (with dip)	Move forward 5 steps with a half dip (reduced dip movement)	Move forward 10 steps & two foot glide (with dip) aided	Both A & B
3. SIT & STAND INDEPENDENTLY	Stand up only (coach to place skater down on ice)	Sit & stand aided	Both A & B
4. STATIONARY SNOWPLOUGH STOP	Use only one foot instead of two to show an understanding of a sliding technique	Stationary snowplough holding onto barrier, skating aid etc (aided)	Both A & B
5. MOVING SNOWPLOUGH STOP	Use only one foot instead of two and reduced stopping technique and distance (as long as the skater stops)	Moving snowplough aided	Both A & B
6. MOVING FORWARD (10 steps) & TWO-FOOT GLIDE INTO A FORWARD LEMON	Move forward 5 steps with reduced lemon shape	Move forward 10 steps & two foot glide into lemon shape aided	Both A & B

# 7 MEET THE LET'S SKATE TEAM

The Let's Skate team is here to support people on their journey into ice skating – we are dedicated to making the sport more accessible for everyone. Please get in touch if you require further support or have any questions:  
[letsskate@iceskating.org.uk](mailto:letsskate@iceskating.org.uk).



Finally, if you have any feedback on something you have experienced within the project, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will work together to create a better environment for all.



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