

Your pro will become your personal instructor. When you first contract with a pro, you should have a long talk about your goals and expectations in skating. Working together, you should build a general plan for how you will achieve those goals. But then you should trust the pro to work out the day-to-day lesson plans and “order of attack”. They know best how to teach the elements, and in what order they should be learned. Don’t be afraid to revisit the “goals and expectations” discussion once in a while, but don’t try to micromanage the pro’s method of getting there either.

Your pro will help you to establish an appropriate lesson and practice schedule. The pro will help you to balance the appropriate amount of lesson time with practice time. A general guideline is that for each 15 minutes of lesson time, a skater should have at least 30 minutes of practice time to reinforce those lessons. Some skaters will need more, some will need less.

Your pro will help you to make decisions about testing and competing. When you test, your pro will usually be present at your test session to help you warm up and to provide support/guidance as you need it. Similarly, when you compete, you should expect that the pro would go to the competition with you to guide your warm-up and provide any last-minute support you need (they usually call it “putting you on the ice”).

Finally, expect to be billed for the pro’s time. Expect a bill for time spent with you at a test session or competition. If the test/competition is not at your home rink, you should expect a fee for travel and room/board if it is an overnight competition (often pros will divide their expenses among the students they have at a competition – sometimes they just have a fixed fee).