

Hockey Made Easy

Canada's Best Instruction Manual



Help for

- Beginner
- Initiation
- Novice/Mite
- Atom/Squirt
- Peewee

Coaches, Parents and Players ...

John Shorey

HOCKEY MADE EASY

CANADA'S BEST INSTRUCTIONAL MANUAL



Developed For

**Parents and Coaches of
5 to 12 Year old Male & Female
Minor/Youth Hockey Players**

in

House League / Recreational to Competitive “AAA” Programs

Revised 2022/23 Edition

by

Hockey Canada Award Winner

John Shorey

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A Note on Changes in this 2022/23 Edition

This 2022/23 edition of **Hockey Made Easy - Canada's Coaching and Instruction Manual** has been completely reviewed and revised where applicable. It is now both longer and/or more focused than in previous editions. All units have been updated to reflect any new rule or penalty changes. Also the words explaining the basic skill development sections have been expanded or fine tuned to help the reader easily understand the expressed ideas. All of these changes have enhanced the books usefulness as a teaching tool and reference guide for all Youth and Minor Hockey coaches, parents, young male and female players 5 to 12 years of age, or new hockey fans. This manual has been deliberately written in a style and vocabulary to help younger or first time players, parents and coaches understand the skills required to play this great game.

Please note the use of the word "he" and "his" in this publication is intended to include both masculine & feminine genders. Because Hockey is such a fantastic team game now played by millions of Boys & Girls, Men & Women in over 75 countries around the world. Hockey for all!

Teaching Tip: If you are a first time Minor/Youth Hockey coach, I offer a small suggestion. You must instill a **fun** element at the very start of the season to make all participants fall in love with this game so they will continue playing from age 5 to 85. If young players don't have fun, or are put under too much pressure to win, from either their coaches or parents, they won't enjoy the game and they won't continue playing no matter how good they get at it. **Hockey Must Be Fun.**

Parents should also remember that most Minor and Youth Hockey Programs are about having fun while at the same time about teaching new skills and learning a new sport. They are not about developing NHL hockey players. Some very talented players will develop their skills to such a high level they will make the NHL, but most will not. But if taught properly, everyone will still have fun, will love playing the game and enjoy watching it live or on television all their life.

The goal of this book is to provide coaches, parents and players with the information they need to have fun playing hockey, to improve their basic skills and knowledge of the playing rules, to fall in love with the game and to continue playing and/or enjoying hockey throughout their adult life.

Acknowledgments

It would be impossible to name the many people who have contributed to the development and distribution of this book since the first edition back in September, 1995. To all of you, I thank you.

In particular I wish to thank Hockey Canada, Hockey Night In Canada's Don Cherry, Harry Neale, Kelly Hradey and TSN's Pierre McGuire, Bob McKenzie and Glenn Healy for their valued guidance. The Ottawa District Minor Hockey Association, Canadian Tire, Mr. Cecil Eaves and Mr. Kelly Lovering for their support and permission to use specific passages and diagrams from their previously published books. And to Mr. Joe Lor, my webmaster, for his excellent work at developing and maintaining the www.HockeyMadeEasy.com website.

I would also like to thank my daughter Sonya for her fine editing skills and valuable time. And special thanks to Chris Courneya for his desktop publishing efforts in formatting text and designing diagrams for this manual. And last, but certainly not least, I want to thank my family; my beautiful wife Carol, who is my soul mate and inspiration, who provided so much positive encouragement, support and direction. And my two lovely daughters Sonya and Leisha who have been so understanding and supportive of all the time I spent on developing and revising this hockey instruction manual instead of spending quality time with them. I love you all.

...John Shorey

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Shorey is a Canadian who was born and raised in Brockville, Ontario. For over fifty years he has been directly involved in many different aspects of hockey. He played Minor Hockey in Brockville beginning in the Atom House League program before advancing to numerous All Star/Representative Teams. At the age of sixteen, he made a big jump to Junior "A" Hockey, winning the League's Rookie of the Year Award. He was rewarded for his successful rookie season by being invited to the Toronto Marlboros Major Junior "A" training camp. The Marlboros were the top Junior farm team of the Toronto Maple Leafs. However, due to a serious broken leg, incurred while playing fastball, he was unable to attend the camp and his Major Junior "A" hockey aspirations ended. Following a full year of physiotherapy and rehabilitation, he returned to hockey and signed with the Brockville Braves Junior "A" Hockey Club, which was a farm team of the NHL's 1961 Stanley Cup Champion Chicago Black Hawks. He played with the Braves for two seasons, finishing second in team scoring points his first season and leading the Club his final year. He averaged almost 2 points per game during his Junior "A" career. He led the club in total scoring points during his two seasons with the Braves.

Upon graduating from Junior but being just 5 feet 7 inches tall and weighing only 135 pounds, playing in the NHL or Minor Pro in North America was not a realistic option so he journeyed to Europe. He played two seasons of Professional hockey; first in Italy as a Player-Coach and then in Holland as a player. Upon his return to Canada he was invited to play Intermediate hockey and his team won the Ottawa and District Intermediate "A" Championship in his third season with them.

In 1968 Shorey joined the Brockville Tikis Junior "B" Hockey Club as an Assistant Coach. He dedicated the next thirteen years to the development of the Junior "B" program serving in different capacities. He spent ten years as head coach and developed a number of players who went on to play Major Junior "A", Junior "A", and University hockey. During these years, he completed Level I, II, and III of the Canadian National Coaches Certification Program. He attended many Coaching Seminars and workshops to improve his understanding of the game and the different coaching philosophies, strategies and teaching methods of Junior "A" and NHL coaches.

He also served the Tikis as General Manager, President and became sole owner and operator of the Junior "B" franchise. He sold the franchise after five years to become President of the Rideau-St. Lawrence Junior "B" Hockey League, a position he has been elected to yearly for thirty three years. On June 1st, 2004, **Hockey Canada** presented John with the Junior Hockey Recognition Award.

Shorey loves hockey, he analyzes NHL games on TV and attends many Junior games every week. He is described as a "student of the game" always seeking new ways to improve on established areas. He initiated a unique Hockey Clinic for Beginners 5-6, and Players 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12 years of age using a school classroom and gym setting to teach the basic skills and systems of hockey. He believes teaching players of this age group is essential to help them understand, improve and reach their full potential. In 2003 he taught a group of non English speaking foreign students aged 14-18, from such non hockey countries as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Korea, & West Africa how to skate & play hockey during their winter semester at Fulford Academy private school in Brockville. The students picked up the skating and hockey skills very quickly and fell in love with our game. On June 15th 2007 John was inducted into the **Brockville and Area Sports Hall of Fame**.

His motto is **"Hockey Begins In The Classroom and Ends On The Ice"**. This revised manual, first printed in September 1995, is based on his teaching philosophy, vast hockey experience, and discussions or observations with current and past hockey coaches and players. He believes the information contained in this reviewed and newly revised edition **Hockey Made Easy Coaching & Instructional Manual** will help improve the hockey skills and knowledge of everyone who reads it.

HOCKEY MADE EASY

INTRODUCTION - *This Season, Players aged 5 to 8 will play on 1/2 or 1/3 ice.*

"Hockey Made Easy" is a unique Instructional Manual and Training Program specifically developed for all Youth/Minor Hockey coaches, parents and players 5 to 12 years of age. The information is intended for both males and females who wish to improve their basic hockey skills and/or increase their understanding and knowledge of this fantastic game in order to play, coach, or watch the game at it's highest level. New rules & Minor/Youth Association initiatives will commence this season.

Hockey is the fastest team game in the world and to many the greatest. In order to have **fun** and to play it well, you must have a sound understanding of its basic rules and penalties, the skills required to play it successfully and safely, as well as its offensive and defensive systems. The earlier you understand and learn these important aspects of hockey, the better player, coach or fan you will be.

This latest revised edition of the *Hockey Made Easy Instruction Manual* will help you become a competent and better all around player, coach or knowledgeable Youth/Minor Hockey parent or fan.

The material contained in this manual can be adapted for street, ball, roller and of course ice hockey, from House League / Recreational Teams to "AAA" Representative / Travel Teams.

PROGRAM GOALS

- 1) To improve your understanding of the basic rules of hockey such as: icing and non-icing, off-sides and delayed off-side, legal two line passes and some of its most common penalties.
- 2) To improve your basic hockey skills such as: skating, puckhandling & stickhandling, passing & receiving, shooting & scoring, stick checking & body checking, and goaltending skills.
- 3) To improve your hockey intelligence by learning how to read and interpret game situations or plays then react by making split second decisions on where to carry the puck, when to pass, where to pass, when to shoot, where to shoot and what to do and where to go to prevent goals against by covering open players when you don't have the puck.
- 4) To improve your understanding of playing a specific position,(forward, defense or goal) its role, and the common offensive and defensive "X" theories and systems of the game including interchangeable positions, on ice balance, clearing/breakout plays, forechecking and backchecking systems, defensive zone coverage, offensive and defensive face-offs, and special teams for Power Play & Penalty Killing situations including their basic theory and strategy.
- 5) To increase parental awareness as to what players in the Beginners 5 and 6, then 7 and 8, 9 and 10 and 11 and 12 age groups should be **learning** in either their local or "AAA" Youth/Minor Hockey Program, or with some help from them at home, in order for their child to develop his/her love of the game by having **fun** and improving basic skills at an early age.
- 6) To provide parents and coaches with valuable information regarding a player's development timetable. Preparing for a Representative/Travel Team tryout, signing a player card, player affiliation opportunities, obtaining a release to play with another team. Regular season and playoff games, role of the coach, yearly practice plans, tips for parents, hockey burnout,how to play a specific position and how to play the game, as well as numerous hockey terms and expressions. You're encouraged to read them in order to fully understand this wonderful game.

TEACHING GUIDE FOR YOUTH and MINOR HOCKEY PARENTS

The following information is for **parents** of young 5-12 year old male or female Youth/Minor Hockey players to help them understand the vital role they can play in their child's early hockey development.

At the start of each hockey season, the local Youth/Minor Hockey Association's ice time convener will assign a specific number of ice slots to each Team Manager or Coach to run their season-long program. Most of these ice slots will be used to play Exhibition, League, Tournament or Playoff games. Only some will be used for practices, the building blocks for hockey skill development.

Nearly all Minor Hockey Coaches will tell you they do not receive enough ice time to run a weekly practice and some don't have either enough free time or a suitable area to conduct a weekly meeting or off-ice practice to teach your child everything they need to know about playing hockey.

Young players must understand hockey before they can have fun or excel at it. They'll need to know just 10 basic things: 2 objectives, 3 rules and 5 basic skills, then understand how, when and what to do with and without the puck at an early age. By learning the objectives of offense (scoring goals) and defence (preventing goals) and the rules for icing, off-sides and basic penalties, then combining this knowledge with the development of the 5 basic hockey skill groups, they will be well on their way to having **fun** & enjoyment and developing into a complete and very good 200 foot hockey player.

Parents can help solve part of this challenge by becoming actively involved in the explaining and teaching of terms, phrases, basic skills, rules, penalties and playing positions to their child at home.

Minor/Youth Hockey parents can become more pro-active and provide a hands-on teaching approach if their child is going to develop to his/her full potential at an early age. But please remember, **fun** is the number 1 priority of these Hockey programs, **not** developing NHL players. By following this manual, your child will be given the correct information to develop their hockey skills and knowledge at a leisurely pace to become an extremely good and competent 2 way, 200 foot player, both offensively and defensively.

The Hockey Made Easy Instruction Manual is written in an easy-to-read, easy-to-understand point format and is presented in a specific learning order to make it easier for parents to teach their child how to play this great game correctly and safely beginning at a young age, from Beginner 5- 6, to Players 11- 12 years old and all levels in between from House League to "AAA" Travel programs.

THE 10 MINUTE SOLUTION

If your child is between 5 and 12 years of age and wants to become a good hockey player, I strongly suggest you invest in his/her hockey development today by reading this manual to them at a slow rate of just 10 minutes or 4 - 5 pages per day. It will make all the difference in the world.

By using the **kiss** formula, "**keeping it short and simple**," your child whether playing on a House League/Recreational Team or a Competitive "AAA" Travel Team, will have the information they require to improve their basic hockey skills and knowledge by up to 400% over the course of the entire season.

By giving just 10 minutes of your time per day, your child could develop into the next Connor McDavid, Sidney Crosby, Auston Matthews, Nathan MacKinnon, Victor Hedman, Cale Makar, or Andrei Vasilevskiy. Or, just become a very good competent and confident young hockey player who puts team goals first, personal goals second, has **fun** and loves to play hockey.

Older players (13-20), adults (21-75) and all hockey fans will also improve their hockey skills or knowledge of systems and strategy by reading this manual at their own pace during their free time.

" You're never too young or too old to learn about hockey"

DEVELOPMENT TIMETABLE

If your child is **5 to 7** years of age, they will **only** require the information contained in this Intro and Units I, II, and III. This will give them a very good start in the basic terms, skills and rules of hockey.

