



OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES: FIGURE SKATING

INDEX

What are the Winter Olympics and what sports are there?

Origin

Technique

Events

Differences between women and men

Top superstars

Necessary equipment



WHAT ARE THE WINTER OLYMPICS AND WHAT SPORTS ARE THERE?

The **OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES** are a multisport event that is celebrated every four years under the supervision of the International Olympic Committee. It includes winter sports from ice and snow.

At first, the activities that were part of the Olympic Winter Games were the following: cross-country skiing, speed skating, figure skating, ice hockey, bobsleigh, Nordic combined and ski jump. Afterwards, some more sports were introduced, like luge, short track speed skating, curling, freestyle skiing, snowboard, biathlon, skeleton and alpine skiing (also known as downhill skiing).

The first Winter Olympics took place in Chamonix in 1924, although figure skating and ice hockey had already been played in the Summer Olympics. Since 1924, they were celebrated every four years, although in 1940 they could not be celebrated because of World War II. They were once again restored in 1948.

The sport that I have chosen is *figure skating*.





ORIGIN

Figure skating was created as a leisure activity in the Netherlands during the XV century. It was considered a sport in Great Britain during the XVIII century, but the official rules of the artistic modality, which consisted in explaining the execution of all the movements and pirouettes with music, started in the XIX century.

Figure skating was put into the Olympic Games since the Olympic Games in London, in 1908. From 1908 to 1920, figure skating was included in the Olympic Summer Games, but from 1924 on, it became part of the Olympic Winter Games. The 6 of April of 2011, the International Olympic Committee included formally this event with a mixed team.

TECHNIQUE

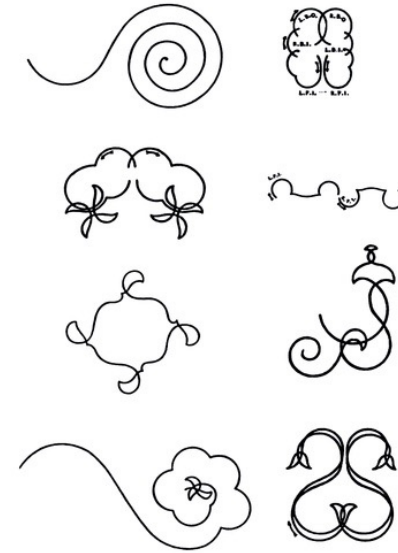
- Figure skating is an incredibly complex sport, and it counts with plenty of techniques.
- There are six major jumps in figure skating, but all of them require a large degree of flexibility and agility. These are classified in two major groups: toe jumps and edge jumps. Inside the **toe jumps** category, we can find:
 - **Toe loops**: the figure skater jumps in a counter-clockwise motion.
 - **Flip**: the figure skater glides backwards before jumping and pushing on the inside edge of their back foot.
 - **Lutz**: the lutz is like the flip, but the skater jumps from the outside edge of their back foot instead of the inside.
- In the **edge jumps**, we can find:
 - **Salchows**: the skater jumps with the inside edge of their stronger foot, perform a half-spin and land on the outside edge of their weaker foot.
 - **Loop jumps**: the figure skater jumps from the outside edge of their strongest foot and spin once in the air. Then, they land onto the same foot.
 - **Axels**: the performer jumps forward in the air, spins a one and a half revolution and lands on the outside of their weaker foot.
- Also, another key movement in figure skating are the **spins**. They take place on the surface of the ice rink, and the skater rotates on the ball of their foot. There are three kinds of spins: upright spin (the body is straight and one or both feet remain on the ground), sit spin (the performer is on one leg only and bends down, almost sitting) and camel spin (the performer positions his or her body into a "T" shape, and only the strong foot rests on the ground).



EVENTS



Men's singles



Men's special figures

The different categories or events of figure skating in the Olympics are the following:

- Men's singles: they were celebrated 26 years. In single skating, the performers compete individually, and they are required to perform two segments in the international competitions.
- Men's special figures: they were celebrated one year (1908), this event involved tracing patterns on the ice with the skates, which meant that the performer should count with lots of balance and body control. Currently, it is not being done.
- Ladies' singles: they were done for 26 years.
- Pair skating: they also were done for 26 years, in this category two people skate in unison with the maximum harmony possible.
- Ice dance: they were celebrated for 13 years, it is inspired in ballroom dancing, and it is quite similar to pair dancing.
- Mixed team: they were celebrated 3 years, it is a team event.



