



JUNIOR ROLLER DERBY ASSOCIATION

PROTECTIVE GEAR CHECK PROTOCOL

Updated January 2020

JRDA Protective Gear Checks

Protective Gear Checks must be completed as described in this protocol prior to every JRDA Sanctioned or Regulation game. The Event Head Referee is responsible for ensuring that these Protective Gear Checks are completed as described herein. There are separate procedures for pre-game and post-halftime checks. In the event of discrepancy between these procedures and manufacturer instructions regarding sizing, use, and/or maintenance, manufacturer instructions take precedence. The Event Head Referee is the final authority on anything worn on the track, and may request that any item be modified or removed to maintain safety for all participants.

The Event Head Referee may and should enlist other Officials familiar with this protocol to conduct Protective Gear Checks. No Official who is uncomfortable with performing Protective Gear Checks is required to do so. Protective Gear Checks should be performed in as public a space as possible, and cannot be performed any place where Parents/Guardians, Captains, and/or Coaches are excluded. No Protective Gear Check that involves touching of equipment will be performed on any Skater without their verbal consent before each check.

Skaters, Parents/Guardians, Captains, or Coaches may request a specific individual perform the Protective Gear Check for themselves or an associated Skater. Captains or Coaches may request specific individual(s) (typically Coaches or Bench Staff) perform the Protective Gear Check for their entire team. In such cases, the Protective Gear Check will be supervised by the Event HR and/or other appointed Official(s) who will facilitate and observe each individual check to ensure it is properly performed.

Protective Gear Checks are part of Officials' overall responsibility for safety, as with issuing penalties and/or warnings for Equipment Violations. Officials do not assume additional responsibility by performing or supervising Protective Gear Checks. All Skaters (and their Parents/Guardians) are responsible for compliance with the safety and gear requirements found in this document, the applicable rules, and JRDA Rules Addenda. The Team Coach is additionally responsible for ensuring that all team Skaters verify equipment prior to participation.

Protective Gear Checks by Coaches and/or Officials are highly suggested for all practices and other on-skates activities.

Performing a Full Protective Gear Check (Pre-Game)

Pre-Game Protective Gear Checks are ideally performed trackside in front of team benches. Each Skater will be assessed individually. Multiple checks may occur simultaneously provided there are enough individuals to perform/observe.

1) Introduction and Permission

- a) Introduce yourself. Explain the gear check and request verbal permission. For example: "Hi. I'm Shebra, and I'll be checking your gear for safety purposes. I'll explain what I'm doing as I do it. This will require me to touch your gear. Is that okay?"
- b) Continue with the gear check only after the Skater has consented.

2) Helmet

- a) Visually check the helmet with the Skater wearing it. If the Skater is wearing a helmet cover, they must remove it when the helmet is checked. The helmet must be worn low over the forehead, with the front rim approximately at the eyebrows. The shell must be in good repair.
- b) Explain to the Skater that you need to touch their helmet and ask them to hold their head still.
- c) Apply slight pressure to the helmet, shifting it first front to back, then side to side and finally gently attempt to lift the helmet vertically off the head. The helmet must not move or tilt independently of the head. Skaters may wear head coverings such as bandanas under their helmet, but these must not interfere with the proper fit and function of the helmet.
- d) Check that the helmet hard foam lining does not move independently nor come free from the hard outer shell. A helmet with a hard shell that moves independently of its hard foam lining is not permitted.
- e) Check that the neck strap is snug to the chin, but still allows for the Skater to move their head without being choked. If the straps feature sliders, the sliders must be located as close to the earlobe as possible.
- f) Optional face shields compliant with the WFTDA Risk Management Guidelines are permitted.
Note: While transparent visors are allowed, and mirrored or iridium visors are prohibited, visors or face shields that are not 100% transparent (due to tint for example) may be permitted if the wearer's eyes, including pupils, can be clearly and distinctly seen - as determined by the Tournament / Game Head Referee. A tinted visor cleared in one instance might be prohibited in another, because varying conditions may require different allowances. A visor allowable under one set of conditions might be problematic with different lighting, for example, even at different times in the same venue.

Note: If Skaters are wearing skates they must take a knee or sit before removing or unclasping their helmet for adjustments.