For players aged **8-10**, they should understand the material contained in the Intro and Units I to IV.

Note: Some young children are like sponges and can absorb more information than stated above.

All players age **11** and **12** should read and understand the entire manual by the end of the season.

Note: Parents are not expected to be the coach, but they can be the communicators or teachers providing specific hockey information to build knowledge, skills, self-esteem and confidence in their child.

But let the Coach, coach! He/she is in charge during all practices and games.

Minor/Youth Hockey Coaches should work with your child over the length of the entire season trying to improve their individual and team skills to make them a more complete and competent two-way and 200 foot player.

Coaches have the very difficult job of taking 15 individual players with different skill levels, learning abilities and personalities, then molding them into a competitive team. **Coaching is not an easy task!**

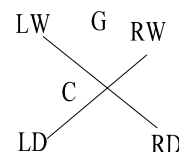
Remember: Good teams and good players are not built in a day, it takes all season.

TEACHING HOCKEY by USING SHAPES and LETTERS

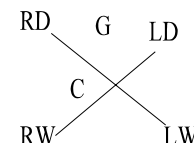
Teaching your child how to play and understand hockey will be much easier if you use familiar shapes and letters to explain specific hockey terminology and formations.



The letter "X" represents a 5-player **offensive zone** formation used to generate goal scoring opportunities.



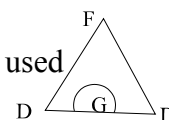
The letter "X" also represents a 5-player **defensive zone** formation used to prevent scoring opportunities by covering the open players.



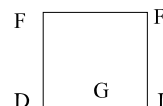
The triangle shape represents a desired **offensive formation** composed of 3 players. It allows the puck carrier to always have 2 passing options. By joining different components of the X above you get numerous triangles involving forwards and/or defencemen.

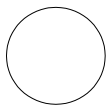


The flexible triangle shape also represents the **defensive formation** used if killing a 2- player penalty i.e. 5 on 3, or 4 on 3.

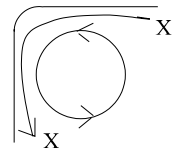


The flexible rectangle, diamond or box shape represents the formation used while **killing a single penalty**. i.e. 5 on 4





The letter "O", or circle represents the **cycling** or passing the puck by the offensive team around the bottom base board in any corner, or behind the net, to maintain control of the puck. By using this circular/cycling motion between passer and receiver you maintain puck possession and can get it out to the front of the net by a pass, or by carrying it, for a quality shot on goal. Cycling the puck is now a very important part of the game.



The letter "Z" represents the **general alignment** of the leg (thigh, knee, femur), ankle and foot to generate speed, power, and movement when skating. Never lock your knees. Your knees should **always** be bent and protrude slightly ahead of and beyond your toes.



The letter "C" represents the skating mechanics of the hip, leg and foot to generate power and motion for **forward & backward** skating by pushing outward through the ball of your foot using the inside edge, then pulling it inward to cut a "C" into the ice.



The letter "T" represents the position of the goaltender standing **square** to the shooter with both pads together and positioned in a straight line or 90 degrees to the **puck**.



The letter "V" represents the position of the goaltenders legs when they go down in the **butterfly** position, knees together feet spread to goal posts. It also represents the goalie moving out of the crease to cut the angle and the powerful 4 step "V" starts for all skaters.

To ensure your child is learning, I suggest parents ask them some pertinent questions to see if they understand what you have told them. If they didn't, please repeat with simpler words.

PLAYING THE GAME half ice is used in ages 5-8 or full ice in ages 9-12 & beyond.

Hockey is about developing 2 on 1 situations with the puck when on offence in all 3 zones; Defensive, Neutral and the Offensive Zone. This allows you to easily pass the puck around an opponent while still maintaining puck control. The team that **creates** and executes the most 2 on 1 situations will score a lot of goals. Likewise, the team that **prevents** 2 on 1 situations when the opposition control the puck by using on ice discipline and backchecking skills by covering the open men to prevent odd man rushes, will allow very few goals against. Both skills, creating and preventing 2 on 1 situations are required for your team to be consistently competitive. The transition time you take going from offence to defense, or defense to offence with every change of possession of the puck will determine if your team's competitive or not. Fast transition time is essential to be competitive.

HOCKEY DEVELOPS LIFE SKILLS

Hockey is more than just a game because it teaches so many life skills used outside the game. Whether you win or lose, are a superstar or average player, hockey instills teamwork, discipline, commitment, determination and builds long lasting friendships.

The social skills learned at the rink helps develop a personality that carries the young hockey player through life and the world of work. Those skills include sportsmanship, communication, comradery, trust, respect for other people, the desire to succeed and usually leads to becoming successful adults.

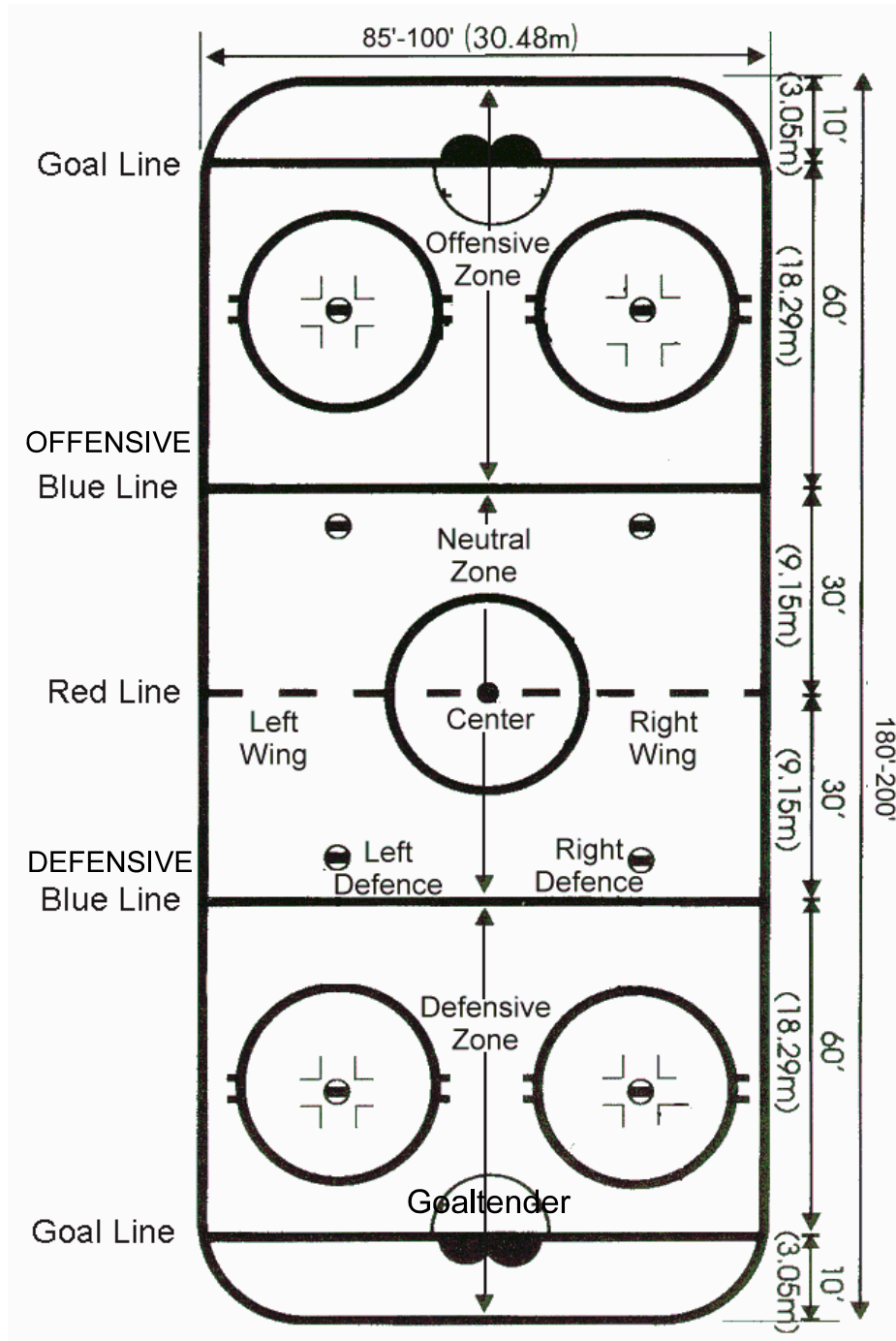
As non professional players mature and grow older and wiser, winning or losing a hockey game becomes secondary to having **fun** by participating with **friends** and trying your best.

"Hockey builds character."

The Rink

Beginning in the **2005/06** Season the dimensions of the Neutral Zone were reduced from 60 to 50 feet and the dimensions of the Offensive Zone and Defensive Zone were expanded from 60 to 64 feet. The distance behind the goal line is now 11 feet.

Note: If your rink is less than 200 feet long the Neutral Zone will be less than 50 feet.



HOCKEY TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS

Following is an alphabetical list of common hockey terms and expressions for reference purposes. Knowing the meaning of most, but not all of these, will help those parents and players just starting to coach, play, or watch hockey, grasp this new foreign vocabulary that veteran hockey people will be using enabling them to understand this game. As time goes by you will be using most of them.

Please study the Rink outline on the previous page to see the **Offensive, Neutral and Defensive Zones** and position of the **Red** and **2 Blue Lines**. Each team will have its own Offensive and Defensive zone depending in which direction it is trying to score a goal when it controls the puck.

List of Hockey Terms and Expressions:

Accountability - Players are responsible for their actions and conduct on the ice: taking bad penalties, leaving players uncovered, not putting out a 100% effort, not passing the puck, going off-side etc.

Activate the defence - the defence on the offensive team move up the ice with the play into the offensive zone and individually if the opportunity is there, join the rush to create a passing option, move into a scoring position to take a shot, go for a rebound or coral a loose puck in the corner. They do not stay back on the blue line all the time but pick their spots when to get involved in the play.

Adversity - teams throughout the season must play through adversity: injury, sickness or suspensions to top players. This gives the other players a chance to play and show their skills to the coach.

Aerobic- refers to energy, for long term marathon like skating for an entire shift or game without tiring.

Affiliate Player (AP) - a player from a lower Division/Category Team who is called up to play for **one** only, higher team in the same season. e.g. under 11 to under 13, under 9 “B” to under 9 “A.”

Affiliation - is when two teams of different Divisions or Category, sign either a Club, Team or a 19 Special Affiliate Player agreement allowing players from a lower team to play with **one** only higher team for up to 10 games maximum. This allows the higher team to field a full team of players because of injury, sickness, a player is not available, or a suspension.

“A” Game - a team and it’s players must play their very best, or “A” Game, to have a chance of winning against the top Teams, as opposed to playing their poorer and less energetic “B” game.

Anaerobic- refers to energy, but for short term sprint like skating for a 5 to 15 second burst of speed.

Angling - is when any Defensive Player without the puck, angles/forces the puckcarrier toward the boards or into the corner to a bad shooting angle and away from the slot or prime shooting area.

Assist - An assist is a scoring point with the value of 1, the same as a goal. The Referee will identify the last two players of the same team who passed the puck to the goal scorer and credit them with an assist to the scorekeeper or official scorer. Most goals would not be scored without some assistance.

Assistant Captain - up to 3 players can be selected by the Coach or Team members to wear an “A” on their sweater and act as the Captain if s/he is absent or not on the ice. Assistant Captains have the same duties and responsibilities as the Captain and can ask the Referee questions about penalties, faceoffs etc.

Backcheck - is a defensive strategy and skill used by the team without control of the puck. The forwards come back quickly into the neutral zone and continue into their defensive zone to help their defence by covering all uncovered opponents. This prevents odd man rushes, players from receiving a pass, or regaining possession of a loose puck. Players do not just chase the puck carrier, everyone has a specific job to do and player to cover. If they recover a loose puck or a rebound they lead an offensive rush. Backchecking or **Back pressure** is required for your team to remain competitive.

Back Door- after receiving a diagonal or an across ice pass in the offensive zone, the player stationed at the far side of the net, scores behind the goalie, or the goalie's back door, into the net as opposed to in front of the goalie or the front door, from a shot taken directly from in front of the goalie. Many goals are scored using a back door play. The NHL Caps Alex Ovechkin is a great back door scorer.

Back End - refers to Defencemen, playing back of or behind the forwards, as opposed to front end or up front, the position of the Forwards.

Backhand - can be referring to either a pass, or a shot taken by the puck carrier on his backhand side rather than his more natural and stronger forehand side.

Back Pass - any pass made back to an open teammate on the point, in the slot, or behind the puck carrier/passers. It could be a flat/sweep pass, flip pass or bank pass off the boards to an open teammate.

Back Pressure - a back checker coming back and checking the puck carrier from behind or the side.

