

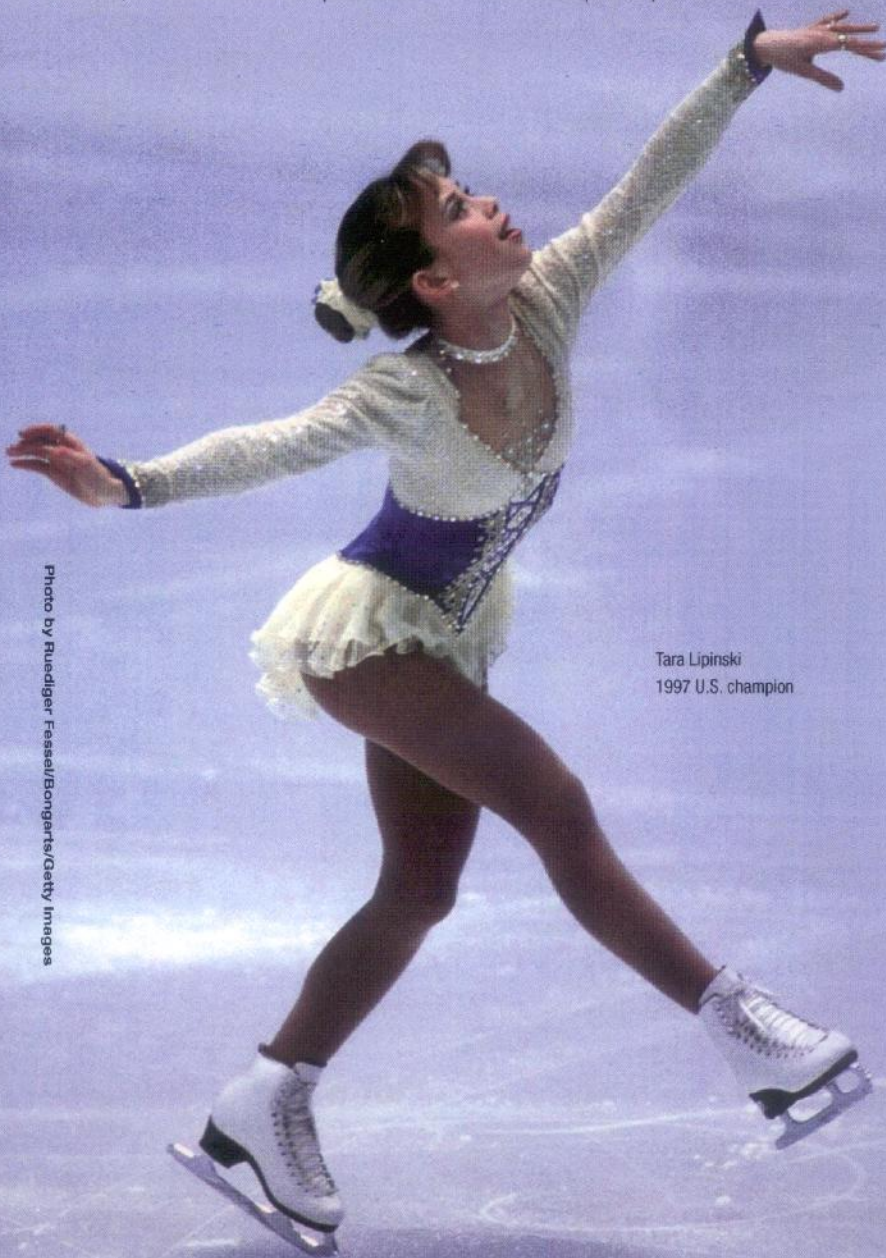
VIEWER'S GUIDE

There are five separate disciplines or divisions in competitive figure skating: ladies singles, men's singles, pairs, ice dancing and synchronized team skating.

This guide represents the first four divisions, all of which are competed at the

Olympic Winter Games and the 2008 U.S. Championships.

A sixth division, figures, was eliminated from international competition in the 1991-92 season and was last competed at the U.S. Championships in 1999.



