

Communication No. 2720

SYNCHRONIZED SKATING (Replaces ISU Communication No. 2632)

This Communication provides **GUIDELINES** for season 2025/26 for the following:

- Referees, Judges and Technical Panel Deductions
- Marking the GOE's of Synchronized Skating Elements

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2025/26 Referees, Judges and Technical Panel Deductions

Referee and Judges *)

Costume/prop violation, Rule 951 para 1 -1.0
(theatrical in design, including makeup; feathers; rhinestones or sequins on the face)

Referee

Costume failure, Rule 951 para 2 -1.0
Late start, more than 30 seconds late, Rule 838 para 4 -1.0
Late start, more than 60 seconds late, Rule 838 para 4 Team is withdrawn
Music requirement violation, Rule 991 para 2 a) -1.0
Program time violation, SP every five seconds in excess of 2 minutes 50 sec, Rule 952 -1.0
Program time violation, FS every five seconds lacking or in excess, Rule 952 para 2 -1.0
Interruption in excess, more than ten seconds (fault of Skaters(s)), Rule 953 para 2:
 more than 10-20 seconds -1.0
 more than 20-30 seconds -2.0
 more than 30-40 seconds -3.0
 second interruption of more than 40 seconds or program not completed Team is withdrawn
Interruption of the program with three minutes, Rule 965 para 4 b) -5.0
Adverse condition prior to the program with three minutes, Rule 965 para 6 -5.0

Technical Panel **)

Fall: One Skater (each Skater per occurrence) -1.0
Illegal Elements, Features, Additional Features, Movements -2.0
Wrong Element shape No value
SP Elements: Un-prescribed, Additional or Repeated Element -1.5

(See Technical Handbook for specific errors and deductions)

*) Referee + Judges: Deduction is applied according to the opinion of a majority of the Panel which includes all of the Judges and the Referee. No deduction in case of a 50:50 split vote.

**) Technical Panel: Technical Specialist identifies. Technical Controller authorizes or corrects and deducts. If both Technical Specialists disagree with a correction asked for by the Technical Controller, the initial decision of the Technical Specialists stands.

ERRORS

- **Serious Errors** – Fall(s) or mistake(s) **which impact the integrity/continuity and fluidity** of the Element and its relation to the music and must be reflected accordingly in the GOE and Program Components.
- **Minor Errors** do not impact the integrity/continuity and fluidity of the Element and should not be over penalized when awarding the GOE.
- **Each error** occurring within the same Element must be reflected in the final marks for GOE and Program Components.

Not Higher Than (NHT) reductions:

- When a **Not Higher Than** reduction is applied, the mark will be the starting GOE, if warranted. Additional reductions are applied as observed, but the final GOE can be Not Higher Than the mark listed in the negative aspects.
- NOTE: If the Element quality does not deserve a mark equal to the NHT, it must be lower.

2025/26 Marking the GOE of Synchronized Skating Elements

Grades Of Execution										
More Negative criteria					Negative = Positive	More Positive criteria			No Fall	No Error
-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
-9 or more	7-8	5-6	3-4	1-2	- / +	+1-2	+3-4	+5-6	+7-8	+9 or more

The GOE is calculated considering quality aspects of the **General Criteria** which results in the starting GOE. The GOE is then increased or decreased according to the **positive and negative Element Criteria**.

To establish the starting GOE, Judges must take into consideration the following General Criteria which applies to the Elements as appropriate:

General Criteria for Starting GOE		
MAX starting GOE with a serious error or serious mistake inside Element = +3		
NEGATIVE (Reduce) Poor -1 to Very Poor -2		POSITIVE (Increase) Good +1 to Very Good +2
Not achieved or maintained	Shape	Achieved and maintained throughout
Inconsistent between Skaters and within Lines, Pairs, etc.	Spacing	Consistent between Skaters and within Lines, Pairs, etc.
Poorly synchronized body, movements, steps, features, holds, etc.	Unison (concurrent or syncopated)	Synchronized body, movements, steps, features, holds, etc.
Weak or reduced speed of rotations (pi, Pa, SySp, TrE, TwE, fe, etc.)	Speed (All Elements)	Consistent or accelerated through rotations (pi, Pa, SySp, TrE, TwE, fe, etc.)
Weak or reduced speed across the ice		Consistent or accelerated across the ice
Labored or lacking	Flow	Consistent, smooth and effortless
Poorly done	Entries / Exits	Seamless or unexpected
Flat, skidded, jumped, two footed, loss of balance, checked turns or on the spot (tw)	Turns / Steps	Strong, controlled edges with good ice coverage and running edge
Awkward or not pleasing	Positions (Fm, Fe)	Beautiful body lines or body position
Labored or poorly done	Other Features	Effortless and correctly done
Lacking variety or unstable	Holds	Clear, secure with variety and changes in spacing when demonstrated
Weak use of the timing, tempo, character or nuances	Musicality	Enhances music timing, tempo, character or nuances
Basic, with no interesting features, patterns, shapes, etc.	Creativity	Unique, interesting features, patterns, shapes, etc.

Definition of required Features and Additional Features: Refer to ISU Special Regulations & Technical Rules – Synchronized Skating (Rule 990), and ISU Communication Synchronized Skating Difficulty Groups of Elements, Features and Additional Features and ISU Communication Well-Balanced Program Requirements.

Judges must also take into consideration the following positive or negative aspects of the Element execution, to establish the final GOE:

NEGATIVE - Reduce		POSITIVE - Increase		
NHT 0	No artistry, creativity or does not reflect the music	Artistic, Creative, Mixed	Design of movement and structure utilizes the music and is interesting or unique	+1
-2	Collision	Intersection (I+pi, CrI)	Increasing speed into pi	+2
-1 to -2	I+pi: Not intersecting at same time (confirm with video review)		Cr: Unique or interesting movement of the CrI and/or Cr pi	+1 to +2
NHT -5	Multiple serious errors and/or mistakes	Lift (Creative, Group, Pair)	Flexible or beautiful positions for all Lifted Skaters	+2
-5	Lift not attempted			
-4	Lifted position not achieved			
-3	Collapse with lifted skater stepping onto the ice			
-2	Collapse with lifted skater remaining off the ice			
-1 to -2	Not gliding out of Lift			
-1	Non-lifting Skaters do not execute a SM		Non-lifting Skaters create an interesting or unique design	+1
NHT -2	Basic fm position not achieved by more than ½ of the Team		Move	Flexible or beautiful positions by all of the Team
		Pair	Unison in all phases	+2
-2	Curved lines during pivoting	Pivoting (B, L)	Controlled and fast pivoting	+2
NHT -2	No centrifugal force	Rotating / Traveling (C, W)	Rapid, continuous and controlled ice coverage	+1
NHT -2	No recognizable traveling or less than ½ of the ice			
NHT -2	Basic spin position not achieved by more than ½ of the Team	Synchronized Spin	Unison in Entry, Rotation, Features or Exit	+1 each
-1	Traveling by more than ¼ of the Team			
NHT -2	Incorrectly executed by more than ½ of the Team	Twizzle	Unison of all Twizzles	+2

Serious Errors		Other Errors	
-2 to -3	Fall by One	Choreographic error displayed by "!"	-2
-4	Fall by Two	Excessive use of ice greater than 1/2 of the surface (confirm with video review)	-2
NHT -5	Fall by Three or more	Each visible error(s)	-1

Examples of serious mistakes: collapse, position not achieved, lift not attempted, collision etc. ...

Examples of visible errors: weak pivoting, stumble, loss of balance, bump, break in hold, loss of position, touch down, hand down, two foot landing etc. ...