Back Up Goalie - a goalie who is dressed and ready to play but is not the starter, but is the backup.

Bad Change - when tired players are slow coming off the ice, or they come off at the wrong time, the opposition get an odd man rush and a chance to score. If over the Red Line, dump the puck in deep then get off the ice. This is much safer and you'll not cost your team a goal against or an icing call.

Bad/Soft Goal - a goal that should have been stopped by the goalie.

Baggage - is a negative term for any player who has a down side. i.e.. takes un-disciplined penalties, complains a lot, or has a parent(s) who interfere with or always question the coach's decisions.

Balanced Scoring -a team with 2-3 lines of equal talent and scoring ability. All lines can score.

Bank /Board Pass - is an angled pass made using the side or end boards to rebound the puck out to a teammate or yourself. Knowledge of angles is required to execute accurate bank/board passes.

Barn- a common nickname for any old or new hockey Arena or Rink.

Bench Management - the control and timely insertion of players on the bench by the head coach for line changes, changing on the fly, power play, penalty killing, face-offs, not putting too many players on the ice. Knowing who should go on the ice and when during different game situations.

Bench Warmer - a player who is dressed and ready to play but is not getting much or any ice time.

Blind Pass - when a player passes the puck without looking for the receiver, it's usually intercepted or given away to the opposition. Players should look before they pass the puck to make sure the receiver is open and the passing lane is clear.

Blow Out - when one team beats another by at least 5 - 6 goals. ie. 6-1, 10 - 4, 11- 2, etc .Coaches want to win but not by a blow out. Good coaches usually change players positioning to keep the score closer. Forwards play some defence and defence may play forward to keep the score reasonable.

Body Checking - is a legal form of hitting allowed in most 11-12 aged and higher divisions of Youth/Minor Hockey. A defensive player tries to physically check or hit the puckcarrier with his body (hip or shoulder) to separate him from the puck. The objective is to create a loose puck that results in a turn over and regaining of the puck by your team. Some "AAA" teams aged 10 -11 are now allowing body checking some Leagues.
Female hockey does not allow physical body checking but incidental or body contact is allowed.

Body Contact - is the accidental, sometimes intentional, bumping between 2 players, then using their body size and weight to gain better position to regain the loose puck. This is allowed in all Minor and Youth Hockey programs and in all Female Hockey programs. The Referee must decide if it was incidental body contact or premeditated and intentional body checking which deserves a penalty.

Body Positioning - getting your body between the puck/puckcarrier or open player and the goal your defending. This allows you to legally box out the player from getting to the net or to a rebound.

Box Out - defencemen and forwards must box out offensive players in front of their net. Don't just watch the puck, you must box out and legally prevent players from getting open in front of your net and getting to rebounds. You should position yourself between your goalie and the player you are covering by physically pushing them to the outside so your goalie can see the puck or shooter.

Breakaway - occurs when an offensive player has control of the puck and no defending players or offensive players are between himself and the goaltender. It's one on one between the shooter and the goaltender. A two man breakaway has 2 offensive players against the goalie.

Bury It- refers to a good scoring opportunity and you're expected to bury/shoot the puck into the net.

Butterfly - when the goalie drops to his knees and spreads his legs outward toward each goal post, he is in the butterfly position trying to see and stop all low shots or those directly on the ice.

Canadian Hockey Association - C.H.A. - was the governing body for Minor, Junior, Senior and Olympic Hockey in Canada. Starting in 2003/04 it was re-named **Hockey Canada**.

Can opener - when a player puts his stick between the legs of an opponent and turns/twists it causing the player to trip or fall. A 2 minute penalty will be called by the Referee for tripping.

Captain - is the player selected by the coach or team members to wear the "C" on his sweater and to lead the team. He has the right to question the Referee about all calls and acts as a liaison/link between players and the coach to communicate and help resolve any team or player issues/problems.

Caught with Your Head Down - is when the puck carrier is legally bodychecked because he was carrying the puck with his head down watching the puck and didn't see the opposing team's player/checker coming at him. Try to carry the puck with your head up, it's more difficult to do, but it's a lot safer.

Cement Hands - is an expression used to describe a player who has difficulty stickhandling and scoring goals because of tenseness in his hands. He is said to have cement hands vs soft or good hands.

Changing On the Fly - occurs when tired players come off the ice and go to their bench and fresh players go on without a whistle or stoppage of play. Young players are usually told by the coaching staff who is going on and where, or you could get a penalty for too many players on the ice. Older players usually take the player's position coming off i.e. Centre takes Centre, Left Wing takes Left Wing etc. Players coming off must be within 3 feet of their bench before new players can go on.

Charging - is a penalty for taking more than 2 steps or strides to bodycheck or jump at an opponent.

Checking - is a general term used to describe 4 types of checking: stick checking, body checking, forechecking and backchecking. All of these are important checking skills used throughout the game by defensive players (without the puck) trying to create a turnover/loose puck then regain possession of it and start an offensive rush.

Chemistry -members of a line or defence pair who get along and play well together having good chemistry.

Cherry Picker - a forward who hangs out around the Red Line hoping/looking for a breakaway pass.

Chip-In or Dump-In- shooting the puck deep into the oppositions end once you're over the Red Line.

Chippy Play - when there's a lot of hitting, stick work, pushing& shoving and trash talk after the whistle creating tension or possible fights. The Referee calls penalties to keep control of the game.

Choke - when a player or a Team fails to perform effectively under pressure and especially during the playoffs. When a much lower seeded Team beats out a higher seeded Team in the playoffs, the team or specific players are said to have choked under pressure.

Clearing Play/Breakout Play - occurs when a team sets up in specific positions inside its own end to start a rush out of its defensive zone. The puck carrier, usually a defenseman, has 6 options to exit his end. Pass to RW, Centre, LW or Defence partner, carry it himself or chip it into the neutral zone. Getting the puck quickly and safely out of your end and under control is the sign of a good team.

Clear the Zone - in an off-side situation all offensive player(s) must clear the offensive zone to avoid an off-side or a delayed off-side. If the puck exits, then re-enters the offensive zone with players trapped inside, all the offensive players must exit that zone or an off-side will be called by the Linesman. When all offensive players have exited the zone, they can re-enter it, thus avoiding an off-side call. The linesman will usually yell "off-side," to alert players of the situation which prevents a whistle and stoppage of play.

Close the Gap - on an offensive rush, defencemen should move up with the play to reduce the distance between themselves and their forwards, in order to provide puck support and another passing or shooting option for the puckcarrier. This is called closing the gap. On a defensive play the defencemen and forwards must also close the gap/distance between the oppositions puck carrier and any open opponent to prevent them from passing or receiving a pass.

Clutch Player - when the game is on the line, and under extreme pressure, he or she comes through by either scoring an important goal, making an outstanding defensive play to prevent a goal or a goaltender making a terrific save of a shot on goal to preserve the win. They performed well in the clutch, or in the moment when the game was on the line.

Coach - is the person selected by the Local Youth/Minor Hockey Association to be responsible for providing **fun** and instruction to **all** players by teaching hockey skills, guiding the play of the team at games, practices, meetings and for the players conduct before, during and after the game. A coach must be certified Coach 1, Coach 2 or Development 1 to coach at different levels of House League or Rep Hockey and he must have attended a “Respect in Sport” seminar on Abuse.

Coast to Coast- is when a player picks up the puck in his end zone and stickhandles all the way down the ice, end to end and scores. Former stars Bobby Hull and Bobby Orr and now Connor McDavid and Auston Matthews can sometimes go coast to coast.

Collapse - defensively, when the forwards leave the points uncovered and collapse down closer to the hash marks to help control any long rebounds and to provide extra coverage in the slot area. If the puck is passed back to the points they then move out to cover/check there defenceman.

Competitive Team and League - a Team made up of very skilled players who want to make hockey a career and try out for the All Star, Rep, Travel or Competitive “AA” or “AAA” Team which plays in the best League. These teams travel to out of town games and play in many Tournaments. This is very serious hockey and requires a lot of skill, time and money to be a member of this elite Team.

Conditioning - the ability to skate hard and long without tiring for every shift and the entire game.

Control the Boards - offensively, on a clearing pass up the boards, the winger must control the boards and get the puck out over the Blue Line by either carrying it, passing it, or chipping it into the Neutral Zone. Also its winning the 1 on 1 battles by regaining the puck in the offensive corner or along the side boards. Defensively its checking the puck carrier along the boards.

Cough the Puck Up - is when a puckcarrier loses, turns the puck over, or gives the puck up to the opposition because of pressure forechecking or aggressive bodychecking by the opposition.

Counter-Attack - an attack in reply to an offensive attack or rush by your opponent. The defensive team regains possession of the puck and starts a counter offensive attack or rush right away. Hockey is a game of constant counter-attacks. The faster you counter-attack, your transition time to go on the offensive or defensive with every change of possession of the puck, the more successful your team will be. Today's game is so fast/quick that offensive counter attacks are imperative.

Cover the Points - a defensive term used to describe two forwards responsibility to cover the opponents 2 defencemen inside their defensive zone if the puck is passed back to them on the point, located on or just inside the Blue Line. Their job is to prevent the defencemen from either receiving a pass, or getting a shot on goal by intercepting/deflecting a pass or blocking all shots from the point.

Cover the Slot - One forward in his defensive zone has the responsibility to cover the opposing teams forward situated in the “slot ”area and prevent him from receiving a pass, getting a shot on goal or getting to a rebound. The “slot ” is that area located between the face-off circles and the goal crease. This is considered the prime area for scoring goals and all opposing players must be covered here.

Cover up - defensively, if a player (D) or (F) gets caught out of a key defensive position, another player should cover up for him by taking his position especially if it's in front of the net, or the slot area. These 2 prime areas are where most goals are scored and players must cover up for each other to prevent goals against. Also the goalie should cover up any loose pucks or rebounds around the net.

Crash the Net/Go To the Net - is when 1, 2 or 3 offensive forwards rush the net trying to get to a rebound, screen the goalie, deflect or tip a shot from the defenceman on the point, or another offensive player. This is how many goals are scored, by “going to the net.” getting a rebound, shooting and scoring. Players must play in traffic in front of the net and get their nose dirty if they want to score or win the game.

Crease (Goal Crease) - the blue colored area in front of the goal. It consists of a 6 foot semi circular radius measured from the centre of the goal line extending 12 feet wide. No goal will be allowed if the Referee sees an offensive player who is **illegally** inside the crease prior to the puck entering it.

Criss-Cross - is when 2 offensive players deliberately exchange “X” lanes and positions trying to gain a better advantage to receive a pass, get a shot on goal, or get away from a backchecker. The Soviet Union in the 1972 Series with Canada, showed the world how to implement the criss-cross rather than going straight up and down your wing. Now it is the norm and all teams use this criss-cross style of play.

Cross-Bar - the 6 foot wide red bar running across the top of the goal, parallel to the Goal Line.

Cross-Over - is a skating skill used for quick starts or turning. You lift your outside skate up off the ice, crossing it over top of your inside skate making an X then planting it parallel on the ice but on the other side of your inside skate. Cross-overs speed up starts, turning, circling and assist when backchecking.

Curl & Drag- a puckhandling skill where you curl/pull the puck with the toe of your stick blade back toward your rear foot then stick drag it forward by an opponent. It is used on some 1 on 1 situations.

Cut the Angle - is a goaltending skill which reduces the scoring area in the net by the goaltender moving out square to the puck and beyond the goal crease toward the shooter. By doing this simple action, the area in which the shooter has to score a goal is reduced by 95% because there is now far less open net for the shooter to see or for the puck to enter the net. Good goalies know all about cutting the angle.

Cycling the Puck - a puck control strategy used deep in the offensive corner or behind the net. It is done by passing the puck to open forwards using a circling action. They use the baseboard to cycle/circle the puck back and forth to each other usually below the goal line, then when the opportunity arises, try to carry or pass it out front, to the slot or point for a quality shot on goal.

D to D - one defencemen passes the puck to his defence partner any where on the ice. D to D.

Dasher Board- the extended 3- 4 inch lip/dash on top of the boards where it meets the plexi-glass.

Deciding Game - in a best of 3, 5 or 7 game playoff series, it's the game that if you win you advance or win the Championship, or if you lose, you are eliminated from further playoff games.

Decoy - in duck hunting the decoys are in the water trying to get/lure the flying ducks to come in and land closer toward the hunters. In hockey, the puck carrier uses his open pass receiver on a 2 on 1, or 2 on 0 situation as a decoy by faking a pass to him trying to get the defenceman or goalie to leave his set position and move toward the open (decoy) receiver thus allowing the puck carrier/shooter to have a more open short side net to shoot at and score.

Defencemen - are the 2 players on the ice positioned closest to their goaltender. Their primary role is to defend their defensive zone by stopping opposing players from carrying pucks to the net, and preventing goals by blocking shots, intercepting passes, not allowing opposing players to set up and take shots from the slot area or close to the net, to clear any rebounds into the corner and to legally cover or move opposing players from in front of the net so their goalie can see the puck.

