



Figure Skating Associations

Clubs and Rinks

Beginning skaters usually skate in rink-sponsored "general" sessions or in a Learn-to-Skate program, which might be sponsored directly by a rink or by a skating club. Usually, when skaters have advanced beyond the beginner level, they join a skating club and take individual instruction from a private instructor, or "pro". In most cases, skating clubs have an affiliation with a National Governing Body, which coordinates the activities of clubs.

National Governing Bodies

Within the USA, most arenas are affiliated with one or both of the 2 national organizing bodies -- either **United States Figure Skating** (USFS), or the **Ice Sports Industry** (ISI). Each association provides an organizational structure for programming, administration, and skater development. While both associations provide a full range of programming to support skaters of all interests, they actually cooperate to each provide a slightly different emphasis. The USFS emphasizes programming for the high level competitive skater, and provides the sanctioned path to World and Olympic competition. The ISI emphasizes programming for both the competitive and recreational skater.

The ISI is actually an organization for rink owners and managers, which defines programming and structure for their figure skating programs. The USFS provides a structure for clubs which are each individually managed by club-member elected Boards of Directors.

The USFS and ISI each define a "Learn-to-Skate" curriculum, as well as a level and test structure for advanced skaters. Both associations sanction competitions at local, national, and world levels.

ISI (Ice Sports Industry) RoseGarden ISI Team and Future Stars	Learn to Skate– USA (LTS-USA) RoseGarden LTS-USA Learn to Skate	US Figure Skating (USFS) Norwich Figure Skating Club
Emphasis: recreational & recreational competitive skater	Emphasis: recreational skater	Emphasis: competitive skater
No path to the Olympics but has their own Open World Competition. USFS Crossover events are available for skaters who are competitive in IS and US	Not the path to the Olympics but can move up to full USFS membership as an individual member or through the Norwich Figure Skating Club	Path to Worlds, Olympics
USA divided into 16 Divisions for competitive purposes. National and Regional events across the country	Individually based in facilities throughout the country	USA divided into 3 Sections, each composed of 3 Regions (total 9 Regions) for competitive purposes
International: ISI itself sponsors competitions internationally	Subdivision of USFS	International: member of ISU
Programming typically managed by rinks and instructors	Programming typically managed by rinks or Figure Skating Clubs	Clubs are independently managed by club-member elected Boards of Directors
Defines "Learn-to-Skate" structure / curriculum		
Defines tests for recognition of accomplishment		
Defines competition levels, elements, structure & sanctioning		

In some cases, your choice of "affiliation" will be determined by the availability of clubs in your area. In most areas, you will have the opportunity to choose a club of either affiliation, and you should choose based upon an understanding of your own needs and goals. The RoseGarden Ice Arena offers all three memberships to its skaters. All skaters must purchase an annual Learn to Skate USA membership to participate in our programs. The rink supplies an ISI membership for all skaters who are enrolled in instructional programs. The Norwich Figure Skating Club is based in our arena and when a skater is ready to start testing or competing in the USFS organization, membership options are available.

Skaters who join a club affiliated with either of these governing bodies automatically become members of the associated governing body as well.

Because of the cooperative agreement between USFS and ISI, skaters affiliated with either of the organizations are generally permitted to compete in competitions and perform in ice shows sanctioned by the other organization without loss of "eligibility" in their own organization. It is possible to have memberships in both organizations. Skaters without a club of the desired "flavor" in their area may join either association as "independent" members.

International Governing Bodies

At the international level, figure skating is organized by the **International Skating Union (ISU)**, which has its headquarters in Switzerland. The ISU defines basic technical and "eligibility" rules and standards for amateur ("eligible") skaters. National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for many countries across the world have become members of the ISU.

The ISU sanctions figure skating competitions internationally, including the annual World Figure Skating Championships. Only skaters who have qualified according to the rules of an NGB affiliated with the ISU are eligible to skate in Worlds and other ISU-sanctioned competitions. All Olympic skaters must be members of ISU affiliated NGBs.

In the USA, the USFSA is a member of the ISU, however the ISI is not.

The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** works with its affiliated national committees in each member country (for instance, the USOC in the United States) to organize the Olympic Games. For each sport, the IOC recognizes a sport-related governing body to establish the basic structure for competition in that sport. For figure skating, the IOC recognizes the ISU and its member associations as the defining authority.

Professional Associations

The **Professional Skater's Association (PSA)** is an organization of ice skating professionals engaged in the instruction, training, and performance of figure skating. Membership in the PSA is available (but not required) to all professionals in the field of skating. The PSA offers training seminars and classes for instructors, and manages a "rating" system whereby instructors can receive certification of their ability to teach at various levels. Additionally, the PSA makes available insurance, retirement services, and job placement services for professionals.

The **Ice Sports Industry (ISI)** offers professional memberships and the ISI Instructors Training program to educate member coaches. Ice rink management (manager, directors, etc) can also attend the ISI University for training in how to effectively run programming in facilities so that coaches and skaters can maximize training for their skaters. The ISI works in conjunction with PSA (through an organizational agreement) to provide educational opportunities for coaching.