

Roller Skating

Area: Dry Sport **Category:** Operations

Introduction

Roller skating is the travelling on surfaces with roller skates. It is a form of recreational activity as well as a sport and can also be a form of transportation. There are many different forms of roller skating, including, freestyle skating, roller hockey, roller derby, roller disco, artistic skating, group skating and speed skating.

This guidance note aims to provide some key points and information to assist operators in awareness and implementing best practice associated with roller skating. This guidance gives broad overview of roller skating, however, mainly covers the delivery of roller skating within an indoor rink setting. It does not cover other forms of skating such as skateboarding or the physical management of skate parks.

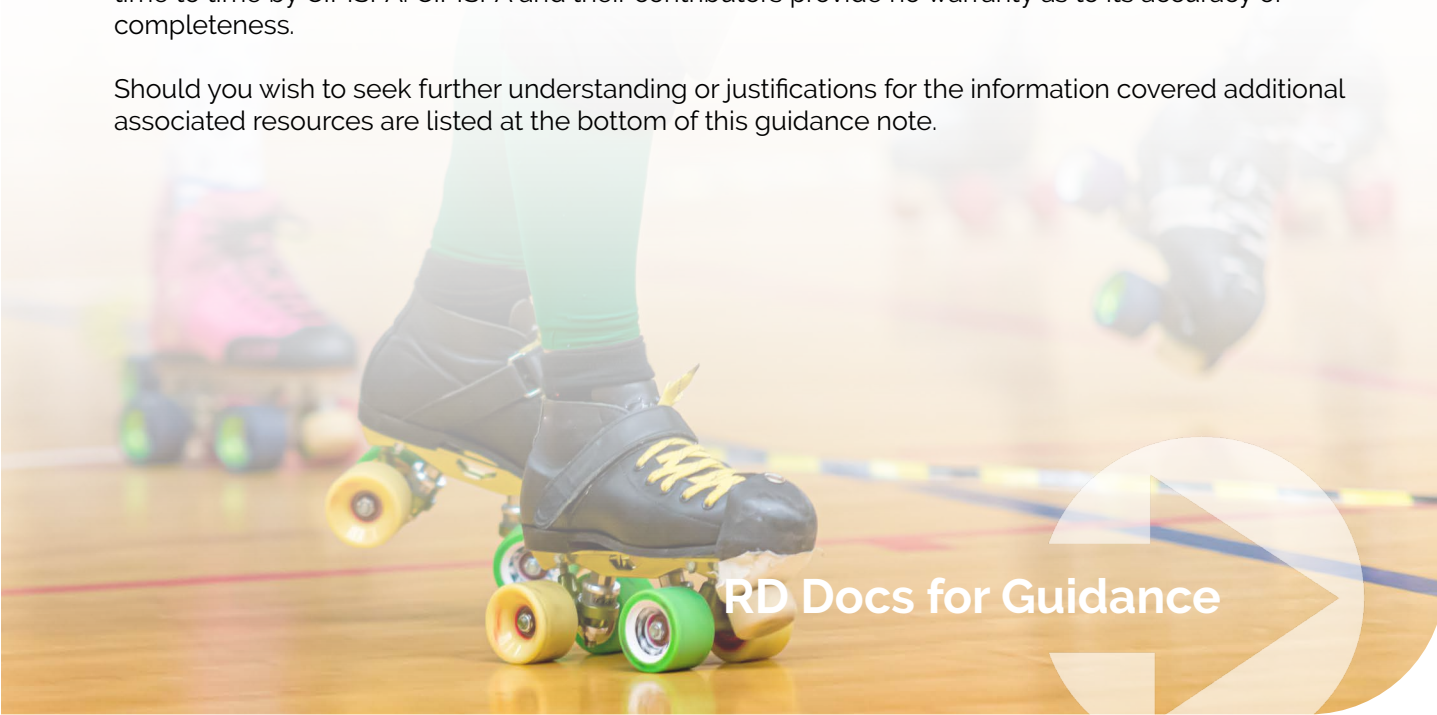
How to use the guidance notes

Operators have a legal requirement to manage health and safety. Employers must protect the 'health, safety and welfare' at work of all their employees, as well as others on their premises. This guide has been produced to help operators do this.

