



SCORING SYSTEMS ...

there are three!

Welcome to a brief overview explaining the major points for the different scoring systems you may encounter at skating competitions. This is just an introduction, not an exhaustive explanation.

People spend hours and hours at schools and as apprentices to learn all the ins and outs, we're just here for a quick once over.

The Three Systems:

Component Judging System (CJS): This one started with Showcase events and will be used for freeskate events starting in the 2026-2027 season.

International Judging System (IJS): This is the one you see when you watch skating on TV.

6.0: This one is often used for the introductory levels of skating competitions (like Learn to Skate) or at smaller competitions hosted by small clubs.

Some terms to know before we get started:

Judges: These are the people sitting rink-side with clipboards or tablets evaluating each skater's performance.

Panel of Judges: This is the entire group of judges. Competitions use more than 1 judge to regulate scores.

Technical Panel: These are specialized officials who determine what elements were actually completed in the program.

Was that a double or a triple Salchow?

Did the skater complete 4 rotations in the spin or was it only 3.5?

Scoring Official: This is the person who enters all the judge's scores into the computer to calculate the final score.

GOE: Stands for "Grade of Execution." This is a measure of the quality of an element like a jump or spin, and GOEs range from -5 to +5



Component Judging System (CJS)

We'll start here because this one probably requires the least amount of explanation. Here's what an actual CJS score sheet looks like:

Showcase		Place Name	Nation	Total Seg Score	Total Elm Score	Total Comp Score	Ded					
# Executed Elements	I Base Value	GOE	J1	J2	J3	J4	J5	J6	J7	J8	J9	
1 Skatie Katie, Skate Crate Club				31.98	0.00	31.98	0.00					
Total BV:	0.00											
Program Components	Factor											
Artistic Appeal	2.40	6.00	6.00	3.25	4.75	5.50						
Performance	2.10	6.50	6.00	3.25	4.75	6.00						
Skating Skills	1.50	5.75	5.00	3.00	4.50	5.00						
General Component Factor:	1.0											
Deductions											-0.00	
Majority deductions			J1	J2	J3	J4	J5	J6	J7	J8	J9	REF

Judges award a mark on a scale of 0.25–10.0 for each of the 3 showcase components:

Artistic Appeal Performance Skating Skills

The marks are averaged, weighted, then added together to get the skater's Total Segment Score.

On this score sheet, Judge #1 (this is abbreviated to J1) awarded Skatie Katie a 6.00 in Artistic Appeal, 6.50 for Performance, and 5.75 for Skating Skills. After the accountant entered all the scores into the computer system, Skatie Katie's final score was **31.98**.

Starting with the 2026–2027 season, this scoring system will be adapted for freeskate judging. We do not have specific information at this time, but we are guessing that the judging categories will be something like technical elements, skating skills, and performance.

International Judging System (IJS)

If you watch skating on TV, this is the judging system used there.

IJS is commonly used at many competitions even for beginner skaters. You do not need to be on TV to compete under IJS.

This is what an actual IJS score sheet will look like

Free Skate										Total Seg Score	Total Elm Score	Total Comp Score	Total Ded									
Place	Name			Nation						=	+	+	-									
12 Skatie Katie, Skate Crate Club										18.91	7.70	11.46	0.25									
#	Executed Elements	I	Base Value	GOE	J1	J2	J3	J4	J5	J6	J7	J8	J9	Panel Scores								
1	1T+1T Toe Loop-Toe Loop		0.80	0.00	0	0	0	0	0					0.80								
2	1Lo Loop		0.50	-0.07	0	-3	-4	0	-1					0.43								
3	ChSt1 Choreographic Step		2.00	0.11	0	1	0	1	0					2.11								
4	SSp Sit Spin		1.10	-0.18	-3	-3	-1	-1	-1					0.92								
5	1S Salchow		0.44 x	0.00	0	0	0	0	0					0.44								
6	1F Flip		0.55 x	-0.05	0	-1	-3	0	-2					0.50								
7	1Lo+1Lo Loop-Loop		1.10 x	0.00	0	-1	0	0	0					1.10								
8	CUSp Change foot Upright Spin		1.50	-0.10	-2	-2	0	0	0					1.40								
Total BV:		7.99												Total elm. score: 7.70								
Program Components		Factor																				
Composition		1.00		2.25		2.25		2.50		2.50		2.33										
Presentation		1.00		2.00		2.50		2.50		2.50		2.50										
Skating Skills		1.00		2.25		2.50		2.25		2.50		2.33										
General Component Factor: 1.6														Total factored comp. score: 11.46								
Deductions		Time violation: -0.25 This is also where you will see deductions for falls listed.												-0.25								
Majority deductions				J1	J2	J3	J4	J5	J6	J7	J8	J9	REF									

There's a lot of information to unpack, and reading these score sheets is a bit of an art, but let's hit the high points so you have a place to start.

The Technical panel is responsible for determining the Executed Elements. Every skating element has an abbreviation (we put the translation into green for you).

The first executed element is listed as 1T+1T. The 1 indicates that it's a single rotation jump and the **T** is for Toe Loop. The + in the middle tells me that it's a combination. Toe Loops are worth 0.4 points. Each Toe Loop in the combination gets 0.4 points for a total base value of 0.8.

The jump codes are fairly easy to figure out if you know the names of jumps. **W** for Waltz jump. **S** for Salchow. Lutz and Loop both start with **L**, so those abbreviations get 2 letters. **Lz** for Lutz and **Lo** for Loop. The number in front tells you the number of rotations. A double toe loop would be **2T**, triple is **3T**, etc.

