



Lafayette Roller Derby

Gear Recommendations

Here you can find everything that will be required for you to skate with LRD, and even some extras that you might want to get along the way. LRD does have a small stock of used equipment that you may try on or borrow before investing in full gear of your own, but sizes and styles are limited.

These recommendations are largely based on our skaters' personal experiences, so there may be other good options as well. If you find something that is not on the list, please check with us to be sure it is suitable for derby! If you don't follow our recommendations and show up with the wrong gear, for the sake of everyone's safety, you will not be permitted to skate until you get the proper equipment.

Please note that the prices are for each individual item as listed and prices sometimes vary slightly based upon where you buy them. You can usually save money overall by buying a "Fresh Meat Package" from a derby-focused website, but it just depends on what you want because not all packages are customizable. Also, if you have questions about sizing, ask a current skater -- we're happy to let you try on our stuff for fit before ordering online.

Where do I buy My Gear???

There are lots of places available to purchase gear, new and used. The increased demand and supply chain interruptions caused by the pandemic have made some things difficult to find, but the below sites all appear to have decent stock as of January.

New Gear

- **Lombard Roller Rink** - This is the closest bricks-and-mortar store we know of, in Chicago's West suburbs. Call ahead and ask for "Steve," who really knows his stuff.
- **Rollergirl.ca** – Canadian skate shop located in Vancouver, BC. GREAT customer service and they have tested every item that they sell to ensure quality merchandise.
- **Bruisedboutique.com** – Great Fresh Meat skate packages and lots of cute accessories.
- **Derbywarehouse.com** – Very large selection, use coupon code "LRD20" at checkout for 20% off most gear items (usually not the actual skates, sorry).

Used Gear (NO USED HELMETS. YOU MUST PURCHASE A NEW HELMET.)

- **Roller Derby Recyclables on Facebook** – A great place to watch for used gear at (usually) reasonable prices! However, make sure to check online prices first and you are clear on what's included to ensure you are getting a good deal.
- **Other LRD Skaters** – A lot of us have upgraded our gear many times and might have something to sell. Don't forget to check with us if you are looking for something!



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REQUIRED TO START

Quad Roller Skates

There is a very wide range of derby skates available, some good, some bad. Please do your research to find the boots and plates that are right for you in both build and price. Keep in mind that you will get what you pay for. You can get a cheap pair of skates, but it is likely that you will need to upgrade them within a year or so. Sizing is extremely important to the safety of skating in roller derby. Your skates should fit very snugly against your feet. You can get try on skates owned by LRD members, or consult the online sizing guide for each brand. If your feet are more than a half a size different you should custom order skates to fit you properly.

Basic

- Riedell R3 – Basic starter skate ~ \$130 -- difficult to find in some sizes right now

Better

- Riedell 265 – very good starter skate ~ \$325-\$450
- Bont Prostar – a lightweight low ankle boot ~ \$200 - \$250
- Luigino Vertigo – Another good option ~\$200-\$330

Not Good

- Roller Derby Brand (their name is misleading, almost none of their products are actually suitable for derby)
- Sonic Skates (made for recreational use, not for the amount of abuse that derby skates get)
- Artistic skates (Moxies, Beach Bunnys, Impalas, etc. If you have a pair you can use them to get started, but do not choose these if you are purchasing skates FOR derby)



Wheels

The price on wheels doesn't really vary between sellers, so just try to find somewhere with free or cheap shipping
Wheels come in different durometers (how hard or grippy the wheel is), heights, thicknesses, and hub types, and you will find that everyone has a different preference on what they like the best. Most basic skates will come with some sort of stock wheels included, and they will be just fine while you are starting out. When you are ready to upgrade, try a teammate's or talk to someone with a similar weight/body type.

Wheels typically come in packs of 4, and without bearings, so be sure you are ordering 8 wheels AND bearings to match!

Basic

- Whatever comes on your skates

Better

- Radar Halo -- A very well-constructed wheel for the price ~\$50
- Reckless Morph Wheels – Two harnesses in one wheel ~ \$70
- Sure Grip Fugitive Mids – A slimmer basic wheel ~ \$70



Mouthguard

You can get a standard boil & bite mouthguard at any sporting goods store for about \$5, but for most people these are really bulky and it's difficult to talk or drink from a water bottle with them in.