Tara Lipinski
1997 U.S. champion

SKILL LEVELS

Within ladies singles, men's singles, pairs and ice dancing, there are five different competitive skill levels that are based on proficiency tests. Each level draws on similar techniques but adheres to increasingly more difficult skills as well as different rules and guidelines. The five skill levels are:

Senior	(Most Advanced)
Junior	↑
Novice	
Intermediate	
Juvenile	(Beginning)

SENIOR PROGRAMS

This guide focuses on the top skill level – senior – which is competed at the World Figure Skating Championships and Olympic Winter Games. The following chart outlines the programs competed during a senior-level competition:

LADIES	MEN'S	PAIRS	ICE DANCING
Short Program 2:50	Short Program 2:50	Short Program 2:50	Compulsory Dance time based on dance
Free Skate 4:00 +/- 0:10	Free Skate 4:30 +/- 0:10	Free Skate 4:30 +/- 0:10	Original Dance 2:30 +/- 0:10
			Free Dance 4:00 +/- 0:10

There are no age requirements to compete as a senior in the United States. To compete as a senior internationally, the following age restrictions apply: at the World Championships and Olympic Winter Games, skaters must have turned 15 by July 1 preceding the events. In all other international events, skaters must have turned 14 by July 1 preceding the events.

Photo by Ruediger Fessel/Bongarts/Getty Images

VIEWER'S GUIDE

LADIES & MEN'S SINGLES

Form, style, technique, concentration and the ability to perform under great pressure are the key requirements in ladies and men's singles. The rules are similar for both the ladies and men's divisions. Each competition is composed of two separate parts: the short program skated first, followed by the free skate.

Senior ladies and men must pass two tests: senior moves in the field and senior free skate.

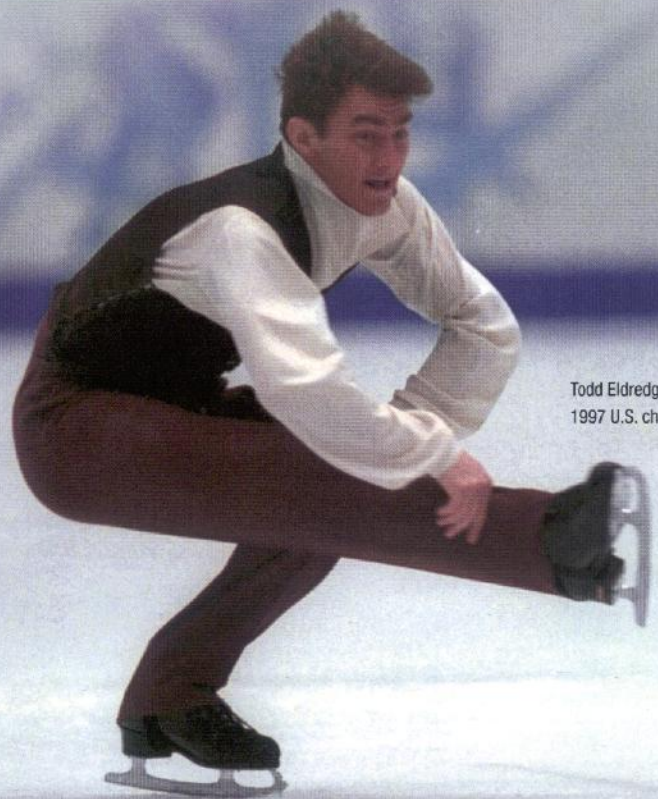
SHORT PROGRAM

The short program consists of eight required moves or elements with connecting steps: three jumps, three spins and two step sequences (men) or one step sequence and one spiral sequence (ladies). The moves may be done in any order within the 2:50 time limit to music selected by the skater.

FREE SKATE

The free skate has a length limitation of four minutes for senior ladies and 4:30 for senior men (+/- 10 seconds for each). Skaters select their own music and theme, and choreograph the jumps, spins, step sequences and interpretive moves to best display their technical and artistic skills.

The well-balanced free skate for 2007-2008 sets a maximum number of a particular element; it does not set a minimum. If a skater performs more than the well-balanced program elements, there are no deductions, but the skater will not receive credit for these additional elements. The skater should pay close attention to interesting transitions, connecting steps and movements between elements.