Defensive Box - a strategy used when killing a penalty if a team is one player short. They form a flexible box to cover the corner the puck is in, the front of the net, the near point on the puck side, and the slot area or move to the far point if the puck is passed there, trying to prevent a power play goal. The 4 player box or diamond shape expands and contracts, moves in and out, or sideways based on the pucks location. It's man to man on the puckcarrier and a zone defence in the other open areas.

Defensive Defenceman - is one who rarely rushes with the puck but would rather stay back and prevent goals. He is good at blocking shots, intercepting passes, controlling rebounds and covering or checking players in the corner and front of the net. He is also a good puck mover.

Defensive Pairings - 2 defencemen who play together as a unit. One is generally offensive minded and skilled at carrying the puck, the other is more defensive minded and skilled at preventing goals.

Defensive Play - is what all 5 defensive players should do immediately when their team loses control of the puck. Their job is to prevent a goal scoring opportunity by either forechecking in the offensive zone to create a turnover of the puck or by backchecking in the neutral and defensive zone trying to prevent odd man rushes, prevent goals and regain possession of the puck to start an offensive rush.

Defensive Shell- when a team tries to protect a lead by playing totally defensive and does not try to generate any offence to score goals. It goes into a defensive shell trying to prevent a goal. This usually occurs in the last few minutes of the game. If started too early this strategy could backfire by allowing a goal against to change the momentum of the game and possibly affect it's outcome.

Defensive Triangle - a strategy used to kill a penalty if a team is playing 2 men short. A team plays with 3 skaters and forms a flexible triangle to cover the puck side corner, the front of the net and the slot area or the point depending on the puck's location. The triangle expands and contracts, moves in and out or sideways, it's not stationary as specific players rotate and move toward the puckcarrier. It's man to man on the puckcarrier and zone defence in the other open areas.

Defensive "X" Formation - is when all 5 defensive players, LD, RD, C, LW and RW form a flexible "X" formation inside their defensive zone covering all 5 offensive players LW, C, RW, LD, and RD so they cannot receive a pass, get a quality shot on goal or get to a rebound.

Defensive Zone - the area extending from your defensive Blue Line back to the end boards.

Deflection - is the skill of redirecting the puck from its original flight path to another location at the goal. It is generally a shot along the ice taken by a defenceman and it strikes the blade or shaft of your players stick or skate in front of the net, causing it to quickly change direction and possibly score. Players cannot kick, direct or bat the puck with their hand into the net or the goal will be disallowed. However, if the puck accidentally deflects or rebounds off your body or skate into the net it will count as a legal goal.

Deiking - the skill of faking a defensive player or goaltender into thinking that the puck carrier is going in one direction but actually carrying the puck in another direction. Head, shoulder and stick fakes are used to fake/deke a player out of position so the puckcarrier can get by a defender or score a goal.

Delayed Off-Side - a rule used by the Linesman to allow the play to continue by allowing players who are in an off-side situation to exit the offensive zone without a stoppage of play or whistle providing they don't play or touch the puck. They can re-enter the zone once **all** their players have exited the zone. The Linesman will yell off-side to alert the offensive players to exit the zone.

Delayed Penalty- when the **non** offending team of a penalty still has control of the puck, play will continue until the offending team touches the puck and then the penalty will be assessed. The non offending teams goalie will skate to the bench and a forward will take his place giving them 6 skaters against 5. The offending team cannot score a goal in a delayed penalty situation because as soon as they touch the puck the whistle will blow to stop the play and a penalty will be issued to them. If the non offending team scores before the penalty is called, the goal counts and the penalty is wiped out and not served.

Depth Chart- the skill ranking of a Team's players ability by its coaching staff by position. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, line Centres, RW, or LW, and 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th Defenceman, 1st, 2nd Goaltenders. A team with 3 or 4 skilled offensive and defensive lines is said to have more depth in comparison to it's opponent.

Desperation Hockey - a team must turn up its intensity level offensively and score a goal to get back into the game or possibly lose the playoff series. It's usually win or go home for the summer.

Discipline - is doing what the Coach or Referee asks or tells you to do. Follow their instructions!

Diving - when a player intentionally exaggerates a trip, hook, hit or high stick trying to draw a penalty. They can receive a 2- minute Minor penalty from the Referee for unsportsmanlike conduct for "diving" or "embellishment".

Diving Poke/Sweep Check - is a last resort stick check used on the puckcarrier who is ahead of you on a clear cut breakaway. The defensive player dives head first with his arms and stick out stretched, sliding along the ice trying to knock/poke/sweep the puck off the stick blade of the puckcarrier. If he hits the puck first and then the puckcarrier falls over him or his stick **no penalty** should be called.

Double Shift - is when a player plays two shifts in a row without taking a break.

Down Low - is the offensive area below the Hash marks and the end boards where most of the forechecking pressure occurs vs **Up High** which is the area from the Hash marks out to the Blue Line.

Draw- the stick action on the face-off. The centre tries to draw or pull the puck back to his team mate with his stick blade. If successful, you win the draw and your team regains possession of the puck. The visiting player must put his stick down first, the home team player puts his stick down last.

Drop Pass - an offensive puck carrier stops the puck with the blade of his stick and leaves it for a trailing (directly behind) or crossing teammate. It usually occurs directly in front of the defender to isolate him and the passer prevents him from getting to the puck with a subtle pic or block.

Dry Land Training - specific off-ice physical conditioning for hockey, consisting of stretching, running, cycling, swimming, stair or hill running, skipping rope and weight training etc. Specific hockey training to get your body and mind in top shape before and during the hockey season.

Dump/Chip and Chase - is an offensive strategy used by some teams in which the puck carrier gets over the Red Line and deliberately shoots the puck into a specific corner or area where his teammates have a high percentage chance of recovering it. His teammates then chase after it trying to regain possession of the puck before the opposition does. If they are too late, forchecking begins immediately. This is also referred to by coaches as getting the puck in deep or down low.

Face-Off - is the dropping of the puck at centre ice by the Referee between 2 centres at the start of the game, the start of each period and after any goal is scored. This act is done by the Linesman after all other stoppages of play at different face-off locations on the ice closest to where the play was stopped. If there was an error by the Linesman in a call, the face-off comes back to centre ice. The visiting player puts his stick down first and the home team player puts his stick down last.

Face-Off Circles - there are 5 -large red face-off circles 15' in diameter located in specific areas of the ice and 4 smaller face-off spots painted on the ice just outside the 2 blue lines in the neutral zone. This is where all face-offs take place following a stoppage of play.

Face Wash - when a player rubs the palm of his glove in the face of an opponent during a scuffle.

Feather Pass - is a soft, easy to receive pass used when there is no opponent near by to intercept it

Fighting the Puck - a term used when the goaltender looks or acts nervous, un-easy and shaky in stopping or catching the puck. He is said to be fighting the puck.

Finish -a term used for a player who can take a pass and finish the play by scoring. Some players are good finishers while others are not. Teams look for players who are good at finishing the play by scoring.

Finish the Check - in hockey ages 11 &12 (some 9 & 10 Rep Teams) and higher divisions, players are urged to finish the body check when checking the puck carrier, by pinning him to the boards and delaying him back into the play. This legal act creates numerous turnovers and loose pucks and the physical punishment wears players down over the course of a game and causes giveaways. In female hockey you are not allowed to bodycheck only stick check, but some **incidental** body contact is allowed to create a loose puck.

Five Hole - is the small open space between the goaltender's pads/legs. It extends downward from his knees to the top of his stick blade. If a goalie goes from post to post trying to make a save he will open his legs/5 hole even wider. Players sometimes shoot at the 5 hole trying to score a goal. Canada's Sidney Crosby found the 5 hole in the Vancouver Olympic gold medal game and Patrick Kane found it in a Stanley Cup Final deciding game.

Flat/Sweep Pass - is a pass right on the ice. A player uses this pass when there is no opponent between the passer and the receiver to intercept the puck. The passing lane or seam is open/clear.

Flip Pass - is an elevated pass about 1- 14 foot high, created by flipping the puck from the toe of the stick blade by flicking your bottom wrist upward. This raises/flips the puck up and over a defender's stick or to an open area on the ice where your player can skate to it.

Flip Shot - a shot to the top part of the net by flipping the puck upward off the toe of your stick blade.

Focus - means concentrate on the hockey job at hand, and the hard work you must do to complete the task successfully. Don't be daydreaming about after the game, or the fans, focus for the entire game.

Follow-Through - when shooting or passing the puck, the follow-through is the action of moving the stick in an upward or forward arc after the shot or pass has been released. When shooting, the higher the follow-through when releasing the puck, the higher the puck goes. The lower the follow through the closer the puck stays to the ice. The follow through provides greater speed and accuracy in shooting and passing.

Forechecking - is the system used by an attacking team in their offensive zone trying to regain possession of the puck. The team will either use 1 or 2 and sometimes 3 forecheckers and their job is to stickcheck or bodycheck the puck carrier, separating him from the puck, or getting him to pass the puck before he wants to by reducing his time, to retrieve and pass it, and space to carry it. The second or third closest player then regains the loose puck. This is a very effective and aggressive strategy used by many teams to create a turnover in the offensive zone and leads to many scoring opportunities.

Forwards - are the 3 players furthest from their goalie, namely the Left Winger, Centre and Right Winger. Together they form a forward line and their primary job is to create 2 on 1's and score goals off the rush, or by cycling of the puck around the base board or behind the net to an open forward.

Freezing the Puck - is the action of covering or holding the puck by a goaltender while in the crease to get a whistle/stoppage of play. It is also the deliberate action by a skater to freeze the puck along the base boards with his skate or stick to get a stoppage of play. However, in both instances, if no opposing player is trying to get the puck, a 2 minute delay of game penalty will be called by the Referee.

Fresh Legs - when players are at the end of a shift, they are tired and their legs feel heavy. The coach will put on rested players, who have "fresh legs" and have a jump in their step to recover the puck. Players should come off before fatigue sets in or you could give up a goal because of tiredness.

Front End - refers to Forwards playing up front. As opposed to the back end or Defencemen.

GAA - Goaltenders Statistic for Goals Against Average and is based on number of minutes played x goals against divide by 60. Example 610 minutes played x 15 goals against divided by 60 minutes = 1.53 GAA.

Game Face - players try to look stern, serious, aggressive, mean and angry to intimidate the opposition.

Gamesmanship - the mental/psychological skills/games or actions the coaches use on players/Teams, or the Referee and Linesmen questioning their calls in hopes of getting a favorable call later in the game.

Game Suspension - when a coach, manager, trainer or player is not eligible to participate in the next hockey game(s) for a serious infraction of the rules. He's suspended for a Gross Misconduct, a Match Penalty, or a fighting Major etc.

Gap - The distance between the forwards and the defencemen on an offensive rush. Or the gap or distance between the puckcarrier and the opposing defenceman or forward in a defensive situation.

Garbage Goals- not pretty goals, but easy goals from pucks lying wide open in/around the crease area. Offensive players go to the net trying to get rebounds and score garbage goals.

Give and Go - an offensive passing tactic/play where a player gives a short 4 - 8 foot pass to a teammate then goes/breaks around an opponent into the clear for a return pass in full flight. Give a pass, then go to an opening for a quick return pass.

Giveaway- an offensive player with the puck gives it away to the opposition because of forechecking, pressure, body checking hits or a bad or blind pass. This is also referred to as a turnover of the puck.

Glove Side - refers to the goaltender's side in which he wears the catching glove.

Goal - a goal is scored when the puck is shot or deflected in a legal manner and it is **entirely over** the 2 inch wide Red Goal Line and is **inside** the goal which measures 6 feet wide by 4 feet high.

Goal Judge - the person with the job of turning the red light on behind the goal when the entire puck crosses the Goal Line into the net. The Referee has the final say and can consult with or over rule the goal judge's action. The goal judges job is to simply rule if the entire puck crossed the line or not.

Goal Line and Icing Line - a 2 inch wide Red Line at each end of the rink and 11 feet from the end boards. It's used for determining goals and icings. If the puck legally crosses the goal line into the net a goal is scored, if it misses the net and was shot from beyond the Red Line it could be ruled icing the puck if the defending team could not play it.

Goon/Enforcer- the protector of the teams most skilled players, he is a big, strong, aggressive player who is a good fighter and checker but less skilled in other hockey areas such as scoring and passing

Go To the Net - when on offense, forwards are expected to go to the net to screen the goalie, tip or deflect a shot or get to any rebounds and shoot them at the net. Don't be a timid perimeter player, go to the net or you could get labeled as being soft or afraid.

Grinder - a term used to describe a forward, usually a big, physical winger, who is not afraid to go into the corner first and hit or be hit while digging the puck out for his line mates. All teams need some grinders.