Ladies' singles

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN

- In figure skating, as it has been previously explained, there are different categories for men and women. Now, there are 5 events, one for men, one for women and three mixed ones. The category that is different for men and women is single skating.
- Due to physical differences between men and women, men's jumps tend to be more thrilling because they get more height, but on other elements, women excel due to their usual superior flexibility.
- One of the main differences that can be seen is in the scores. There are two basic components to skating scores: the technical element score (TES), which focuses on the technique, such as jumps and spins, and the programme component score (PES), which has to do more with artist interpretation and performance. Figure skating routines consist of two phases: a short programme and a free skate or long programme. The score of men's short programme is multiplied by 1 to get the total, and women's is multiplied by 0.8. Also, men's long programme score is multiplied by 2, and women's is multiplied by 1.6.
- Furthermore, men's individual figure skating scores are normally higher because they skate for longer (2 minutes and 50 seconds the short programme, and 4 minutes and 30 seconds approximately the long programme, while for women it is 2:50 and 4 minutes more or less). Therefore, as they have more time, they can do more tricks.
- Also, their clothing is different. Women have to wear skirts, and men have to wear tights if they look like pants.





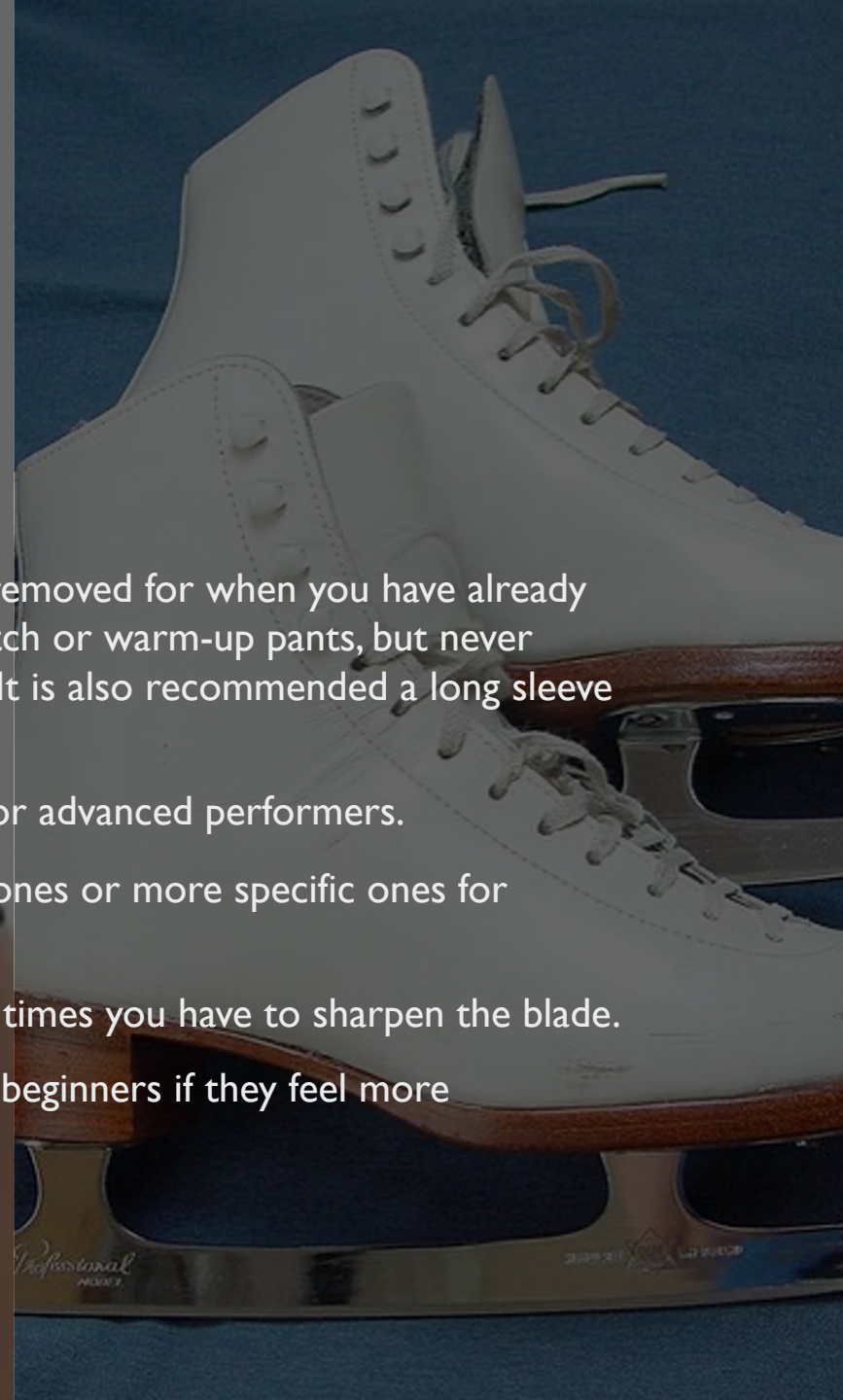
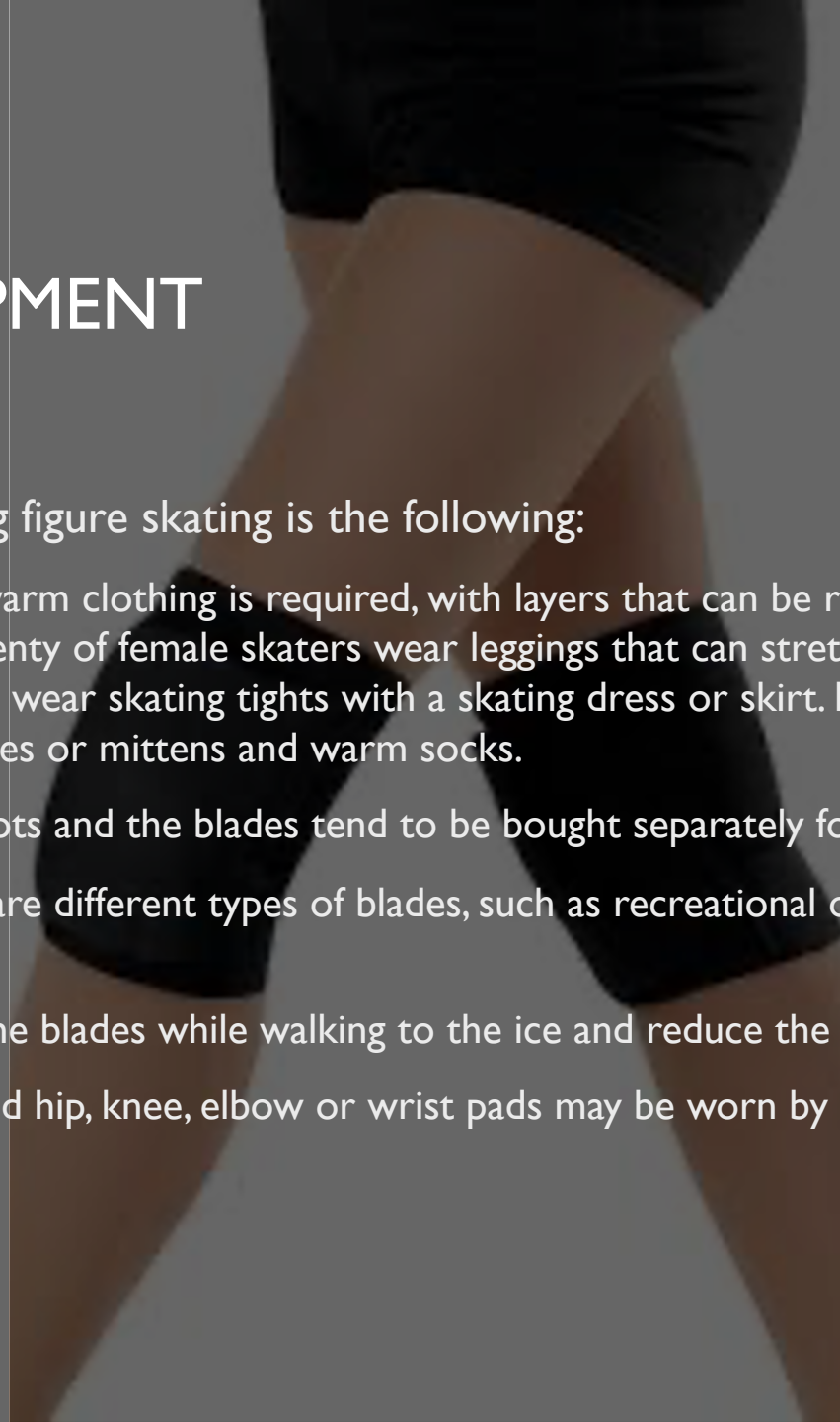
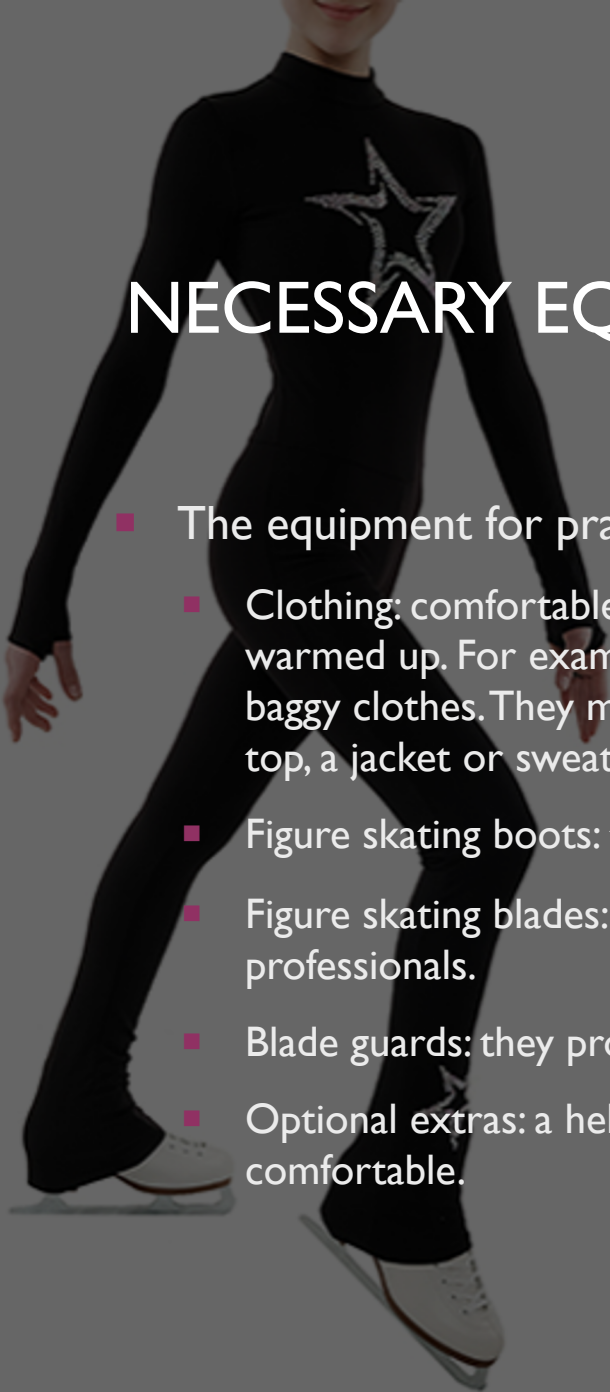
TOP SUPERSTARS

