

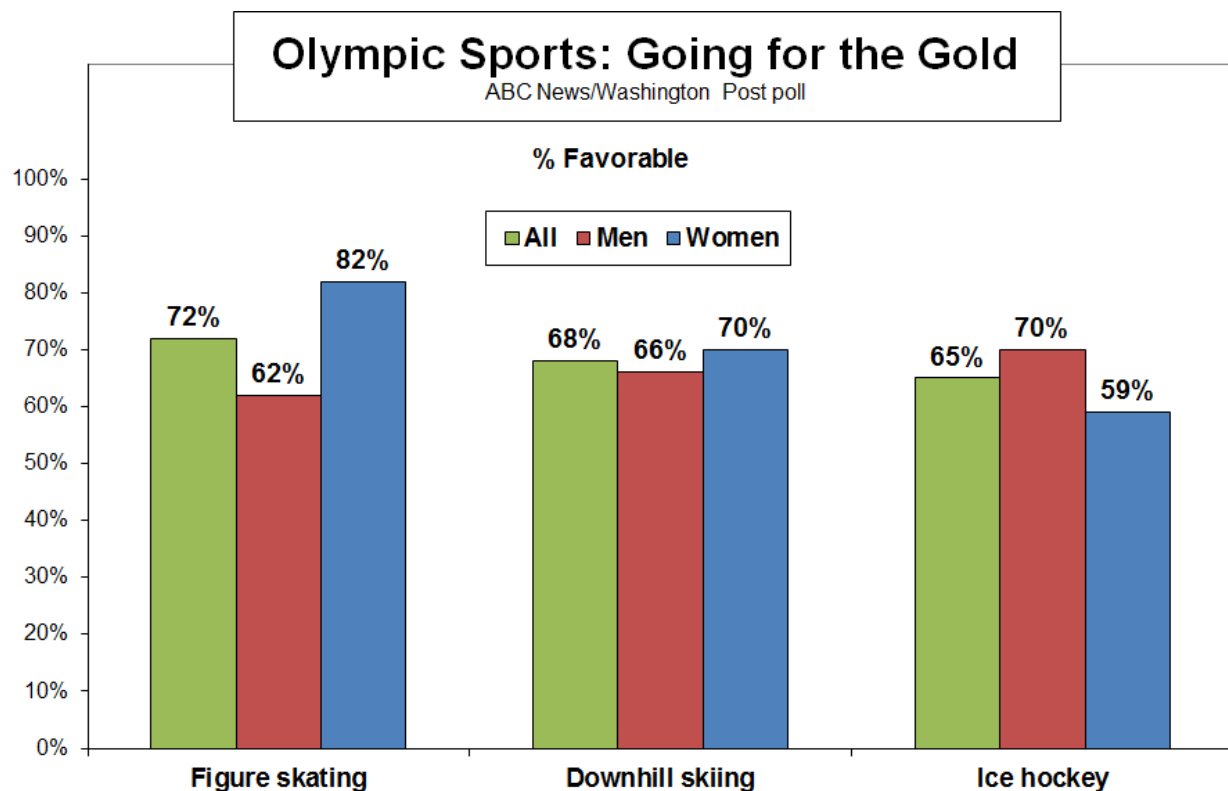
Figure Skating Glides to Gold in Winter Games Popularity

Figure skating glides to Olympic gold in U.S. popularity, with downhill skiing slaloming into silver and ice hockey cross-checking its way to the bronze.

Unless you're a guy, in which case the skate's on the other foot.

Skating, skiing and hockey go 1-2-3 among all Americans by dint of figure skating's huge popularity among women, this ABC News/Washington Post poll finds. Leave it to men, and the order's flipped, with ice hockey first in popularity, skiing still second, figure skating third.

It's therefore, as some may see things in Sochi, all about who's doing the judging.



Each of these sports at the Winter Games is broadly popular: Among all Americans, 72 percent express a favorable opinion of Olympic figure skating, 68 percent see Olympic downhill skiing favorably and a similar 65 percent view Olympic ice hockey positively. (The difference between skiing and hockey is not statistically significant, given the scoring system used in polling.)

But positive views of figure skating range from 82 percent among women to 62 percent among men, a big 20-point gap in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). And women are twice as likely as men to have a “strongly” favorable opinion of figure skating, 46 vs. 23 percent.

Ice hockey, on the other hand, gets a favorable score from 70 percent of men, compared with 59 percent of women, less of a gap but still a substantial 11 percentage points. (Men are a similar 12 points more likely to see it strongly favorably.) Men and women are more apt to agree on the third Olympic sport tested in this survey, downhill skiing.

There are some other differences. All three sports are a bit less popular in the South than elsewhere, not a surprise since it’s harder to find ice and snow there to play on. Whites are more apt than nonwhites to like skiing and hockey (no difference on figure skating), with hockey notably weak among blacks – just 46 percent see the sport favorably. And skiing and hockey are less popular among lower-income adults, perhaps given the cost of participation.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cell phone Feb. 5-9, 2014, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,017 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points. The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

Media contact: Van Scott Jr., (212) 456-7423.

Full results follow.

1. Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of the Olympic (ITEM) competition? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

2/9/14 - Summary Table

	----- Favorable -----			----- Unfavorable -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
a. Figure skating	72	35	38	20	12	8	8
b. Downhill skiing	68	29	40	22	15	7	10
c. Ice hockey	65	26	39	25	15	10	11

*** END ***