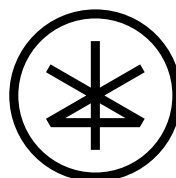




**TECH  
DECK™**

SETTING  
UP A SAFE SESSION

~~KEEP~~ **START**  
**PUSHING.**



**Canada  
Skateboard**

# HOW TO PLAN FOR A SAFE SESSION

## Welcome to Canada Skateboard's first training module!

This instructional manual is intended for anyone working with children, youth, or adults through formalized clubs, camps, classes and programs, as well as, through informal "pop up" lessons and events at your local skatepark!

## First, we would like to formally acknowledge our privilege to live, work, and play on traditional and ancestral lands:

Canada Skateboard acknowledges that we live, work, and play on the occupied and unsundered territories of the indigenous peoples. We are humbled by the opportunity to promote and grow skateboarding upon these ancestral homelands.

We realize you may be working with children and/or adults in a variety of settings. Regardless, it is incredibly important to have the skills and knowledge necessary to promote a safe introduction to skateboarding, as well as to be able to respond appropriately to all emergencies and injuries.



"SAFETY IS THE KEY TO INTRODUCING SKATEBOARDING TO NEW SKATERS AND ALLOWING THEM TO THRIVE"

Jump Start Games in Calgary, AB 2018



SKATEBOARDING IS FOR EVERYONE

Canada Skateboard has compiled the following information and resources for anyone introducing individuals to the world of skateboarding. The intention of this module is to put forth concepts that ensure all skate sessions are being run in a safe and controlled manner.

## WE WILL COVER

- Equipment and maintenance
- Safety statistics
- Skatepark safety and etiquette
- Adaptations
- Warming up and stretching
- How to fall
- Responding to injuries
- Head injuries and concussions



# THROUGHOUT MODULE #1

In order to make this happen, it is important that we teach participants to effectively service their skateboards and make sound choices around the variety of safety equipment available to them. By the end of this module, we will be able to confidently teach skatepark etiquette and promote skatepark awareness with our less advanced skatepark users. We will also learn practical ways of increasing mental and emotional safety (as a part of Safe Sport Training) and inclusion for participants of a variety of cultural backgrounds, gender identities, abilities, and socio-economic environments. Most importantly, we will be able to actively prevent and address injury when it occurs.

**Before we get started, we want you to take a moment and consider the following questions:**

How do I ensure the safety of all participants while learning how to skateboard?

How do I empower skaters to promote the safety of others while skateboarding?

How do I promote and maintain the mental and emotional safety of those participating in skateboarding?

How do we promote effective use of the skatepark/skate spot through the teaching of proper etiquette and responsibility?

How do I recognize and intervene appropriately when injury occurs?

How do I set up a "Safe Session"?



**TAKE THE TIME TO THINK, WHAT IS A SAFE SESSION?**

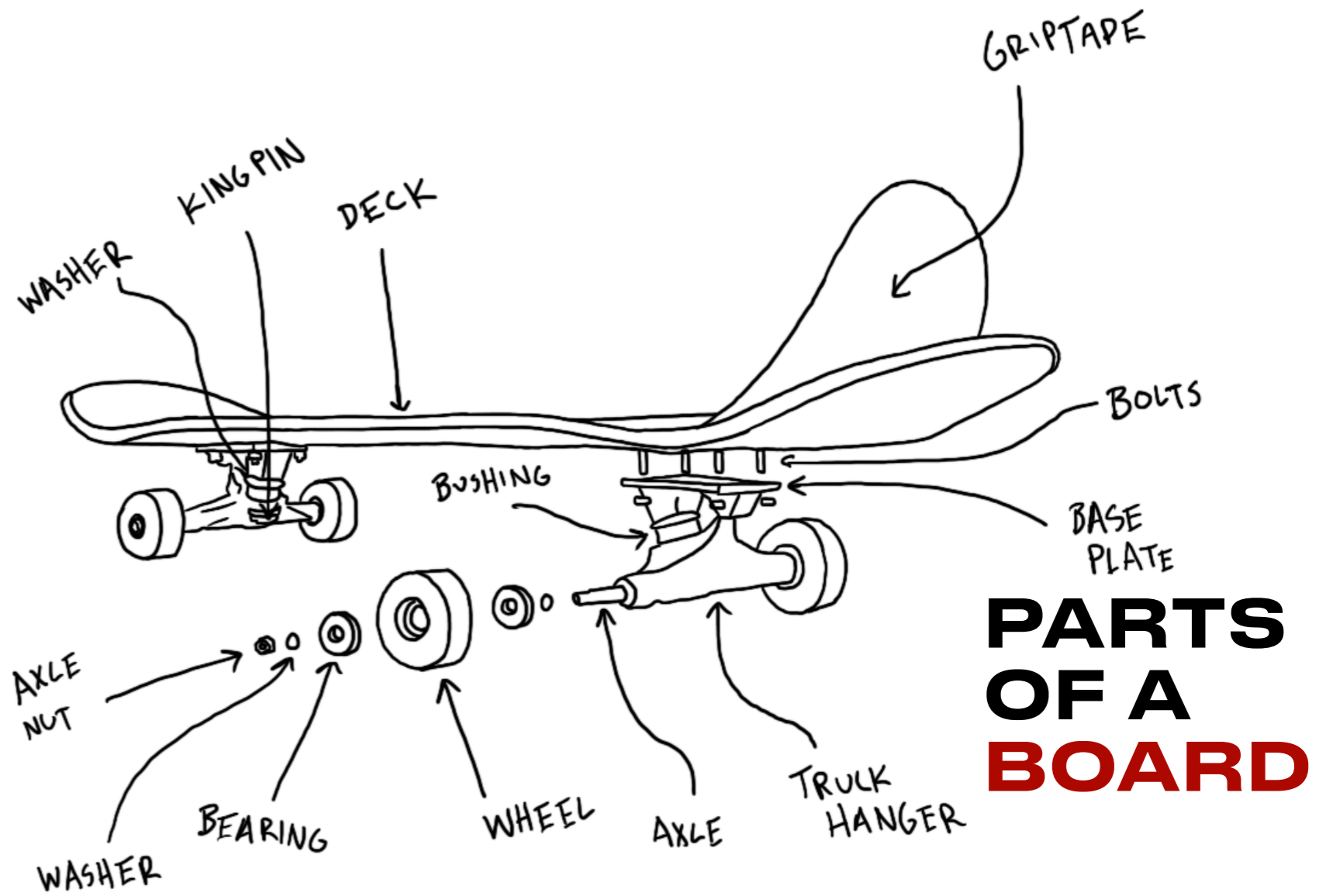
GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR ANY SESSION



