

Communication No. 2826

SYNCHRONIZED SKATING

Judging Criteria for Synchro9 Effective for the 2026/2027 season

This Communication provides GUIDELINES for seasons 2026-27 for the following:

- Referee Deductions
- Technique Judge Score Chart
- Artistry Judge Score Chart
- Marking Guide for the Difficulty Score

All other rules are published in the Communication for Season 2026-27 and the Sport Rules Synchronized Skating 2026

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2026/27 Referee Deductions Synchro9

Timing:	
Program time violation, Rule 13, para 2	-1.0 for every 5 seconds in excess
Late start, between 1 and 30 seconds late, Rule 13	-1.0
Late start, more than 60 seconds late, Rule 12	Team is withdrawn
Costume: Rule 804, para 2 and Rule 13	
Costume and prop violation	-1.0 per program
Costume failure	-1.0 per program
Music: Well Balanced Program Content and Rule 13	
Music requirement violation (prescribed theme or BPM)	-1.0 per program
Interruption in excess: Rule 811, para 2, Rule 822 and Rule 13	
More than 10 seconds up to 20 seconds	-1.0
More than 20 seconds up to 30 seconds	-2.0
More than 30 seconds up to 40 seconds	-3.0
Interruption of the program with three (3) minutes, Rule 822, para 4b and Rule 13	-4.0 per program
Adverse condition prior to the program with three (3) minutes Rule 822, para 6 and Rule 13	-4.0 per program
Illegal movements: Rule 843, para 2, Rule 13	-4.0 per movement
Falls: For each Fall, Rule 811, para 1 and Rules 13, 14	-1.0 per Skater

Serious errors are falls and/or mistakes which **result in a break in the delivery of the program, including too much separation from the team.** The consequence depends on the severity and impact they have on the fluidity and continuity of the program.

Technique Judge Score Chart

Errors	DIFFICULTY	SYNCHRONIZATION
	<i>Total of 100 Points – Average of each sub-criteria score out of 100 (Difficulty, Variety & Quality)</i>	<i>One Score out of 100 (Unison)</i>
	Evaluates: Shape (number and changes of configuration) Full Team Movements Difficulty Features Patterns and ice Coverage Skating Vocabulary: body movements/use of space, power/speed/flow, holds, multidirectional one foot skating, steps/turns/linking steps	Evaluates: Unison
No Errors or Mistakes	100 Outstanding Difficulty Exceptional, all criteria outstanding	100 Outstanding Synchronization Exceptional, all criteria outstanding
No Serious Errors	90-99 Excellent Difficulty Always precise shapes, excellent spacing & symmetry, complexity, effortless transitions between all shapes Effortless, complex and fully controlled FTM's Excellent, fully controlled DF's with complexity Excellent and complex patterns that fully cover the ice in a complex or unexpected manner Deep, quiet and effortless use of skating vocabulary, creative use of holds and multidimensional space	90-99 Excellent Synchronization Excellent unison throughout
One Serious Error	80-89 Very Good Difficulty Strong shapes, very good spacing and symmetry, complexity, and fluid transitions between most shapes Strong FTM's showing complexity Strong DF's showing complexity Strong patterns covering the full ice surface using all directions Strong use of skating vocabulary and fluidity with holds and space	80-89 Very Good Synchronization Strong unison with only minor deviations
Two or more serious errors	70-79 Good Difficulty Well-developed shapes with variety of configurations Well-developed FTM's, majority complex Well-developed DF's, majority complex Well-developed patterns with good ice coverage Controlled use of varied skating vocabulary, demonstrating confidence with varied use of holds and space	70-79 Good Synchronization Well-developed and controlled unison most of the time
Serious errors are falls and/or mistakes which result in a break in the delivery of the program, including too much separation from team. The consequence depends on the severity and impact they have on the fluidity and continuity of the program.	60-69 Above Average Difficulty Consistent shapes with evident variety of configurations FTM's with recognizable complexity Consistent DF's with recognizable complexity Evident patterns with above average ice coverage Reasonable use of skating vocabulary, mainly consistent use of holds and space	60-69 Above Average Synchronization Recognizable unison, mainly moves as a team
	50-59 Average Difficulty Partially consistent shapes, with some variety of configurations Partially consistent FTM's with some complexity Partially consistent DF's with some variety Partially clear patterns with average ice coverage Partially consistent use of skating vocabulary, holds and space with some variety and some breaks	50-59 Average Synchronization Partially consistent unison, broken occasionally
	40-49 Below Average Difficulty Minimum four (4) shapes, inconsistent execution FTM's meet minimum requirements, inconsistent execution Attempted four (4) DF's or inconsistent execution At least four (4) patterns attempted, generally covers ice, but some parts not covered Simple use of skating vocabulary, inconsistent use of holds and space	40-49 Below Average Synchronization Inconsistent unison
	30-39 Weak Difficulty Three (3) basic shapes or less identifiable shapes FTM's meet minimum requirements with weak execution Attempted three (3) DF's or weak execution Three (3) patterns attempted or minimal ice coverage Weak use of skating vocabulary with weak execution, holds and space	30-39 Weak Synchronization Infrequent unison throughout
	20-29 Poor Difficulty Two (2) basic shapes, clearly struggling with execution FTM's meet minimum requirements clearly struggling with execution Attempted two (2) DF's or clearly struggling with execution Two (2) patterns attempted or poor ice coverage Limited use of skating vocabulary, simple pushes, minimal one-foot skating, limited holds & use of space, obvious breaks	20-29 Poor Synchronization Rarely remonstrates unison, individual skaters noted of different skill levels
	10-19 Very Poor Difficulty One basic shape or shapes not clear FTM's all attempted, not meeting minimum requirements Attempted one (1) DF or very poor execution Attempted one (1) pattern or little ice coverage Unclear use of skating vocabulary, toe pushing, two-foot skating, no clear use of holds or space, regular breaks	10-19 Very Poor Synchronization No clear unison, individual skaters seen
	0-9 Extremely Poor Difficulty No recognizable shapes FTM's missing or unclear DF's missing or unclear Patterns missing or unclear No recognizable use of skating vocabulary, no use of holds or space	0-9 Extremely Poor Synchronization No unison, all skating as individuals

