

Competition Checklist

Going to a competition??? Don't forget the following:

- Your skates (BOTH of them!)
- Your dress / tights (or pants and shirt if male)
- A spare set of tights
- Extra scrunchies, bobbie pins, etc
- Any makeup you will require
- Comb, brush, hairspray
- Sweater or warmup jacket
- Your music CD (labeled and tested)
- A backup CD (labeled and tested)
- Guards and soakers
- Your "emergency bag" (this should contain spare screws for your blades, a screwdriver, spare laces, band-aids, aspirin, etc)
- Inhaler (if needed)
- Props (if needed)
- Camera / camcorder or phone charger if you are using your phone (many rinks have bad reception and will drain your battery quickly. You may want to switch to Airplane mode so your phone does not search for a signal constantly and have your charger on hand so you can use your camera/video features of your phone)
- Have your membership numbers (ISI / USFS) and your cards
- Know your event number(s) and time
- Directions to the rink or the rink address for GPS
- Plan to arrive 1 hour before your first warm up unless your coach tells you otherwise.

Air Travel with Skates

Traditionally, skaters usually transport their skates as carry-on items when traveling by air. The additional security restrictions imposed after the 9/11 tragedy have made this ability uncertain for most skaters. Apparently the sharp blades are considered too "knife-like" by most carriers and they are telling their passengers that they may not be carried on.

If you are planning to travel with your skates, you should check in advance with your carrier to see what they say, but I think that even if I was told it was ok, I'd still half-expect someone at the gate to tell me otherwise.

The reason most skaters carry on their skates is because they are concerned that they might become lost or delayed if they are checked. A 24-hour delay in getting your luggage might not be real serious if you're just visiting Aunt Matilda, but it would be a real problem if you arrive 20 hours before you're supposed to skate at Regionals... So what can you do to minimize the possibility of errors if you DO check your skates?

- I would wrap them well to protect them against bumps and bangs during handling. I might even put them in hard guards instead of soakers for the duration of the flight (after making SURE they were real dry first...).
- I'd put them in a suitcase that is unique and very identifiable. I'd mark it loudly with my name and some obvious & unique markings to minimize the possibility that anyone would mistakenly grab it off the conveyor because it looked like theirs (I'd use colored tape to make a pattern of stripes or a big X on the sides).
- I'd make sure to put a tag on the bag that has a phone number that could reach me AT MY DESTINATION (a cellphone or a hotel number).
- When checking the bag, stay until you see the check-in person put the destination tag on the bag, and make sure it says the right destination
- See if the airlines will allow you to "gate" check the bag containing your skates, that way they remain in your possession until you board the plane and you may be able to collect them upon arrival at the gate. (i.e. baby strollers). *(Jim Achtenberg notes that a potential difficulty associated with this idea is that you still have to get them past the concourse x-ray inspectors)*
- And finally, I'd make real sure to keep the little numbered check tags to help track it if it does get misplaced.