

Secrets of Skateboarding Guide

Secrets of

Skateboarding

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BUYING YOUR FIRST SKATEBOARD

So you've decided to start skateboarding. Good for you. You've probably seen some cool skate videos, played a bit of Tony Hawks pro skater or just hung around with other skaters at your local skate spot, and decided it's time you got in on the action yourself. By its very nature, skateboarding is a very creative and individual sport, and you can take it in a lot of different directions, but there is one thing you will need and that's a skateboard.

I'm going to run through the major things you need to consider when buying a skateboard so you can make a better decision about what you buy and where you buy it from. This information is aimed at budding street/flatland skaters. I am not familiar with the requirements for vert skating.

After reading this guide, why not check out Board Crazy to read about some skateboarding tricks?

1. Cost

One thing you should know straight off is that skateboards can be extremely expensive. Straight off the bat you can pay triple figures for a pro deck and that doesn't even include wheels, trucks and bearings (all of which also come at a premium if you want quality gear).

You should try and blank your mind to all that great stuff. To begin with, you need something basic and functional. Something fairly disposable is ideal so if you decide skating isn't for you or you end up ruining the skateboard in the process of learning (which you probably will) you haven't paid the earth for any reason.

Aim to pay around £40 for a **complete** brand new beginner setup - any more and you're paying for something you don't need, much less and you are buying junk.

2. Deck

By far the best kind of deck to go for is a 'blank' - a deck with no graphics. The graphics and the branding are what make pro decks so expensive, and if you do any decent amount of skateboarding on it they will scratch off pretty quickly. You will usually get these with grip tape already on, or you can get any skate shop to do it. It's not even very difficult to do yourself.

Try and get a 7-ply deck - this means it's laminated with 7 layers of wood. 9-ply decks are heavier and more unwieldy, and a good sign that they are cheaply made. Try and also pay attention to the shape of the deck. If it's quite flat and straight it's no good - you need a decent amount of curve to the kicktails.

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3. Trucks

The trucks on the first deck I bought snapped the first time I tried to ollie. Watch out for this - buy from a proper skateboard dealer (whether online or in a shop), not a high street sports shop/department store! If you look at the trucks on skateboards in these kinds of shop you can tell that the metal is of bad quality because it seems overly shiny and light. As tempting as the prices may be, walk away.

4. Bearings & Wheels

Bearings are what keep your wheels spinning when you stop pushing - they determine how fast your skateboard is. Bearing speed is measured by the ABEC value. The slowest bearings are 'AA' bearings, skateboards from high street shops come with these and they are BAD! With AA bearings, you will probably not be able to roll *down* a hill let alone on the flat. From there, you've got various bearing ratings including ABEC 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Go for ABEC 3 or ABEC 5 bearings at the absolute maximum. Though you want to be able to roll quite freely, getting bearings that are too fast is a bad idea for beginners. It makes riding more intimidating and landing tricks much more difficult as the skateboard is more likely to slip from under your feet.

For beginners, wheels are less of a consideration. Fairly standard wheels of 55mm will suffice until you decide which direction to take your skating. The wheels that come with a basic complete set are fine.

Summary

To summarise your ideal first skateboard will be a **complete** consisting of a **blank 7 ply deck**, strong trucks, basic wheels and **ABEC 3 or 5 bearings**. But before you go out and buy brand new, ask around among skaters you already know - often, a second hand dk from an experienced skater will be even better, as it will have been comfortably worn in and there is a fair chance you can pick up a bargain.

BUYING SKATEBOARDS ONLINE

If you are in the market for a new skateboard or longboard, buying online could be a good decision. When you buy skateboards online you will very likely have access to a great deal, more variety than if you went shopping for one in your present location. And just imagine how much easier it is to find skateboards for sale from your computer. You don't have to worry about what the time is, or that the shop may shut before you have time to get there.

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Online skateboard stores often advertise discount skateboards, so you could actually save quite a bit. Just watch that the freight does not increase your total sales price, though. Many reputable online stores deliver their goods free of charge. Also, look for the prefix of https on the URL to ensure safe purchase.

So whether you want a complete skateboard or just skateboard decks, try finding your skateboard online. What should you watch for when purchasing a longboard or skateboard online? You will need to carefully read the specifications so that you get the right size and type. You will also want to know the width, thickness and what material it is made from to get the best longboard.

