



BASIC SKILLS MANUAL



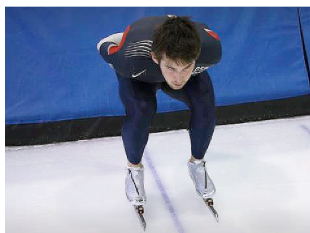


» BASIC POSITION

- Ankles straight, not carving in or leaning out
- Skates shoulder width apart
- Blades parallel and pointing straight ahead
- Knees over toes
- Legs bent about 90°
- Elbows on knees with hands clasped
- Back bent at least 45° in a relaxed position
- Center of gravity over middle of blade
- Head and eyes straight ahead looking at a point about 10 feet in front



Basic Position – Side



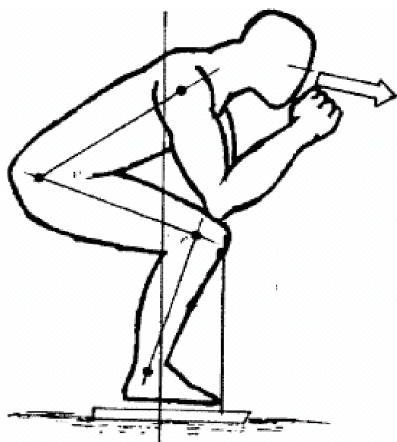
Basic Position – Front



Basic Position – Arms on back

**This is the basic building block which all speedskating skills are built upon.
Try to focus on one or two points at a time while on the ice to avoid overwhelming beginner skaters.*

DRILLS - BASIC POSITION



- **Basic Position Static Sit:** have skater assume Basic Position and then make corrections. Limit time on this drill as it can be too demanding. Concentrate on one main point at a time.
- **Basic Position Glide:** take a few steps and glide down the ice in Basic Position. Check for skates parallel and ankles and knees straight.
- **Basic Position Rock:** start with the Basic Position Glide, then have the skater rock forward and backward with all of their body weight. The goal is to find the most stable, powerful position for the skaters' center of gravity.



» BASIC POSITION - PUSH TO SIDE

- Complete extension of the leg directly to the side
- Blades parallel and pointing straight ahead before ankle extension
- **Nose, knee and toe** of supporting leg aligned
- No weight on extended leg
- Good balance with supporting leg bent about 90°
- Center of gravity directly over the supporting leg



Basic Position – Push to side

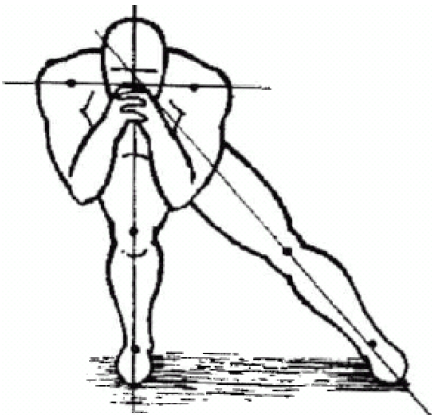


Basic Position – Push to side



Basic Position – Push to side

DRILLS - PUSH TO SIDE



- **Straightaway Extension:** assume Basic Position with one leg extended straight to the side. Work on one major point at a time.
- **Straightaway Extension and Lift:** assume Straightaway Extension position and have the skaters lift extended leg off the ice. Skater will be able to lift the extended leg without falling to the side.
- **Straightaway Extension and Glide:** take a few steps and glide on flat part of blade in Basic Position with one leg extended straight to the side.
- **Straightaway Extension, Glide & Lift:** glide on flat part of blade in Basic Position with one leg extended straight to the side. Lift extended foot keeping it low to the ice.



» **BASIC STRAIGHTAWAY PUSH**

- All body weight is on the pushing leg
- Legs come close together
- Body is leaning into the push as legs come together
- Push is directly to the side and shifts the center of gravity
- Weight is on the pushing leg until it is transferred to the other leg at the end of the push



All body weight is on the pushing leg

DRILLS - STRAIGHTAWAY PUSH

- **Push the Boards** – hold onto the hockey boards and practice leaning with their shoulders on the boards. Make sure body stays parallel
- **Low and Slow** – skate in a “S” like pattern slowly in a low position to exaggerate the feeling of pressure on the pushing leg
- **Power Straights** – skate straightaways emphasizing the timing of all of the points of the push



