Short vs. long track speedskating

Long track is skated on a 400-meter oval, about the same size as a running track. Short track is skated on a 111-meter oval inside a hockey rink.

**Long track**

500 meters = 1 lap plus 1 straightaway

- Two international-size hockey rinks (60 meters by 30 meters) fit inside a long track oval.
- Long track speedskaters race in pairs and change lanes each lap on the back straight.
- The skater who starts in the outside lane wears a red armband, and the skater on the inside lane wears a white armband. The skater passing from the outside lane to the inside lane has priority.

**Short track**

500 meters = 4.5 laps

- Short track speedskaters wear more protective gear. Hard plastic helmets, shin guards, and gloves protect them from crashes and the blades of other skaters.
- The current Olympic Winter Games program includes seven long track events: both men and women compete in 500-meter, 1,000-meter, 1,500-meter, 5,000-meter, mass pursuit, and team pursuit; additionally, men compete in a 10,000-meter and women compete in a 3,000-meter.
- Currently, the Olympic Winter Games program includes four short track events for each men and women: 500-meter, 1,000-meter, 1,500-meter, and team relay (5,000-meter men's and 3,000-meter women's).

Sources: Olympic.org and Socialspeedskating.org