Basic

- Basic Boil & Bite Mouthguard ~\$5
- Shock Doctor Gel Max Mouthguard – these are a little on the large side (this is what most fresh meat packages come with) ~ \$13

Better

- SISU 1.6 or 2.4 (Protech Dent) –The number (1.6 or 2.4) is the mm thickness of the mouthguard (it's TINY), but it protects your teeth just as well as any other mouthguard and you can still talk and drink with it in! ~ \$25



Lafayette Roller Derby

Gear Recommendations

Bearings

If your skates come with stock wheels, they will also come with bearings. When you are ready to upgrade, you can find bearings at most skateboard shops, including Amused on campus and Zumiez in the mall.

- Bones Reds (8mm) ~\$25-\$35 for a 16 pack (Amazon tends to be the cheapest)
- Kwik Zenith ~ \$35



Helmet

Your helmet is your most important piece of safety equipment; you want to make sure you are getting a good one. You only get one brain. Helmets must be purchased new because with even one fall the integrity of the helmet could be compromised, and you never know what history a used helmet could have.

Hockey helmets provide fuller coverage, but skate helmets are better-ventilated, so choose according to your personal preference.

Better

- Bauer Hockey Helmets ~ \$40-\$100
- S-One Lifer or Premium ~\$55-\$70

Not Allowed

- Skiing Helmets
- Motorcycle Helmets



Knee Pads

Good kneepads are ESSENTIAL to safe derby skating. There will be A LOT of falling on your knees, so you want to make sure you have plenty of padding and a good fit. You may begin bruising through simpler knee pads after less than a year, while higher quality pads can last 3+ years. Knee pads MUST have a hard shell.

Basic

- Triple 8 – KP 22 – Basic knee pads ~\$35
- 187 – Fly – suitable padding, and less bulky ~\$35

Better

- Smith Scabs Elite – Nice padding and comes down onto the calf for additional protection. You can get them in cool designs too. ~ \$70
- TSG Force III – A little bulkier, but they have great padding. The plastic knee cap are replaceable ~ \$70
- 187 Derby Pro – Designed specifically for derby, available in a few colors ~ \$75

Elbow Pads

It's not likely that you'll be taking any serious falls onto your elbows, so really thick foam isn't necessary, but you really want the elbow pads for skid protection because rink rash hurts (and scars). Elbow pads MUST have a hard shell.

- Triple 8 EP55 – large plastic cap to protect elbow, thin lycra sleeve for easy movement ~ \$30
- 187 Elbow Pad – contoured design to bend with your arm – thicker material so less mobility ~ \$30



Lafayette Roller Derby

Gear Recommendations

Wrist Guards

A good fit on a wrist guard is important because you may be falling on your hands a lot in the beginning and you can bruise yourself up good with ill-fitting wrist guards. Triple 8s are nicer than the 187s, and both significantly better than the pro-techs. Wrist guards MUST have a hard shell.

Basic

- Pro-Tech Wrist Guards – bulky but functional ~ \$20
- 187 Wrist Guards – also bulky, but better fit and quality than the Pro-Techs ~ \$25

Better

- Triple 8 Wrist Savers – comfortable mesh sides are breathable and stretch to fit ~ \$20

OPTIONAL

Knee Gaskets

If you need some extra support and padding for your knees then these might be just the thing.

- Smith Scabs Knee Gasket – fits perfectly with Scabs knee pads, Velcro sticks them into place ~ \$30
- Triple 8 Knee gasket – Velcro for attaching to your knee pads ~\$30
- 187 Knee Gaskets – curved design ~\$30

Outdoor Wheels

If you want to trail or sidewalk skate when it gets warmer, you will want wheels for that purpose. Outdoor wheels are softer than indoor wheels so you don't feel bumps quite as much. There's not much difference among them -- you want a 78A durometer, but beyond that, just get what's cheap or comes in a color you like.

Toe Stops

All skates will come with toe stops, but many starter skates come with a smaller black rubber stop that is somewhat hard to use properly and tends to wear out quickly. We recommend large grippy toe stops, they'll make your life way easier.

- Bionic Super Stopper ~ \$20
- Chaya Cherry Bomb ~\$25

Padded Shorts

If you are especially bony in the rear or otherwise nervous about contact with your hips or tailbone, you might want to invest in crash pads. There are a number of derby-specific options with prices ranging from about \$50 - \$90/pair.

- McDavid Hex -- low profile protection ~ \$50
- Triple 8 Bumsavers -- shorts with removable pads for easy washing ~ \$50

