



WHEELCHAIR USERS ICE SKATING COACHING RESOURCE



Let's Skate is an exciting project from British Ice Skating funded by Sport England, which will deliver opportunities for disabled people to get involved in ice skating – whether that's skating on the ice, volunteering, coaching or officiating.

We will be supporting rinks across the UK to deliver inclusive ice skating sessions, led by qualified coaches. British Ice Skating will showcase the impact of the Let's Skate project to celebrate our success and inspire prospective new skaters to try ice skating; with the aim of consistently developing new opportunities for everyone to be involved in the sport.

Throughout the project we will be working with rinks, coaches, officials, volunteers and skaters to gather feedback to shape future work and help us realise our potential. Overall, we will make ice skating welcoming, safe and accessible for all – with a view to offering pathways to competition, volunteering, coaching or officiating.

You can find out more about the project at iceskating.org.uk/lets-skate

Participation statistics tell us that there is still much work to be done to support disabled people in sport. The number of disabled people taking part in sport or physical activity is significantly lower across all age groups than the overall population.

Inspire and motivate disabled people to continue to play sport and take part in physical activity with the help of this advice:

- Involve disabled people in all of your sessions.
- Recognise a disabled athlete as an individual, not an impairment.
- Have a shared vision with your participants in terms of coaching goals and expectations.
- Communicate and work together to achieve their goals.
- Talk to your disabled participants about their impairment to plan effective coaching sessions and adapt practices.
- Know the sport you coach. Have a passion to develop yourself as a coach.

This resource has been put together by British Ice Skating in collaboration with Wheelpower to support coaches in successfully coaching wheelchair users.

WHEELCHAIR USERS COACHING RESOURCE:

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WheelPower

British Wheelchair Sport



1 GENERAL INFORMATION ON WHEELCHAIR USERS

While there are common characteristics for this impairment, every manual wheelchair user is different and it is recommended you ask the participants before the session what coaching considerations may apply to them.

- Be aware and minimise risk of common injuries from propelling the wheelchair such as blisters, abrasions and lacerations.
- Check participants' range of movement; they may, for example, find it difficult to raise their arms above their head.
- There is a common assumption that if a participant is in a wheelchair, they cannot bear weight on their legs. Participants may be able to bear weight, depending on their impairment.
- Participants may tire easily during a session due to their lack of motor skill efficiency.
- Participants may struggle with temperature regulation – both hot and cold. For example, a tetraplegic (quadriplegic) may not be able to perspire and will, therefore, require water to be sprayed on them to avoid overheating.
- There may be a decrease in a participant's range of movement due to, for example, a rod in the spine.
- Participants may have a decreased breathing efficiency due to only their diaphragm supporting their breathing (tetraplegic/quadruplegic).
- If transferring to a different wheelchair or sporting equipment (throwing frame/handcycle), participants should do this independently or with the help of a parent/guardian/personal assistant, or with a trained individual. With higher levels of impairment, a hoist may be required for transfer.
- If participants are not using a sports wheelchair, they may not have an anti-tip system fitted to their chair. If this is an option on their chair, ensure it is fitted. If no anti-tip is fitted, reduce the risk of the chair tipping back during an activity (eg by reducing speed and quick turns) as this may cause head injuries.

2 FIVE THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN COACHING WHEELCHAIR USERS

Treat all participants as an individual, just as you would with non-disabled participants. Here are some additional considerations to bear in mind when supporting wheelchair users to feel more welcome, comfortable, and confident in your sessions:

1

Only a very small percentage of wheelchair users cannot mobilise without their wheelchair. Help your participant to make their own choices of if/when they want to use it. Do not assume.

2

Some wheelchair users consider their wheelchairs to be part of their personal space so you should avoid touching or resting on it, as you would avoid touching or resting on an individual.

3

When talking to a wheelchair user, do so from a position that is comfortable for both of you – sitting on a chair at the same eye level as the other person is often the simplest way.

4

Do not move someone in their wheelchair without asking them first.

5

Do not hang your coat or bag on the back of someone's wheelchair.

