



All About Spins

ASPIRE TO SPIN FASTER! ASPIRE TO SPIN LONGER!

The following information is a guideline for the spin section of the Aspire Program. **Remember to tailor the class according to the age and ability of the participants.** Depending on skating level, some groups may only work on one principle the entire session. Adjust times according to length of classes. Use this as a guideline only.

Within this document, we introduce language that pertains to the International Judging System (IJS). We do so to encourage skaters and coaches at all levels to understand the language used in our sport. There are a variety of additional resources provided by U.S. Figure Skating and the Professional Skaters Association to help guide you through the basics of IJS, and we strongly encourage coaches to take advantage of them.

Important information and language to implement before creating your on-ice lesson plan for your spin class:

- What makes a spin?
- The three basic spin positions and their requirements
- Types of spins
- Basic entries into spins
- Character of a spin and important codes to know
- Examples of spins with a different character

WHAT MAKES A SPIN?

1. A spin must have a minimum number of three continuous revolutions to be considered a spin. A spin with less than three revolutions is considered a skating movement and not a spin.
2. For any spin with a change of foot, the spin must have three revolutions before and after the change of foot.
3. The minimum number of required continuous revolutions will be counted from the entry of the spin until its exit (except the final wind-up in one-position and flying spins).
4. When the foot goes down with a weight change, the spin is over.

THERE ARE THREE BASIC SPIN POSITIONS:

1. **Upright:** Any position with the skating leg extended or slightly bent (not a camel position)
 - a. Layback spin: An upright spin in which the head and shoulders are leaning backwards with the back arched. Position of the free leg is optional.
 - b. Sideways leaning spin: An upright spin in which the head and shoulders are leaning sideways and the upper body is arched. Position of the free leg is optional.
 - c. Biellmann: This spin is a difficult variation (DV) of an upright position when the skater's free leg is pulled from behind into a position higher than and towards the top of the head, close to the spinning axis.
2. **Sit:** The upper part of the skating leg is at least parallel to the ice
3. **Camel:** Free leg backwards with the knee higher than the hip level

All spin positions not according to the above definitions are considered nonbasic positions (NBP).

IMAGES OF CORRECT POSITIONS:



BASIC UPRIGHT POSITION:

any position with skating leg extended or slightly bent which is not a camel position



BASIC SIT POSITION:

upper part of the skating leg at least parallel to ice



BASIC CAMEL POSITION:

free leg back-wards with the knee higher than the hip level

ON-ICE LESSON PLAN FOR COACHES — SPINS

BREAK-OUT TIME	TIME ALLOCATION	ACTIVITY/SKILL	INSTRUCTIONAL POINTS
5-10 minutes Free Skate levels	Bring entire group together (by ability)	Individual spins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pivots • Two-foot spin • One-foot spin—also referred to as an upright spin (USp) • Sit spin (SSp) • Back spin (USp) • Camel spin (CSp) 	Principle #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Entry • Centering • Exit
5-10 minutes	Break-out groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice time 	Individual spins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus should be on correct positions of USp, SSp, CSp
5-10 minutes Free Skate 6 — Pre-preliminary	Bring entire group together (by ability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USp change foot spin to back USp (CUSp) • Front SSp change to back SSp (CSSp) • Forward CSp-front SSp (CoSp) • Forward CSp to a back SSp (CCoSp) 	Principle #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach mechanics of changing feet and changing position • Correct positions and acceleration • Producing rotational force in transition
5-10 minutes	Break-out groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice time 	Spin combinations	
5-10 minutes Pre-preliminary — Preliminary	Bring entire group together (by ability)	Flying spins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flying camel spin (FCSp) • Flying sit spin (FSSp) 	Principle #3 Technique of flying spins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk-through • Take-off • Correct position • Exit
5-10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice time 	Flying Spins	

TYPES OF SPINS:

1. **Spin combination:** Must include a minimum of two different basic positions with two revolutions in each of these positions anywhere within the spin. The number of revolutions in positions that are nonbasic is counted in the total number of revolutions. Changing to a nonbasic position is not considered a change of position. A change of foot may be executed in the form of a step over or a jump. The change of foot and the change of position may be made either at the same time or separately. To receive full value, a spin combination must include all three basic positions.

2. **Spin in one position:** May change feet (if allowed in program requirements), but may not change position. Nonbasic positions are allowed and counted in the total number of revolutions but, in IJS events, are not eligible for features to increase the level.

a. The concluding upright position at the end of the spin (final wind-up) is not considered to be another position, regardless of the number of revolutions if no additional feature (change of edge, variation of position, enhancements, etc.) is attempted in the final wind-up.

3. **Flying spin:** A spin with a flying entrance, no change of foot and no change of position. Nonbasic positions are allowed and counted in the total number of revolutions but, in IJS events, are not eligible for features to increase the level.

BASIC ENTRIES INTO SPINS:

There are four recognized ways to enter a spin:

- Forward outside three turn entry
- Forward inside three turn entry
- Backward outside edge
- Flying

BASIC SPIN EDGES:

Spins can be performed on outside and inside edges, plus a true flat. Spins can also be performed with forward and backward rotation in either or both clockwise and counterclockwise directions.