Brand is important too, so do your research to become familiar with the best brand names, such as Sector 9 longboards. Sector 9 Longboards is based in San Diego, California and have been making longboards since 1993, but they export too many countries. When you stick with a reputable name brand you know that your purchase will be of good quality.

CHOOSING SKATEBOARD SHOES

What is a Vulcanized Sole? Every shoe is actually made from Vulcanized materials, but there is a difference in the methods of how the soles are attached to the shoe. Vulcanization is the process by which rubber molecules (polymers or macromolecules made of repeating units or monomers called isoprene) are cross-linked with each other by heating the liquid rubber with sulphur. Cross-linking increases the elasticity and the strength of rubber by about ten-fold, but the amount of cross-linking must be controlled to avoid creating a brittle and inelastic substance. In simpler terms, a 'vulc sole' means the rubber soles are heated so they adhere to the shoe. The process is more durable than gluing.

What is a Cup sole? A cup sole is pre-molded to specifically fit the shoe during the production process. It is glued to the bottom of the shoe as opposed to being cross-linked like a vulcanized sole.

What is better for skateboarding?

Each sole type has pro's and con's, so 'what is better' is purely the skaters preference. Vulcanized soles offer high durability, better 'board feel' due to a thinner layer of rubber on the very bottom, and sometimes more grip support, but, vulcanized soles can wear down faster because of the thin bottom. Vulc soles can also be less-comfortable. Cup soles tend to be more comfortable, and have more options with tread designs, and shapes. Cup soles also offer high durability as well. Cup soles are often bulky, and the glue can weaken while skating. The pros and con's can change depending on the shoe style as well. We simply suggest trial and error. Try one style, then a different one the next time, and see which type you prefer.

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How much toe room should I have? The general rule is the width of a thumb between the longest toe and the end of the shoe, but this is our preference. We always suggest a little 'wiggle' room for your toes.

Why do my skate shoes only last a few weeks? This is a common problem. Just because a skate shoe is designed for skateboarding, does not mean it is indestructible. If you skate everyday, try not to be surprised if your skate shoes don't last past 4-6 weeks. Grip tape easily rips apart the materials of shoes, no matter how durable they may seem. It can get expensive, so it doesn't hurt to keep around a worn-out pair of shoes to use if you are practicing new tricks, instead of using those \$90.00 limited edition Nikes you just bought.

What are some other skate shoe features?

These include but are not limited to:

- Air pockets in the heels
 - Shoelace protectors
 - Dynamic Grip Technology (DGT)(DC Shoes)
 - Super Suede (DC Shoes)
 - System G2 Cushioning (Etnies)(Emerica)(éS)
 - STI foam (Etnies)(Emerica)(éS)
 - Lace Loops that "hide" shoelaces
 - 'Action Leather'
 - Thermoplastic Toe Box Reinforcement
 - EVA Mid Sole
 - Fusion Grip Rubber Outsole
 - Asymmetric stabilizer
 - Silicon Rubber makes shoes last longer (SiRC)
 - Stash Pockets (under sole)(DVs)
-

SKATEBOARDING BASICS

Skateboarding has been around since the 1950s, although no one really knows who invented the very first skateboard. Several people may have developed it at the same time. The wood part of the skateboard is known as the deck, and it has drastically changed over the years. The very first skateboard consisted of a heavy plank of wood attached to a set of roller skate wheels. It has developed into a strong, but rather lightweight design which includes seven to nine layers of wood or fiberglass.

The typical price range for a skateboard deck is 30 to 60 dollars depending on which brand is selected. A thin layer of sandpaper like material which is known as grip tape is applied to the top surface of the deck. This material creates enough friction for the rider to perform tricks without slipping off. The two metal parts which attach the wheels to the deck are known as the trucks. They allow

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the person to steer the board. In addition they can be used to perform various tricks.

The level of steering is controlled by a set of rubber cushions, known as bushings. They are inserted into each truck. A softer set of bushings will make the steering loose, and a harder set of bushings will make the steering tight.

Each skateboard has four wheels, two wheels per truck. This is what makes the skateboard move. There is a wide variety of wheels available. Big, soft wheels provide a smooth ride, but are substantially slower than small, hard wheels. Each wheel contains two slots which are used for the bearings. They are what make the wheels spin on the truck axle.

It is important to keep these well lubricated, or it may become difficult to gain speed. The nuts and bolts which attach the trucks to the deck are known as the hardware. In order to securely fasten the trucks to the deck four nuts and four bolts are required per truck.