3) Mouthguard

- a) Ask the Skater to hold up the mouthguard. Check that the guard has not been shortened or cut off before the molars. Mouthguards that have been shortened before the molars are not permitted.
- b) Ask the Skater to place the mouthguard into the mouth. Once the mouthguard is engaged, ask the Skater to say "ah" or recite their name/number. When they do so, visually ensure that the guard fits snugly against teeth, does not disengage from the teeth if moldable, and does not dangerously protrude from the mouth when in place. Moldable mouthguards must be molded to fit the Skater. The mouthguard is not permitted if it does not fit as designed.

Note: Non-moldable mouthguards are permitted, however, penalties will be issued any time mouthguards become disengaged from the teeth during gameplay.

4) Wrist Guards

- a) Ask the Skater to present their wrist guards, with their arms out and palms up. Explain to the Skater that you need to touch their wrist guards.
- b) Check that each wrist guard is being worn on the appropriate (left/right) hand. Wrist guards must be worn on the hand for which they were designed. (In the event that the skater is wearing a cast, a wrist guard is not required over a cast that extends to the wrist.)
- c) Check both visually and by touch all hard shells and grommets or rivets, to make sure there are no sharp spots or cracks, and that the hard shells do not easily come loose. In the event a wrist guard has an internal hard shell, make sure this also does not feel cracked, sharp, or broken. Cracked or broken shells are not permitted.
- d) Check that the hard shell covers the bend of the wrist. The plastic cap must cover the bend of the wrist.
- e) Grasp the plastic insert on the palm of the hand (if applicable) and attempt to slide the wrist guard left-to-right, and back-and-forth (towards and away from the Skater's body). The guard should not move on the wrist. Tape may be used to secure loose guards over old or insecure Velcro.

5) Elbow Pads

- a) Explain to the Skater that you need to touch their elbow pads. Physically check that the pads do not slip by gently tugging on each pad. The pad should not slide at all. Tape may be used to secure loose pads over old or insecure Velcro.
- b) Check that each elbow pad is being worn in the correct fashion - i.e, not upside down. Elbow pads must be worn in the manner in which they were designed.
- c) Ask the Skater to present their elbow pads with their wrists by their ears. Check both visually and by touch all hard shells and grommets or rivets to make sure there are no sharp spots, cracks, and that the shells do not easily come loose. For pads that have an internal hard shell, make sure this also does not feel cracked, sharp, or broken within the pad. Cracked or broken shells are not permitted.
- d) Check that the hard shell covers the point of the bent elbow. The plastic cap must cover the point of the bent elbow.

6) Knee Pads

- a) Explain to the Skater that you need to touch their knee pads.
- b) Check that each knee pad is being worn in the correct fashion - i.e, not upside down. Knee pads must be worn in the manner in which they were designed.
- c) Check both visually and by touch all hard shells and grommets or rivets to make sure there are no sharp spots or cracks, and that the shells do not easily come loose. For pads that have an internal hard shell, make sure this also does not feel cracked, sharp, or broken within the pad. Cracked or broken shells are not permitted.
- d) Check that the hard shell covers the knee cap. The plastic shell must cover the knee cap.
- e) Tug the pad up and down on the leg. The pad should not slide at all. Tape may be used to secure loose pads over old or insecure Velcro.
- f) Gently pull the plastic shell away from the Skater's body. The shell must remain firmly attached to the pad.

7) Other Apparel

Other apparel is any item worn or carried on the body not already covered in this document, including jewelry, clothing, decorations, optional protective gear, skates, and/or electronic devices.

- a) All items worn on the track must comply with the "Protective Gear" section of the WFTDA Risk Management Guidelines.
- b) While it is not required to check skates during a standard gear check, it is suggested that the Skater be advised to check laces, wheels, and toe stops after the gear check.
- c) Devices allowing electronic communications - whether worn, attached to equipment, or carried - are not permitted for skaters in sanctioned play.

8) Uniform Requirements

Protective Gear Checks are a good time to confirm all Uniform Requirements are met. It is suggested that, at a minimum, the following Uniform Requirements are checked during Protective Gear Checks.

