

# SAFETY TIPS FOR OUTDOOR FUN

By Kevin Kelly

It's that time of year again! With spring right around the corner, kids and adults alike are heading to the skateparks with skateboards and inline skates in tow. Like any sport, falling is inevitable, so it is important for skaters to use common sense, wear the proper protective gear, and keep their equipment in top form with regular inspection and proper maintenance.

The following tips are things you should be on the lookout for:

## PROTECTIVE GEAR

**Helmets:** Use a "skate specific" helmet. Bike helmets for instance do not offer the same protection. Make sure your helmet has a fairly snug fit. Loose helmets can be dangerous. Make sure all the insert foam is in place. Adjust the chin strap so that it is just slightly under your chin. Keep your chinstrap fastened at all times!

**Knee Pads, Elbow Pads and Wrist Guards:** Are also recommended, especially for all those who are new to the sport. Ensure that these pieces of equipment are "skate specific" as well, and have a slightly snug, yet still comfortable fit.

Keep your pads and helmet clean. Wash them regularly.

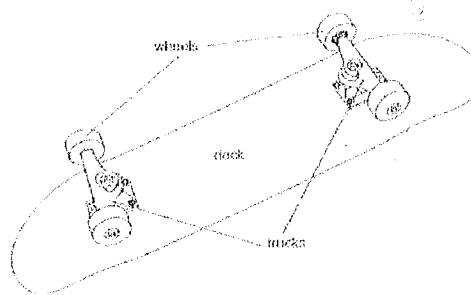
## MAINTENANCE

Skateboards take lots of abuse so it is important to inspect its parts before every use. Make sure that there are no cracks or defects in the board, trucks or wheels. Check to see that all of the 14 nuts on the board are fastened tightly. IE: kingpins, axels and hardware.

Ensure that your grip tape is clean and still grippy. Keep your wheel bearings well lubricated with "skate specific" bearing lubricant. And most importantly - don't ever get your



board wet! Water ruins bearings and weakens the glue in the deck making the board soggy and weak.



## COMMON SENSE

- ⊕ Avoid riding on the street
- ⊕ All tricks require practice
- ⊕ Skate and practice tricks and jumps in safe areas
- ⊕ Skateboards are designed for one person
- ⊕ Don't be stupid – hitching a ride by hanging onto a car, bus or truck is asking for trouble!
- ⊕ Wear the appropriate gear for the type of skateboarding you attempt
- ⊕ Try to relax during a fall and do your best to land on the fleshy parts of your body

## KNOW YOUR LIMITS

- ⊞ Remember to stretch (warm up)
- ⊞ Do not skate on wet surfaces

- ⊞ Keep your shoes tied up
- ⊞ Wear bright gear when out at night
- ⊞ Never use your board as a weapon
- ⊞ Keep your head up at the skatepark
- ⊞ Avoid using headphones at the skatepark
- ⊞ Stay alert
- ⊞ Respect the skill level of those around you
- ⊞ Don't be afraid to ask for help or lend it to others

For more information visit Kevin at Skate It Up Enterprises, Suite #569 – 3495 Cambie Street, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4R3 (604) 813-7581 or visit his website at [www.sk8itup.com](http://www.sk8itup.com)

## FACTS:

Sprains, fractures, contusions, and abrasions are the most common types of injuries.

Six out of every 10 skateboarding injuries happen to children under the age of 15.

Inexperience accounts for one-third of injuries.

Injuries to experienced skaters are often due to them falling when their skateboard hits rocks, debris, or irregularities (i.e. cracks) on the riding surface.

Protective gear is not subject to Federal performance standards, so careful selection is necessary.

Sources: [www.kidsource.com](http://www.kidsource.com) & U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission