

What is training?

Training includes not just what you do but the schedule and time frame in which you do it.

- Short term: an individual workout or training day
- Medium term: a “block” of training days or weeks, typically oriented towards a specific event like a competition or a test
- Long term: planning for the entire season
- Training needs to balance the development of underlying athletic abilities with the practice of new on-ice skills
- When properly designed, your training plan should have a varied progression of both intensity (how hard the exercises are) and volume (the amount of time spent training, both on and off the ice) that will cause a steady increase in performance
- Training includes time for rest and recovery



What is overtraining?

A survey conducted by the USOC following the 1996 Atlanta games revealed that 28 percent of U.S. athletes felt that they were overtrained for the Olympics. Overtraining ranges from excessive fatigue to overuse/chronic injuries that occurs when the training is too intense or the number of sessions or hours is too much.

- Overtraining can cause many problems:
 - o Chronically decreasing performance
 - o Injuries because of overuse
 - o Chronic fatigue – does not reverse with recovery
 - o Mental or psychological fatigue and inability to focus
 - o Increase susceptibility to illness and acute injury
- Overtraining has many causes including poor planning, lack of tapering, insufficient rest, too much travel, etc.
- The best defense against overtraining is having a well thought out training plan and including recovery as is appropriate



What is recovery?

Recovery is the process of allowing the body to rest and repair, and encompasses not just physical rest but psychological rest. During recovery, the body should experience positive physiological and psychological adaptations to occur with an accompanying improvement in performance. Recovery can come in many forms and should be a planned part of training:

- Passive recovery: resting, sleeping
- Active recovery: stretching, unloaded exercise
- Therapeutic recovery: foam rolling, massage, ice baths
- Recovery nutrition: eating the correct amount and types of calories, distributing calories throughout the day



Training checklist:

- Have a daily lesson/training plan
- Have a structured training block leading up to each competition or test
- Have an established yearly plan with consideration to all non-negotiable obligations in the athlete's life
- Carefully consider which competitions to enter and what the goals of each competition are
- Make sure your coach and trainer communicate often
- Have a directed training plan appropriate for the time of year (off-season, pre-season, in-competition season)
- Have the skater work on developing the necessary athletic skills to execute the on-ice technique prior to attempting it on the ice
- Pack the right foods and serving sizes or have access to food in the training environment
- Leave room to adjust the training plan accordingly

Overtraining risk factors:

- Lack of a well-periodized plan
- Lack of a daily recovery routine
- Failing to consider all obligations in the athlete's life: school, other sports and activities, and sleep
- A "more is better" training approach – which can be related to either good performance or bad performance
- Resistance to taking time off when injured or sick
- A poorly planned diet, failing to eat enough calories, and failing to plan fueling throughout the training day
- Overloading adolescent athletes during growth spurts
- Transitioning to the next level of training

Recovery checklist:

- Incorporate exercises that will help prevent injury and improve performance (see www.STARScombine.org)
- Include recovery as a structured part of every training day, with time allotted both before and after practice for good recovery practices
- Implement practical therapeutic recovery: foam rolling, passive stretching, etc.
- Plan recovery snacking after every skating and workout session, and have a recovery snack before bed so your muscles are ready to go the next day
- Give extra consideration to prior injuries (good record keeping is helpful), and injury "pre-hab" – keeping core and joints strong and stable
- Commit to mental and psychological recovery – enjoy your down time
- Get enough sleep!