If the content of this guidance note relates to operations within your facility it is recommended you review your risk assessments, policies, procedures and training to ensure the content provided has been considered.

The guidance provided is not intended to be exhaustive and will be reviewed and added to from time to time by CIMSPA. CIMSPA and their contributors provide no warranty as to its accuracy or completeness.

Should you wish to seek further understanding or justifications for the information covered additional associated resources are listed at the bottom of this guidance note.



RD Docs for Guidance

This guidance note covers:

- Hazards and risks
- Safe set up
 - Flooring
 - Skates
 - Protective equipment
 - External hire of facilities for roller skating.
- Operational standards
 - Rink occupancy
 - Admission policies
 - Personal attire
 - Pregnancy
 - Communication of standards
- Maintenance, checks and inspections
- Supervision and training
 - Supervision of the rink
 - Roller skating coaching
- Emergency procedures and first aid

Hazards and Risks

Roller Skating can be inherently dangerous. Hazards can include slips and trips, collision with other participants and equipment, incorrect handling and injuries due to poor maintenance. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment should be undertaken before the activities take place.

Safe set up

Many facilities will not have purpose-built skating rinks and therefore consideration needs to be given to ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for roller skating to take place. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment should be completed when doing this.

When setting up a skating rink the following should be considered:

- Access and egress including emergency access routes
- Entrance and exit routes from the rink
- Any objects, fixtures and fittings skaters could fall into
- An appropriate seating/resting area
- Skate hire location
- Marking out the rink area, without causing trip hazards. Barrier systems where possible should ideally be used.

Flooring

The best type of flooring for roller skating is maple hardwood. Maple wood floors have much more grip, are smoother and are more durable. They also hold up better in humidity and are very easy to maintain. Sports halls with wooden floors (at least three badminton courts in size) offer a suitable space for roller skating to take place. Consultation with the floor manufacturer is recommended before use to ensure roller skating does not cause damage.

Skates

There are various types of skates used to partake in different roller-skating activities. All skates must have a braking mechanism fitted to the front if the wheels are in a quad formation and to the back if the wheels are in an inline formation. It is recommended that they conform to 'BS EN 13899:2003 Roller sports equipment. Roller skates or BS EN 13843:2009 Roller sports equipment. Inline skates.'

Protective equipment

There is a range of protective equipment available for skaters. The requirement to wear protective equipment will ultimately be decided by the operator's risk assessment which should consider the nature of and the specific roller activity taking place, the facility arrangements and the participants.

As a minimum, it is recommended that skaters wear appropriate skates, a helmet and knee, wrist and elbow pads. This is supported by an observational study in the use of protective equipment by inline skaters. Details are provided in the additional resources section of the guidance.

Other equipment to be considered include mouthguards, body padding, toe guards and knee gaskets.

External hire of facilities for roller skating

Roller skating can be operated in a sports hall by an external contractor.

Firstly, you need to establish that the external contractor has a good track record and is competent.

Checks should include:

- references
- safety and safeguarding policies and procedures
- stewarding and supervision policy
- skate maintenance policy
- insurance

Once the contractor is appointed, the issues to consider include:

- 1) Check with the event operator regarding their policy on protective gear. Many disco organisers strongly advise it should be worn. The activity is not within the control of National Roller Skating or the Federation of Artistic Roller Skating.
- 2) Numbers will need to be closely controlled to allow adequate space. Agree a working capacity for the space, possibly based on the guidance for ice rinks at 2m² per person. But this may need to be tailored depending on the competencies of the participants.
- 3) It is important to allow enough space for stewards to supervise effectively
- 4) Confirm the rules of use with the event operator, including either banning speed skating or having exclusive mini-speed skating sessions.
- 5) Active stewarding is important to control behavioral the absence of anything from British Roller Sports Federation (BRSF), the ice rink guidelines can be followed. It is suggested a minimum of two stewards (at quiet times this may be one on skate hire/music and one on the floor).
- 6) First aid provision will be required and responsibility for this must be agreed between the contractor and operator.
- 7) If you have a Granwood floor then damage is not likely to be an issue, but look out for boots with black marking front stoppers.
- 8) Ticket and admission control.