**SAFE SPORT TRAINING**

# LET'S TALK EQUIPMENT

For any skater there are few things more intimidating and ultimately satisfying than putting together a new skateboard. The reality for many people new to skateboarding is that visiting a skate shop may be scary, while putting together and maintaining a board may also be confusing. On top of that, improper set-up and maintenance may lead to discouragement and injury.



## PARTS OF A BOARD



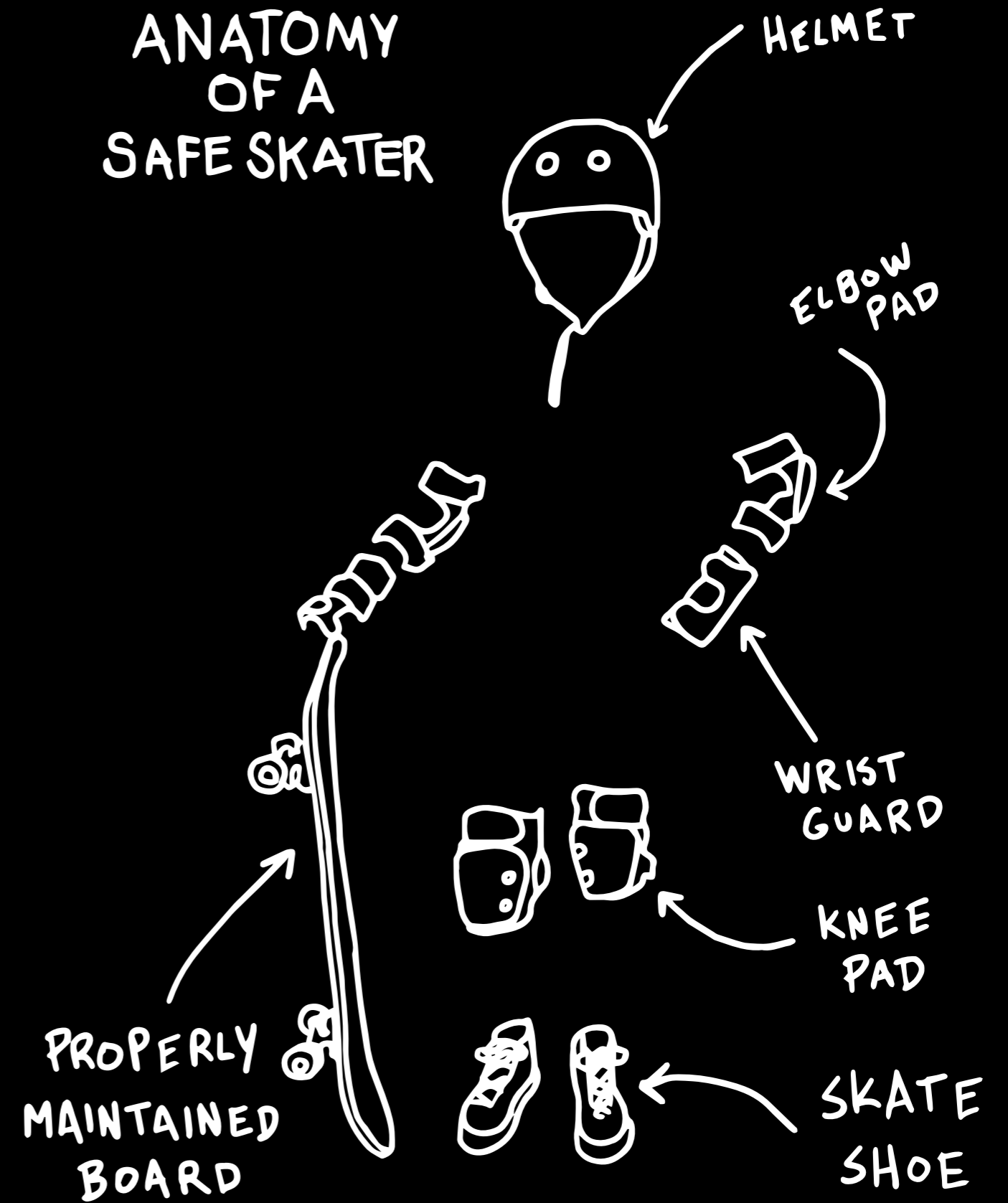
CHECK OUT THIS VIDEO OF A FIRST VISIT TO A SKATESHOP!



# HELMET USE

The use of helmets and pads, while not always common in professional-level skateboarding, is an essential part of programming that maintains the safety of beginner riders. It also protects your organization from possible legal liability resulting from serious injury. Based on this, Canada Skateboard recommends all formalized beginner skateboard programs have a mandatory helmet policy, and strongly recommends full pads for all participants. In the next portion of the module we will explore the data. However, it is well established that helmets lower risk to participants and prevent the most severe of injuries, including those that may lead to concussions or ev

**[CHECK OUT CANADA SKATEBOARD'S HELMET POLICY HERE](#)**



# WHY SAFTEY?

While it is strongly recommended that all skateboard coaches have an up to date first aid certificate, it is essential that all leaders are aware of the most common injuries associated with the sport. Instructors must actively take steps to prevent injuries, recognize them when they occur, and have the ability to respond effectively to all situations.