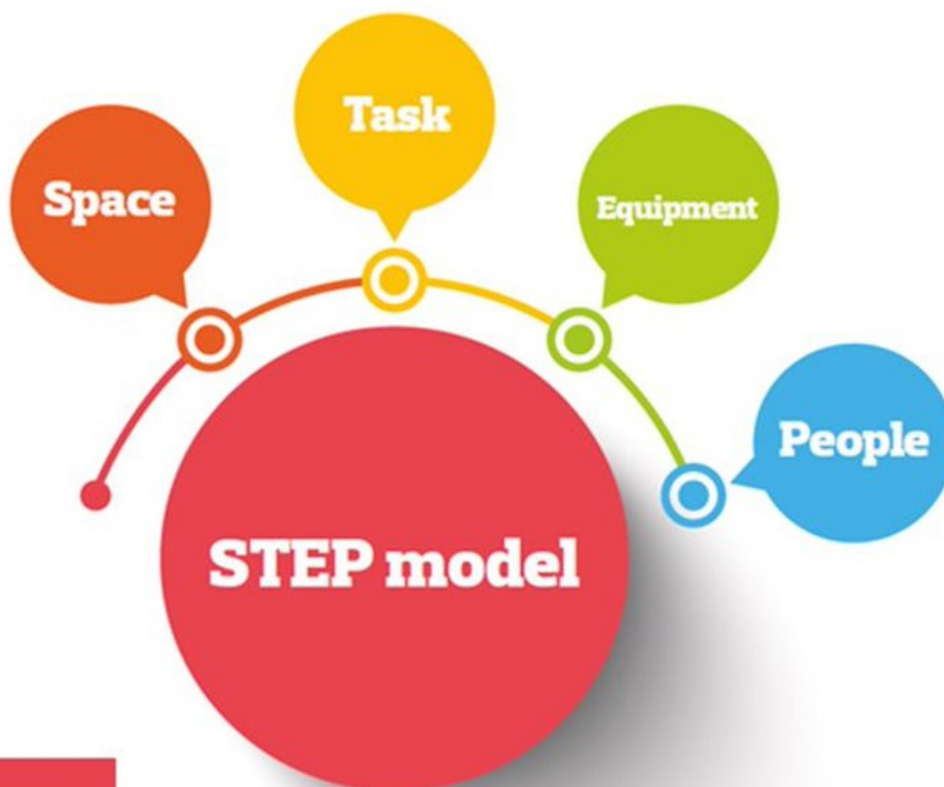
3 ADAPTING A SESSION FOR A WHEELCHAIR USER (STEP MODEL)

Advice on how to adapt sessions using the STEPS principle:

The STEPS principle (Space, Task, Equipment, People and Safety) provides guidance on how to make your sessions more inclusive.

Every coach should modify their areas of focus according to the skills, abilities and needs of the individuals in the group. The STEPS framework will help you do just that, with the five letters representing these explicit areas of focus.

Some adaptations and safety considerations are given below that, put into practice, will allow manual wheelchair users to feel included in sessions.



Space

Change the space in which the activity is taking place...
e.g. larger / smaller...
different shape?

Task

Change the type of activity taking place
e.g. rules / roles for everyone or individuals

Equipment

Change the type / size of equipment being used
e.g. smaller / larger ball...

People

Change the people who are involved
e.g. number of taggers / defenders

4 SKATE UK DISPENSATION MODEL

British Ice Skating Association is committed, as a service provider, to promoting Equality within Ice Skating, eliminating unfair discrimination. We believe that Equality is defined by the terms fairness, justice, inclusion and respect for diversity.

It is about making sure that everyone has an equal chance to participate in and contribute to the aspects of ice skating that interest them, and that no one is discriminated against unfairly for any reason, including – but not limited to – sex, gender, race, disability, age, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, social background, ethnic origin, language, marital or civil partnership status or pregnancy.

Sports Equality is also about recognising and acknowledging that inequalities do exist in sport, taking positive and proactive steps to overcome these inequalities, and making sure that any barriers standing in the way of people who are traditionally not involved in ice skating are removed.

The Dispensation Model, developed in collaboration with Activity Alliance and built into British Ice Skating's learn to skate program Skate UK, is a key part of our commitment to building Sports Equality. It's designed to make ice skating more accessible for people with disabilities.



**Find out more
about Skate UK:
iceskating.org.uk/skateuk**

Examples of the dispensation pathways options for learning Skate UK skills:

Exercise	Dispensation A (Reduced skill)	Dispensation B (Aided)	Dispensation C (Combined)
1. MOVING FORWARD	Move forward half distance (i.e half width of rink surface instead of full width)	Move forward aided (i.e full width of rink)	Both A & B
2. MOVING FORWARD (10 steps) & TWO-FOOT GLIDE (with dip)	Move forward 5 steps with a half dip (reduced dip movement)	Move forward 10 steps & two foot glide (with dip) aided	Both A & B
3. SIT & STAND INDEPENDENTLY	Stand up only (coach to place skater down on ice)	Sit & stand aided	Both A & B
4. STATIONARY SNOWPLOUGH STOP	Use only one foot instead of two to show an understanding of a sliding technique	Stationary snowplough holding onto barrier, skating aid etc (aided)	Both A & B
5. MOVING SNOWPLOUGH STOP	Use only one foot instead of two and reduced stopping technique and distance (as long as the skater stops)	Moving snowplough aided	Both A & B
6. MOVING FORWARD (10 steps) & TWO-FOOT GLIDE INTO A FORWARD LEMON	Move forward 5 steps with reduced lemon shape	Move forward 10 steps & two foot glide into lemon shape aided	Both A & B

5 MEET THE LET'S SKATE TEAM

The Let's Skate team is here to support people on their journey into ice skating – we are dedicated to making the sport more accessible for everyone. Please get in touch if you require further support or have any questions:
letsskate@iceskating.org.uk.



Finally, if you have any feedback on something you have experienced within the project, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will work together to create a better environment for all.



ANDREW HIBBERD
EDI & COMMUNITY LEAD



KEITH HUDSON
SKATE UK LEAD



MILLIE KELMAN-JOHNS
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (EDI)



DAN RODENBY
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (EDI)