

# Getting Started in Private Lessons

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When should a skater start private lessons? Unfortunately there is no absolute answer to this question. The best way to decide when is to know what your skater's goals are. Does your skater want to compete, pass tests, or hang out with their friends. If your skater wants to compete and/or pass tests the sooner they start private lessons the better.

Once you have determined what your skaters goals are the next step is to find a coach to help them reach their goals. The best way is to get a list of coaches who teach private lessons from the Director of the skating school and educate yourself about a few of them. Pick two or three coaches that you think your child may like to work with. Also ask your child who they might like to work with. Educate yourself about the coaches you have chosen. Go to freestyle sessions at your local rink and watch how the coaches interact with their students. Talk to parents in the stands about the coaches that teach their children. Educate yourself before making a decision.

When you have decided on a coach you can either approach the coach in person or call them on the phone. If you approach a coach in person be sure that they are not in the middle of a lesson. An example of a nice introduction would be to first introduce yourself and your skater, bring the skater along if possible. After introducing yourself and your skater, an example of an opening line could be, "My child would like to take lessons from you, do you have any openings?" If the coach does have an opening it may only be for a few specific times so you may have to be a little flexible.

Determine your financial resources. Private lessons and ice time that needs to be purchased can run from as little as \$20/ week to much more. If you have a hard time paying for group lessons than private lessons may not be for you.

Remember, you are employing the coach. Don't be afraid to ask questions, and don't be afraid to voice your concerns. Be involved with your child's skating. Instead of just dropping them off and picking them up, be a volunteer for the club or just be a spectator while your child learns the great sport of figure skating