



## Skating for Life

### Singles Skating Terms

#### Jumps

**Waltz Jump:** Generally the first rotational jump that skaters learn. The skater takes off from a forward outside edge, completes 1/2 revolution in the air, and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot.

**Salchow Jump:** A jump in which the skater takes off from the back inside edge of the skating foot, rotates one rotation in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot. Named after its originator, Ulrich Salchow.

**Variations:** double Salchow, triple Salchow, quadruple Salchow, one foot Salchow.

**Neat fact:** The 1965 World Champion and 1964 World and Olympic bronze medallist Petra Burka became the first woman to complete a triple jump in competition - the triple Salchow - performed at the 1962 Canadian Championships in Toronto, Ontario.

**Toe Loop Jump:** A toe jump in which the skater takes off from the back outside edge of the skating foot with assistance of the toe of the free foot and turns one rotation in the air, landing on the back outside edge of the take-off foot.

**Variations:** double toe loop, triple toe loop, quadruple toe loop.

**Neat fact:** Canadian Kurt Browning was the first skater to complete a quadruple toe loop in competition at the 1988 World Championships in Budapest, Hungary.

**Loop Jump:** A jump in which the skater takes off from the back outside edge of the skating foot, turns one rotation in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the take-off foot.

**Variations:** double loop, triple loop, 1/2 loop (a one rotation jump in which the skater lands on the back inside edge of the opposite foot from take-off)

**Flip Jump:** A toe jump in which the skater takes off from the back inside edge of the skating foot with assistance from the toe of the free foot, turns one rotation in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the original free foot.

**Variations:** double flip, triple flip.

**Lutz Jump:** A toe jump in which the skater takes off from the back outside edge of the skating foot with assistance of the free foot toe, rotates in the reverse direction one rotation in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot.

**Variations:** double Lutz, triple Lutz.

**Neat fact:** 1962 - Donald Jackson completes first-ever triple Lutz in competition.

**Axel Paulsen:** The skater takes off from the forward outside edge of the skate, completes 1 1/2 revolutions in the air and lands on the back outside edge of the opposite foot. Named after its originator.

**Variations:** double Axel, triple Axel, inside Axel, one-foot Axel.

**Neat fact:** Canada's Vern Taylor became the first skater to land a triple Axel in competition at the 1978 World Championships in Ottawa.

#### Spins

There are three main categories of spins:

- the upright spin
- the camel spin
- the sit spin

There are many variations within each of these categories.

**Upright Spin:** A spin where a skater's body stays more or less vertical to the ice. This category includes one-foot spins, backspins, cross foot spins, and the layback spin. The layback spin is a spin primarily performed by female skaters (though more men are performing this difficult spin today) where the back is arched and the free leg is drawn up slightly.

**Variations** include the Bielman position (the skater catches the blade of the free foot in their hands and pulls the free-leg up over their head) and sideways leaning spin in which the skater arches to one side while maintaining an upright position.

**Sit Spin:** As the name indicates a sit spin is classified as any spin in which the skater's body is located close to the ice and the skating knee is bent to allow the skater to appear to be 'sitting'.

**Variations** include flying sit, flying change sit, sit change sit spin and more.

**Camel Spin:** A spin position in which the skater's body is horizontal to the ice except for the leg on which they are spinning.

**Variations** on this spin include a flying camel (change foot in air prior to start of spin) and death-drop (a dramatic flying entry). To increase the difficulty of a camel spin skaters will often perform a forward camel spin on an outside edge, or a back camel on an inside edge. Arm and leg position variations also increase the difficulty of spins and can be very effective from an aesthetic standpoint.

## Pairs Skating Terms

### Pair Lifts

The International Skating Union (ISU) has categorized all pair lifts into six different categories, according to degree of difficulty.

