

Caring for your Blades

When you have finished skating

ALWAYS wipe your blades well to dry them. Use two cloths (sometimes called skate rags) if necessary, to make sure that they are dry. Dry all the area under your boots.

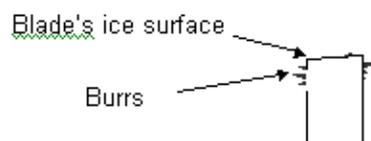
Rub your blades (just the blade) with an oily cloth. This should be a non absorbant cloth, such as a piece of canvas. You can use WD40 or any other oil on this cloth.

When you store your blades, keep them in skate guards, preferably lined with newspaper (to absorb moisture). If you store them for a long time, wrap them in a tea towel and hold the ends together with rubber bands.

Why do your blades need sharpening?

When you skate, the bottom area of your blade (the part that touches the ice) becomes uneven and develops burrs along the side. This slows you down.

Bad blade:

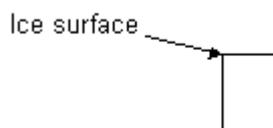


What is the aim of sharpening them?

The aim is to make the surface that touches the ice flat, straight and smooth with no burrs along the side.

When you sharpen your blades you are really creating a new surface to skate on. This means that your skating blade will eventually wear down to nothing. This will take a long time.

Good blade:



What equipment do I need?

Jig

To do an effective job, you will need a jig to hold the blades firmly while you sharpen them.

Sharpening stones

You will need
a rough sharpening stone
a smaller burr stone and
a polishing stone, such as a ceramic stone.

Do I need to look after the stones?

Yes. You certainly do!

If you damage them, such as chip them or break them, you can't use them any more.

When not in use, keep your stones wrapped in an old cloth.

Clean them with oil from time to time.

Find a tool box or similar to keep them in.

Don't put oil on a ceramic or diamond stone.

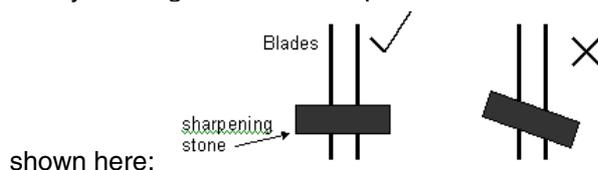
Sharpening your blades

Set your skates in the jig

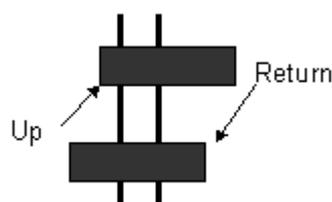
- Put your blades in the jig with the back of the blades resting against the stopper.
- Secure the blades in the jig by tightening the wing nut.
- Check that the skating surface of each blade is level with the other. Use a spirit level to check this. (You can buy a spirit level for approximately \$3.00 from a variety store.)
- Put some baby oil on your stones before using them.

Create your new skating surface

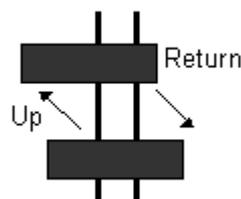
- Take your roughest stone and place it on the blades at a 90° angle to the blades as



- Using some pressure, run the stone diagonally to the top of the blades.
- Then bring the stone back in the same direction.



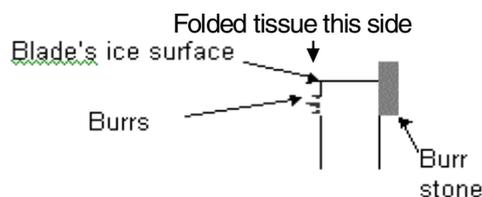
- Now repeat, running the stone diagonally up the blade, but in the opposite direction.



- Use an even pressure on the blade as you go up and down. If you push harder on the front than the back, you won't get a flat straight surface.
- Keep repeating the left, right, strokes until you can feel a burr when you run your finger nail up and down the edge of the blade. Be careful when you do this! You will soon get to know how many diagonal strokes you will need to make to get the burr.
- When you feel the burr, do ten even strokes straight up and down the blade to get all the grooves facing in the same direction.

Remove the burr

- Run your burr stone firmly down each side of the blade in one direction until all the burr is gone. Use a folded tissue on the opposite side of the burr stone to avoid cutting your finger.



Refine the surface

- Once the burr has been removed, repeat the **Create your new skating surface** and **Remove the burr** steps.

Polishing

- If you have one, finish off your new surface with a polishing stone i.e. a ceramic stone.