Grit/Sandpaper - a player who plays aggressively and finishes the check by physically hitting the opponent carrying the puck. He is also not afraid to take a hit in front of the net screening their goalie. He will also go into the corner first take a hit and still come out with the puck. Teams need a combination of players with grit and skills if they are going to do well in the playoffs.

Half Boards - usually on a power play, an offensive player positions himself about half way between the goal line and the blue line along the side boards to control the puck in a safe zone then makes a passing play to an open teammate, shoots or carries it to a better scoring position.

Hand Pass - in your defensive zone, an elevated open hand or bat pass or sliding hand passes on the ice are allowed between all defending players. But they are not allowed in the Neutral or Offensive zone. Do not grab, cover, pick up or throw the puck or you will receive a penalty.

Hash Marks - the 2 parallel lines on both sides of the 4 - end face-off circles. They are used as a dividing line to keep opposing wingers on their own side of the ice and outside the circle during a face-off.

Hat Trick - an expression to describe a player who has scored 3 goals in a game. A natural hat trick is scoring 3 goals in a row in a game. Some fans throw hats onto the ice for this rare scoring feat.

Head Manning the Puck - is the action of passing the puck to an open teammate who is ahead of you in the clear and in a position to receive a pass skating toward the offensive zone.

Healthy Scratch - a player who is physically able to play but is not put in the line up by the coach.

Heavy Shot- a shot with weight, the puck actually feels heavy like a brick if it hits you **vs** a light shot.

HECC -stands for Hockey Equipment Certification Council, on approved USA hockey helmets.

Hip Check - is a bodycheck initiated by a defensive player using his hip to hit/check the puckcarrier and create a loose puck. Hip checks are initiated along the boards or in open ice to the mid section of the puckcarrier. Some are very dramatic and the player goes airborne and sails over the checker.

Hired Gun - a goal scorer traded from a non playoff contending team to a playoff bound team just before the trading deadline which is January 10th in all Hockey Canada program jurisdictions.

Hollow Ground Sharpening - is a sharpening process where the bottom centre surface of the skate blade is removed from the toe to the heel area to create a semi hollow or concave surface. This produces a smooth and sharp Inside edge and an Outside edge on the bottom of the blade by its unique “U”shape. Both edges should remain sharp in order to skate fast, turn, start and stop on a dime.

Home Ice Advantage -in the Playoffs the team with the higher regular season standing gets home ice advantage. The 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th Youth/Minor Hockey Playoff games are played in their home rink.

Hook Check - is a legal stick check used by a defensive player bending down on one knee to hook/pull the puck off the puckcarriers stick blade back to himself. Do not confuse with hooking which is a penalty.

House/Recreation Team or League - a local Minor/Youth Hockey Team/League consisting of players who did not join the more serious Competitive Rep/Travel team but preferred to play hockey for recreational and fun purposes. It's usually strictly a local League but there maybe some area travel to other close by centres to form a viable House Rec. League.

Icing the Puck - is the action of shooting the puck from the defensive side of the Red Line all the way down the ice and over the Goal/Icing Line without it being able to be played by an opposing player. The whistle will blow and the face-off will come all the way back to the icing teams end zone. In Minor/Youth it's no touch icing. The icing team cannot change players and cannot call a timeout.

Import/Branch to Branch Transfer - is a player from outside the Local Minor Hockey Associations Boundary, Zone, District, Province/State or Branch. A Branch transfer may be required from his previous team or Hockey Association for this player to be eligible to play Competitive Rep hockey in this new Minor/Youth Hockey Association.

Inside Edge/Outside Edge - when skates have been sharpened using the hollow ground method it produces a unique “U” shape giving the blade two edges, an Inside edge and an Outside edge on each blade. Different edges are used to stop, start, turn, cross-over and pivot during a game or practice.

Inside Positioning - an offensive player tries to get better inside positioning to the front of the net and a better scoring position against a defenceman or defender. The defender will also be trying to get inside positioning between the goalie and offensive player in order to box him out and keep him away from the net. You will see many battles going on in front of the net for better inside positioning.

Intensity - is an expression to describe intensive and constant speed and action, an all out effort by a player, line or team during a shift or the entire game. Most playoff games are played with a lot of intensity, physical checking and emotion.

Intentional Off-Side- when a player deliberately plays the puck in a delayed off-side situation, knowing that he is off-side or when a player carries the puck across the Blue Line into the offensive zone when he knows that players from his team are inside the zone and in an off-side position. The whistle will blow and the face-off will come all the way back to your end zone face-off circle.

In the Paint - skaters are not allowed to be in the paint an expression for in the blue goal crease. Once the puck enters the goal crease area the opposition can enter the crease and play the puck.

In the Zone - like Baseball pitchers who rarely miss the strike zone, goalies in hockey are in the zone when they are always positioned correctly and rarely allow a goal. They stop just about every shot.

Join /Jump into the Rush - when a defenceman comes late to join the forwards on an offensive rush to create an odd man advantage and provide more passing options and scoring opportunities.

Keep Away - a drill used in practice to develop puckhandling or stickhandling skills by keeping the puck away from team-mates as long as you can. It could be 1 on 1, 1 on 4, or 1 against everybody.

Keep Your Feet Moving -if you are stopped by the opposition, keep your feet moving forward as you may be able to draw a penalty if you are tripped, hooked or held , breaking away from the check. Also for some unknown reason teams stop skating and start standing around. Coaches want them to keep their feet moving all of the time.

Kick Boards- the 5 to 6 inch high colored base boards that surround the ice at ice level.

Kick Goal - you cannot kick the puck or propel it with a kicking motion into the goal. The goal will be disallowed, however if the puck banks off your skate blade or body into the goal it should count.

Killer Instinct- when the opportunity presents itself a team must score to put the opposition away.

Knee on Knee - an accidental or deliberate collision of opposing players knee on knee.

Last Change - the Home Team gets the last change of players and the coach can match lines or defence pairings. He can match strength against strength or his best checkers against the opposition's best players.

Late Man- on a 3 on 2 rush, it's the 3rd man who stays back a few yards from the 2 lead forwards and comes late into the slot area to provide a good passing option and possibly quality shot on goal.

Lateral Movement - a Goaltending term meaning quick side to side, or post to post movement.

Leading the Receiver - just like a football quarterback, the hockey passer must pass the puck ahead of his intended moving receiver so he doesn't have to slow down or stop to receive the pass. Pass it ahead of or lead him so he can skate to the puck and receive it in full flight.

Left Hand Shot - is any player who shoots or passes the puck from his left side.

Left Wing Lock - when forechecking, the third offensive forward stays high or deep in the slot and if the opposition regain the puck, he turns to cover their wide winger and backchecks in the neutral zone to prevent any odd man rushes or passes to the wide winger. Your Defencemen will play their puckcarrier.

Line -usually refers to a forward line consisting of 3 players, a Centre, Left Wing and Right Wing. But, it can also refer to the Red Line, Blue Line or Goal/Icing Line in other specific context.

Line Juggling -a coach may change a player(s) on a line during a game to get a better effort, more speed or to get a player away from a specific checker or defenceman in order to get more scoring opportunities.

Linesmen - The 2 on ice officials who call off-sides, icings and have the authority to call specific Minor, Major, Match, Misconduct, Game and Gross Misconduct Penalties. In some Minor/Youth Hockey games they use the 2 man system and both officials have the duties of the Referee and Linesmen.

Making The Cut - is a term to describe a player who did not get cut or released at tryout/training camp but made the team. "He made the cut and is now a member of that team".

Man Advantage - when one team has a penalty, the other team has one more player on the ice. i.e: 5 against 4, or a 4 against 3 man advantage. Also known as a **Man Short** if you are killing the penalty.

Match Penalty- a very serious 5 minute Major penalty and game ejection, as well as a minimum 3 game suspension. A Match penalty is the most severe penalty a player can receive. A player attempting to injure an opponent as well as other serious physical infractions would receive a Match Penalty.

Match Lines - the home team has the last line change throughout the game and can match up their best defence pair or best checking line or face-off man against the oppositions top scoring line with this last change. Line/Player match ups are very important in playoff games or games you must win.

Mental Mistake - when a player doesn't think before acting. Example, icing the puck when he could have skated 1 foot further and over the Red Line and avoided taking an icing and face-off in his end zone. Or taking an undisciplined penalty in the offensive or neutral zone that had no bearing on the play.

Misconduct Penalty- a Misconduct, Game Misconduct or a Gross Misconduct penalty is given by the Referee for abusive language, making a travesty of the game, or given automatically in conjunction with all 5 minute Major penalties such as fighting or high sticking and a Game misconduct.

Mixed Team- a young (usually 5 to 10 years of age) Minor/Youth Hockey team consisting of both boys and girls. At about age 11 or 12, most girls leave to play on an all girls team.

Momentum Shift- when a team scores a goal and starts a come back from a 1 or 2 goal deficit. The momentum of the game shifts in favor of the team that just scored.

Neutral Zone - the area located between the 2 Blue Lines and divided by the centre Red Line.

Neutral Zone Trap - a defensive strategy where defending players without the puck, plug up the Neutral zone and it's passing lanes to cover or check opposing players in an attempt to regain possession of the puck in the Neutral zone instead of aggressively forechecking in the offensive zone.

Non Icing - if a defensive player could have played the puck on an icing situation, but made no effort to do so, the Linesman will nullify the play and rule Non icing and the play will continue.

North and South - refers to players and teams carrying the puck straight ahead up and down the ice as opposed to carrying it east and west or left or right stickhandling it across the ice.

Odd Man Rush - usually 3 offensive players against 2 defensive players, or a 2 on 1, or a 4 on 3 situation. There is at least one extra offensive player to pass to on an odd man rush.

Off Ice Officials (Minor Officials) - these people are given the responsibility to run the time clock, announce the goals and assists, post the score and penalties on the clock and to record the goals, assists and penalties on the official game sheet as reported by the Referee. 2 Goal judges could also be required to confirm if the puck crossed the goal line into the net.

Off Wing - the positioning of a winger to his unnatural shooting side. A player who shoots right is moved to left wing or a player who shoots left is moved to right wing for a better shooting/scoring angle to the net. eg. Alex Ovechkin shoots right but plays Left Wing for the Washington Capitals.

Offence - occurs when any player or team has possession of the puck, anywhere on the ice and is attempting to move down the ice to create a high percentage scoring opportunity and a shot on goal.

Offensive or Attack Zone - the area between the offensive Blue Line and the end boards in which direction the team is trying to score a goal.

Offensive "X" Formation - is when 5 offensive players LW, C, RW, LD, RD set up inside their offensive zone in a flexible "X" like formation trying to create a 2 on 1 situation or take a high percentage shot on goal.

Offsetting Penalties - occur when the same number of players from each team receive the same number of minutes in penalties at the same time in the game. The penalties are served by the guilty players, but the teams are allowed to play at full strength as the penalties offset/cancel out each other.

Off-Side - when any offensive player **precedes** the puck across the offensive Blue Line. The whistle will blow for being off-side and the face-off takes place on the red dot just outside the Blue Line.

On Ice Discipline - refers to players following the coach's instructions and game plan and not running around all over the ice chasing the puckcarrier but staying in their position. It also means not taking undisciplined penalties away from the play. On ice discipline is a key to winning hockey games.

One on One- refers to one offensive puck carrier against one defensive player, or a 1 on 1 situation.

One-Timer - an offensive forward positioned on his off wing, or a defenceman positioned on his off defence side but facing the passer, one times a soft to medium speed pass with a slap shot without stopping the puck. This saves valuable seconds to get the shot off and will sometimes catch the goalie out of position. Alex Ovechkin and Steven Stamkos have excellent one timers.

One, Two, Two, System (1-2-2) - is a forechecking system in which one forward goes in deep to check the puck carrier and the remaining two forwards peel off to cover the wingers. The two defencemen move up inside the Blue Line to prevent passes up the centre and up along the puck side boards. Depending upon the success or failure of the forechecker, the wings can either move forward to retrieve the loose puck or retreat into the neutral zone covering the wingers.

One Way Player - a forward who works very hard offensively trying to score a goal but rarely backchecks trying to prevent a goal in his defensive zone. He usually hangs out around the Red Line looking for a pass. You do not want to be labeled as a one way player.

Open Man - an offensive player who is in the open for a pass and not covered by a defensive player.

Out Coached - is when one coach out smarts another coach by using his hockey experience, knowledge and coaching skills to match lines or defencemen, win important face-offs, adjust his game plan and systems to win the game or playoff series. He is said to have out coached his opponent.

Over Load a Zone- when forechecking, a team may send 2-3 players into a corner or side of the rink to over load a zone and outnumber the defenders thus increasing their chance of regaining the puck.

Overtime - "OT" - if the game is tied after its regulation time, usually a 5, 10 or a 20 minute sudden death, or sudden victory overtime period is played. The first team to score, wins the game.

Paddle- is the widest part of the shaft on a goaltenders stick. It measures about 3.5 inches in width.