Operational Standards

Rink occupancy

Operators should, as part of the risk assessment, assess the maximum number of people who can safely be admitted onto the rink and immediate ancillary areas (skate hire, spectator seating etc.) and ensure that an effective method of control and recording numbers is in operation. Should there be a risk of the numbers being exceeded, admissions should be restricted.

Admissions are normally controlled at the point of entry into the facility/area rather than onto the rink itself. Therefore, allowance can be made in setting a maximum figure for the proportion of users likely to be off the rink at any one time using for example, seating areas. A booking system should be considered to ensure maximum numbers are not exceeded.

Guidance provided by The Ice Rink Managers Association managers can be applied to work on 2m² per skater for recreational skating. It is therefore recommended that operators, in determining maximum figures, use this formula as a starting point (for unstructured sessions).

Operational experience and assessment of the risks such as young and/or novice skaters should also be taken into account when determining occupancy figures for the rink.

In addition to this, the maximum number of customers allowed, which may include special events, may be specified in the Premises Licence or specified by the Fire Officer as part of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Admission policies

The following age policy is recommended.

- Operators should consider an age policy in line with the overall admission policy for the facility and the risk associated to the types of session taking place.
- Parents or guardians are to stay in the facility with all children under eight during courses and sessions, excluding play schemes.
- All literature and booking forms must include this Policy.
- All coaching staff must ensure parents are adhering to the Policy.

Personal attire

Personal attire should be considered, as some may constitute hazards to the wearer or other patrons. For example, hats can often be dropped on the rink and when a patron then stops to retrieve the item a 'pile-up' situation could occur.

Pregnancy

When pregnant, the centre of gravity shifts and this can affect balance and coordination during skating. This increases the risks of falling and collision. As a competent adult, it is ultimately down to the judgement of the customer, however pregnant women should be advised not to take part. The level of risk will increase as the pregnancy progresses.

Communication of standards

Any rink will be safe if users are aware of potential hazards and act responsibly. As far as is reasonably practicable, the hazards should be brought to users' attention as soon as possible. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, such as:

- Notices displayed at the entrance, in changing area and around the rink
- Availability of leaflets and to those in charge of organised groups (including school parties)
- Verbal reminders, where necessary by staff or directly over the public announcement system
- Operator websites
- Audio welcome / safety messages on CD loops
- Consideration should be given to developing a Skater's Code of Conduct which skaters agree to adhere to.

Skater's Code of Conduct - Example

By engaging in skating, both skaters and spectators are deemed to have knowledge of, and assume the risk of skating which include but are not limited to the following:

- Injuries that result from collision or contact with other skaters or other individuals who are on the skating surface
- Injuries that result from falls
- Injuries that involve objects or artificial structures that is within the properly intended path of travel of the skater

Skaters and spectators also agree to:

- Maintain reasonable control of his/her speed at all times
- Maintain a proper lookout to avoid other skaters, objects or conditions on the surface of the rink
- Accept responsibility for knowing the range of his/her abilities while on skates, and skate within the limits of that ability and as appropriate to the session on which he/she is skating
- Not skate whilst under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other control impairing substance. Any persons under the influence will be asked to leave the premises.
- Refrain from instigating or becoming involved in any type of altercation with any other skater or spectator or engaging in abusive, abrasive or disorderly conduct, this type of behaviour will not be tolerated
- Not to sit or climb over any barriers or skate outside of the designated area.
- Management reserve the right not to allow unsuitable skates and personal protective equipment to be used.