Todd Eldredge
1997 U.S. champion

Photo by Jamie Squire /Allsport

SHORT PROGRAM

	LADIES	MEN
TIME	2:50 (maximum)	2:50 (maximum)
AXEL JUMP	Double	Double or triple
SOLO JUMP	Any triple • Must be immediately preceded by connecting steps or comparable free skating movements	Any triple or quad • Must be immediately preceded by connecting steps or comparable free skating movements • May not be a quad if a quad is used in the combination jump
COMBINATION JUMP	One combination jump consisting of: • triple/triple or • triple/double May not repeat the double Axel or the solo jump	One combination jump consisting of: • triple/double or • triple/triple or • quad/double or • quad/triple May not repeat the Axel just performed or the solo jump
FLYING SPIN	Any flying spin • Minimum of 8 revolutions	Any flying spin • Minimum of 8 revolutions
COMBINATION SPIN	Any combination spin without a flying entry: • Only 1 change of foot • At least 2 changes of position • Minimum of 6 revolutions on each foot and 2 revolutions in each position	
OTHER SPIN	Layback or sideways leaning spin • Minimum of 8 revolutions	Camel spin or sit spin • Only 1 change of foot • Min. of 6 revolutions on each foot
STEP SEQUENCE	Spiral step sequence • Minimum of 3 spiral positions • Minimum of 1 change of foot	Any step sequence
STEP SEQUENCE	1 step sequence	1 additional step sequence (different from above)

FREE SKATE

	LADIES	MEN
TIME	4:00 +/- 10 seconds	4:30 +/- 10 seconds
JUMPS	Maximum of 7 jump elements	Maximum of 8 jump elements
JUMP RESTRICTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 must be an Axel-type jump • Of all the triple and quad jumps, only 2 can be repeated, and these repetitions must be in either a jump combination or a jump sequence • There may be up to 3 jump combinations or jump sequences • Jump combinations may not contain more than 2 jumps; however, 1 jump combination may consist of 3 jumps • The number of jumps in a jump sequence is free 	
SPINS	Maximum of 4 spins	Maximum of 4 spins
SPIN RESTRICTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One must be a spin combination with change of foot • One must have a flying entry • One must be a spin with only 1 position • All spins may change feet and start with a fly • All must have a minimum of 6 revolutions (10 for a spin combination) and 2 revolutions in each position 	
STEP SEQUENCES	Maximum of 2 different step sequences; one must be a spiral step sequence with at least 2 spirals	Maximum of 2 different step sequences

PAIRS SKATING

Pairs skating is essentially free skating performed in unison by partners, with the addition of daring and difficult overhead lifts, throw jumps and spins. The key to pairs skating is exact timing in unison. Whether the partners are together or apart, their movements should be synchronized with matching body lines, gestures and footwork.

Senior pairs skaters need to pass two tests: senior moves in the field and the senior pairs test.

SHORT PROGRAM

The pairs short program consists of eight required elements, which include overhead lifts, side-by-side solo jumps and solo spins done in unison, step sequences, pairs spins and a death spiral, all performed to music of the skaters' choice.

FREE SKATE

The free skate consists of technical and artistic moves choreographed to best display the skaters' individual strengths, skills and ability to perform as a team. Shadow skating, in which partners perform identical maneuvers some distance apart, and mirror skating, where the pair's moves are in opposite directions and mirror each other, are challenging aspects of pairs skating.

SHORT PROGRAM

PAIRS	
TIME	2:50 (maximum)
LIFT	Any lasso lift take-off (from group 5)
TWIST LIFT	Double or triple twist lift (Take off must either be a flip or Lutz)
THROW JUMP	Double or triple throw jump
SOLO JUMP	Double or triple solo jump
SOLO SPIN	Any solo spin combination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 change of foot • At least 1 change of position • Minimum of 5 revolutions on each foot
PAIR SPIN	Any pair spin combination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 1 change of foot • At least 1 change of position • Minimum of 8 revolutions
DEATH SPIRAL	Backward inside death spiral
SPIRAL STEP SEQUENCE	One step sequence

FREE SKATE

PAIRS	
TIME	4:30 +/- 10 seconds
LIFTS	Maximum of 3 lifts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One must be from group 3 or 4 • All must have full extension of the lifting arms
TWIST LIFT	Maximum of 1 twist lift
THROW JUMPS	Maximum of 2 different throw jumps
SOLO JUMP	• Maximum of 1 solo jump
JUMP COMBINATION OR SEQUENCE	• Maximum of 2 jumps in combination • No limit to the number of jumps in a jump sequence
PAIR SPIN	• Maximum of 1 pair spin combination • Must have minimum of 8 revolutions with at least 1 change of foot and 1 change of position by each partner
SOLO SPIN	• Maximum of 1 solo spin combination • Must have a minimum of 10 revolutions and at least 1 change of foot by each partner
DEATH SPIRAL	• Maximum of 1 death spiral • Must be a regular hand-hold with at least 1 revolution by the lady after the man has attained the pivot position
STEP SEQUENCE	one step sequence

Kyoko Ina and Jason Dungjen
1997 U.S. champions

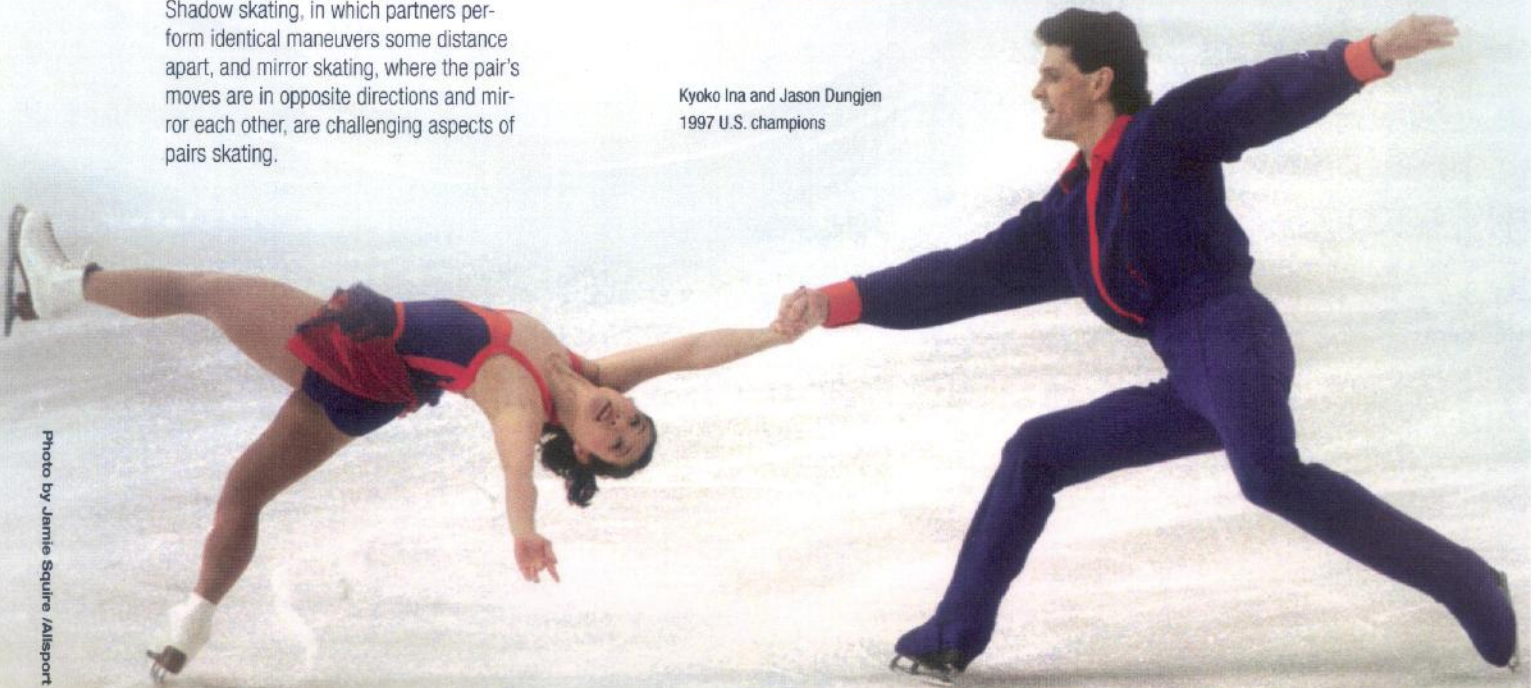


Photo by Jamie Squire /Allsport

VIEWER'S GUIDE

ICE DANCING

Ice dancing, the newest Olympic figure skating event (introduced in 1976), was first seen at the World Championships in 1952 despite having been a popular recreational sport since the turn of the century. Unlike pairs skating, which features overhead lifts and jumps, ice dancing is based on the different aspects of dance, including rhythm, interpretation of the music and precise steps. Its beauty lies in its limitless creativity, choreography and its theatrical and innovative aspects. No overhead lifts or jumps of more than one half revolution are allowed.

An ice dancing competition is made up of three parts: the compulsory dance(s), a 2:30 original dance and a four-minute free dance. Unlike singles and pairs skating, ice dancing permits vocal music.

Senior ice dancers must pass three tests: senior moves in the field, the gold dance test and the senior free dance.

COMPULSORY DANCE(S)

In any given event, zero, one or two compulsory dances may be competed at the discretion of the event organizers. Only one compulsory dance is performed at the 2008 U.S. Championships and the World Championships. In any case, all skaters perform the same selected dance(s) to

the same music. The compulsory dance(s) consists of dances with specified steps and holds that are set pattern dances. Some latitude is given to allow a couple to demonstrate its own individual style. Accuracy, placement, style, unison, timing and expression are the requirements for the compulsory dance(s).

For the 2007-2008 season, in accordance with the ISU, senior dances are to be drawn from the following three: Austrian Waltz, Yankee Polka and Argentine Tango.