- the traditional forward upright, sit and camel that are initiated by a hooked forward outside 3-turn rotate backward on the inside edge or flat.
- the traditional back upright, sit and camel that are initiated by a hooked forward inside 3-turn rotate backward on the outside edge or flat.

CHARACTER OF A SPIN:

In a well-balanced free skate, each spin performed must have a different character (abbreviation). Abbreviations can be found in the ISU Scale of Values for Singles. Character is also referred to as “the nature of a spin.”

Rules and requirements should always be checked regarding what spin features are permitted in the level competing. For example: A flying entry is not permitted in Excel Preliminary Plus in either the spin in one position or the combination spin which may or may not change feet.

IMPORTANT CODES TO KNOW:

Sp – Spin

U – Upright

S – Sit

C – Camel

USp – Upright Spin

SSp – Sit Spin

CSp – Camel Spin

Co – Combination

C – Change

CoSp – Combination Spin

CCoSp – Change Combination Spin

F – Flying

FUSp – Flying Upright Spin

FSSp – Flying Sit Spin

FCSp – Flying Camel Spin

FCoSp – Flying Combination Spin

FCCoSp – Flying Change Combination Spin

FCSSp – Flying Change Sit Spin

FCCSp – Flying Change Camel Spin

FCUSp – Flying Change Upright Spin

1. A spin that begins with a backward entry and a spin that begins with a forward entry are considered to have the same character if they are otherwise the same type of spin.

Examples of spins with a different character:

- A sit spin with a forward entry has the same character as a sit spin with a backward entry (SSp).
 - A spin combination with a change of foot with a forward entry is the same code and value of a combination spin with change of foot that begins from a backward entry (CCoSP).
2. A spin with a flying entry has a different character than a spin without a flying entry. For example, a flying sit spin would read FSSp (F for flying, SSp for Sit Spin). The “F” prior to the “SSp” is what makes it of a different character.
 3. A spin with a change of foot has a different character than a spin without a change of foot. For example, a camel spin, change of foot to back sit spin to an upright spin would read CCoSp. The C is for Change foot, the CoSp is Combination Spin giving us CCoSp. A camel, sit, upright spin without a change of foot would read CoSp.
 4. All spin combinations without a change of foot and no flying entry are considered to have the same character, regardless of the number or types of positions (CoSp).
 5. All spin combinations with a change of foot and no flying entry are considered to have the same character, regardless of the number or types of positions and the number of changes of foot (CCoSp).
 6. If a combination spin has a flying entry into it, the code is FCoSp.
 7. If a combination spin has a flying entry and a change of foot, the code is FCCoSp.

Once the skater has developed strong basic positions (camel, sit, upright), it is time to start teaching what the IJS refers to as “features” or “difficult variations.”

11 DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF DIFFICULT VARIATIONS (DVS)

CAMEL POSITION three categories based on direction of the shoulder line:	SIT POSITION three categories based on position of free leg:	UPRIGHT POSITION three categories based on position of torso:	LAYBACK POSITION one category
(CF) Camel Forward: shoulder line parallel to the ice	(SF) Sit Forward: free leg forward	(UF) Upright Forward: torso leaning forward	(UL) Upright Layback: difficult variation in layback position
(CS) Camel Sideways: shoulder line twisted to a vertical position	(SS) Sit Sideways: free leg sideways	(US) Upright Straight or Sideways: torso straight up or sideways	NONBASIC POSITIONS one category
(CU) Camel Upward: shoulder line twisted to more than a vertical position	(SB) Sit Behind: free leg behind	(UB) Upright Biellmann: The skater’s free leg is pulled from behind to a position higher than and toward the top of the head, close to the spinning axis of the skater	(NBP) difficult variation in nonbasic position



DEFINITION OF A DIFFICULT VARIATION (DV):

A DV is a movement of a body part, leg, arm, hand or head that requires more physical strength or flexibility and influences the balance of the main body core. Only these variations can increase the level.

- There are 11 different categories in which a DV can be executed.
- Each category can only be used once per program for a level feature. The first attempt is the only one counted, whether the DV is achieved.
- A DV is considered attempted when this variation is clearly visible, independent of the fact this variation was counted or not.
- A DV in a nonbasic position is only considered for a Level Feature in spin combinations.
- If a DV in a nonbasic position of a spin combination is quite similar to one of the executed DVs in a basic position, the last performed of these two variations will not be counted as a level feature.
- Once a DV has been attempted and another DV of the same category is executed, the second of the two DVs cannot be counted, but any additional feature (e.g. 8 revs, edge change, increase in speed) executed in this DV can still be counted.

DEFINING VARIATIONS:

Simple Variation

A simple variation of position is a movement of a body part, leg, arm, hand or head, which enhances but does not change the basic position of the main body core. **A simple variation does not increase the level.**

Difficult Variation

A difficult variation is a movement of a body part, leg, arm, hand or head that requires more physical strength or flexibility and influences the balance of the main body core. Only these variations can increase the level.