Artistry Judge Score Chart

ORIGINALITY	PERFORMANCE	Errors
<i>One Score out of 100 (Program Construction & Innovation)</i>	<i>One Score out of 100 (Delivery, Presence & Impact)</i>	
Evaluates: Choreography Unity Creativity & Innovation Fits with the music, tempo, mood Concept and Design	Evaluates: Connection & Presence Commitment Projection Musical Sensitivity Variety and Contrast of Energy and Movement	
100 Outstanding Originality	100 Outstanding Performance	No Errors or Mistakes
Exceptional, all criteria outstanding	Exceptional, all criteria outstanding	
90-99 Excellent Originality	90-99 Excellent Performance	
Memorable and architecturally complete Seamless structural cohesion Advanced, bold innovation in movement and configurations Commanding movement integrated fully with melody, rhythm & tempo of music Fully realized and distinctive concept sustained throughout	Fully captivating, spellbinding Excellent emotional commitment from start to finish Commanding team projection Excellent musical nuance Excellent contrast of energy and movements	No Serious Errors
80-89 Very Good Originality	80-89 Very Good Performance	
Clear, compelling artistic identity Strong compositional unity, moves as one unit Clear innovation and risk-taking Strong musical integration with clear and compelling movements Compelling concept & design of program, unified sense of feeling	Strong presence and connection Strong commitment maintained Strong, compelling projection across the team Strong musical responsiveness Strong contrast of energy and movements	One Serious Error
70-79 Good Originality	70-79 Good Performance	
Well-developed program with some gaps in choreography Creative elements present and effective Well-developed innovation with limited risk taking Good integration with music, tempo, mood Well-developed concept	Well-developed presence and connection Well-developed commitment Good projection with confidence by all skaters Good musical awareness most of the time Well-developed contrast of energy and movements	Two or more serious errors
60-69 Above Average Originality	60-69 Above Average Performance	
Above average choreography Evident and logical structure to program Includes creative, original movements Above average integration with music, tempo, mood Evident but safe concept and design	Consistent presence and connection Mainly confident Evident projection by most on the team Above average timing and musical phrasing Evident contrast of energy and movement	
50-59 Average Originality	50-59 Average Performance	
Average choreography Some gaps in unity Partial attempts at creativity/innovation Some consistency of movement with music, tempo, and mood Acceptable and clear but conventional concept and design	Acceptable but uneven presence and connection Acceptable commitment Projection varies among skaters Acceptable musical sensitivity Partial contrast of energy and movement	
40-49 Below Average Originality	40-49 Below Average Performance	
Simple idea with inconsistent execution Inconsistent program with structural gaps Minimal creativity or innovation Inconsistent fit with music, tempo, mood Simple program concept and design	Inconsistent presence and connection Few skaters showing commitment inconsistently Inconsistent projection Simple relation between movements and music Inconsistent contrast of energy and movement	
30-39 Weak Originality	30-39 Weak Performance	
Weak or basic formed concept and choreography Infrequent unity of program Weak or basic program structure Weak relation to music, tempo, mood Weak program concept and design	Seldom demonstration of presence and connection Tentative commitment Weak projection Weak relationship between music and movement Infrequent variation in energy and movement	
20-29 Poor Originality	20-29 Poor Performance	
Limited creativity with simple choreography Rarely moving as a team Repetitive or generic formations Struggles to relate movement with music, tempo, mood Limited relationship between program concept and design	Limited presence and connection Rarely showing commitment Limited projection Limited relationship between music and movement Limited contrast of energy and movement	
10-19 Very Poor Originality	10-19 Very Poor Performance	
Lacking sustained choreography Lacking unity, little demonstration of skating as a team Lacking or disorganized program structure Lacking connection to music, tempo, mood Lacking clear program concept and design	Lacking presence and connection Little commitment Lacking clear projection Lacking musical awareness Little ability to show contrast	
0-9 Extremely Poor Originality	0-9 Extremely Poor Performance	
No creativity, basic elements only No identification as a team, all skaters moving independently No program structure No connection to music, tempo, mood No concept and design of program	No presence or connection No emotional commitment No projection No relation to music and timing No variety and contrast of energy and movement	Serious errors are falls and/or mistakes which result in a break in the delivery of the program, including too much separation from team. The consequence depends on the severity and impact they have on the fluidity and continuity of the program.