According to the [BC Research and Prevention Unit \(2016\)](#), most injuries are "due to falls, resulting in upper and lower extremity injuries and head injuries." While any activity contains a certain amount of risk, when compared to other physical activities, skateboarding remains a relatively safe activity, especially when even the most basic safety precautions are taken. It should also be noted that severe injuries and death are far more common in longboarding and often involve unintended collisions with vehicles. Because of this, some municipalities have begun to implement restrictions on longboarding.

**49.3%**

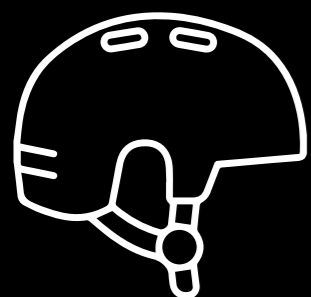
occur to the upper extremities.  
Wrists, elbows, shoulder etc...

**12%**

of ER visits resulting from a skateboard injury were due to a fall involving the head

**27.6%**

occur to the lower extremities.  
Ankles, knees, hips etc...



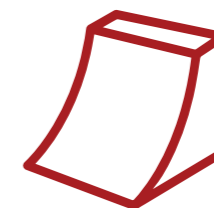
**ONLY 33.4%**

of skaters report wearing a helmet regularly



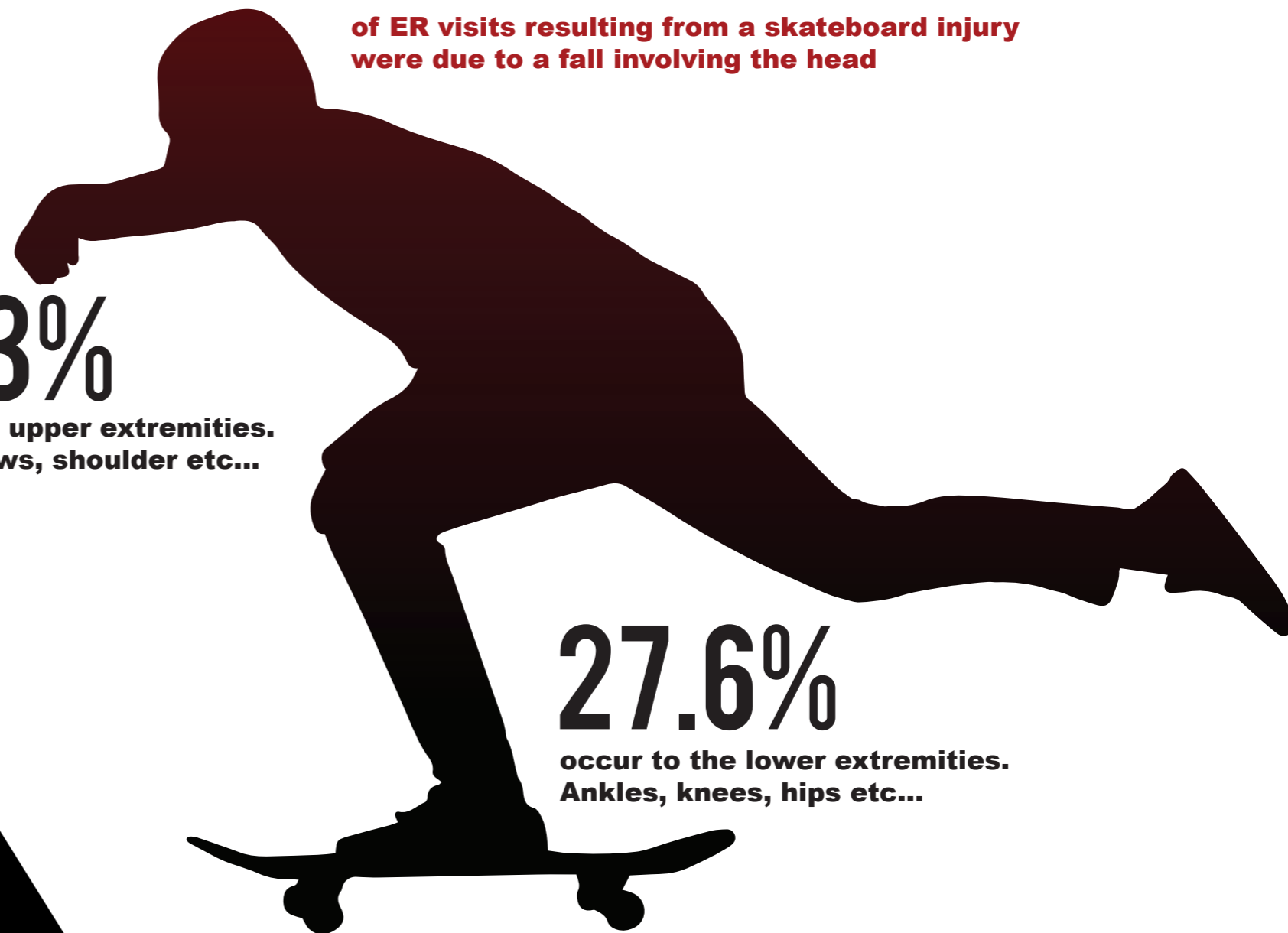
**28.7%**

of injuries occur in the street