Straightaway push sequence



»» ARM SWINGS

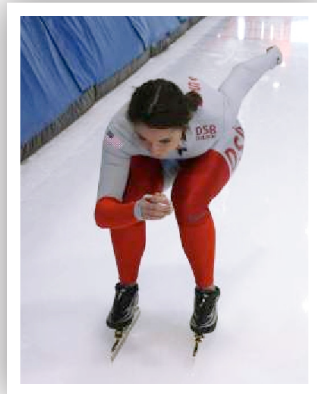
- Swing straight back and forth
- No higher than the skaters back on the backswing.
- Directly in front of the nose in front
- Relaxed but controlled
- Slight bend in elbow at the front
- Synchronized with pushes



Arm swings - side

DRILLS - ARM SWINGS

- **Basic Position Arm Swings** – assume Basic Position and then swing arms
- **Basic Position Glide With Arm Swings** – take a few steps, glide and assume Basic Position and swing arms

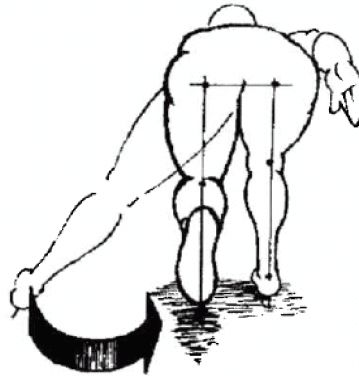
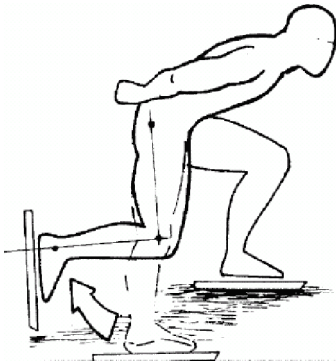
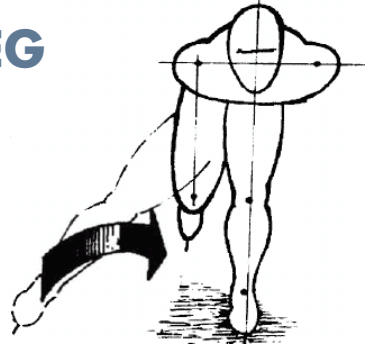


Arm swings - front



» **PUSH** RECOVERY LEG

- Relax leg and let it swing behind in a circular motion
- Continue circular motion to drive knee back to starting position
- Tendency is for the skater's legs to come straight back together. Emphasize creating a circle with knee and foot during recovery



DRILLS - PUSH RECOVERY LEG

- **Hold the Boards** - face the boards in basic position holding on with both hands. Practice leg recovery while holding on for balance
- **Basic Position Recovery Glide** - practice extending and recovering leg while gliding in Basic Position
- **Low and Slow** - skate straightaways low and slow emphasizing recovery stroke



Push recovery leg - front and side



» BASIC TURN POSITION

- Same as basic straightaway position, except that entire body should lean in towards the center of the turn
- Pressure should be on the outside edge of the left skate and the inside edge of the right skate
- Head and shoulders should follow the line of the corner
- No shoulder rotation



Basic turn position

DRILLS - BASIC TURN POSITION

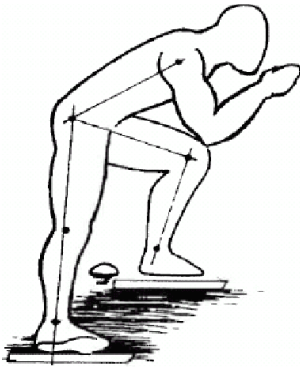
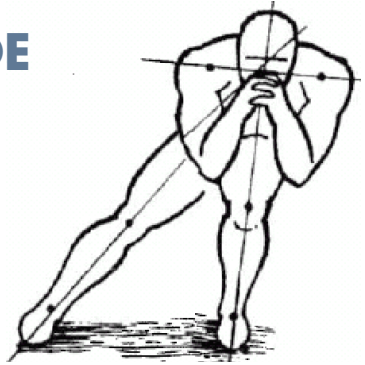


- **Form the Circle** – Have the skaters form a large circle and assume the Basic Position
- **Glide Around the Circle** – Take a few steps and glide around the circle in Basic Position
- **Alternate Pressure** – Glide around the circle in Basic Position, slowly alternating body weight and pressure between both legs
- **Tighten the Circle** – As the skaters improve, tighten the circle so the skaters can experience the feeling of leaning into the corner