The first step to take before riding a skateboard is to ensure all of the parts are securely connected to each other. Once each part is examined, safety equipment can be put on. The helmet is the most basic form of protection. This is normally a requirement if attending a skate park. Additional protective gear can be worn such as, knee pads and elbow pads if desired.

There are two different ways to stand on a board which are called regular and goofy. Regular stance is when the skateboarders left foot is placed in the middle of the deck, and right foot is at the back. Goofy is just the opposite, someone who is goofy places their right foot in the center of the deck and their left foot at the back.

Riding a skateboard opposite to someone's dominant stance is known as switch stance. Riding a board in normal stance, while rolling backwards with the tail facing forward is called Fakie. When the rider becomes comfortable balancing on the skateboard they can start rolling. Normally when someone gains speed on a skateboard, their front foot is placed in the center of the board while their back foot pushes off the ground. Some people prefer placing their back foot towards the back of the deck while pushing off with their front foot, this is called Mongo.

The next step is learning how to steer and stop a skateboard. A person who rides in regular stance must apply weight onto their heels in order for the skateboard to turn left. When turning right the weight must be applied to the toes. Another technique used for turning is known as the tic-tac.

Slight weight is put onto the back of the board in order to gently lift the nose of the board off the ground just long enough to shift the position of the skateboard. The skateboard can be turned right or left using this technique. The tic-tac is

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generally used by skateboarders with tight trucks, because it is faster to turn using this method. If the tic-tac is done multiple times alternating from right to left, speed can be produced. There are a number of different ways to stop the skateboard.

The most basic method a skateboarder can use to stop the board is by lifting their back foot off the board and placing it on the ground. A more advanced maneuver is called the Powerslide. The skateboarder must rotate the board 90 degrees and come to a complete stop. Force must be applied to their back foot while leaning backwards to avoid falling forward onto the ground. This method takes a lot of practice in order to perfect.

Finally the skateboarder can begin learning tricks. The Ollie is the most basic trick to learn, which consists of the skateboard coming completely off the ground, leveling out, and landing back onto the ground. To begin the skateboarder places their feet in a comfortable stance.

By slamming their back foot towards the ground the skateboard will come halfway into the air. Simultaneously sliding their front foot from the middle of the board towards the top will allow the board to level out in the air. If successful the skateboarder will land onto the ground and roll away smoothly. This trick usually takes a while to learn because of the inexperience the rider has on a skateboard.

In order to become a good skateboarder each trick learned should be practiced until mastered. The Ollie should be practiced over various objects to achieve a greater height. After the skateboarder has learned the Ollie, many more tricks can be learned and mastered.

Skateboarding has evolved from a two by four piece of lumber attached to roller skate wheels, to an advanced design which hundreds of companies produce every day. This activity continues to grow and become more popular among people of all ages. Many newcomers become easily frustrated and quit, but if practiced for years it can be one of best experiences.

PREVENTING SKATEBOARDING ACCIDENTS

Skateboarding accidents can be minimized

Skateboarders are passionate about their sport!! And yet very often people ask the question; why would anyone want to participate in this dangerous sport where there are so many skateboard crashes. Many people have the skewed view that boarders are basically just 'skateboarding accidents that are waiting to happen'.

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Many parents are wary to let their children participate in this relatively new sport, as they fear the inevitable skateboarding accidents that will come along. In reality there is inherent danger in any form of sports and especially contact sports and it all depends on how you go about it. Another myth that is still perpetuated today is that girls should never participate in skateboarding, as it is too risky, yet girls love this sport. The numbers of girls participating in this sport is growing steadily today.

Reduce injuries

Skateboarding accidents are part of this action sport, and that is just a fact! However, there is a lot you can do to make sure that you do not become seriously or unnecessarily injured in skateboarding crashes. The place to start is to look at the appropriate safety gear all skateboarders should wear at all times. A well-fitting helmet is non-negotiable; you should never get on a skateboard without it.

Make sure that it is snug yet completely comfortable to wear and does not restrict your movements. The body parts that usually take the brunt when any skater is involved in skateboarding accidents are the knees and elbows. Get the appropriate pads for both the knees and elbows, as you will save yourself a lot of pain and discomfort. The onus rests on parents to make sure that their children wear safety gear at all times.