**21.8%**

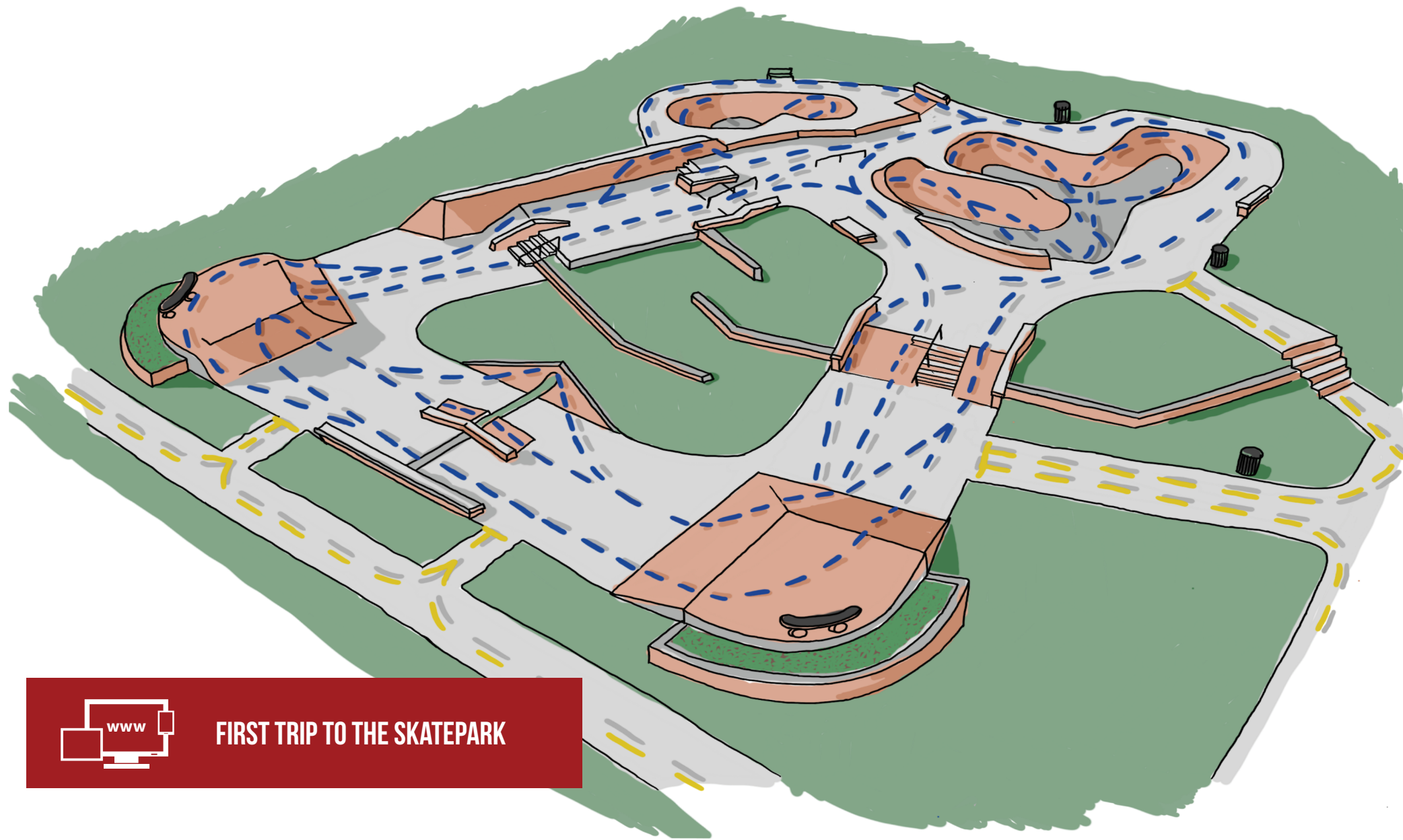
of injuries occur in the skatepark



# SKATEPARK SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE

If a skate shop may be intimidating for a new skater, a skatepark is a foreign world filled with physical dangers and potentially aggressive personalities. A place governed by a convoluted and invisible set of rules. For many of us, it took months or even years, to figure out how to fit into this unique environment. With the dramatic increase in the number of modern skateparks and a lack of entry points for new skaters, scooters have become a way to acclimate to a park with reduced risk and challenges.

The good news is there are individuals like you creating a pathway for new skaters to gain the confidence and skills required for the often lifelong pursuit of skateboarding. Once a skater is comfortable and informed, a skatepark becomes an environment filled with endless possibilities. This place connects the rider with a positive community, is an outlet for individual creativity, and allows for the freedom to pursue an activity they love.