Marking Guide For the Difficulty Score

Difficulty (Quality)	Extremely Poor 0-9	Very Poor 10-19	Poor 20-29	Weak 30-39	Below Average 40-49	Average 50-59	Above Average 60-69	Good 70-79	Very Good 80-89	Excellent 90-99	Outstanding 100
Shapes	No recognizable shapes	One Basic OR shapes not clear	Two Basic OR clearly struggling with execution	Three Basic OR less identifiable shapes	Minimum of all 4 shapes or inconsistent execution	Partially consistent Shapes Some variety of configurations	Consistent Shapes with evident variety of configurations	Well-developed Shapes Variety of configurations	Strong Shapes Complexity and fluid transitions	Precise shapes Complexity and effortless	Exceptional, all criteria outstanding
Full Team Movements (FTM)	Missing / Unclear	All Attempted Not Meeting Min Requirements	Meets Min Requirements OR struggling with execution	Meets Min Requirements Weak execution	Meets Min Requirements Inconsistent execution	Partially consistent Some complexity	Executed with recognizable complexity	Well-developed Majority complex	Strong FTM's All complex	Effortless, complex, fully controlled	Exceptional, all criteria outstanding
Difficulty Features	Missing / Unclear	One Attempted OR very poor execution	Two Attempted OR struggling with execution	Three Attempted weak execution	At Least Four Attempted Inconsistent execution	Partially consistent Some variety	Consistent recognizable complexity	Well-developed Majority complex	Strong All complex	Excellent, fully controlled with complexity	Exceptional, all criteria outstanding
Pattern & Ice Coverage	Missing / Unclear	1 Pattern Attempted OR little ice coverage	2 Patterns Attempted OR poor ice coverage	3 Patterns Attempted OR min ice coverage	4 Patterns Attempted generally covers ice, some parts not covered	Partially clear Patterns Average ice coverage	Evident Patterns Above Average ice coverage	Well-developed Patterns Good ice coverage	Strong Patterns full ice coverage, all directions	Excellent, complex Patterns covers ice in complex or unexpected manner	Exceptional, all criteria outstanding
Skating Vocabulary	Extremely Poor	Very Poor	Poor	Weak	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Exceptional, all criteria outstanding

Restrictions: 1 Serious Error: maximum score of 89, 2 or more Serious Errors: maximum score of 79