Upright Spin Variations

Upright spin variations focus on the direction of the torso. The torso is either facing (leaning) forward (Upright Forward), torso straight up or sideways (Upright Straight or Sideways) or in a Biellmann position (Upright Biellmann).

A Windmill (Illusion) spin is considered a difficult variation of nonbasic position (NBP). This must be done at least three times in a row to be counted as a level feature.

Windmill (illusion) can be considered as a level feature for difficult variation of nonbasic position or difficult entry or difficult change of position **only the first time it's attempted**. This movement must show physical strength or flexibility and influences the balance of the main body core.

The windmill is performed by the skater keeping their head, torso and free leg in a straight line, and rhythmically bobbing above and below the position of a standard camel spin. This can be considered a difficult variation of a nonbasic position if performed three times in a row.

CATEGORIZING DIFFICULT VARIATIONS:

Sit Spin Variations: These variations depend upon the direction of the free leg. The free leg can be in front (Sit Forward), to the side (Sit Side) or behind (Sit Behind). There are a variety of ways to achieve each feature.

Camel Spin Variations: These variations depend on where the shoulders are facing: The shoulders are either forward (Camel Forward, parallel to the ice), to the side, twisted vertical (Camel Sideways) or facing upwards toward the ceiling, past vertical (Camel Upward). As with the sit spin there are a variety of ways to achieve each feature.

Flying Spins:

The flying camel is initiated with a forward outside edge jump entry to a back camel spin. A regular flying camel is not counted as a level feature or "difficult entrance."

The flying sit spin is initiated with a forward outside edge jump entry to a forward or backward sit position. A flying sit spin/entry achieves a total sit position in the air (with height and total movement control) or open butterfly position in the air taking sit position immediately after landing. The flying sit spin can be rewarded as a difficult flying entry (Feature 11).

When performed correctly, the **death drop** is an impressive different attempt of the flying sit spin and can be rewarded as a difficult flying entry (Feature 11).



THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTION PICTURES OF CORRECT POSITIONS AND AN EXAMPLE OF A DIFFICULT VARIATION:



Basic Upright

any position with the skating leg extended or slightly bent (not a camel position)



Upright Straight

difficult variation of a basic upright with the torso straight up



Upright Forward (UF)

difficult variation of a basic upright with the torso leaning forward



Upright Layback

difficult variation of an upright in layback position



Upright Biellmann (UB)

difficult variation of a basic upright
Biellmann position is achieved when the free leg is pulled from behind to a position higher than and toward the top of the head, close to the spinning axis of the skater



Basic Sit Position

upper part of the skating leg is at least parallel to the ice

THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTION PICTURES OF CORRECT POSITIONS AND AN EXAMPLE OF A DIFFICULT VARIATION:



Sit Forward (SF)

difficult variation of a basic sit position with the free leg forward



Sit Behind

difficult variation of a basic sit position with free leg behind



NonBasic Positions

all other positions that do not fulfill the basic position definition



Basic Camel Position

free leg backwards with knee higher than hip level



Camel Forward

difficult variation of a basic camel with the shoulder line parallel to the ice

BUILD YOUR SPINS EXERCISE BY UTILIZING THE DIFFICULT VARIATION CHARTS:

What is your spin in one position going to be?

Camel Spin (Csp) _____

Sit Spin (SSp) _____

Upright Spin _____

*Utilize the Stars below to place on the chart as you build your spin

CAMEL POSITION	SIT POSITION	UPRIGHT POSITION	LAYBACK POSITION one category
(CF) Camel Forward:	(SF) Sit Forward:	(UF) Upright Forward:	(UL) Upright Layback:
CS) Camel Sideways:	(SS) Sit Sideways:	(US) Upright Straight or Sideways:	NONBASIC POSITIONS one category
(CU) Camel Upward:	(SB) Sit Behind:	(UB) Upright Biellmann:	(NBP) difficult variation in nonbasic position





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SKATER ACTIVITY WORKSHEET 2

NEXT, BUILD YOUR COMBINATION SPIN (COSP) OR CHANGE COMBINATION SPIN (CCOSP):

Will you be changing feet? Yes ___ No ___

*If yes, remember that if changing feet, only two features can be counted on each side of the spin, but you can perform more. Utilize the "R" and "L" below if you plan on changing feet.

** You may repeat a difficult variation from your spin in one position, but it can only be counted once in a program.

Reminder - all three basic positions must be achieved in order to receive full credit for the spin

CAMEL POSITION	SIT POSITION	UPRIGHT POSITION	LAYBACK POSITION one category
(CF) Camel Forward:	(SF) Sit Forward:	(UF) Upright Forward:	(UL) Upright Layback:
(CS) Camel Sideways:	(SS) Sit Sideways:	(US) Upright Straight or Sideways:	NONBASIC POSITIONS one category
(CU) Camel Upward:	(SB) Sit Behind:	(UB) Upright Biellmann:	(NBP) difficult variation in nonbasic position



BUILD YOUR OWN SPINS
STRONG BASICS
AND BEGIN TO BUILD