— Commonly Used Lines      — Areas to Learn / Park Entry Points

## KEEPING THE SESSION SAFE

### Best Times to Go to a Skatepark

**Morning (Beginners and Old Timers)**

**Midday (Programs, kids, youth and adults)**

**Late Afternoon/Evening (Advanced skaters)**

### Where to Learn the Basics

**Adjacent pathways and sidewalks**

**Flat areas (at appropriate times)**

**On grass**

### Advice for Guardians and Parents

**Do not leave young beginners without supervision**

**Ask advanced skaters for help and guidance**

**Watch the action from the side**

### The Importance of Observation

**Look for: patterns, trouble, opportunities and others**

### Keeping the Skate Space Clean

**USE THE GARBAGE CANS!**

### How to Spot your Line

**Is it clear? Is it safe?**

### Keeping your Head Up and Looking Out for Others

**Where are the other skaters? Where are they headed?**

### Skating within your Means

**Can I do it? Should I do it?**

### Bowl Etiquette

**One at a time no matter the size of bowl.**

### Staying Away from Bad Influences

**Are they here to skate? If not, why are they here?**

### Where to Take a Break

**Sit on benches, not ledges.**

### Cooperating with Other Users

**How can I make this more fun and fun for everyone?**

### How to Report a Problem

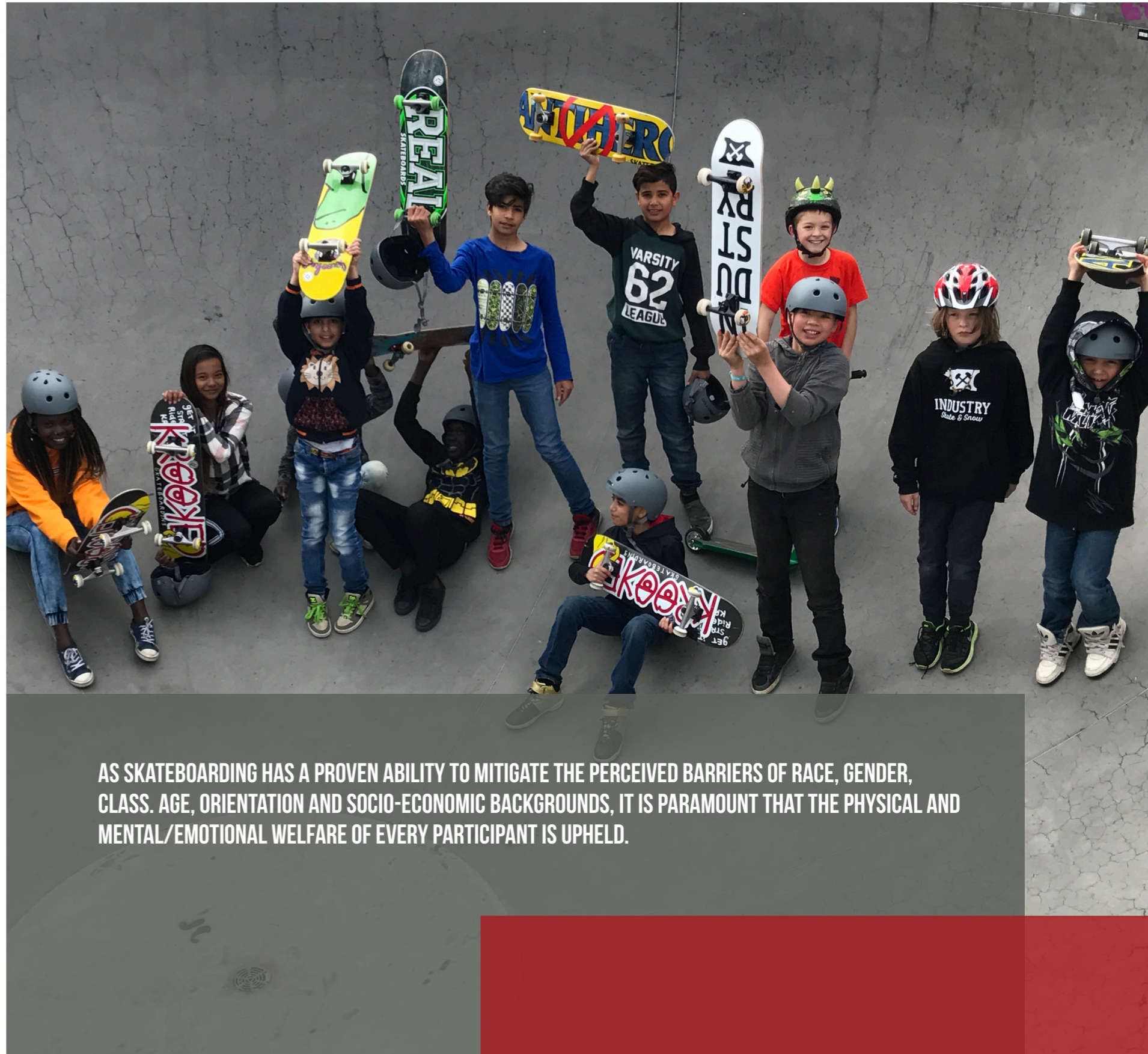
**How serious is the problem... Do I call friends, parents/guardians or police?**



FIRST TRIP TO THE SKATEPARK

# KEEPING THE SESSION SAFE

The reality is that skateparks are often a crowded and fast-paced environment—coaches and mentors need to be able to teach the basic skills to navigate it safely and effectively. There are several principles of etiquette involved at a skatepark, such as knowing when it is “your turn”, and the importance of looking out for others. Effective leaders should be able to coach participants to collaborate with others in order to keep skateparks safe and a positive environment. Safety includes creating space for everyone to participate in a physically and psychologically safe place. There are several effective measures to identify and effectively call out negative, hateful, or exclusionary behaviour (bullying), and actively promote inclusion amongst groups who have historically experienced exclusion in skateboarding. Canada Skateboard strongly recommends all leaders, instructors, coaches, and programmers take the SAFE SPORT training to understand how to approach these situations appropriately.



AS SKATEBOARDING HAS A PROVEN ABILITY TO MITIGATE THE PERCEIVED BARRIERS OF RACE, GENDER, CLASS, AGE, ORIENTATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS, IT IS PARAMOUNT THAT THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL/EMOTIONAL WELFARE OF EVERY PARTICIPANT IS UPHELD.



**SAFE SPORT TRAINING**

# ADAPTING FOR READINESS

When running any program, it is important to have a strong understanding and awareness of your participants' willingness, readiness, and abilities. In this light, it is critical to adapt and accommodate instruction for individuals with disabilities. While skateparks and other public environments are legally required to adhere to the guidelines of accessibility set forth by the Canadians with Disabilities Act, your programming should go beyond access, and promote the full inclusion and participation of individuals with disabilities as best it can.

To achieve this, instructors need to create an effective working relationship with the individual, as well as any caregivers and/or external supports, in order to establish appropriate accommodations. This might be achieved through the use of physical aids or supports, visual cues, and adapting equipment and/or the environment to meet the needs of the individual.

In many respects, we naturally adapt our instruction for beginner, intermediate, and advanced skaters—instructing individuals with disabilities should be no different. If you are struggling with what accommodations need to be made, reach out to local experts, educators or associations with the expertise to help you create a plan.



**TAKE THE TIME TO THINK, WHAT DOES THE PARTICIPANT  
NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL?**

**IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND ADAPTATIONS TO REDUCE BARRIERS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH  
DISABILITIES**



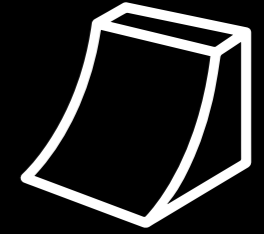
**DAN MANCINA X ACADEMY IN CALGARY**

# WARM-UPS PREVENT INJURY

Crucial to any physical activity is an adequate warm up. Taking the time to adequately prepare the body can go a long way in preventing injury, increasing performance, and enhancing overall mobility. Skateboarding is no exception. As the movements in skateboarding often happen in sudden bursts rather than prolonged output, it is important that skaters begin each session by increasing their heart rates, actively stretching to heat, loosen, and prepare muscles. These movements continue periodically throughout the session, followed by a “cool-down” post-skating.

According to the Foundation for Global Sports Development, effectively warming up may produce the following benefits:

- Release of adrenaline
- Increased heart rate
- Increased production of synovial fluid between joints to reduce friction
- Dilation of capillaries (increase blood flow)
- The oxygen in blood travels with greater speed and at a higher volume
- Decreased viscosity of blood and within the muscle
- Removal of lactic acid
- Supply of energy through breakdown of glycogen
- Increase of muscle metabolism
- Increase of speed in nerve impulse conduction



**R** Raise heart rate, breathing rate, body temperature as a first step. For example, biking, jogging, kicking a ball, or lightly skating around or to the park.

**A** Activate muscle groups that will be used for the session next. Think specific exercises like squats, lunges, calf raises, etc., keeping the intensity low.

**M** Mobilize joints that are relevant to help with athletic movements, like hips, ankles, and shoulders.

**P** “Potentiate” or prime the body to move quickly to finish off the warm up. Try jumping or bounding to wake up the nervous system and raise intensity.



**CHECK OUT THIS VIDEO  
OF JUST SOME OF THE  
WAYS TO WARM UP  
BEFORE SKATING!**

## SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

\*\*\* It is important to note that recent research has unveiled that there is little evidence that static stretching lowers risk of injuries and even in some cases, may actually cause harm. Static stretching is defined as stretches in which you stand, sit, or lie still and hold a single position for a period of time, typically while muscles are cold.\*\*\*

When working with younger children and/or youth, consider interactive games that meet each outcome of RAMP. This can be a way to physically warm up, have fun, and get participants comfortable with the group prior to heading to the park or spot.

**CHECK OUT SOME GREAT SKATE GAMES FROM THE GOODPUSH ALLIANCE**

# SAFE FALLING

When introducing individuals to skateboarding, it is paramount to start with the basics. One of the most important skills, while not always an obvious one, is learning to fall. Knowing how to bail off a board effectively is key to avoiding sprains, breaks, and head injuries.

The underlying principle is that it's always better to bruise than break, so we must ensure it is the softest parts of our bodies making contact with the ground and/or obstacles, and to roll, rather than take direct impact, whenever possible. The idea is to continue momentum until the fall is complete, avoiding a hard stop.

## Check concepts to keep in mind:

Staying relaxed

Running out

Rolling

Knee Slides

Avoiding joints ie: wrist, knees,  
elbows etc...

Using your pads

Sliding



THOUGH NOT DESIRED, FALLING IS AN INEVITABLE REALITY OF SKATEBOARDING. IT IS CRITICAL THAT NEW SKATERS LEARN TO DO IT IN A WAY THAT LOWERS THE RISK OF INJURY.



SAFE FALL VIDEO RESOURCE

# TYPICAL SKATE INJURIES

**Note that this is a brief description of common injuries not medical advice. If you or a participant are injured, we strongly recommend consulting a physician.**

**Shinner** – one of the most common injuries, where the skateboard hits along the shin, usually when attempting a flip trick. They tend to hurt a lot, but the pain should subside after a minute or two.

**Rolled ankle (sprain)** – the foot twists and there is strain on the ligaments. These range from fleeting pain to a broken bone, so it's wise to get it checked out, especially if there is swelling or bruising.

**Cuts and scrapes** – whether from taking a fall or the board making unwanted contact, these can be treated as you would any laceration: clean it, ensure the bleeding stops with pressure, keep it covered with a clean bandage, and try not to hit the same spot again.

**Swellbow** – a swollen elbow that generally occurs after hitting the tip of the elbow on the ground. Liquid builds up under the skin, causing an 'egg-shaped' swelling. Swellbows can be moderate to severe, and there is a risk of infection, so get it looked at by a doctor.

**Dislocations and fractures** – Though less common than the above, serious injuries like broken bones can occur, and it is important to address them right away. This usually means going to a hospital. With immediate medical attention and proper treatment in the weeks following, everything should be fine.

**Stiffness and sore joints** – generally with overuse (or more likely, old age), knees, ankles, and hips tend to become sore and less flexible. Always skate within your ability, and encourage others under your instruction to do so as well. Stretching, warming up, cooling down, and proper footwear for your needs can help alleviate the symptoms of being too old to skate (joking of course).

**Concussions** – head injuries are the most serious, as they can be a matter of life or death. Even with head protection, concussions may happen. It is vitally important that all head injuries receive immediate medical attention. We will discuss concussion protocol later in this section.

## IN THIS SECTION OF THE MODULE WE WILL COVER:

- How to recognize severity of injury
- The importance of an Emergency Action Plan
- How and when to contact guardians
- When to call emergency services



CANADA SKATEBOARD RECOMMENDS THAT ALL SKATEBOARD MENTORS HAVE A VALID FIRST AID CERTIFICATE.

