How to Tie Figure Skates

Sit down and put skates on. Make sure to have your laces loose when doing this, you will cause major damage to your skates if you shove your foot into a skate that is not loose enough.

Make sure your foot is all the way back to the heel. You may have to gently kick on the back of the skate.

Grab the lace around the 3rd eyelet from the toe. Pull tight and repeat as you go up.

Lace the skates snugly at the top of the foot (the top 4-5 eyelets). When you pull the next lace you do not want it to be too tight like you have been doing. Your ankles need a little flexibility. However, it cannot be too loose or your ankles will collapse inward when skating. Just pull at a comfortable tightness that still gives you support until you get to the hooks.

Laces should be pulled snugly enough that you cannot pull a loop with the finger.

Lace through all the hooks at a medium tightness. There are a variety of ways to do this.

Don't over-tighten the laces at the top of the boot. You need to bend your ankles; be sure you do not confuse ankle support with ankle restriction. You should be able to slide at least two fingers down to the second hook to ensure you can bend your ankles well.

Don't skip the top eyelet when lacing the skates. This eyelet is instrumental in securing the foot in place and helps the foot to track properly while practicing.

Do change the laces as needed. Over time laces stretch lose their grip and allow the foot to shift position inside the boot. Use non-elastic laces. Laces with even the slightest stretch compromise a secure fit. Non-elastic wax laces work well for figure skaters.

If you get out on the ice and are feeling like your ankles don't have much support and are bending in towards the ice, that means your skates are too loose around your ankles, so go re-tie them a little tighter.

If you get out on the ice and are feeling like your foot is no longer there and is getting numb, that means you tied it way too tight near your ankle and it needs to be a bit looser.

When you are done skating, loosen your skates all the way so your foot slips out with ease, you will kill your skate if you need to yank it out or step on the heel to yank your foot out. Unlace the first few eyelets and then loosen the rest…your foot should pop right out.

Sources:

"The do's and don'ts of lacing skates", Patti Larkin, *Skating*, December 2022, US Figure Skating magazine

"How to Tie Figure Skates", Michael Opalinski, americanathleticshoe.com, Blog July 13, 2018