Panic Pass - is a bad or rushed pass made under aggressive forechecking pressure. The puckcarrier panics if going to be hit/checked and just gets rid of the puck usually coughing it up to the opposition.

Pass - is the planned moving of the puck forward, backward or side ways from the puck carrier to an open receiver on the same team.

Penalty - is called by the Referee when a player is caught breaking a rule. It could be a 2 minute Minor penalty, 5 minute Major penalty, a 10 minute Misconduct penalty or a game ejection Match penalty depending on the severity of the infraction.

Penalty Killers - are the players put out by the coach, who try to prevent a goal against during a penalty. They are usually very skilled defensively, both at blocking shots and icing the puck.

Penalty Killing - "PK" is a strategy of using a flexible box/diamond formation, if only 1 player short, or a rotating triangle formation, if 2 players short, used by the team with the penalty to kill a 2 or 5 minute penalty without giving up a goal. Icing the puck is allowed by the team killing the penalty.

Penalty Shot - is awarded by the Referee for an infraction of specific rules. i.e. When an offensive player has a clear scoring chance and is fouled from behind, or any defensive player but the goalie grabs or falls on the puck inside the goal crease. The player fouled or a specific player is awarded a one time uncontested penalty shot, a breakaway from centre ice against the goalie. No penalty is served whether there is a goal scored or not unless it was a 5 minute Major penalty then it must be served by the offending team.

Perimeter Player- is a negative term to describe forwards who play on the outside of the rink, not going to the net, the slot or high traffic areas because of the oppositions fierce aggressive checking in this area.

Period - a true hockey game consists of 3 - twenty minute stop time periods. However, Minor/Youth hockey use a variation of this based on the age of their players and amount of ice time available for the game. The last 2 minutes are sometimes stop time while the other is called straight time.

Pic Play- like in Basketball, where an offensive player without the puck, subtly blocks a defensive player from getting to the puck carrier. This could result in an interference penalty from the Referee if the blocking is too obvious or you knock the player down. Today, many interference penalties are called for pics.

PIM- Player statistic for Penalties in Minutes. Some aggressive NHL players on each team receive over 100 minutes in penalties in a full season. There are not too many players with high PIM in Minor or Youth Hockey programs.

Pinch - is when a defenceman stationed on the offensive Blue Line moves in along the boards trying to keep the puck inside the offensive zone. If he fails the opposition might have a 2 on 1 break or a breakaway. If he is successful the puck remains inside the zone. Defencemen usually pinch if they have a 60% chance of keeping it in and their D partner or a forward moves over to this vacated position to back them up and prevent an odd man rush.

PK-a term used for Penalty Killing. Good teams will kill 9 out of 10 penalties for a 90% success rate.

Play as a Team - is an term to indicate team work and passing plays rather than individualism.

Play in Traffic - is a positive term for any offensive player who will go to the front of the net and take a hit to get a shot on goal, to recover a rebound or screen the goalie. They are very courageous players who will pay the price, get their nose dirty and will “play in traffic” to get the job done.

Playing for Pride - when a team can no longer make the playoffs it’s “playing for pride.”

Playing Not To Lose - when a team plays very defensively, not generating any offence, just trying to kill time by dumping the puck out of the defensive zone and into the offensive zone if over the red line. The team is not trying to score. This strategy most times backfires as you are “playing not to lose” the game rather than “playing to win” because of a lack of generated scoring chances.

Playing To Win - an all out effort by everyone to score and win the game. Very offensive, not sitting back waiting for an opportunity but trying to create opportunities. Usually coming from behind late in game.

Playmaker - is a forward, usually a centre, who is very skilled at passing the puck to his left and right, or behind him to an open player. He sees the entire ice and is good at finding open players and setting up scoring opportunities in the offensive zone.

Plays Soft - is when a player usually backs off from physical play in the corners, slot area and in front of the net and rarely initiates body-checking. Opposite of playing tough or getting your nose dirty. Teams with too many players who play soft or are perimeter players will not win the big game.

Play the Man - is a defensive expression in which on a 1 on 1 situation, the defenceman should always play the puck carrier by blocking or bodychecking him creating a loose puck. A forward will usually pick up the loose puck and start a rush.

Play the Puck - is a defensive expression in which on a odd man, 2 on 1, or 3 on 1 situation, the defenceman should always stay in the middle between the offensive players and play the puck by using his stick to deflect or intercept any passes but not bodycheck the puckcarrier and take himself out of position. This delay tactic allows backcheckers to get back and help out defensively.

Play with Passion - play hockey with great enthusiasm and emotion, it is not a passive sport.

Plugger - a good 3rd or 4th line checker/player who works very hard but has limited scoring skills.

Point - is a position along or just inside the offensive Blue Line usually manned by 2 defencemen. Forwards should try to pass the puck back to the open point man to get a good low hard shot on goal.

Poke Check - is the poking action of a defensive player using his stick blade, trying to knock/poke the puck off the puckcarrier's stick creating a loose puck. He darts his stick blade along the ice at the puckcarrier's stick blade.

Pond Hockey Player - is a negative term for a player who doesn't understand the team concept and just gets the puck and goes with it individually without any regard for passing or team play. He's a puck hog.

Power Forward - is a big, strong, aggressive forward who bodychecks, plays tough and is physical in the corners and along the boards but can also score goals. eg. Washington's Tom Wilson.

Power Play - "PP" occurs when one team has a penalty and the other team has a man advantage and is on the power play. The power play continues for the length of the penalty or until a goal is scored.

PP - a term for Power Play. Good Teams might score 1 out of 4 times or 25% on the power play.

Pre -Game Meal - a light meal consisting mostly of pasta (carbohydrates) eaten 2 to 3 hours prior to the game or practice. For a morning game it would be a cereal containing mostly carbohydrates of wheat, rice or corn and sugar. Carbohydrates and sugar break down to produce energy.

Pressure - is a forechecking term where the defensive players (without the puck) put constant pressure on any puck carrier in all 3 zones all over the ice trying to create a turnover or loose puck.

Puck - is the 1 inch by 3 inch, 6 ounce frozen circular disc of vulcanized black rubber players shoot or pass trying to score a goal. Players aged 5-6 or 7-8 on some Minor/Youth teams can use a lighter 4 ounce puck.

Puck Control or Puck Possession - is an offensive strategy where a team keeps control of the puck entering the offensive zone by carrying, stickhandling, deking and passing the puck rather than giving it up by shooting it into the zone then playing a dump and chase system to retrieve it. The 2016 and 2017 Stanley Cup Champion Pittsburgh Penguins used a puck control system.

Puck Hog - is a selfish player who won't pass the puck even when his team mates are wide open.

Puck Management - A Team controls the puck by way of stickhandling, passing or carrying the puck. There are no turnovers or giveaways and no dump and chase, the Team has good puck management.

Puck-Pursuit- a forechecking system where 1, 2 or even 3 players quickly pursue the puckcarrier in the offensive and neutral zone trying to regain possession of the puck. This system can be very effective!

Puck Support -where team mates close the gap and provide passing options and near by support for the offensive player with the puck. There is also defensive puck support where forwards try to help out their defencemen by eliminating odd man rushes by backchecking and back pressure on the puckcarrier to retrieve any loose pucks or rebounds.

Pulling Back - when defencemen make a calculated decision that it's time and safer to leave the offensive Blue Line and pull back into the Neutral Zone to defend against any offensive rush.

Pulling the Goalie - is a strategy used when a team is behind by one or two goals late in the game. The coach will pull the goalie and replace him with a skilled offensive player in an attempt to score and tie the game. Some coaches will pull their goalie at other times trying to get back into the game.

Quarterback- is the very skilled offensive defenceman used on a team's power play. He can lead an end to end rush, execute pin point passes, has a great shoot and can score goals or set up scoring plays. The NHL's Erik Karlsson and Drew Doughty were 2 great power play quarterbacks.

Quiet Areas - are on ice areas in the open corners, behind the net or along the side boards in the offensive zone which are usually uncovered and considered safe areas for offensive players to set up a play with or without the puck. Defensive players must cover more strategic scoring locations like the slot, front of the net and points or where ever the puck is located.

Ragging the Puck - when penalty killing, the puckcarrier, stickhandles all over the ice with the puck trying to kill the penalty time. This is usually done in young Minor Hockey games but rarely in Junior or the NHL. The puckcarrier would be a very skilled and confident puckhandler and stickhandler.

Read and React - is a term which means analyzing an offensive or defensive play or situation then reacting to it positively by doing the correct thing. i.e. identifying a drop pass, playing a 1 on 1 by playing the man, or playing a 2 on 1 by playing the puck.

Rebounds - occur when a goalie makes a save with his pads or body but cannot control the puck because it rebounded/bounced off his equipment and lays near the crease or in the slot area. Many goals are scored from rebounds because the goalie didn't fall on the puck immediately, or his defenceman and forwards didn't clear it into the corner or out of their defensive zone. A very high percentage of rebounds turn into goals.

Red Liner - is a forward who hangs out by the Red Line hoping to get a pass for a breakaway.

Reduce Time and Space -a forechecking term, where the first and/or second forechecker must reduce both the **time** the puck carrier has to retrieve the puck and to make a pass and the **space** or the room he has to carry the puck out of the zone. Get to him quickly and bodycheck if allowed, as quickly as you can and it will cause him to make bad passing decisions or create numerous turnovers of the puck.

Referees - are the head on ice officials who wear the red arm bands and award the goals and call penalties. He is in-charge of the game and responsible for its safe, fair and orderly conduct. Minor Hockey Leagues have zero-tolerance for violence and instruct Referees to call penalties. Many Leagues use 2 Referees but Minor/Youth Hockey programs still use only one, or allow 2 Officials to call penalties, off-sides and icings at the younger age level of games to keep costs down.

Rep Team - is a Representative team composed of players who displayed the best hockey skills at the try out camp. They have the time, desire and finances, and want to play on a Competitive travel team. It could be a “AAA”, “AA”, “A”, “B” or “C” Rep. team representing your city or hockey district/zone. It could cost between \$3000 to \$7000 a season to play on some Rep.Teams.

Ride the Pine - is when you are benched by the coach for inferior play, mistakes, bad attitude, bad penalties, lack of effort etc. You ride the pine (the players bench) for a period of time or the rest of the game. This action usually gets the players attention and when he gets ice time he works harder.

Right Hand Shot - is any player who shoots or passes the puck from his right side.

Ring it around the boards - both in the offensive zone or defensive zone the puckcarrier shoots the puck very hard so it will go around the boards, behind the net, and come out the far side to your awaiting winger. It's a form of cycling the puck.

Rocker/Profile - a term used to describe the slightly circular shape of a skate blade or stick blade. Neither of these blades are perfectly flat but are like the runners of a rocking chair. Both can be customized to increase or decrease the rocker/roundness to suit a players skating style or the stick's on ice lie/angle.

Rookie - a player or coach competing in their first season with this team or at this level of hockey.

Rushing Defenceman - is one who is very skilled at stickhandling and carrying the puck out of his end zone and down the ice trying to set up or score a goal. Bobby Orr and Paul Coffey were great rushing defencemen. Victor Hedman and Quinn Hughes are good at rushing in the NHL.

Sandpaper - a term for a team or player who plays with grit, aggressive hitting and determination.

Saucer Pass - an across ice pass about 4 to 6 inches off the ice to clear the height of an opponent's stick blade. The puck is rotated in a circular motion from the heel to the toe of the passer's stick then passed in a shooting motion. The spinning action like a frisby causes the puck to lay flat when it hits the ice sliding onto the receivers stick.

Save - the stopping of the puck by the goaltender to prevent it from going over the goal line into the net.

Save Percentage - the number of stops or saves the goaltender would make to prevent the puck from going into the net out of 100 shots .i.e.23 saves out of 25 shots = .920 a very good save percentage.

Scrambled Face-off - where the puck is neither won or lost but is scrambled and open for recovery.

Screen - is the deliberate action by an offensive player to get in front of the goaltender to block his view of the puck when being shot by an offensive player usually a defenceman or a man in the slot. The player screening must stay outside the goalcrease or the goal if scored will not count.

Screen Shot - the shooter waits for one of his players, or a lot of traffic to get in front of the opponents net to block the goaltenders view, then shoots a low or high shot at the net trying to score.

Scrimmage - is a mini game between players of the same team during a practice or tryout camp.

Scrum- is when a number of players from opposing teams fight for control of a semi-loose puck located in their skates. Scrums usually take place along the side boards, in the corners, or in front of the net. Scrums also develop after the whistle has gone with pushing and shoving and the Referee might call a penalty to maintain control of the game.

Seam - a narrow opening, or thin passing lane between 2 defenders. Good players find open seams and take quality shots & score many goals by being in an open seam at the right place and right time.

Secondary Scoring - a team must generate scoring from its second and third line to be successful.