Learn and Practice the Tricks You Learn

Everyone wants to learn and perform the tricks they see the professionals do. However, you should learn the tricks completely before trying to perform them. Don't just look at them, and think you will be able to do them with ease. Even the professionals have had skateboarding accidents as they got to the level they are now at. The key here is to get the tricks and practice them every day. Accept that you are going to have skateboarding crashes along the way. But the more you practice, the more proficient you will become and skateboarding accidents will be a thing of the past.

Adults should heed their own advice

Ironically, the biggest culprits for negligence that lead to skateboarding accidents and skateboarding crashes are adults. They are quick to preach to children about safety gear and the need for it, but then they go and disregard their own advice. This leads to spectacular falls, broken bones and more. Instead, adults should take the responsibility and lead by example as there is no more powerful way of getting the safety message across to the younger generation. Unfortunately the media has a field day whenever a skateboarding accident occurs and a skateboarder is injured in any kind of accident related to the sport. This sends out the wrong message and leads to a negative image for the sport.

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Be realistic about the sport

Yes, skateboarding can be dangerous if tackled without training, experience and a logical mindset. Too often parents hold their children back from this wonderful and fun sport for fear of skateboarding accidents as they see the breathtaking tricks and stunts performed by the professional skateboarders. It takes many years for any skaters to become that proficient, and along the way all the professionals have experienced skateboard accidents but lived to tell the tale. As a matter of fact, being an adult and a parent does not prevent anyone from taking up skateboarding. Put on the correct safety gear; pick up a skateboard and join the kids out there and you will learn that smart skateboarders know how to prevent serious damage when skateboard accidents happen.

SKATEBOARDING TRICKS

Skateboarding is more than just the outfits; it's more than just using your board to get around the town. Skateboarding is about the stunts. There are so many skateboarding tricks, and some are easier to master, some are harder. How do you take your skateboarding to the next level and start performing some skateboarding tricks? Here is some advice.

First, you need to purchase the right gear. Experts advise against purchasing a board from the department store because you can find good deals at skateboarding shops. And, this may not be fashionable, but you may want to purchase safety gear. If you are a beginner, you will probably fall a lot, especially once you begin to do your first skateboarding tricks.

Once you find your skateboard, your shoes, and some safety equipment, it's time to start learning how to balance and move on the board. It will seem easy to balance while the board isn't moving, but once you move, it can be a challenge to sustain your balance. Moving fast may also take some getting used to.

When you master that, you can start visiting the parks to start learning some skateboarding tricks. The first tricks you may want to learn are "grinds," "board glides," and "gaps." If you need some help learning the skateboarding tricks, you can ask a knowledgeable friend or maybe find someone to give you lessons. There are also a lot of resources online.

To learn skateboarding tricks, you first need to find the proper equipment. You'll need skateboarding shoes, a board, and safety gear. Next, you'll want to learn the basics. Once you master the basics, you can start to learn more complicated skateboarding tricks.

TRICKS THAT MAKE YOU LOOK LIKE A PRO

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There are many people out there that would love to do skateboard tricks like the pros do. Most pro skateboarders practice and train for years before they can land certain tricks on their board correctly.

If you want to begin skating like a professional here are some great pro skateboard tricks you can perform. With a little practice you can begin landing these tricks easily and you will look like a professional to your friends.

The 5-0 Grind: Another way to grind a ledge or rail is to perform the 5-0 skateboard grind. With this grind only the back trucks are grinding while the nose of the skateboard is in the air. To perform the 5-0 grind correctly you need to practice it for a while because it is an advanced trick. To begin performing this trick you must find a good place to grind and you should also know how to 50-50 grind.

Once you found the right ledge to grind you are going to come at the ledge the same way you would normally do a 50-50 grind. Once you ollie up to the ledge you are going to put all of your body weight on the back trucks. The nose of your board has to be pointing in the air and off to the side the whole time you grind. When you land your body weight should be on your back foot and your shoulders should be slightly forward over your board so you can continue grinding along. Keep your arms out at your sides for balance while you grind. You can get off the ledge anytime you want by dropping off of it. This trick looks very sweet and it will add a lot of style to your skateboarding.

The 360 Flip: if you really want to impress your friends then this is the perfect trick to perform. To perform this trick correctly you need to know how to do an ollie. Just like with an ollie you need to slam your back foot on the board, but you need to slam it a little harder so you can flip it. While you're slamming your board with your back foot you must allow your front foot to slide off the board and use your toes to flip it that way. Once you have performed the flip you are going to want to catch the board with your feet and center it again.

