

LAURA STAMM INTERNATIONAL POWER SKATING SYSTEM

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MY FAVORITE DRILL

It's been my favorite drill for 28 years. I created it. I've used it to improve the forward stride of thousands of hockey players from novice to pro. Tried and true, it is one of my *SIGNATURE* drills.

It's been copied and the name has been changed. The fact is that most power skating instructors recognize how perfectly suited this drill is to teach the motions of the forward stride. I have never discovered another drill to be as good as this one for practicing the fundamentals of the forward stride. Many pros still tell me this was the best drill ever, and that working on this drill helped improve their forward skating more than any other.

I call the drill "*drag/touch*" when I want to abbreviate it. In actuality I call it "*drag your toes, touch your heels*". Here it is. Learn it, practice it properly and diligently, then try to skate the same way!

After pushing off, fully extend your pushing (left) leg and drag the first two or three inches of the left inside edge (called "the toe") on the ice for about two seconds. In order to drag the inside edge of the toe your left leg and skate must be turned outward. If they are turned straight downward you will be dragging the "tippy toe" of the skate, with the leg now in a walking-running position (a "no-no" for skating).

After dragging the "toe", drag the heel of the returning skate back under your body until that heel (left) touches the heel of the gliding (right) skate. When they touch your feet should be in a "V" position (heels touching, toes apart). If your knees are well bent, the shape between your thighs, knees and ankles should form a "diamond" shape. I call this recovery position the "V-diamond" position.

Repeat, now pushing the right leg to full extension. When the right leg reaches full extension drag the toe of that skate (in the turned out position) for two seconds. Now drag that heel back to touch the heel of the gliding (left) skate. When your heels touch, your heels should be in the "V" position and your legs should be in the diamond position (the "V-Diamond" position).

The purpose of dragging the toes and touching the heels is to enable players to *feel* the difference between correct and incorrect execution. It's much easier to feel the difference with the skates on the ice than when the skates are off the ice.

Repeat this drill until you can feel each motion and can distinguish between correct and incorrect execution at every point of the forward stride. Now, try using the exact same technique while skating at half speed. The only differences are:

1. Do not drag the toe on the ice. At the finish of each push lift the skate about ½ inch off the ice.
2. When bringing the skate back under your body, keep it (the skate) close to (about ½ inch) off the ice.
3. When bringing the recovering heel back to the gliding heel, they should end up being about ½ inch apart.
4. Try skating faster and faster, always trying to skate with this same (proper) technique.

At first your skating technique will deteriorate, but this is only temporary. The ultimate goal should be to skate with perfect technique regardless of how fast your legs are moving.

SKATE GREAT HOCKEY,

LAURA STAMM

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