

Ballet Secrets for Skaters

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

1. What are *Ballet Secrets*?

It's almost impossible to study ballet from a photograph and recreate the position. As a skater, you want to achieve "that ballet look." But if you're like most figure skaters, ballet is a mystery -- a well-kept secret. You recognize the quality in other skaters and their artistic performances, yet it's too complex to describe. As a Russian-trained dancer, choreographer and instructor, Barbara Denise Files understands what skaters need. Point by point, she unlocks the secrets of ballet technique, empowering you with the information you need to improve your artistry.

2. What is the role of artistry under the new judging system?

The new International Skating Union judging system defines a broader number of components within the figure skating program and awards points for each component. There is greater scoring emphasis on the balance between raw skills, such as jumps and spins, and the elegant presentation of those moves. In other words, as a skater, you now have more opportunities to improve your competitive standing based on artistic expression than before.

3. Are there new kinds of competitive figure skating?

Yes, you have more options today than ever before. You can still challenge yourself with the traditional forms of competitive skating—individual figure skating, pairs skating, or ice dancing—as seen on television. Or, you may explore some of the fastest growing segments of figure skating, such as synchronized team skating, college team skating, and adult figure skating. If you enjoy the artistic side of skating, there are exhibitions and competitions that focus solely on interpretive and theatrical presentations on ice.

4. What *Ballet Secrets* can be found in the celebrity interviews?

Olympic Gold Medallist Viktor Petrenko and three-time World Professional Champion Yuko Sato are famous for merging ballet artistry with flawless technical skill within their performances. It's heartwarming to learn about their early skating and dance training and see how it contributed to their amazing careers. Their opinions on how they use artistry to excel in their sport are honest and real—something aspiring figure skaters can understand. A third interview, with Broadway jazz choreographer Patti Wilcox, reveals how the dance and figure skating worlds work together to create magic on the ice. All three stories inspire us to work hard and pursue our dreams.

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Frequently Asked Questions & Answers (continued)

5. Doesn't Viktor Petrenko say he would rather skate than take ballet class?

Yes, most skaters would rather be skating than doing just about anything else. It's human nature to practice your favorite things—skills that come naturally. As a performance coach to skaters, Barbara Denise Files knows you prefer to spend as much time on the ice as possible honing your skills. With your already demanding practice schedules, you need to learn the artistic skills for your craft in the most efficient way possible. *Ballet Secrets for Skaters* includes more than 70 photos of a real figure skater learning the ballet secrets. At the end of the book, the skater changes from ballet slippers to figure skates and shows how the ballet secrets improve her presentation on the ice.

6. How did a professional ballerina develop a specialty in figure skating?

Barbara Denise Files skated as a child and studied ballet. As she grew older, Barbara became more serious with dance and dedicated her efforts full-time to that endeavor. As a teen, she worked as a teaching assistant to Andre Eglevsky, an international dance legend and one of the most incredible teachers of his day. Figure skaters used to come to his studio looking for help and Barbara had the opportunity to work with them. From these early days with Eglevsky, Barbara's goal was to work with figure skaters. She has a unique specialty of translating the finer points of ballet into training for people who need sound dance technique and presentation skills outside of the dance world.

7. When will the book be available?

The book is set to launch in the fall at Capezio Ballet Makers' flagship store in New York City. Barbara Denise Files will conduct a seminar on artistry at that time and will end the session with a book signing.

Capezio Ballet Makers is one of the most established and recognized names in dance and athletic apparel. If you can't make the launch, they will provide a link from their global web site, and will offer the book for sale in their flagship and anchor stores throughout the U.S.

8. What do you have planned after the launch?

Barbara will teach and host a number of workshops on artistry and skating. In the next few months, she will be traveling, speaking and doing additional book signings. She already has a number presentations booked with the Ice Skating Institute—teaching coaches “in training” for judging how to evaluate artistry— and hopes to do more work with them next year.