Second Effort - is when an offensive or defensive player is stopped but doesn't give up and uses a second effort to complete the play by breaking through a check, or getting to a rebound, getting a pass or a shot on goal **or** a goaltender making a great second effort to stop the shot from a rebound.

Sees the Ice - describes a puck carrier who actually sees and understands positioning and knows exactly where openings are to carry or pass the puck, where his players are going to be located to receive a pass and where the opposition is positioned in relation to them. Wayne Gretzky was great at seeing the ice. Go where the puck is going not where it has been.

Select Team- is a traveling team composed of the best House League players. They still play for their house league team but will also play against other select teams from other Hockey Associations in weekend Tournaments or exhibition games.

Seventh Man- the boisterous home crowd can be like a 7th man and energizes the whole team with their positive yelling and chants of "go team go". This usually helps the home team play better, try harder and even assists in the team scoring a goal. In the NHL and at most Junior games, this chanting supplies contagious positive energy to the home team and disrupts the flow of the visitor's play.

Shadow - is when a defensive player actively covers or closely follows a goalscorer or very skilled offensive player all over the ice trying to prevent him from receiving a pass or getting a quality shot on goal.

Shift - the length of time a player is on the ice before coming off for a rest. Shifts last between 1 and 2 minutes in some lower aged Youth/Minor Hockey games depending on the League and Division you are playing in. During a 50-minute Minor Hockey game a player may get 7 to 10 shifts. NHL shifts are about 40- 45 seconds in length, playoffs are even shorter.

Shoot-Out- if the game is tied after Overtime, a shoot-out may take place. Each team selects 3 players to shoot on a breakaway, the team that scores the most goals in the shootout wins the game.

Short Handed - is a penalty killing term to describe a team playing with one or two less skaters than the opposition because of penalties. They're playing shorthanded, the other team is on the power play. A team cannot play with less than 3 skaters, if another penalty is called it will be a delayed penalty.

Short Handed Goal - is a goal scored by the team that has a penalty and are playing with one or two less players than the opposition. This is rare in hockey but it can be achieved by skilled players.

Short Side - the closest part or shortest distance to the goal/net from the shooter. Versus the **Wide** side, which is the furthest distance from the shooter. Goals are rarely scored on the short side and if they are it is considered a bad or soft goal on the goaltenders part.

Shorten the Bench - when a coach, late in the game, decides to play 2 lines or specific players instead of his full compliment of players to try to win or tie the game. It's usually done in the last 2 minutes of the game.

Shots On Goal - are the number of shots recorded on the scoreboard or score sheet by the scorekeeper as an official shot on goal. To be an official shot, the puck would have gone into the net had it not been stopped by the goalie. Shots that are blocked by players or miss the net are not recorded as shots on goal. The goalkeeper must stop the puck from entering the net to be recorded as an official save.

Shoulder Check - is a body check delivered by a defensive player using his shoulder to hit/check the puck carrier, shoulder to shoulder, or shoulder to chest, along the boards or in open ice to create a loose puck.

Shovel Pass - is a rarely used pass that is executed by lifting the puck up high, 15 -25 feet into the air, using a shovel like motion. This pass would be used to clear the defensive zone or to set a player off on a breakaway. The puck is lofted over the defenders head into an open area and the receiver skates hard to the puck. It is a great play because there are no 2 line off-side passes to nullify it.

Shovel Shot - is a shot using a shovel like action to lift the puck up high into the top part of the net.

Shut Down Pair -your 2 best defencemen who prevent the oppositions best players from scoring.

Shut-Out - if one team fails to score a goal during the game, the opposing goalie earns a shut-out.

Sits Back- when a team plays too defensive trying to protect a lead, it sits back, not trying to generate offence or score any more goals. This strategy sometimes backfires and you end up giving up a late goal. If you are over the Red Line late in the game, dump the puck in as it eats up time.

Slap Pass - a 3/4 speed slap shot on the ice used as a pass to an open teammate for a deflection or shot.

Slap Shot - a very fast, hard, heavy shot when executed properly. The stick is drawn back in an arc above your head, then brought down rapidly slapping/hitting the ice 2- 4 inches behind the puck and drawing it forward then following through to the height you want the puck to go..

Slew Footing - the action of tripping a player by knocking or pulling his skates out from behind him with a kicking or leg dragging motion. This is very dangerous and can seriously hurt a player because he could fall backwards, hit/crack his skull on the ice, or the very least cause a concussion.

Sliding Block - is when a defensive player attempting to block a shot, slides feet first with his legs stacked one on top of the other at a 90 degree right angle to the shot pucks forward direction.

Slot - is the area directly in front of the goal crease and extends 15 feet out to the hash marks located between the 2 face-off circles. The slot is where the majority of Minor Hockey goals are scored from.

Slump - is when a team stops winning or individuals stop scoring for no apparent reason.

Snake Bitten - when a player can't score, even into an open net for no apparent reason.

Snap Shot - is a half slap shot, half wrist shot used close to the net on many rebounds or loose pucks.

Sniper - is a term used for a player who scores a goal, or scores goals on a regular basis.

Soft Hands - a term used to describe a goal scorer who has soft flexible hands and wrists, free of tension when he is carrying the puck, receiving a pass, stickhandling, deking and in particular shooting and scoring.

Special Team - is a group of specially skilled offensive or defensive players used in a special situation such as on the Power Play (PP) to score a goal or when Penalty Killing (PK) to prevent a goal.

Spinerama - is when a defenceman on the point has the puck and spins 360 degrees to his backhand side to get away from a checker. Serge Savard of the Montreal Canadians initiated this move.

Stacking the Pads - is a goaltenders move where he stacks one pad on top of other facing them outward, while sliding to the far post trying to cover as much of the lower half net as possible.

Stand Up At Blue Line - Defencemen should meet the offensive attack outside their Blue Line if the wide wing is covered. If executed properly this causes many off-sides or turnovers of the puck. Defencemen should not give up their Blue Line easily as it allows the opposition access into your defensive zone with the puck under control.

Stay Home Defenceman - is one who rarely rushes with the puck but concentrates more on staying back and preventing goals. He rarely gets caught out of position or deep inside the offensive zone.

Stick Checking - is a skill used by defensive players to knock the puck off the stick of an offensive player. They use their stick to legally sweep check, poke check, stick lift or hook check the puck from the opposition. In female hockey stick checking is very important as bodychecking is not allowed.

Stickhandle - is an offensive skill used by a player carrying the puck to go around a defensive player. He moves the puck back and forth to himself by keeping it on his blade while skating at full speed. Stickhandling to the backhand side of the defender on a 1 on 1 has a higher % for success.

Stick Side - refers to the goaltenders side in which he holds the stick.

Stop Time - during a game, whenever the whistle is blown the clock is stopped. It restarts when the puck is dropped and play resumes. A 20 minute stop time period lasts about 30 -35 minutes.

Straight Time - during a game, the clock runs straight through until the end of the period or game. It does not stop for any whistles unless the Referee stops it for an injury or during the last 2 minutes of play if scheduled to do so.

Stretch Pass - A long forward pass from inside your defensive zone to a teammate near the offensive Blue Line. With no Red Line to stop 2 line passes, the stretch pass has become a very effective play.

Strong Along the Boards - an offensive or defensive player who will without hesitation use physical force and strength along the boards to keep control of the puck, or get control of the puck.

Strong On the Puck - players get to loose pucks quickly then use the strength in their forearms and hands to hang on to and control the puck so it can't be taken off their stick by any stick checking.

Structure - players must follow the offensive & defensive game plan as devised by the coach.

Suck It Up - is when a team must play with adversity. It loses its top player to injury, someone takes a major penalty and is thrown out of the game, or the team falls behind early. They must suck it up.

Suicide Pass - A pass made to a receiver who has to turn his head and look back over his shoulder for the puck and in so doing opens himself up to be hit/body checked and possibly being very seriously injured. Suicide passes should not be made if there is any chance the receiver has to turn his head to find the pass.

Support - is when offensive players away from the puck move up to support the puck carrier by providing passing options for him and become part of the attack. Likewise defensive support is when defensive players away from the puck come back into their defensive zone to help their defencemen by trying to position themselves to prevent odd man rushes, passing options and shots on goal and to regain possession of loose pucks or rebounds.

Swarm - a forechecking term when 3 forecheckers attack the puckcarrier, they swarm him like Bees.

Sweep - when one team wins every game of a series, either regular season or playoff, it sweeps the series. If it's during the playoffs, the team losing is swept from further playoff competition.

Sweep Check - is a stick check using a back and forth on ice sweeping motion with your stick blade trying to knock/sweep the puck off the puck carriers stick blade.

Synergy - the trade name of a very expensive, composite one-piece hockey stick made by Easton. Many companies are now making these one- piece sticks, like Bauer, CCM and Warrior, but paying \$150 to \$200 is a little much for a Youth Hockey stick. Wooden sticks are still fine with me.

Tag Up Rule - just like in Baseball where the runner can go back to the base and tag up. In hockey on a delayed off-side situation, all the offensive players inside the offensive zone must come back out and 1 skate must tag up on or over the Blue Line. They can only re-enter the offensive zone once all teammates have cleared or exited the zone. This allows the play to continue without a whistle.

Take a Hit to Make the Play - a good player will take a bodycheck in order to make a pass to an open man, get a shot on net, get the puck out of the defensive zone or to keep it in the offensive zone.

Team Chemistry - good team chemistry is when everyone on the team gets along, there are no bad apples. If there is bad team chemistry something must be done by the coach or manager to correct it.

Team Depth - The comparison of all the players skills of one Team by position against all the players skills of another Team. One Team may have more Team depth than another or they match up evenly. However team chemistry, hustle and desire will allow a lesser talented team to win the big game.

Telegraph Pass - a pass in which the opposition can see where the puck is going and to whom.

The “A”, the “O”, the “Q” and the “W” - are nicknames for the **American** Hockey League, the development League of the NHL. The **Ontario** Hockey League, the **Quebec** Major Junior League and the **Western** Hockey League. These are the 3 Major Junior “A” Leagues in Canada and they develop young 16 - 20 year old hockey players in which the best 18 year olds are drafted by the 32 NHL Teams in June.

The Full Package - a player with all the skills. He can score on long shots from the deep slot, or close in with a flip shot, can pass, forecheck, backcheck, bodycheck and fight when necessary. He can do it all. Sidney Crosby of the Pittsburgh Penguins is an NHL player with the full package.

Three on One - similar to a 2 on 1, but with 3 offensive players against 1 defensive player.

Tic, Tac, Toe - is a beautiful three way passing and scoring play. Pass, pass, shoot and score.

Time Out - some Leagues allow the coach to call one 30 second time out per game. It's usually done in the last two minutes of the game to allow him to plan strategy and to rest his top players for the last shift. Time outs could be called earlier if the team is playing poorly or falls behind quickly. In the NHL and some Junior Leagues you cannot call a timeout on an icing.

Tip In - is the act of redirecting an air borne puck into the net using the blade or shaft of the stick. The stick must be below the players shoulder or the cross bar or the goal will be disallowed.

Top Shelf - the top part of the net, just under the cross bar.

Toe Drag - dragging the puck with the toe of your stick around an opponent like the letter C.

Top 6, bottom 6 forwards - many NHL and Junior Teams have their top 2 lines composed of their six best skilled and scoring forwards and their third and fourth line, or bottom 6, is composed of their best grinders and checkers.

Touch Icing - has been eliminated in the NHL. Now a defensive player must skate to the top of the circle before any offensive player reaches it to get an icing call. Youth/Minor Hockey and most Junior Leagues use automatic no touch icing because its much safer.

Touch/Tap Pass - is a pass in which the receiver just redirects the puck to a fellow teammate without handling the puck. He just touches or taps the puck to an open team mate who is close by.

Tracking - chasing the puck carrier or open man by using the shortest route to him a straight line.

Traffic - when a number of offensive and defensive players are in front of the goalie or in the slot area. The offensive players are intentionally trying to create traffic to screen or distract the goalie.

Trailer - is a player on an offensive rush who drops back to become the trailer or late man on the play. He is situated in the deep slot to take a pass and get a quality shot on goal, or to forecheck or backcheck if his team loses the puck. Sometimes the trailer is left uncovered by the defending team and he is in a good position to score. The trailer is also the player who gets the puck on a drop pass.

Transition - is the term used to describe the time taken by players going from offence to defence, or defence to offence, with every change of possession of the puck. It should be done quickly/immediately and if it is, your team will be very competitive.

Trash Talk -when a player tries to intimidate an opposing player with verbal threats or trash talk. It is usually done during a face-off or after the whistle to end a play involving a scrum of players.

Triangulation - is an offensive strategy and formation, stationary or moving, large or small consisting of 3 players creating a triangle shape, thus providing 2 passing options for the puck carrier.

Turnover - one team has lost or given up possession of the puck and turned it over to the other team.

Turtle - is when a player refuses to fight and get thrown out of the game. He falls to the ice, covers his head with his 2 hands like a turtle to avoid taking a major fighting penalty and game misconduct.

