

# Craig Heath's 'Jump to Win'

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What is jumping? Well, I looked it up in the dictionary and the literal definition is: "To push oneself off a surface and into the air by using the muscles in one's legs and feet." This makes sense, right? But when we (ice skaters) jump, we are moving (we have momentum) and then on top of that we add rotation (the action of rotating around an axis or center). Now *that* is a lot to think about in a fraction of a second- and on a thin piece of metal that is gliding on ice! This is the reason I thought of some easy and fun things to think about to make your jumping career soar to the sky: literally!

1. Before you go UP, you must go DOWN! In other words, BEND YOUR KNEES!!
2. Say NO to SWING! Make sure that your free leg goes straight through the center on the way up. You must get into the 'h' position before getting into the 'i' position. The 'h' position is when your free knee is at hip level and your body is in the position of the letter 'h'. If you swing your legs and arms around trying to rotate then you will most likely come crashing down and have birds chirping around your head...*OR*...you will be doing a spin without any jump (how embarrassing). ☺
3. Backspins. All your jumps take off and then turn into a backspin in the air. This is one of the most important things for you to remember. If you bring your free knee up into the 'h' position and then lock into the 'i' position during the backspin (in the air)- you are definitely on the right track. Landing in the 't' position will make everyone happy. The 't' is the landing position with the free leg high and the arms straight out from the shoulders. Hands pressing down as if on a table.
4. Knee. The free knee coming up into the 'h' position is what makes you JUMP. The free foot coming down into the backspin position (or the 'i' position) is what makes you SPIN. The *KNEE* is the *KEY* that unlocks the door to the *BACKSPIN!*
5. 'hit'. If you do your jump correctly then you will have said 'hit' with your body. When you say 'hit' with your body then you will jump HIGH and HIT your landing!! A great way to remember these positions is to always 'hit' your jumps. When you 'hit' your jump that means you landed it perfectly!!
6. Left shoulder in front. Sorry to all of the opposite way jumpers but just change Left to Right and you will understand this technique. After you lifted your free knee into the air which made you JUMP, you must lock your LEFT shoulder in front during your 'i' position so that you can spin fast and then check out into your 't' position. One of the most common jumping disorders is when skaters let their left shoulder keep going in the direction of the take-off. You MUST block your left shoulder in front in order to check out. It is easy to know when you have not done this correctly (or enough) because you either land the jump and then turn out of the jump OR you fall on your left hip (ouch).

7. h + i + t =hit (Please hit all of your jumps). Yes, I already explained this, but I wanted to say it again so that you will remember it forever. ☺
8. Be sure to work on your jumps on the floor. I prefer that you wear a good pair of sneakers and jump on a carpet or slightly padded floor (like an ice rink floor). It is very important that you learn how to jump without momentum (moving). Your legs will get stronger from pushing off the floor and you will learn how to rotate faster because you had no momentum from the speed of skating.
9. Watch other people doing the jump you want to master and copy them. Make sure you are copying a good jumper! ☺
10. Walk-Through. Be sure to walk-through your jumps before you do them. What I mean is to go through the motion of the jump on the ice without jumping. Once you can feel the take-off, air rotation and landing- then give 100% and go do the jump. You are much more likely to land the jump when you give 100%. Why give less?
11. Know you will land perfectly. I know this might seem silly for me to write this, but many skaters think of the take-off and rotation, but they don't think all the way through the jump to the landing position. Your brain has a lot to do with landing the jump successfully so you have to tell it what to do. Think all the way through the jump from the take-off to the air position to the landing. If you can see a perfect landing in your head the moment you take-off, then you have a much greater chance of landing perfectly.
12. The Four P's. Expecting to land your jumps perfectly and not being 'surprised' when you land them is the most *PERFECT*, *POSITIVE* and *PRODUCTIVE* way to jump that will *PRODUCE* a champion! Remember the four P's!
13. Breathing. When you jump you must hold your breath. Not before you take-off, but right when the jump is catapulting off the ice. This is not an easy thing to think about but it actually what happens in this very critical moment. Experiment by doing a jump that is easy for you and pay attention to your breathing. I guarantee that if you land it, you are holding your breath in the air.
14. Pulling Back. When you take off, you must pull your jumps back in the direction you are going. You can imagine a string attached to the top of your spine that pulls you back in the direction that the jump is moving. Your jumps want to go UP and they also want to TRAVEL. If you pull back, then you will land with speed and flow.

Go For Greatness! 'Jump to Win'

Craig Heath

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