

## From the Judges Perspective: Tips from the Judge

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Most judges are former skaters who still enjoy being actively involved in the sport. They want everyone to skate well and have fun in spite of their serious expressions of concentration! Judges don't always agree, but there are a few things that they would all like to see included in your program.

Your goal should be to demonstrate a well-balanced program that includes a variety of jumps, several spins, footwork, spirals and strong edges. Jumps only count for a portion of your total score and only cleanly landed jumps will qualify.

***It's best to include only jumps that you have consistently mastered, as you will not be given credit for falls or jumps that were not complete. You and your coach may agree to include one risky jump that you have recently learned, but that should be the limit.***

Judges look for spins that are well centered and have good speed. Advanced skaters need to include three spins, one of which should be a flying spin and another should be a combination of positions. Strong edges spirals and footwork, not just forward or backward crossovers, should connect your elements.

When you are judged, you'll be given two marks. The first is the technical merit mark that includes all the elements you successfully completed as well as your speed and sureness throughout your program. The second mark is for your presentation. This mark is equally important and counts for half of your total score.

For the presentation mark, the judges will consider how well you skated your program with the music. They will pay attention to your choreography and how well you demonstrate good timing and expression. Very often when the technical difficulty of the skaters is similar, the skaters with the best interpretation will place higher.

If you find, when the results are posted, that you received a variety of ordinals, it means the skaters in the group were equally matched and the event was difficult to judge. Your goal should be to skate your best performance and not worry about what the other skaters are doing. Don't be discouraged if you make mistakes, a strong finish can make a positive impression.

Be confident and proud of yourself and it will show in your skating. Good luck and have a great time on the ice!