



How to...



FUN FACT
Skateboarding made its debut as an Olympic sport at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Try out skateboarding

This exciting sport is fun to practice on your own or with friends.

More than 85 million people around the world participate in skateboarding. The sport is believed to have been first developed in the 1950s by surfers who wanted to do a similar sport on land. Many people have said they enjoy skateboarding because they can do it anywhere, such as on sidewalks and in parks. It's also a great way to improve your balance, which can help you with other sports. Here's how you can get started.

Find some gear

If you don't have a skateboard, you can ask a neighbor or family friend if they have one you can borrow. While skateboards are made in sizes for kids, you can learn on an adult-sized one too. It may actually be easier to learn on a slightly larger board because it can be easier to balance on. Whenever you skateboard, you should always wear protective gear—including a good-fitting helmet and elbow, wrist, and knee pads—to guard against injuries when you fall.

Start with balancing

Similar to riding a bike, one of the most important aspects of skateboarding is learning to balance on it. Place the skateboard on a patch of grass. Wearing your protective gear, step onto the skateboard, placing both feet on the board about shoulder-width apart. You can place whichever foot feels more comfortable in the front.

You may notice you have a preference for leading with one foot or the other, once you start riding. Next, lean forward and backward on the board and notice how it reacts to your body's movements. Practice leaning and hopping on and off while the board is on the grass.

Get moving

Find a safe area, like a sidewalk or driveway, and practice moving on the skateboard. Step onto the board one foot at a time, with feet shoulder-width apart and knees

bent. Take your back foot off the board, and use it to push off from the ground. As you move forward, bring the foot back onto the board.

You will eventually want to push off a few times to gain speed. Once you're moving and have both feet back on the board, try turning. Push down on your toes to turn in one direction. Push back on your heels to go in the opposite direction. To stop, take your back foot off and drag it on the ground until you slow down.

Practice often

The more you skateboard, the better you'll get. Your area may have a skate park, which provides a smooth riding surface and ramps. Check to see if skateboarding clinics for beginners are held there. It can also help to watch kids with more experience. Or ask a parent to help you look up skateboarding videos on YouTube.



Skateboarding can improve balance.

4 skateboarding tricks to know

Professional skateboarders have a variety of moves with specific names. Here are some of them.

Boardslide

A boardslide is when a skateboarder jumps up on a railing or ledge at a skate park, then moves across the railing before sliding down it.



Manual

Also called "pulling a manny," this trick is similar to being on a bike and popping a wheelie (lifting up the front wheel). To do it,

skateboarders lean back on the board so the front wheels come up as they roll on the back wheels of the board.



Ollie

An ollie is when a skateboarder jumps in the air and the board stays with their feet.



Riding switch

Most skateboarders have one foot they prefer to have in the front of the board. However, experienced skateboarders encourage

learners to "ride switch." This means to practice having the other foot in front of you so you gain the flexibility you'll need for learning harder tricks.