- [Group 1](#) - Armpit lifts
- [Group 2](#) - Waist lifts
- [Group 3](#) - Hand to hand lifts
- [Group 4](#) - Hip lifts
- [Group 5](#) - Hand to hand lasso-type lifts
- [Group 6](#) - One hand lasso lifts

On all lifts you should watch for speed of entry and exit, control of the female's free leg on the exit of the lift (high and sweeping is the ultimate goal!), position of the female in the air, the male's footwork (a clean, smooth series of mohawks), quick and easy changes of position (if applicable) and maintenance of flow throughout the lift.

### Group 1 - Armpit Lifts

The lifts with the armpit hand hold position are the easiest type of existing lifts. The male places one hand under one arm of the female in the armpit. The female places one hand on the male's shoulder. The male grips the female's other hand with his free hand, to assume the hold. The arm of the male that is in the armpit position of the female is to be fully extended. The following lifts belong to this group: Lutz lift, Flip lift, Axel lift, One arm toe lift.

### Group 2 - Waist Lifts

The lifts with waist hold position are more difficult than the lifts in the armpit group. The male places both hands on the female's waist and she, in turn, places both hands on his wrists or shoulders. This lift is more difficult as the male is required to extend both arms. Attention should be paid to the position the female assumes throughout the lift. The head should be held high, the back should be straight and a good extension of the legs is desirable. The following lifts belong to this group: Waist Loop lift, Platter lift.

The **platter lift** is a lift in which the male raises his partner overhead, with hands resting on her hips. She is horizontal to the ice, facing behind in platter position. It is sometimes referred to as a tabletop lift. The female releasing her grip on her partner's wrists increases degree of difficulty within the lift. Females should strive to obtain an arch in the back and an aesthetically pleasing leg position.

### Group 3 - Hand to Hand Lifts

The lifts with hand to hand hold are more difficult than the previous waist lifts. Both hands of the male and female are clasped. The partners' face each other in the closed lift position with hand to hand grip, or the male is behind the female with the same grip. The following lifts belong to this group: Pressure lift, hand to hand loop lift.

The **pressure lift** is a lift in which the male is skating backwards and the female is skating forwards, facing each other. Both hands of each partner are clasped. The female jumps straight up over the head of the male, the arms of each partner fully extended. This is generally the first full-extension lift that pair teams learn. Variations on the pressure lift include a roll-up entry or an entry where the male is skating forwards and the female is skating backwards.

The **hand to hand loop lift** is a lift in which the male raises his partner, who is in front of him and facing in the same direction, above his head. She remains facing the same direction in sitting position with her hands behind her while her partner supports her from her hands. The female should take-off for this lift from one foot, on a back outside edge (like a loop jump). There are many possible variations of the female's leg position.

#### **Group 4 - Hand to Hand Hip Lifts**

The lifts with hand to hip hold are of the fourth degree of difficulty. The male places one hand on the female's hip, and takes her other hand in his free hand. The female's free hand is placed on the male's shoulder. The following lifts belong to this group: Star (or cartwheel) lift, toe loop hip lift, one arm toe loop hip lift.

The **Star lift** is a lift in which the male raises his partner from his side, by her hip, into the air. The basic position of the female is a scissor- position with either one hand touching his shoulder or in a hands-free position. The releasing of grips increases degree of difficulty in a star lift. Isabelle Brasseur and Lloyd Eisler made the no-hand star lift famous; in this lift Lloyd lifted Isabelle into the star lift position, with one hand placed on her hip and no other point of contact.

#### **Group 5 - Hand to Hand Lasso Type Lifts**

The lifts of the hand to hand Lasso type holds represent the fifth degree of difficulty in pair lifting. The difference between the hand to hand pressure lifts and these lifts is that in hand to hand lasso type lifts, the female rotates on her way to the top of the lift. The same is also, generally, true for the dismount. What makes this type of lift difficult is that a good portion of the lift is pressed to the top with the use of only one arm of the man. The added torque created by the rotation of the female to the top of the lift also adds difficulty to these lifts, in particular on the Lasso lift. The lifts belonging to this group include: toe overhead lift, step overhead lift, Lasso lift

**Toe overhead lift:** A lift in which the female is lifted after a toe assist from one side of the male's body behind his head to a raised position. She is facing the same direction as the male in a split position.