Consideration should be given to displaying the following notices.

- The Admission Policy in key areas at reception and at the entrance to the rink, as well as on the website for online bookings.
- Persons who appear to be intoxicated by alcohol or drugs will be refused admission.
- Food and drink must not be brought onto or consumed on the rink.
- 'How to Tie Skates Properly' in the skate hire area.
- Skating directional signage.
- Skating is entirely at your own risk. The management will not be responsible for any loss or injury incurred.
- Rules of the rink displayed within the rink.

Examples of Rink Safety Rules

- No stopping, going in the wrong direction.
- Skating should not take place at excessive speed or backwards without due care and attention to other skaters.
- No running/skating is permitted on stairways or rink surroundings.
- No trains of any length are allowed.
- Skaters will start and stop sessions only on the instructions of the Team Members.
- Skaters must not wear jewellery or eye glasses for their own protection. No bags, phones or cameras on the rink. No MP3 players or other headsets.
- Skaters must not wear hats, scarves and long coats on the rink (exemptions are for religious / medical reasons)
- No locker keys to be worn, in any other manner other than prescribed.
- Pregnant women are advised not to take part.
- Only small children accompanied by an adult should be allowed to skate together. Parents should not carry young babies or children whilst on the rink.
- Skaters/public must not be allowed to sit on any barriers surrounding the rink.
- Patrons will not be allowed to eat, drink or smoke while on the rink. Patrons wishing to do so must use the designated areas.
- No littering.
- Do not play tag or any other games.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment.

Maintenance, Checks and Inspections

Recorded facility inspections should take place before each session to ensure the area is safe to use. This should include check such as the condition of the floor and any barriers being used.

All hire skates should conform with BS EN 15638:2009 Ice skates. Safety requirements and test methods. Before each use, the operator must ensure that the skates are in a fit condition to give out. These documented checks should include:

- Check to see if the wheels are attached properly by making sure that the wheel nut is screwed in firmly. There should be no wobbling between the wheel and the wheel nut.
- If the roller skate is a quad, make sure the toe stop is properly adjusted to where you want it to be.
- Four-wheeled roller skates have a space between the four wheels that is called a truck. The bolt in the truck area must be kept tight.
- All defective skates should be removed and reported.
- It is recommended that all skates are sprayed with a sanitiser on completion of each hire to prevent the spread of any diseases/infections as well as to combat unpleasant odours.

The skate marshal at the entrance to the hall should check condition of skates and personal protective equipment for people who bring their own.

Most roller skates fit the same as your standard shoe size, so if the person wears a size 8 in everyday shoes, a size 8 in roller skates should fit. If toes are curled or crunched the skates are most likely too small.

If protective equipment is being hired out to participants, recorded checks should be completed before issue. Manufacturer's guidance should be followed when checking helmets. These should be sanitised before and after each use.

Examples of checks helmets should include:

- Verify the presence and legibility of the serial number and the CE mark.
- Check the condition of the inside of the shell (marks, deformation, cracks, missing parts...). **WARNING:** do not remove the liner that is attached to the shell.
- Check the condition of the slots and holes for mounting accessories (deformation, cracks...).
- Check the condition of the liner (marks, deformation, cracks, missing parts...). Remove the comfort parts to inspect the hidden areas. **WARNING:** do not remove the liner that is attached to the shell
- Check the cradle (webbing head harness), and check the condition of the straps and their attachments to the shell (wear, cuts, burns, deformation of plastic pieces).
- Check the condition of the adjustment system and its attachments to the shell (wear, deformation, missing parts...). Check the function of the adjustment system.
- Check the condition of the chin strap and the adjustment parts (wear, cuts, burns, deformation of plastic pieces).
- Check the condition of the comfort foams. If necessary, remove them for washing or replacement.

Supervision and Training

Supervision of the rink

The number of 'on rink staff' is subject to both the number and the abilities of customers skating and type of session, thereby ensuring safety standards are implemented and adhered to. This should be identified as a part of the roller-skating risk assessment.

Supervision of recreational roller skating sessions by staff provides a good way of assuring users' safety. To demonstrate competence, supervisors should be able to undertake their responsibilities and perform activities described below to the required standards on a regular basis.

Rink supervisors should receive general roller-skating safety training, site/activity specific training and familiarisation training where they undertake their duties whilst being supervised to ensure they are operating to the required standards. For example, this training may include rink features, on/off stewarding, skate hire duties and activity specific training such as roller discos. It is recommended that this training is delivered by a qualified coach.

Due to the nature of roller skating, it is recommended that staff are trained in first aid or as a minimum, qualified first aiders can be immediately accessed.

Roller skating coaching

The BRSF provide Sport Coach UK aligned courses.

The British Roller Sport Federation (BRSF) Level 1 course is the first step towards becoming a recognised roller skating coach. The course offers candidates the practical and theory to help candidates develop an understanding of planning, delivery and evaluation of ethical roller skating sessions.

Level 2 Qualifications Guidance, will cover all the elements required to deliver basic roller skating skills to newcomers, beginners and novice roller skaters, the course will also include those scUK / UKCC Level 2 modules which are common to other sports, delivering Coach Education Courses aligned to scUK / UKCC.

The courses are suitable for individuals looking to take a recognised roller skating foundation coach education course, to deliver basic roller skating skills to newcomers, beginners and novice quad and inline roller skaters, in environments such as schools, leisure and sports centres and roller skating clubs of all roller disciplines.

All coaches should be suitably trained through qualifications aligned to the CIMSPA professional standards and provide evidence of the following:

- **A satisfactory check if working with children or adults at risk, through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Disclosure Scotland or Access NI, depending on location.**
- **Safeguarding training (in the last 3 years).**
- **Appropriate public liability insurance (if cover is not provided by the leisure facility).**

Emergency procedures and first aid

It is important ensure that emergency situations are dealt with in a manner which minimises the risk to customers and staff members. Emergency procedures provide a systematic approach to addressing medical, environmental, and security emergencies. Plans should be tailored to an organisation's specific venue, resources, and personnel. Emergency plans should assign roles and designate a chain of command.

Emergency procedures to consider:

- **Injury (first aid accident procedures)**
- **Fire**
- **Power/lighting failure**
- **Lost child**
- **Disorderly behaviour**
- **Outside threats**
- **Adverse weather (for outdoor rinks)**

For guidance on Adverse weather conditions refer to CIMSPA Adverse Weather guidance

Useful Resources

BRSF::British Roller Sports Federation

www.brsf.co.uk

BIPHA:: British Inline Puck Hockey Association

www.bipha.co.uk

BiSHA:: British Inline Skater Hockey Association

www.bishahockey.co.uk

FARS:: Federation Artistic Roller Skating

www.fars.co.uk

NRHA:: National Roller Hockey Association of England

www.englandrinkhockey.com

UKFSA:: UK Freestyle Skaters Association

www.freestyleuk.org

UKRDA:: UK Roller Derby Association

www.ukrda.org.uk

BS EN 13899:2003 Roller sports equipment. Roller skates. Safety requirements and test methods.

www.en-standard.eu

BS EN 13843:2009 Roller sports equipment. Inline-skates. Safety requirements and test methods

www.en-standard.eu

BS EN 15638:2009 Ice skates. Safety requirements and test methods.

www.en-standard.eu

D J Beirness, R D Foss, K J Desmond (2001) Use of protective equipment by in-line skaters: an observational study. BMJ Journals

<https://injury prevention.bmj.com/content/7/1/51>

CIMSPA professional standards library:

<https://www.cimspa.co.uk/education-training/professional-standards/professional-standards-library/>

These guidance notes have been produced by Right Directions in partnership with CIMSPA.

For more information on roller skating or any other topics, please email Right Directions: info@rightrightdirections.co.uk or give us a call for a chat: **(01582) 840098**

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