

SKATING TIP

Imagine You're A Cat

Aligning the body over the blade in the posture which allows a skater to produce maximum flow, control, and power is, I believe, the most important basic in skating. If you can learn to adjust the different parts of the body in isolation as described below, then you will build the torso posture with which to achieve the proper alignment over the middle to the front of the blade.

Face the barrier. Place your feet about six inches away from the barrier so that each foot is placed directly under each hip (approximately six inches apart). The legs should be straight (not locked) to start. Spread your arms as if stroking forward, then place them, hands flat, on the barrier to steady yourself.

Imagine you are a proud cat—head held high by elongating the neck. Without arching, push your sternum (breastbone) up as if showing off your beautiful furry chest. Now begin to flatten your back by pulling your belly button back toward your spine, then take your “tail” and pull it down between your legs, always maintaining hips (torso) over the middle of the blades. With the back held flat, slowly flex the ankles and knees until the knees protrude well out beyond the toes.

Listen to the purring sound your blades make when you stroke in this position. ■

Provided by Cecily A. Morrow, producer of the *Lussi Technical Video* series and the *Natalia Dubova Stroking Exercises* series. Morrow is currently producing additional volumes of both series in Lake Placid.

ILLUSTRATION BY MARTHA VAUGHAN