**Step overhead lift:** Same as above, except there is no assistance from the female's toe pick on the take-off.

**The Lasso lift** is the most difficult of the hand to hand Lasso type lifts. When it is properly done, the female will take-off from a clean forward outside edge, directly beside the male, rotate one full rotation around the male, and end up on top of the lift facing the same direction as the male. Many skaters when attempting this lift rotate almost to backwards, prior to taking off for the lift. When this occurs, they are no longer performing a Lasso lift, but a step overhead. The Lasso lift take-off should resemble that of an Axel jump.

The degree of difficulty on all hand to hand Lasso type lifts is increased by the position of the lady, changes in position during the lift, release of grip, variation in dismount. Some common variations include a reverse star position, step through, change to platter. Teams will often also include flip or toss dismounts from the overhead lifts. Any flip or toss dismount can add difficulty to a lift, so long as it is cleanly executed and well controlled throughout the movement and into the landing.

#### **Group 6 - One Hand Lasso Type Lifts**

The one hand Lasso type lifts represent the sixth degree of difficulty in pair lifts. The beginning of the lift is as in the previous group of lifts. When the female reaches full extension the partners release one hand at the top of the lift and continue the lift with one hand only. All one hand Lasso type lifts are included in this group.

### **Other Pair Moves**

#### **Twist Lifts**

Sometimes the most thrilling and exciting component in pair skating, twist lifts can also be the most difficult to perform correctly. The **Double split twist lift** is a mandatory element in the short program at all levels (Pre-Novice to Senior). Details to be watched for on this element are: speed on entry and exit, split position attained by female on her way to the top of the twist lift, height, clean rotation, clean catch by the male (two hands at the female's waist), no collapse of female on male on the way down, one-foot exit (both partners).

In the **Split twist lift**, both partners skate backwards in a hip lift position, the male behind the female. The female reaches back with her free leg, and picks to assist in the take-off (like a Lutz jump). The female is then lifted by the male for half a revolution, at which time she attains the split position. The male then releases the female, at which time she completes the necessary rotation (1/2, 1 1/2, 2 1/2). She is then caught by the male in the air and assisted to a smooth landing on a clean, back outside edge. There are many fine examples of excellent split twist lifts by Canadian skaters including Brasseur and Eisler and Jamie Salé and David Pelletier.

**Lateral twist:** A move in which the male throws his partner overhead. She rotates one time, or more, while in a lateral position to the ice and is caught before being set down gently on to the ice. 1984 World Champions Barb Underhill and Paul Martini were known for this element, as were Brasseur and Eisler who completed a triple lateral twist!

### Throw Jumps

Another exciting aspect of pair skating is throw jumps. In throw jumps, the male partner assists the female into flight. The height and distance that can be obtained on the different throw jumps often thrill audiences. Typically there are four different type of throw jumps that are executed: throw Axel, throw Salchow, throw toe loop, throw loop. From time to time, teams will also execute throw flip or throw Lutz jumps, though these are not that common. Teams will execute either single, double or triple throw jumps, depending on level and ability. The number of rotations, speed of entry increases degree of difficulty, and height and/or distance obtained. Two-time Canadian Champions Kristy Sargeant and Kris Wirtz are known world-wide for their clean, high throws.

### Pair Spins

Pair spins differ from one another by the position (sit, camel, upright or variation thereof), the direction of the partners' free legs (the same or opposite), the skating leg (the same or opposite) and by the catching holds (only one partner or both hold each other with different grips).

Spins may be commenced from the edge of the spinning foot or after a jump.

### Some common spin positions to look for:

- upright waltz spin (partners facing each other in waltz hold)
- upright Kilian spin (partners facing the same direction, side-by-side, in Kilian hold)
- pair sit spin
- Kilian Camel spin
- Tango Camel spin
- Catch-waist camel spin

Degree of difficulty in spin elements is increased by the positions attained, speed of revolution, number of revolutions and number of changes of position. Teams should strive to maintain a constant speed throughout the spin, and execute clean changes to new positions. Spins should also be centered, with aesthetically pleasing lines.

### Death Spirals

Death spirals are a circular move in which the male lowers his partner to the ice while she is arched backwards gliding on one foot. The female holds the male's hand while he rotates her in a circle with her head almost touching the ice surface. The male must be in a correct pivot position for this element to be executed properly. There are four variations on the death spiral: forward inside, forward outside, backward inside, backward outside. It is generally accepted that the forward inside is the easiest of the four, and the forward outside is the most difficult. This will vary though according to each team's strengths and abilities.

At the entry-levels of pair skating, teams will often execute an upright spiral figure rather than a death spiral. In this spiral figure the male is in correct pivot position, while the female rotates around him in an upright spiral position. Again there are four variations: forward inside, forward outside, backward inside, backward outside.

**Neat fact:** At the 1948 World Championships, pair team Suzanne Morrow and Wallace Distelmeyer performed the first low death spiral in international competition.

## Synchronized Skating Terms

**Assisted Jump:** A jump of not more than one (1) revolution, in which a skater(s) provides passive assistance to another skater(s) in a non-supportive role. The take off must be done by the skater who jumps. In this action there is a continuous ascending and descending movement. The hands of the skater(s) providing the passive assistance must not be raised higher than the shoulders.

**Configuration (Arrangement/Form):** A configuration is the arrangement and/or form of the element. A change in arrangement means that the skaters must change the members beside whom they skate. A change in form means that the number of lines in an element must change (e.g. block).

**Dance Jump:** A small jump or a rotational type movement of not more than one-half (1/2) revolution during which both feet leave the ice.

**Free Skating Movements:** Free Skating movements such as lunges, spirals, Ina Bauers, spread eagles.

**Highlighting:** An element in which a skater(s) performs a movement in isolation that is distracting from the performance of the rest of the team.

**Jumps:** A rotational type of movement of at least one (1) turn during which both feet leave the ice. Jumps of not more than one (1) revolution are permitted.

**Lifts in Synchronized Skating:** An action in which skater(s) is elevated to any height and set down. During the action, the lifting skater(s) must not raise both hands higher than their head. Any rotations and/or positions and changes of positions during the lift are permitted except sitting or lying on the lifting skater(s) shoulder or back. The lifting skater may rotate but not more than one and a half revolutions. Lifts should enhance the music chosen and express its character, but not be a display of acrobatics. These lifts are permitted in senior free skating only. Acrobatic lifts are defined as moves in which the skater is held by the blade(s), foot (feet), leg(s), or arm(s) and swung around or any lift where the lifted skater(s) is in a vertical sustained position with the head down. These or other such actions which display sheer feats of strength are not permitted.

**Movements in Isolation:** Movements in isolation are elements where some skaters are isolated from the rest of the team. These movements must show a relationship to the overall elements and enhance the musical interpretation. Movements in isolation (provided these movements are not illegal movements) such as short spins, jumps, spirals etc. and other unique or innovative movements are allowed in free skating only.

**Moves in the Field:** This is a sequence of movements which may include spirals, arabesques, spread eagles, Ina Bauers and flowing moves with strong edges, which can be connected with linking steps and step sequences.

**Spin:** A spinning movement with more than one revolution performed on one foot on the spot.

**Spiral:** A spiral is a glide on long edges in arabesque position in which the free leg is held equal to or higher than hip levels.

**Step Sequence:** A combination/series of different turns and steps such as three turns, brackets, counters, rockers, mohawks, choctaws, changes of edge, chasses, etc.

**Sub-grouping:** A subordinate or smaller group(s) without close relationship to the rest of the team: a division of the team into several smaller groups.

**Transition:** A passage between elements. In the Short Program, transitions necessary to link the required elements are permitted provided they cover less than half of the ice surface.

**Twizzle:** A traveling turn on one foot with one or more rotations which is quickly rotated with a continuous (uninterrupted) action. The weight remains on the skating foot with the free foot in any position during the turn then placed beside the skating foot to skate the next step.