The compulsory dance drawn for the 2008 U.S. Championships is the Yankee Polka.

ORIGINAL DANCE

For the original dance, skaters are given a prescribed rhythm (such as a paso doble or rumba) with a defined tempo range and must create a completely original version of the dance. Teams choose their own music and choreography, but it must conform to the specified rhythm and tempo. The original dance must have the character of ballroom dancing translated to the ice by flow and use of edges.

Judges look for creativity, good interpretation of the music and rhythm, originality and utilization of the full ice surface.

For the 2007-2008 season, the original dance rhythm is country/folk.

Elizabeth Punsalan and Jerod Swallow
1997 U.S. champions



Photo by Jamie Squire /Allsport

FREE DANCE

In the free dance, skaters display their full range of technical skills, interpretation and inventiveness to music and choreography of their own choice. Teams use changes of position, intricate and varied dance holds, small lifts and difficult footwork to present their best ice dancing skills.

ORIGINAL DANCE	ICE DANCING	
	TIME	2:30 +/- 10 seconds
	MUSIC	Country/Folk
	LIFTS	2 different types of short lifts (but no more), not to exceed 6 seconds
	DANCE SPIN	1 type of dance spin or combination dance spin (but no more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 3 revolutions • In a combination, minimum of 3 revolutions on each foot by both partners
STEP SEQUENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 curved step sequence in hold • 1 midline (not touching) step sequence with sequential twizzles 	
FREE DANCE	ICE DANCING	
	TIME	4:00 +/- 10 seconds
	MUSIC	Any tempo or mood can be used as long as it is danceable
	LIFTS	4 lifts (but no more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 may be long lifts (maximum of 12 seconds) • The rest must be short lifts (maximum of 6 seconds)
	DANCE SPINS	1 spin or combination spin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A spin must have a minimum of 3 revolutions • A combination spin must have a minimum of 3 revolutions on each foot by both partners
	TWIZZLES	1 set of synchronized twizzles
	STEP SEQUENCES	2 step sequences (but no more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 must be midline or diagonal from Group A • 1 must be circular or serpentine from Group B
OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS	Additional elements that may be performed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 additional dance spin • 1 additional set of synchronized twizzles • Additional elements are not identified but are considered in the program component of linking footwork/movements 	