# WHEN INJURIES OCCUR

Even when all precautions have been taken, appropriate equipment has been worn, and rules have been followed, there will likely be moments when injury does occur. To reduce the likelihood of over or under-reacting, we strongly encourage instructors and mentors to have active First Aid certificates and at the very least, have an organization-specific Emergency Action Plan in place. It is critical that we are prepared, calm, and able to respond appropriately to any emergency situation.

## RESPONSE VS. REACTION

Most skate injuries you will encounter will not be of a serious nature. It is best to take a moment to observe the participant before rushing toward them—response vs. reaction is an important concept to consider. Skateboarding largely involves failure as the pathway to success. Empowering participants to take these failures in stride and learn from them builds resilience and increases confidence. When a coach or caregiver reacts from a place of panic or anxiety, it may have the effect of adding additional stress to the participant, thereby further imposing a sense of undue fear in the new skater.

With that said, it is the responsibility of a coach to accurately assess any injuries, whether or not they appear serious. Some skaters will allow their determination to cloud their decision-making skills, while others are quick to be discouraged. It is important to listen to our bodies when there has been any kind of physical trauma. Coaches must use their experience to assist in making that determination with the skaters in their care.

Regardless of the nature of the injury the response should be calm. However, this is crucial in the case of a more serious injury. In addition to providing physical aid or contacting EMS, the coach should help the injured manage emotional distress. This can be done by acknowledging the injury with empathy. Encouraging deep breaths and reassuring the injured person that they will be okay can also help, but often just being present is enough.

**The primary role of the coach/first responder** in the case of an evident injury is the immediate assessment and care of the injured party. First, we must ensure the area is free of additional risks (active skating, boards on the ground, movable obstacles, bystanders or untrained responders, etc.). The injured skater should remain still and communicate with the responder; an accurate assessment must be made before any intervention takes place.



## SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

MOVING AN INJURED SKATER PREMATURELY CAN CAUSE FURTHER INJURY AND PERMANENT HARM.

# WHEN INJURIES OCCUR

**The primary role of the coach/first responder** in the case of an evident injury is the immediate assessment and care of the injured party. First, we must ensure the area is free of additional risks (active skating, boards on the ground, movable obstacles, bystanders or untrained responders, etc.). The injured skater should remain still and communicate with the responder; an accurate assessment must be made before any intervention takes place.

Remember to take it slow. Encourage the skater to give themselves the time to recover in order to fully assess the extent of the injury. Some skaters may want to jump right back into action when it is unsafe to do so.

If the injury is deemed serious and cannot be treated by a certified first aider and/or caregiver on site, or if a neck or head injury is suspected:

Call emergency services (911)—provide name, address, phone number, condition of injured, first aid treatment given, specific directions, and other information as requested

**Ensure there is a clear path to the individual for EMS**

**Ensure the individual is comfortable but does not move before EMS arrives**

**Designate someone to “flag down” EMS and direct them to the scene**

**Limit the scene to first aid providers and move bystanders away from the area**

To expand on these concepts, we recommend that every instructor, organization, and team have a detailed Emergency Action Plan in place that is reviewed and practiced regularly.

**AFTER ENSURING THE ENVIRONMENT IS CLEAR OF ADDITIONAL HAZARDS, IT IS TIME TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE INDIVIDUAL. POSSIBLE QUESTIONS FOR THE INJURED SKATER MAY BE:**

- Did you hit your head? (If so, refer to Concussion Protocol contained in the next section of this module)
- What happened?
- Can you tell me what hurts?
- Is the pain burning, crushing, throbbing, aching, or sharp?
- Are you bleeding?
- Are you afraid to move the injured area?
- Rate the pain on a scale of 1-10
- Do you have any other medical conditions?



**coach.ca**  
Coaching Association of Canada  
Association canadienne des entraîneurs

**START YOUR EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN HERE**

**COACHES, PEERS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS SHOULD MONITOR THE INJURED PARTY FOR THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS AFTER A SIGNIFICANT FALL OR TRAUMA TO THE HEAD:**

- **Headaches or head pressure**
- **Dizziness**
- **Nausea and/or vomiting**
- **Sensitivity to light or sound**
- **Balance problems**
- **Feeling tired or a lack of energy**
- **Not thinking clearly**
- **Feeling “slow”**
- **Easily angered or upset**
- **Uncharacterized feelings of sadness**
- **Nervousness or anxiety**
- **Change in sleep patterns**
- **Trouble falling asleep**
- **Trouble waking up**
- **Difficulty focusing eyesight**
- **Difficulty learning new information**

**HELMETS SAVE LIVES**



# LET'S TALK CONCUSSIONS

According to the Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport, “concussions are brain injuries that cannot be seen on x-rays, CT, or MRI scans. It affects the way an individual thinks and can cause a variety of symptoms. ”

Concussions are caused by blows to the head, face, neck, or anywhere on the body that causes sudden movement of the head. Examples in skateboarding would be hitting one’s head on the ground/transition/coping, being hit in the head by a board, a collision with another rider or stationary object, or a fall hard enough to jar the neck, face, and head.

A concussion should be suspected after a significant fall (such as the events listed above) and the participant communicates or demonstrates any visual signs that they are concussed. It is critical to note that a concussed individual may develop symptoms immediately, while other symptoms may develop 24-48 hours after the incident. For this reason, documenting, and communicating the injury to parents/guardians is an essential component to transfer the care and monitoring of the individual.