So, back to Skatie Katie's 1T+1T combination

The base value is 0.80 and the GOE is 0.00. If you keep reading that line, all the judges awarded a GOE of 0. So Skatie Katie does not gain or lose any extra points on the element.

Let's go down the list to Element #4. SSp. The "Sp" is the clue that this was a spin. S for Sit. C for Camel. U for Upright. L for Layback. So a camel spin would be CSp. The base value for a sit spin is 1.10 points. Her GOE for that element is -0.18. If you look at all the individual GOE from all the judges, she received a -3, -3, -1, -1, -1. They are all negative, so that is why she lost some points and ended up with 0.92 points for the sit spin.

The GOEs are kind of like a measure of quality. If you get a 0 GOE, that means the element was as expected. Positive GOEs come from qualities like if the jump has very good height & length, good take off & landing, and is effortless throughout. For spins, the good qualities are having good speed (rotations per second), controlled positions, and is effortless throughout.

Negative GOEs for jumps would be things like if the skater touched down with their free foot or a hand on the landing, unable to hold the landing, poor speed & height, or a loss of flow. For spins, negative GOEs would be traveling, loss of balance, poor positions, or slow speed.

Every Executed Element receives a GOE from every judge. The Scoring Official (with the help of accounting software) calculates the Total Element Score (TES). For this event, Skatie Katie's TES is 7.70.

Towards the bottom left, we have the Program Components. Composition, Presentation, and Skating Skills are all judged on a scale of 0.25 to 10. Those scores are averaged, weighted, and combined to give you the Component score of 11.46.

At the bottom of the score sheet is the deduction. Skatie Katie got a time deduction during this program. Make sure to stop when your music stops (and that your music is the correct length for your level). Fall deductions also go in this place on the score sheet. Deductions for falls vary from 0.25-1.0 points depending on the level.

Skatie Katie's Total Segment Score is calculated by adding the TES of 7.70 to the Component Score of 11.46 and subtracting the 0.25 points for the time violation, which gives her 18.91.

6.0 judging system

A few months after composing this information, USFS announced that 6.0 judging system will not be used after July 1, 2026. Rumor is that current computer operating systems cannot run the ancient 6.0 scoring programs. Read on if you would like to learn some skating trivia about what skating was like “in the olden times.”

Six point oh (6.0) judging was the original judging system. After the 2002 Olympics, the judging system changed/evolved into the IJS system we have today.

Skaters used to all be judged on a scale up to 6.0. The 6.0 was considered a perfect score. If you watch videos of competitions before 2003, you’ll hear the competition announcer reading off “The scores for technical merit 5.8, 5.9, 5.9, 6, 5.9.”

Skaters received 2 scores, one for technical (the 1st mark) and another for artistic (the 2nd mark). Those scores are then converted to ordinals (1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place, etc) and it’s these ordinals that are used to determine the winner.

This 6.0 judging system was still used at smaller competitions hosted by smaller clubs up until July 1, 2026 when this scoring system was replaced. It was a more cost efficient system than IJS for small events as you only need to bring in half the number of officials (there’s no tech panel). That’s half the plane tickets, half the hotel rooms, half the meals, etc that the club has to pay for.

Here’s what the score sheet for a 6.0 competition looks like

Final Standings

Place	Name	1	2	3	4	5	Maj.	Tie Br.
1.	Barry Blade, Super Skate Club	1	1	2	2	2	5/2	
2.	Philippa Flip, Skating Club of Stars	2	2	1	3	1	4/2	
3.	Larry Lutzer, Sparkle FSC	3	3	3	1	3	5/3	
4.	Skatie Katie, Skate Crate Club	5	4	4	4	4	4/4	
5.	Lois Loops, Sparkle FSC	4	5	5	5	5	4/5	

To sum up Skatie Katie's score . . .

If we look at Skatie Katie, her ordinals are 5, 4, 4, 4, 4. She got more 4th place ordinals than anybody else, so it makes sense that she ended up 4th.

Often in 6.0, you can just add up the ordinals and the lowest number wins. Barry's total would be 8. Philippa has 9. Larry has 13. Skatie Katie has 21. Lois has 24. However, that's not actually how the Scoring Official knows who the winner is.

The calculations for 6.0 is more like sorting Skittles by color than any actual real math. Imagine you gave each skater a bag of Skittles and told them to count all the yellow ones. Whoever has the most yellow skittles is 1st place. Next is whoever has the most yellow and orange ones combined. It's possible for the numbers to NOT add up in a way that nicely explains who is in first.

Final Standings

Place	Name	1	2	3	4	5	Maj.	Tie Br.
1.	Barry Blade, Super Skate Club	1	5	1	1	5	3/1	13
2.	Philippa Flip, Skating Club of Stars	2	2	2	2	1	5/2	9
3.	Larry Lutzer, Sparkle FSC	3	1	3	3	3	5/3	13
4.	Skatie Katie, Skate Crate Club	4	4	4	4	2	5/4	18
5.	Lois Loops, Sparkle FSC	5	3	5	5	4	5/5	22

We've added the ordinals and put them in the right column in pink.

If we went just by adding up the ordinals, Philippa would be in first place, even though most judges put her in 2nd. Barry and Larry would be tied for 2nd place, even though most judges put Barry in 1st and Larry in 3rd.

If we sort Skittles, though, Barry got the most 1s. Philippa got the most 1s and 2s. Larry had the most 1s, 2s, or 3s, etc etc.

Congratulations!

For making it all the way through this "brief overview" of skating scoring systems we award you a 10.00 +5, and 6.0 (yes, those are all perfect scores.)