

Green Mountain Derby Dames Gear 101

Helmet

Do not use a bike helmet or a single impact helmet. It must cover the back of head like a skateboard helmet and should fit snugly.

S-One, Pro-tec, or Triple 8 are good brands.

Pads

You can get a really cheap package set of pads at any big box or sports store. DON'T. You will fall. A LOT. You need good protection to avoid injury.

Wrist Guards

There are a number of different kinds of wrist guards, but any basic wrist guard will do; just make sure they fit snugly. Pro-Tec, TSG Pro, or Triple-8 Wrist Savers are all fine.

Elbow Pads

There's not a lot of falling on elbows but you still want a decent pad. They must have a hard cap. Protec, S-One and Bullet brand elbows are good but cheap elbow pads that will work for a while but Triple-8, 187s, and TSG pros are better.

Knee Pads

These are your most important pads and are worth taking seriously and putting more money into. You may skimp on other gear and upgrade later but you will want very good knee pads from the beginning. You should look for pro knee pads that are made for vert skateboarding or lots of hard falling, and not recreational knee pads that are only up for the occasional fall. The fit on these can be tricky depending on the size and shape of your legs. A few suggestions: Rector Fatboys (run small), 187 pros (run a little big), TSG Force III, and Bones Scabs.

Mouthguard

A good mouthguard not only protects your smile but can also prevent traumatic injury. A basic boil and bite or gel boil and bite from the sports store will work, but eventually you may find you actually want to shout to your teammate across the track, and you may want to invest in a better mouthguard that lets you breathe, talk, and drink water without taking it out (also you'll look better in action photos without a crazy-bulky mouthguard!). Protec Dent mouthguards are 2 for \$40 and several of our skaters swear by them. Others prefer Gladiators, which are custom fit for around \$85. A custom fit mouthguard from your dentist is another (albeit more expensive) option.

Skates

There is a huge range of skates out there from very very cheap to very expensive. What fits your budget? You might not want to invest in a high-end skate until you've had some time to learn more and try some on. Don't buy the very cheapest skates out there

though; they will only break your heart and your feet. If you're spending well under \$99 for a new pair of skates you're probably getting a really crappy pair of skates. Spend a little more on a decent skate and they can always be used as outdoor skates when you've upgraded. Ask to try on other people's skates to see how they fit your foot. All the skates have different sizing and shapes and you'll need to find what works for you.

Things to look for:

- Skates specifically designed for roller derby will have a low ankle and little to no heel
- Metal trucks – a plastic truck is crap and will break easily. Don't do it even if it is a good deal.
- Metal vs Nylon plates – a nylon plate is totally fine especially for beginners. Lightweight metal plates offer better energy transfer and more support for larger skaters, so you may want to upgrade eventually.
- Vinyl vs leather boots – vinyl boots are more comfortable out of the box and are less expensive. They work just fine especially to start with. However they don't last as well and often don't conform to your foot as well over the long term as leather. Unlike leather, vinyl doesn't break in, it just breaks down. Leather takes more time to break in but is ultimately more comfortable and far more durable.

Some good beginner skates to consider: R3, Boxer, Rock, Torq, Carrera and GT-50, Rock Speed Freak, and Rebel.

Wheels

GMDD practices and bouts on polished concrete which can be quite slick. We recommend getting grippy wheels especially at first. Cheaper skates usually come as a package with very hard wheels that don't grip so you will want to buy other wheels.

Some wheels to consider: Radar Flatouts, Atom G-Rods, Atom Stokers, Atom Omegas, Atom Lowboys, Atom Jukes. Are you sensing a trend? GMDD has many Atom devotees.

Nylon hubbed wheels are good to start but if you're over 250lbs you'll need metal hubbed wheels.

If you plan to skate outside you should also consider getting a set of outdoor wheels with bearings. Some skaters just use an old beat up pair of wheels for skating outdoors too. Get an extra set of bearings for your outdoor wheels so you don't have to constantly change them when you change wheels. Radar Energy wheels are inexpensive and soft enough to make the ride smoother over rocks and debris.

Bearings

They come with an ABEC rating system where the higher numbers (5-7) are faster and smoother but ABEC rating is for machine bearings so don't rely on that rating as your

benchmark for good bearings. Powells bearings and the China Bones Reds are both popular, smooth, fast and affordable. Bone Swiss are as good as you can get for the money and with proper care will last you for years.

Impact Shorts

Not required, but useful for avoiding tailbone injuries. McDavid Hex Shorts are fairly low profile and won't make you look like a marshmallow.

Toe Guards

With all the falling we do, the toes of your skates can take a beating. Protecting them will extend the life of your skates. Leather toe guards and plastic toe caps are great and duct tape will work in a pinch.

Toe Stops

Your skates will come with toe stops, but you may find that a beefier one gives you more control. A number of GMDD skaters use Gumball toe stops.

Skate Tool

At the very least something like a Riedell skate key but we recommend one with a bearing press like a Reflex Utilitool.

Bearing Lube

Bones Speed Cream is good.

Where do I get all this stuff?

Sadly there are no local skate shops where you can go try on skates. Talent Skatepark in South Burlington carries some gear, as does Ridin' High in Burlington. A short road trip will get you to the Bruised Boutique in Nashua, NH (www.bruisedboutique.com), or Neon Skates in Montreal (www.skateneon.com), both of which are skater-owned skate shops.

Otherwise you're going to have to order your stuff online. We recommend buying from a derby skater-owned and operated shop if possible. You're more likely to get quality gear and good advice.

Skater owned and operated:

www.skateneon.com

www.bruisedboutique.com

www.sincityskates.com

www.emeraldcityskates.com

www.fastgirlskates.com

www.rollergirl.ca

"Big Box" e-tailers:

www.rollerderbydepot.com

www.rollergirlskates.com
www.lowpriceskates.com