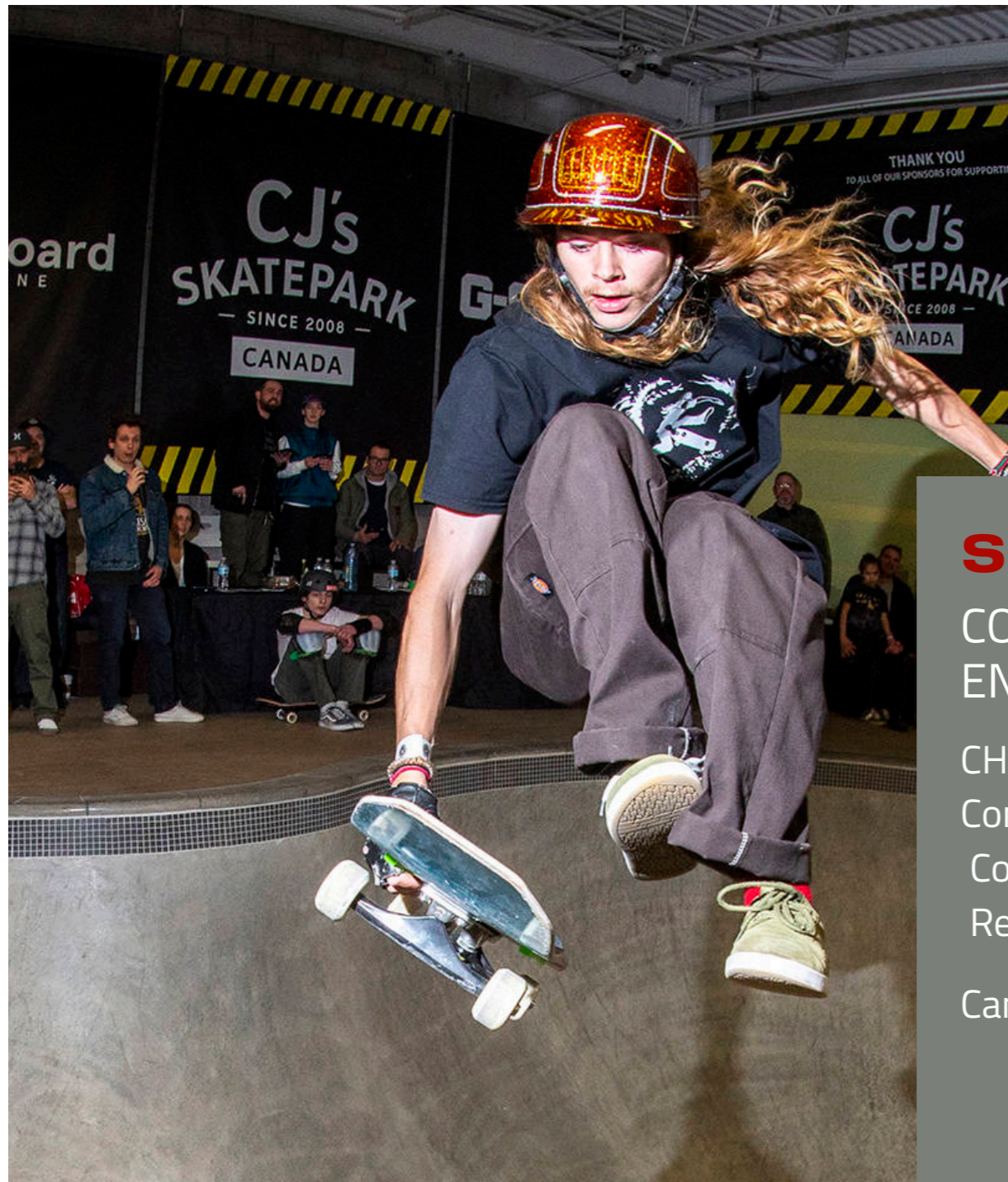
CANADIAN GUIDELINE ON CONCUSSION IN SPORT

# APPROPRIATE ACTIONS

Given the potential severity of a concussion, a participant suspected of being concussed MUST be immediately removed from the activity (if neck injury is also suspected do not attempt to move the individual).

Individuals with a suspected concussion MUST undergo medical assessment by a doctor or nurse practitioner as soon as possible. It is recommended that parents/guardians/emergency contacts are notified immediately and the details of the incident are clearly communicated.

Participants should also receive a written medical clearance before returning to any programming.



## BE SURE TO FOLLOW CANADA SKATEBOARD'S RETURN TO SKATEBOARDING PROTOCOL ANY TIME A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED



Recommended steps to follow for return to skateboarding (RTS) and competition (RTC)

Injuries happen, the following are recommendations to ensure skateboarders allow a significant injury (fracture, significant sprain, ligament tear, concussion, etc.) to be adequately assessed and managed. The injury should receive sufficient treatment and rehabilitation to allow for a return to dedicated skateboarding and competition safely, and without risk of further injury.

### Step 1

#### Medical Assessment - Trip to the Hospital:

A medical assessment and follow up with a medical doctor should occur for proper diagnosis and recommended timelines for rest and initial healing.

IE: ACL surgery requires follow up with the surgeon at 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months. Medical clearance will be given when the MD has determined that appropriate recovery time for physiological healing (may require proper imaging) has occurred. Prior to returning to skateboarding all physiotherapy and S&C goals must be met for safe return to skateboarding.

### Step 2

#### Physiotherapy:

Following approval from a medical doctor, a skater should proceed with physiotherapy. Physiotherapists help assess functionality and will set goals of regaining range of motion, stability and functional strength.

Upon achieving these goals, proceed with sport specific training or actions that simulate, skateboarding

## SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

CONCUSSIONS MAY BE THE MOST SEVERE INJURY YOU ENCOUNTER IN YOUR PROGRAMMING.

CHECK OUT THE FOLLOWING LINKS TO LEARN MORE

[Concussion Awareness Training Tool](#)

[Collection of Concussion Resources \(Parachute\)](#)

[Return to Skate Protocol](#)

[Canada Skateboard Concussion Protocol](#)

milestones should be (achieved prior to injury).

coach to ensure you are

their readiness &

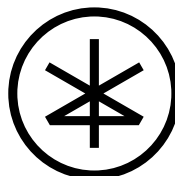
return to regular skating



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