



Make Sure Your Music Is Working Hard For You

Music matters. If it didn't, skaters would just skate compulsory, right? Music is the inspiration, the guide star, and the timing mechanism for any program. Skaters need to love their music, and understanding what makes a good choice can give you an advantage.

Love Your Music

Not all the music you 'like' is 'good', and it's definitely not all good for skating programs. Your music helps you tell a story so you need to view it as a partner in your performance. The choice comes with multiple layers of consideration. It's not just about getting to skate to your favorite song, because let's be honest – your favorite songs change. The music you choose is one of the tools in your back pocket.

Chosen well, it can:

- Set the mood for your program
- Help display your skill set
- Create opportunities for interpretation
- Provide cues for energy and pacing
- Show tempo and variety to judges

Skaters at developmental levels probably don't need all that. You need to love the feel of skating to your music. When you hear it, you feel like a champion; and that's perfect! However, as your skills progress and you move up into more advanced levels, music selection becomes more important for your overall performance.

3 Things Pro Music Cutters Know about Great Music Choices

Make sure the music fits how *you* actually move on the ice. We all have music we love, but loving a song doesn't automatically mean we can move well to it. A skater trained in ballet movements may adore heavy metal, but without the physical tools to match that energy, the music will work against them. Choosing music that supports a skater's natural movement style can make everything look more confident and intentional.

Interpretation matters in many skating events. If you choose obscure music, don't expect judges or audiences to catch every nuance that's tied to lyrics they've never heard before. Choosing music that's at least somewhat familiar can make it easier for them to recognize and appreciate your interpretation.

Be realistic. We all change our minds, and most people have several favorite songs in a single year. No matter how much you love a song at the start, it will feel very different after months of skating to it every day. Try to avoid music that's deeply emotional for you (it won't be 'the same' when you have worked with it endlessly) and choose something you can happily live with for a full season.



Practical Tips for Choosing Competition Music that Fits YOU

Choosing your music is one of the most fun parts of skating. You already know what you like, so that part is easy. But it's a good idea to broaden your horizons. This guide is designed to help you figure out what kind of music works in competition, what suits you, and how to make great choices

Before You Start: 5 Important Tips for Choosing Music:

1

Make it age appropriate. Often you are going to interpret the song, and because competitions are family friendly, you want to be careful what you are interpreting. Something that feels innocuous to you at your age could be offensive to others – remember, there are young kids in the stands.

2

Be Mindful of your time limitation. Most skaters from LTS up to Preliminary have approximately 50-100 seconds to accomplish everything in their program. It's not very long. Higher skaters have more, but before you make a final decision, try timing the part of the song you are most inspired by, think about how and where you may need to fit in a step sequence, or other features you want in your showcase, and remember you need time for a beginning & end.

3

Be Realistic - a 6-minute song rarely condenses well to just a minute or two, and if the tempo is super slow, there may not even be enough time for the whole tune. Symphonies can sound wonderful but sometimes it's hard to find a useful beginning or a definite end to skate with. Disney overtures often contain multiple moods and tempos but rarely start and finish in the same key and multiple modulations throughout the piece causes similar difficulties to the symphonic music.

4

Be savvy. Say you choose the currently popular Cruella De Vil (after all, the costume options on Amazon are amazing). There could be another Cruella in your level and two others in the competition at large, which just invites comparison. And remember that every competition the judges go they see Auroras, Ariels, Belles, Jasmines and of COURSE Elsas. How do the judges remember which one is which among a sea of princesses? Try to be original, fun and a little different to the rest.

5

Make it easy to judge your skate - if your interpretation depends on lyrics, consider choosing something that judges (who are often in their 50's and upward) will be familiar with. However much you love the song, don't expect judges to hear it for the first time and understand everything you are doing in your program - they won't. No matter how much you love the song, it may not be the best way to show off your skills. Obscurity may be interesting, but it's not always your friend.