A Figure Skaters Guide to Edges & Turns

# Edges

It is commonly mistaken that a skate blade has only one edge that comes to a point along the bottom of the blade. In reality, each skate blade has a small, rectangular width that has two edges, an **inside edge** and an **outside edge**, which are separated by the **radius of hollow**. This radius of hollow creates an inverted arc across the bottom of the blade, which causes the centre of the blade to be curved inwards and raised off of the ice. When skating, the edge of the blade is what allows the skate to “grip” or “cut” into the ice.

When a skater is using the edge closest to the baby toe side of their foot, they are considered to be on the *outside edge*. When the skater is using the edge closest to the big toe side of their foot, they are considered to be on the *inside edge*. For proper form and quality of skating, a skater should be balancing on a single edge at a time. When a skater is on an edge, the tracing on the ice appears as a single line.

When a skater is gliding on both edges simultaneously, they are considered to be on a **flat**. This is considered to be of poor edge quality and should be avoided.

There are *eight* possible edges that can be performed when skating, where each edge is determined and named according to three factors:

* The *edge* of the blade the skater is gliding on
* The *foot* the skater is standing on
* The *direction* the skater if travelling (Forwards/Backwards)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RFI | RFO | RBI | RBO |
| LFI | LFO | LBI | LBO |

\*in chart, have hover options of long version of name; ex right forwards inside edge\*

### Forced and Natural Edges:

**Natural edges** occur when the edge on which the skater is balancing is the same as what would be expected for the direction of the skaters lean and the circle on which the skater is travelling. Natural edges are easily sustained when gliding and are usually the type of edge a skater will use as they skate.

**Forced edges** occur when the edge on which the skater is balancing is different from what would be expected for the direction of the skaters lean and the circle on which the skater is travelling. A forced edge is usually short in length and is most commonly seen immediately before or after certain difficult turns.

Need:

* Pictures
* Diagram of radius of hollow/edges, forced edge diagram
* Videos (from skate Canada?) of edges being done along a line

# Turns

There are many different types of ice-skating turns. The type of turn depends on the entry edge and foot, the exit edge and foot, and the shape and direction of the turn tracing relative to the circle of the entry edge.

There are three stages to each turn: *the entry, the turn,* and *the exit*. The **entry** is the portion of the circle prior to the point at which the skater begins to execute the turn. The **turn** is the point at which the skater leaves the circle and changes from the entry edge to the exit. The skater may leave the circle in either an inwards or outwards direction. On turns that do not change feet, this is what creates the cusp shaped tracing on the ice. The **exit** of a turn occurs after the turn has occurred and is when the skater returns to a circle that is equal in size with the entry circle, and follows either the same or opposite concavity.

\*picture of a cusp/turn and a caption about it\*

There are eight possible variations of each turn, where each is named and labelled according to three factors:

* The *edge* of the blade the skater is gliding on for the *entry edge*
* The foot on which the skater is standing during the entry edge
* The direction the skater if travelling (Forwards/Backwards)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RFI | RFO | RBI | RBO |
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\*in chart, have hover options of long version of name; ex right forwards inside edge\*

## Types of Turns:

### Three-Turns:

Three turns are a basic turn executed along one circle with a change of edge, but no change of foot. Both the entry and exit edges are natural, which causes the cusp of the turn to point towards the centre of the circle. When done correctly, the turn will have a small gap at the very tip of the cusp where the blade has changed from one edge to the other.

There are many free-leg positions that can be done during a three-turn. The most basic is the “*closed three-turn*”, where the free leg is held tightly to the other leg as the turn is done (approximately so that the big toe of the free-leg is placed at the top of the boot of the standing leg). Another common free-leg position is the “*open three-turn*”, where the free leg is extended away from the body and the toe is pointed, throughout all three stages of the turn.

\*video\*

\*image of tracing\*

### Brackets:

Brackets are a difficult turn that are executed along one circle with a change of edge, but no change of foot. Both the entry and exit edges are forced, which causes the cusp of the turn to point away from the centre of the circle. When done correctly, the turn will have a small “X” shape, often referred to as “bunny ears”, at the very tip of the cusp where the tracing has crossed over itself as the blade has changed from one edge to another.

\*image of tracing\*

### Mohawk:

Mohawks are a basic turn that are executed along one circle with a change of foot but no change of edge. Both the entry and exit edges are natural. Unlike most other turns, the tracing of a mohawk does not have a cusp, and the shape of the tracing may vary depending on where the free-foot was placed on the ice relative to the other during the turn. The mohawk may be “closed”, where the free-foot is placed down during the turn so that the exit edge crosses over the entry edge to create a large “X” shape. The mohawk may be “open”, where the free-foot is placed down during the turn so that the exit edge and entry edge do not cross, and the is a small gap where the skater changed their feet.

### Choctaw:

Choctaws are a turn that are executed changing from one circle to another with a both a change of edge and a change of foot. The entry edge of a Choctaw is forced and the exit edge is natural. Unlike most other turns, the tracing of the Choctaw does not have a cusp, and the shape of the tracing may vary depending on where the free-foot was placed relative to the other foot. There are many free-foot variations of Choctaws which result in different tracings on the ice.

### Rocker:

Rockers are a difficult turn that are executed changing from one circle to another with no change of edge and no change of foot. The entry edge of a rocker is natural and the exit edge is forced, which causes the cusp of the turn to point towards the centre of the first circle. A rocker is named after the rocking action that the blade undergoes to perform the turn. As the turn begins the foot is pushed into the circle and the skaters weight “rocks” to either the heel or the toe (depending if a forwards or backwards rocker is being done) of the blade.

\*image of tracing\*

### Counter:

Counters are a difficult turn that are executed changing from one circle to another with no change of edge and no change of foot. The entry edge of a count is forced and the exit edge is natural, which causes the cusp of the turn to point away from the centre of the first circle. A counter is named a such due to the counterrotation that is required between the lower and upper body of the skater to achieve the turn.

\*image of tracing\*

### Loop:

A loop is a difficult turn that remains on one edge, one foot, and one circle. Approximately halfway along the circle, the pressure into the ice is increased so that the blade accelerates and travels 360° around a smaller circle before pressure is released and the blade completes it rotation around the original circle. The loop tracing should be 1.5 blade lengths tall and 1 blade length wide. Entirety

### Twizzle:

A twizzle is a series of rockers and counters that are performed continuously with no knee rhythm separating the turns. A twizzle should rotate at a consistent speed, follow a linear axis without stalling (in either travel or rotation). When done correctly, the weight will quickly and repeatedly rock back and forth across the rocker in very small and quick movements.

\*try and get slow motion twizzle foot\*

# References

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