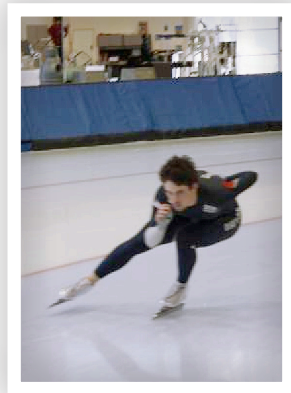
» **BASIC PUSH TO SIDE IN TURN**

- Same principle as the straightaway stride except for slight inside lean of the body
- Pressure should be on the outside edge of the left skate and the inside edge of the right skate
- All bodyweight should be on the supporting leg



DRILLS - PUSH TO SIDE IN TURN

- **Right Leg Extension in the Turn** – Form a circle and have the skaters first assume the Basic Turn Position. Then have them extend their right leg fully to the side keeping their nose, knee and toe in alignment over the left leg as they glide around the circle
- **Left Leg Extension in the Turn** – Cross right leg over left leg. Hold and glide with left leg extended and nose, knee and toe in alignment over the right leg. Blades should be parallel as the skater glides around the circle
- **Tighten the Circle** - As the skaters improve, tighten the circle so the skaters can experience the feeling of leaning into the corner



Push to side in turn



» START COMMANDS

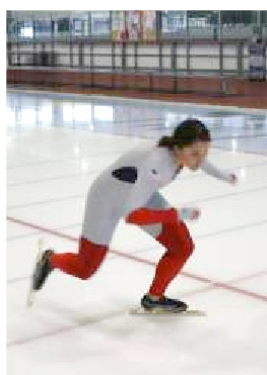
- Skaters approach the line, beginning behind Pre-start line when the starter blows his whistle
- **“Go to the Start”** – on this command, the starter asks skaters to step up to the starting line
- **“Ready”** – on this command, the starter asks the skaters to take their ready position at the starting line to wait for the gun
- **“Bang”** – the starter shoots the gun and the skaters are off
- The race will not begin until all the skaters are still in their ready position with their blades completely behind the starting line
- **“False Start”** – skaters are allowed one false start before being disqualified. A “False Start” could result from starting before the gun, stepping over the line, arriving late for a race, or not following the starter’s commands



Approaching the line



“Go to the start”



“Bang!”



“Ready”



» **BASIC START POSITION**

- **“Go to the start”** – skaters approach the line with their feet shoulder width apart and their body at a 45 degree angle in relation to the starting line
- **“Ready”** – skaters assume the Ready Position:
 - Knees bent 90-120 degrees
 - Back bent about 45 degrees
 - Leading arm in front and bent at the elbow
 - Trailing arm loosely extended behind
 - Weight distributed so that slightly more weight is on the front foot
 - Eyes directed forward
 - Skater should be in a stable, athletic position ready to spring



Ready position



» BASIC START POSITION (continued)

- **“Bang”** – skaters take off from the line
 - *First step*
 1. Drive off back foot
 2. Front foot raised and placed 45 degrees from the starting line
 - The first steps off the line are quick and powerful
 - Mainly pushing back with front foot placed at a 45 degree angle



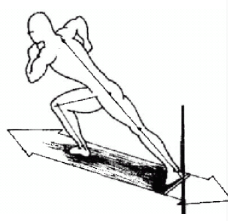
First step - front view



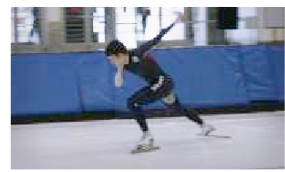
First step - side view

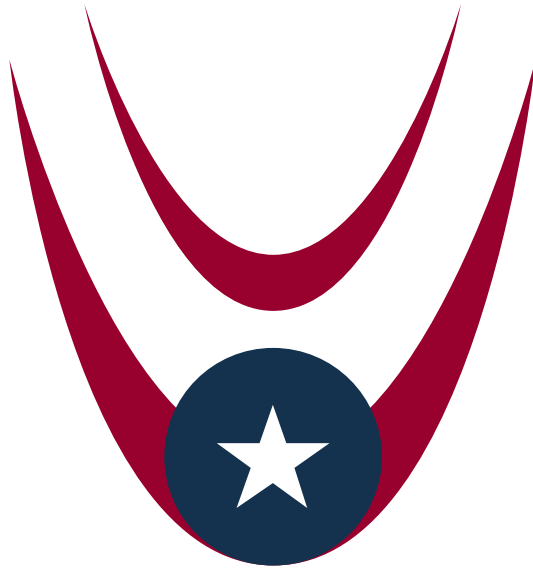


Second step - front view



Second step - side view





US SPEEDSKATING

www.usspeedskating.org

For more information contact:
Chris Weaver, Sports Development & Event Coordinator
cweaver@usspeedskating.com