Some of the best figure skaters in the world are the following:

- Jason Brown: he is from the United States, and he won in the teams category the bronze medal for the Olympic Winter Games in 2014, and he started skating when he was three and a half.
- Mikhail Kolyada: he won the silver medal in the teams category in for the Olympic Winter Games in 2018.
- Nathan Chen: he won the gold medal in the World Figure Skating in 2019, and the bronze medal in the Winter Olympic games in 2018.
- Irina Slutskaya: this Russian performer was world champion in 2002 and 2005 and was an Olympic medalist in 2002 and 2006.
- Michelle Kwan: she has obtained two medals in the Olympic games (silver in 1998 and bronze in 2002), and has been world champion five times (1996, 1998, 2000, 2001 and 2003).

NECESSARY EQUIPMENT

- The equipment for practicing figure skating is the following:
 - Clothing: comfortable and warm clothing is required, with layers that can be removed for when you have already warmed up. For example, plenty of female skaters wear leggings that can stretch or warm-up pants, but never baggy clothes. They may also wear skating tights with a skating dress or skirt. It is also recommended a long sleeve top, a jacket or sweater, gloves or mittens and warm socks.
 - Figure skating boots: the boots and the blades tend to be bought separately for advanced performers.
 - Figure skating blades: there are different types of blades, such as recreational ones or more specific ones for professionals.
 - Blade guards: they protect the blades while walking to the ice and reduce the times you have to sharpen the blade.
 - Optional extras: a helmet and hip, knee, elbow or wrist pads may be worn by beginners if they feel more comfortable.





THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION