

# Steel City Blades Synchronized Skating



2026 US Eastern Synchro Sectionals Silver Medlaists

## 2026-2027 Steel City Blades Tryout Guide

**“As Individuals we are strong but  
together we are unstoppable”  
- unknown**



## What is Synchronized Skating?

Team skating first appeared in the late 1950s at the University of Michigan, Synchronized skating has now become an international sport. Team USA team now compete with teams from around the world.

Synchronized skating is a team sport in which a group of figure skaters performs a choreographed routine together on the ice. The team works together to execute intricate formations, lifts, and spins in synchronization with the music. It requires precision, teamwork, and athleticism.



## Why Skate Synchro?

Synchronized skating is a fun and rewarding experience for skaters of all ages. It is the newest and fastest growing discipline in the sport of figure skating.

Team skating provides additional skills not taught in regular figure skating sessions. Learning these skills will enhance your abilities as a figure skater.

Synchro will offer your skater a great platform to develop their skating skills, learn how to work as a team, and develop friendships that will last a lifetime (both for the skater and parents)!

## About Steel City Blades

The Robert Morris University Island Sports Center offers the only competitive synchronized skating teams in the Pittsburgh Area beginning in 2005.

Starting off as only one team in its first year, the program now includes 3 competitive teams and one developmental team.

Steel City Blades alumni have and continue to compete beyond the SCB teams in Collegiate, Junior and Senior levels nationally & internationally.



# The Steel City Blades Teams

## The White Team

Skaters at this level are in the process of building and refining the fundamental skills of figure skating. They demonstrate developing edge quality, with emerging consistency in good form, posture, and control. There is a clear focus on strengthening power, speed, and flow across the ice.

### Eligibility Requirements:

- Skaters must be 13 years of age or younger as of July 1, 2026, in accordance with U.S. Figure Skating guidelines.
- Skaters must have passed Pre-Preliminary Skating Skills or higher by July 31, 2026.



## The Red Team

Skaters at this level demonstrate a strong foundation in the fundamentals of figure skating, with continued development toward mastery. They exhibit solid edge quality, with increasing consistency in flow, power, extension, and posture. Skaters are expected to perform skills with greater speed, control, and confidence than those at the Preliminary level.

### Eligibility Requirements:

- Skaters must be 17 years of age or younger as of July 1, 2026, in accordance with U.S. Figure Skating guidelines.
- Skaters must have passed Pre-Bronze Skating Skills or higher by July 31, 2026.

## The Blue Team

Skaters at this level demonstrate a strong command of the fundamental skills of figure skating. They exhibit advanced edge quality, with consistent flow, power, speed, extension, and posture. Skaters are expected to execute skills with a high level of control, efficiency, and confidence, performing at greater speed and with stronger technical precision than those at the Pre-Juvenile level.

### Eligibility Requirements:

- Skaters must be 19 years of age or younger as of July 1, 2026, in accordance with U.S. Figure Skating guidelines.
- Skaters must have passed Pre-Silver Skating Skills or higher by July 31, 2026.



# The Workshops and Tryout Process

## The Workshop Days

### **Arrive Early to Be Ready for Group Start Time**

**Preparation is Key** - Ensure you arrive ahead of schedule to get on the ice promptly at the designated group start time.

**Coaching Focus** - Coaches will review the necessary skills for each group and introduce the synchro elements along with the corresponding steps and music.

**Importance of Attendance** - It is crucial for skaters to participate in workshops to become familiar with both individual and group skills that will be assessed on *Tryout Day*.

**Engagement Opportunity** - This is the perfect chance for skaters to ask questions during the workshops.

### **Workshop Day 1:**

Warm-up  
Individual & Connected Skills  
Free Skating Elements  
Synchro Elements

### **Workshop Day 2:**

Warm-up  
Individual & Connected Skills  
Review of Day 1  
Synchro Elements

## The Tryout Evaluation Day

### **Arrive Early to ensure you are ready to take the ice at the designated start time of the tryouts.**

On the day of the tryouts, skaters will be assigned a number at random. Please note that this number does not reflect skill level or potential team placement. It should be pinned to the front of the skater's shirt and must remain visible at all times.

### **Skaters will be evaluated based on various criteria, including:**

- Individual & Group Elements
- Presentation
- Unison in connected elements

Teams for the 2026-27 Steel City Blades will be selected by the coaching staff, and will be sent via email by **Friday, May 9th, 2026 9:00 PM.**

### **Tryout Evaluation Day**

Warm-up  
Individual & Connected Skills  
Field Moves  
Free Skating Elements  
Synchro Elements

Evaluations will be sent via email to each skater after the announcements for the 2026-27 Steel City Blades Teams.

Please take the time to review the feedback provided by the synchro coaches, to use as goals for you to focus on and continue developing throughout the season alongside your private lesson coaches.

Enhancing individual skills throughout the season is crucial for the growth and advancement of the team.