If you practice and learn how to properly perform these pro skateboard tricks you will impress your friends and spectators. These skateboard tricks will take you some time to master but the time you put in will be well worth it.

HOW TO GO PRO

If you love to skateboard, you've probably thought a lot about what it would be like to go pro. Pro skateboarders travel around the world to compete is known the world over for their amazing tricks, and may even get a chance to create their own skateboard line. The key to going pro is to get sponsorships. A sponsored skateboarder can expect to get free gear and support to attend skateboarding events and competitions. A pro skateboarder often gets money from the

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sponsorship company for appearing in ads or other publicity activities, too, and may receive a pay check from the sponsoring company in addition to being compensated with gear and trips.

If you want to get serious about skateboarding and are looking into the possibilities of going pro, your first step is to practice! Skateboarding is very competitive, and you won't find any companies to sponsor you if you're not the best of the best. There are millions of skateboarders out there, and you must do something to set yourself apart. It is entirely possible to become a sponsored skater while you're still in your teens, but it requires a lot of hard work to become that good at such a young age.

Once you've learned some unusual and difficult tricks, show them off. Enter any local skateboarding competitions you can find, post videos of your trick on YouTube, and do anything you can to get your name out there. Earn a reputation as one of the best skateboarders around. Companies can't sponsor you if they don't know that you exist. If you're serious about finding a sponsor, put together a sponsorship or publicity package. This is the information that represents you as a person and you as a skateboarder. It is your opportunity to show potential sponsors that you have the skills and the dedication, and that sponsoring you would be a good business decision.

Once you have a sponsorship package, take it to different companies who may be able to sponsor you. Generally, this includes companies in the skateboarding industry and those who already have sponsored skateboarders. Your publicity package is your "pitch" to the company about why they should sponsor you. Don't be surprised if you get turned down a lot before you find a company willing to sponsor you. Most skateboarding companies get dozens if not hundreds of sponsorship inquiries every month.

Sponsored skaters are paid by their sponsor company to compete, do photo shoots, or participate in other publicity activities. They often get the opportunity to travel around the world. Any skater who earns money through competitions is considered a pro skater. It is very difficult to make it in the world of professional skateboarding, so assess your reasons for doing so. Pro skateboarders do it for love of the sport, not for the income possibilities.

THINGS TO DO ON YOUR SKATEBOARD

Disclaimer: skateboarding can be a dangerous sport. Whenever you ride your skateboard, there's a possibility that you could get hurt. It's important that you understand this.

Also, before trying any of these fun things, wear your skateboarding equipment. Get a proper helmet, elbow pads, and knee pads, at the very least. Safety should

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be your number one priority as a skateboarder. Without keeping yourself safe, you're risking your ability to skate.

Skateboards are great because they can be used almost anywhere. Indoors and outdoors, up hills, down hills, and on flat ground. They're simple to use, too. Just hop on and go. Skateboarding is the ultimate freedom.

Skateboard ramps are plenty of fun. They can be made without much effort - a classic ramp is just a board stacked up on some objects. A safer alternative is to construct a ramp entirely from wood. Cut a two by four piece of wood diagonally, and nail a piece of plywood to the pieces. Instant ramp!

Street curbs are a classic object that skateboarders skate on. They're almost like a wave, if you can ride them properly. It's a lot of fun to ride up and down the street, pumping off the curbs to keep you going.

Curbs can also be like a miniature skate park. They're perfect for practicing small tricks, and can be used as a ramp. Alternatively, you could jump from the street to the curb, using the gutter as a little mini gap.

When I was young, my friends and I made things dangerous by jumping over each other with the ramp we made. I can't recommend this, because it's just so dangerous. However, we did have lots of fun finding objects to stack, and then trying to gap those.

Another fun time I remember having as a boy is stacking up a couple of skateboards, and then doing an ollie over them. This can be turned into a game - stack up a board and jump over it. The next person to not make it over stacks their board up too. This keeps going until a winner is created

Skateboard games are lots of fun, but if you don't have friends then you can go check out your local skate park. Not only is the skateboard park a lot of fun, but it's a great opportunity to meet people like you.

You can have fun with your skateboard in plenty of different ways. Don't feel like you are limited by what I've written above. Instead, use this guide as a way to think up new ideas. Always remember to wear your safety gear!