- a) The helmet must not display any numbers that are not that Skater's number but could be construed as such, or any details which could be construed as a Pivot stripe or Jammer star.
- b) Each Skater participating in a game must visibly display their roster number on their uniform. The minimum height for jersey numbers is 6 inches (15.24 cm). All characters in the Skater's charter roster number must be printed at the same size. Any letters surrounding the number must be no taller than 2 inches (5.08 cm).
- c) Each Skater participating in a game must visibly display their roster number on each sleeve or arm. Roster numbers must be of high contrast and easily legible. Handwritten numbers on the arm are acceptable. The minimum height for a Skater's roster number on the arm/sleeve is 2 inches (5 cm). The maximum height for a Skater's roster number on the arm/sleeve is 4 inches (10 cm).
- d) Uniforms and equipment may not contain sexually explicit or offensive language or images. Such language or images must be removed or covered if so directed by an official.

This is not an exhaustive list of Uniform Requirements.

Protective Gear that is not in compliance as described must be either altered such that the equipment conforms to this protocol, or replaced with equipment that meets these standards. In the event a portion of a Skater's Protective Gear does not fit properly and/or only requires a re-adjustment, instruct the Skater to fix the problem and return for a second check. If a piece of gear is ill-fitting or in disrepair to the point that it is deemed unwearable because it no longer functions as intended, begin a discussion with the Skater, the Event HR, Team Coach(es), and Captain about replacing the equipment. THOs and/or GTOs may also be brought into the conversation to help find solutions. Upon repair/replacement/refitting of non-compliant equipment, complete the entire Protective Gear Check again for that Skater.

A Skater who has not undergone a Full Protective Gear Check or whose equipment is not as required is not permitted to skate in the game. Officials may complete the Pre-Game check on Skaters who arrive late, provided there is an Official available to observe/facilitate. This may include an ALT or off-duty Official enlisted by the Head Referee, or, in tournament situations, THRs, THNSOs, and/or GTOs. Teams may use a Team Timeout to ensure an Official is available to observe/facilitate a Pre-Game check.

Performing a Visual Protective Gear Check (Post-Halftime)

Visual Protective Gear Checks will be conducted before the beginning of the second period. Visual Protective Gear Checks are ideally performed trackside in front of team benches. Skaters may be assessed individually or as a group by one or more assessors.

1) Introduction

- a) Ask the Skater(s) to assemble for Visual Protective Gear Checks.

2) Mouthguard

- a) Ask the Skater(s) to hold up the mouthguard. Visually check that each Skater has a mouthguard. Each Skater must have a mouthguard.
- b) Ask the Skater(s) to place the mouthguard into their mouth. Once the mouthguard is engaged, ask the Skater to say "ah". The mouthguard is not permitted if it does not fit as designed.

Note: Non-moldable mouthguards are permitted, however, penalties will be issued any time mouthguards become disengaged from the teeth during gameplay

3) Helmet

- a) Visually check that each Skater is wearing a helmet. Ask the Skater(s) to keep their head still and attempt to move their own helmet. The helmet must not move or tilt independently of the head.
- b) Visually check that each Skater's neck strap is snug to the chin, but still allows for them to move their head without being choked. If the straps feature sliders, the sliders must be located as close to the earlobe as possible.
- c) Optional face shields must conform as outlined above.

Note: If Skaters are wearing skates they must take a knee or sit before removing or unclasping their helmet for adjustments.

4) Wrist Guards

Ask the Skater(s) to display their wrist guards. Visually check that each wrist guard is being worn on the appropriate (left/right) hand. Each Skater must be wearing wrist guards, on the hand for which they were designed.

5) Elbow Pads

Ask the Skater(s) to display their elbow pads. Visually check that each elbow pad is being worn in the correct fashion - i.e., not upside down, with the hard shell covering the point of the elbow. Each Skater must be wearing elbow pads, in the manner in which they were designed.

6) Knee Pads

Ask the Skater(s) to display their knee pads. Visually check that each knee pad is being worn in the correct fashion - i.e., not upside down, with the hard shell covering the point of the knee. Each Skater must be wearing knee pads, in the manner in which they were designed.

7) Other Apparel

Visually check any other apparel, including jewelry, clothing, decorations, optional protective gear, skates, and electronic devices for anything that violates policies outlined in this document.

8) Uniform Requirements

While not required as part of the Protective Gear Check, this is also a good time to confirm all Uniform Requirements are met.