# Preparation for Tryouts

**Download the Skills List** for the teams you are planning to tryout for.

**Begin learning and practicing** the Skills List as early as possible.

**Private Lessons:** Bring your Skills List to your private lesson to work on with your coach.

**Ask Questions:** If you or your coach have any queries, feel free to reach out to the synchro coaching staff.

**Make It Fun:** Practice with a friend to enhance your experience!



## What Skaters Should Wear to Workshops & Tryouts

- Hair should be securely tied back in a ponytail or bun.
- Wear black skating pants or leggings along with a black tank top.
  - **Please avoid baggy pants or sweatpants.**
- Jackets must be form-fitting.
  - **Please avoid oversized sweatshirts and baggy sleeves.**
- Refrain from wearing any jewelry, including bracelets, necklaces, and dangling earrings.

## What Level Should I Sign up for?

Please refer to the Steel City Blades Team page for age and level information.

**If you are uncertain about the level, please contact:**

Cari Manchester, Synchro Coordinator: manchester@rmu.edu

Beth Sutton, Skating Director: sutton@rmu.edu

Rosie Lynch, Head Coach Steel City Stars: lynch@rmu.edu

### Please Note

- Passing the required Skating Skills Test does not automatically qualify a skater for full membership on a team.
- Previous placements on a team do not guarantee a spot for the current season.



# Tryouts Q & A

## Can I Watch Workshops & Tryouts?

Family and friends are welcome to observe the workshops. However, **\*\*NO SPECTATORS\*\*** are allowed during the actual tryout day. Spectators should not congregate in the lobby areas near the doors or windows around the Olympic rink or upstairs in the Balcony area, as anyone found in those locations will be asked to leave. This helps skaters focus on their performance without distractions or the pressure to "perform" for an audience.

## What If I Cannot Attend the Workshops?

Missing workshops means your skater will miss out on specific individual and team skills that are crucial for final team placement (full, alternate, or trainee) for the season. Attendance is important for showcasing the necessary skills and ability to function well within a team.

## What If I Cannot Attend Tryouts?

If a skater is unable to attend tryouts, a make-up tryout will be arranged. Coaches will coordinate a make-up day if multiple skaters miss tryouts. Official team placement will occur only after the skater has completed their tryout. All skaters are required to pay for the Workshops & Tryouts, regardless of attendance.

If you cannot attend tryouts, please email:

Beth Sutton, Skating Director, prior to the event: [sutton@rmu.edu](mailto:sutton@rmu.edu)

## Can I Try Out for More Than One Team Within Steel City Blades?

Skaters are permitted to try out for multiple teams based on their age and the highest Skating Skills Test they have passed. The Steel City Blades Coaching Staff will make this determination, and families will be notified before tryout day.

## What If I Do Not Pass the Skating Skills Test Required for Team Level?

Skaters must pass the Skating Skills Test for their respective team level by July 31st, 2026. The age requirement is based on the date of July 1st, 2026 as set by US Figure Skating.

## When Will I Know If I Made the Team?

The Steel City Blades coaching staff will assess each skater's skills demonstrated during the workshops, in conjunction with the US FS test and age criteria. All skaters who tried out will receive notification of their team position (full, alternate, or trainee) no later than **Friday, May 9, 2026, by 9:00 PM**. Every skater will secure a team position. An email will be sent to all skaters with important details regarding team placements, tentative financials, practice schedules, and season information. Individual skater fees will depend on the number of teams and commitments.

Those not quite ready for SCB teams will be encouraged to join the developmental synchronized skating program, known as **The Steel City Stars**. Questions about the developmental program please contact:

Rosie Lynch, Steel City Stars, Head Coach: [Lynch@rmu.edu](mailto:Lynch@rmu.edu)

## What does the season look like?

- June - July Summer Synchro Skills:

### **Monday Summer Synchro Skills Practices**

Teams will work on synchro skills and program element development. All Team Skaters are required to attend as many as they can.

**Mondays: June 8 - July 27: 4:00- 5:50 PM**

- Boot Camp and August Practices:

**Boot Camp** is held in August and is a mandatory camp for all SCB skaters to attend with his/her team. The teams will prepare their programs for the upcoming competition season during this time.

**Boot Camp: July 31 - August 6, 2026**

**August Team Practice** on Wednesdays following Boot Camp. Team will continue development of routines learned at Boot Camp in preparation of the start of the synchro & competition season in September.

**Wednesdays: August 12, 19, 26: 4:00- 6:50 PM**

- Competitions will occur from October through February, December Holiday Show Exhibitions, and a final exhibition at Shamrock Skate in late March. Tentative competition details will be shared during the parent meeting and updated as provided by US Figure Skating.
- The SCB Banquet will be held in late March or early April.

## What is the time commitment?

- **The White Team:** Practices once a week on Sundays during the regular season starting in September, including on and off-ice sessions.
- **The Red Team:** Practices twice a week on Sundays during the regular season beginning in September and Tuesdays in October in the Stadium Rink, including on and off-ice sessions.
- **The Blue Team:** Similar to the Red Team, practicing twice a week on Sundays and Tuesdays during the regular season starting in September.
- Additional practice time details will be discussed at the parent meeting.

**GOOD LUCK TO ALL SKATERS!!**