Two on One - occurs when 2 offensive players with the puck, create a situation against 1 defensive player. This occurs in all zones, Defensive, Neutral or Offensive zone and leads to scoring chances.

Two, One, Two (2-1-2) - is an aggressive forechecking system using 2 forwards in deep attacking the puck carrier, 1 forward stays back in the slot area and 2 defencemen are up inside the Blue Line. Depending on the success or failure of the 2 forecheckers the 3rd forward can either go to the net for a pass and shot or turn and backcheck covering the wide winger. He can also become the 1st forechecker if the puck is moved into the opposite corner. The 3 must play as a flexible cohesive unit inside the offensive zone.

Two Way Player - a player who works hard both offensively and defensively at both ends of the ice.

Tyke- in some Minor and Youth Hockey divisions, the ages 6 and 7 are called Pre-Tyke and Tyke.

Underdog - when a team is seeded below the team it's playing in regular season games or playoffs it's considered the underdog. However, that does not mean there won't be an upset.

Unforced Turnover - the puck is given away to the opposition when there was no pressure or reason.

USA Hockey - the governing body of Youth, Junior, Senior and Olympic Hockey in the USA.

Veteran - a player, coach, manager or Referee who has a number of years experience in hockey.

Wall - The new nick name for the rink's side boards surrounding the ice surface. "The wall."

Wheel - is a skating expression used to describe an offensive player cutting in a semi-circular pattern to open ice to receive a pass, or while carrying the puck himself out of his defensive zone.

Wrap Around - is a forehand or backhand scoring attempt used by an offensive player with the puck, coming out from behind the opponents net. He tries to wrap the puck in a semi circular motion between the goal post and goalies skate or between the goaltender's legs into the net.

Wrist Shot - is a quick, accurate forehand shot executed by dragging the puck from behind you then snapping your bottom wrist to create power and flight, then following through for height.

Zamboni - is the name of the inventor and the trade name of many ice cleaning and flooding machines used in arenas around the world. Olympia is the name of a competitive company.

Zebras - is a nickname for the Referees and Linesmen in their black and white striped sweaters.

Zones - the ice is divided into 3 zones, the Defensive Zone, the Neutral Zone and the Offensive Zone with the Blue Lines acting as the boundary line. Each team has its own 3 distinct zones in relation to which direction it is trying to score a goal and prevent a goal.

Minor/Youth Hockey Parents, Coaches, young Players and Fans, as stated earlier, you do not have to learn all of these hockey terms and expressions, they are there for reference purposes to help you understand the hockey language, terms, expressions and different rules of the game.

However, your children or young players, between 5 and 12 years of age, may come up to you from time to time asking you if you know what such and such a hockey expression means and you might not be able to explain it to them. Or, you may hear a new hockey expression at the rink and not know what it means and with any luck it might be listed here.

Having said that, just knowing the meaning of some of these hockey terms and expressions will help kids play better, coaches teach with more confidence and parents or fans who just came to watch their kids or grand kids play, will now have a general understanding of the basic rules, penalties and strategy of the game. They will also begin to appreciate the systems and identify the great offensive skills or the defensive errors that are continuously going on during every shift of every game. Goals will only be scored if there was a defensive error made by someone. It could be a forward, a defenceman, the goaltender or a combination of all three.

In no time: You will be able to recognize the great plays and the not so great plays and the reason why penalties were called by the Referee for a specific infraction of the rules or why the Linesman blew the whistle to stop the play for either an off-side or an icing.

In Conclusion:

I have included many hockey terms and expressions to get you started. But time and space will not allow for all the terms and expressions you will learn or hear over your lifetime of playing, coaching or watching hockey games. I hope these have helped you in some small way understand the vocabulary and the skills, systems and strategy of hockey. Now it's time to enjoy the games.

Hockey Made Easy is for Beginners to Beer Leagues and everything in between. It teaches you the skills required to make you feel and be part of the TEAM. For Kids, Teens, Adults, Oldtimers to Beer Leagues composed of Doctors, Lawyers, Policemen, Firemen, Industrial workers, etc. or anyone who wants to play hockey and enjoy being part of a team.

Yours in hockey,
John Shorey
Best Selling Author -
Hockey Made Easy and
Hockey Canada Award
winner

UNIT I

INTRODUCTION TO HOCKEY

Learning to play hockey can be a lot of **fun**. However, there are a number of important facts that should be understood before you step onto the ice to play or coach hockey.

This manual contains everything young 5 -12 year old Male and Female players, rookie or veteran Minor and Youth Hockey coaches or new Youth hockey parents need to know. It presents them in a progressive, easy-to-read, easy-to-understand point format to help you play or teach the game correctly and safely.

Some of these points should be explained and demonstrated in the Beginner 5-6 ages and 7-8 & 9-10 years. All should be learned before players graduate from 11-12 aged programs.

“Knowledge is the key to success.”

KEY ELEMENTS OF HOCKEY

Hockey is easy to play and easy to master if you understand just **10 key elements**. These elements are the same whether you are playing at the Minor/Youth Hockey level, the Junior level, in College, the NHL or in an Old-timers game. They include two objectives, three playing rules and the five basic skill groups.

OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME

Hockey consists of **2 main objectives**:

1. To **Score a Goal** when your team controls the puck. This is called **“Offensive Play.”**
2. To **Prevent a Goal** when the opposition controls the puck. This is called **“Defensive Play.”**

PLAYING RULES

Hockey has many **playing rules** but these **3** must be learned and understood at the very beginning:

1. **Off-Sides / Delayed Off-Side / Intentional Off-Side**, what they mean and their consequences.
2. **Icing the Puck / Non Icing of the puck**, what this means and its consequences.
3. **Penalties**: what they are, why you get them, varying consequences and how to avoid them.

BASIC SKILLS

Hockey requires the development and execution of **5 basic skill groups** they include:

1. **Skating: Forward and Backward, Stops, Starts, Turns, Pivots and Crossovers**
2. **Puck Handling, Stick Handling and Deking**
3. **Passing and Receiving on your Forehand and Backhand**
4. **Shooting and Scoring**
5. **Checking Techniques: Stick Check, Body Check, Forechecking and Backchecking**

If young players can understand, then master these 10 key hockey elements listed above, they will be on their way to becoming very skilled, confident, competent and excellent two-way Minor/Youth Hockey players.

GETTING STARTED IN MINOR or YOUTH HOCKEY PROGRAMS

Many **Minor/Youth Hockey Associations** offer 3 or 4 types of programs to play in.

1. The **Initiation Program** focuses on **teaching basic hockey skills** to beginners and players 5 to 6 years of age as of Dec. 31st. This is the determination date for all age groups.
2. The **House League Program** is designed for **recreational** players aged 7 to 17 years of age. Groupings include ages 7- 8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15, and 16-17.
3. The **Representative “A” or “B” Program** is for **competitive** players aged 7 to 19. Local Associations may call this their Rep. or their Travel Team program. Groupings include ages 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15 & 16 -17 and 18 -19 in Canada and USA. A Select team is a group of House League players selected to play in some tournaments.
4. The **Elite “AA” or “AAA” Program** is for **very skilled & competitive** players aged 7 to 17, who wish to make hockey a career or to receive a University Scholarship. Some have 1 year Minor and Major Divisions: Ages 9 &10, 11&12, 13 &14, 15 Minor & 16 -17 Major.

WHICH PROGRAM TO PLAY IN - HOUSE LEAGUE OR REPRESENTATIVE TEAM

By age 8, following graduation from the 6-7 aged program, parents and coaches must decide which **program** is best suited for their child based on his/her size, ability, attitude, competitiveness and the time they have to take their child to the rink. Time commitment varies greatly by program. Many Minor Hockey Players start their young hockey career in the **House League Program**. Here they receive basic hockey instruction from volunteer coaches with the goal being **fun** and recreation. **House League Levels** Time Commitment “A” 2-3 days week, “B” 2 days week, “C” 1-2 days week.

As players develop& improve their skills, they may want to try out for the local "A," "B" or “C” **Rep Team**. This level of hockey is more competitive than the House League with more skilled players and more experienced coaches. The goal here being improved skill development and competition. **Competitive Levels** Time Commitment “A” 4-5 days week, “B” 3- 4 days week, “C” 3 days week.

The Elite "AA" or "AAA" District Rep Team plays in the most competitive League and is for the most skilled players in the region or district. Players trying out for this team must possess the talent, time, desire and finances to play on this major league travel and tournament team. The coaches here are very skilled, experienced and very demanding. It is evident and their goal is to win every game.

Elite Levels Time Commitment “AAA” 5-6 days week, “AA” 4-6 days week. If a player's goal is to play Junior "A" or receive a college scholarship, he should try to play on the "AA" or “AAA” team as soon as possible in order to develop his individual and team skills, and be seen and evaluated by hockey scouts while playing with and against the most talented players in the district.

If a player just wants to have fun, without the pressure to win, the House League Recreational Program meets this need. It provides the opportunity for players to still learn the basics of hockey in a less competitive environment. However, the chances of a player making hockey a career or getting a scholarship from this level is very rare. The higher the calibre of hockey you play or coach, “A”, “AA”, or “AAA”, the more serious and stressful it becomes. There is far more pressure to win at this level than in House League hockey. Also the time commitment at this level is 15 - 20 hours per week including travel for games, practices, Team meetings and Tournaments.

The cost also varies by program: House League is about \$250- \$500 a year, Rep "A" Teams are about \$2000 - \$4000 a year, and "AAA" about \$5000- \$7000 a year. Whether you decide to play House League, Rep, or Elite “AAA”, the information contained in this manual will help you understand the game, improve your basic skills, and help you develop to your full potential.

ESSENTIAL PERSONAL QUALITIES

All hockey players must possess the following **personal qualities** to contribute to their team, whether it's in the local House/Recreation League or on the Rep. travelling "AAA" Elite Team.

- C **ATTITUDE** You must be willing and open minded to receive instruction and learn from those with the hockey experience and expertise in order to be the best you can possibly be. Be receptive to new ideas and methods of teaching. You must want to learn, to improve and to win.
- . **CONFIDENCE** Players must have confidence in their ability to play at a high level. The more confidence you have in your hockey skills the better you will play.
- C **DRIVE** You must have the drive to play well, to improve and to win. Do not take losses or poor performances lightly. Give a 100 % effort every shift.
- C **DEDICATION** You must have the time and desire to attend and actively participate in all team practices, games and meetings.
- C **DISCIPLINE** You must respect and obey your Coaches, and the Referee, and be willing to do whatever they ask hockey wise, even if you disagree with them.
- . **EMOTION** To be successful, players and coaches must play or coach with emotion and passion. You have to love hockey in order to play or coach it well.
- C **MEMORY** You must be able to remember what your Coach has taught you to do in different situations on Offence and Defence, with and without the puck.
- C **MOTIVATION** You must have the determination and incentive it takes to see you through the bad times as well as the good. This enables you to always be the best you can be and contribute to your team. Hockey builds character.
- C **PRIDE** You must demonstrate pride and self-respect in yourself, your play and in your team. Remember, "Quitters never win and Winners never quit."

REMEMBER : Players should always give it their best effort every game and every shift, because you never know who is watching your performance. There may be a Scout in the audience evaluating your play, who may want to call you up to the Rep. Team as an affiliate player based on what he just saw you do on the ice. Or he may want to invite you to their tryout camp next year. Give it your best shot on each and every shift.

SUMMARY

Possessing these qualities means you have achieved the first component of the hockey equation.

PERSONAL QUALITIES + HEALTHY LIFESTYLE + ACQUIRED SKILLS
= A SUCCESSFUL HOCKEY CAREER.

TEAM PLAY

Hockey is a **Team Game** not an individual game. If you desire to stand out as an individual, you should consider taking up skiing or snow-boarding as a winter sport.

A hockey team is like an orchestra, every player has a specific part to play and when everyone works together, you make beautiful music or play fantastic hockey.

Hockey teams are made up of individuals, but these individuals **work together** as a five man unit for the success of the team. When you work hard as a team and play your position intelligently, pass the puck accurately, forecheck and backcheck correctly and put your team goals ahead of personal goals, your Team's chances of success or winning the playoff championship are greatly increased.

PLAYING SHIFTS

A **Hockey Shift** is the length of time you are on the ice. It varies between 45 seconds and 1 minute depending upon the league, the age division and the level you play in. 7-8 ages may have a 3 minute shift and use a buzzer system to change players, but as you progress to 11-12 the shifts will be much shorter, from about 45 seconds to 1 minute maximum because of the games faster tempo.

A shift usually involves skating up the ice on a rush or to forecheck, back down the ice in a backchecking role, returning up the ice if you recovered the puck, then getting off to the players bench. **Never** stay on the ice until you are dead tired. **Always get off before then**, otherwise you increase the chances of a goal being scored against your line because you're tired, you can't think straight, can't react and you'll make a defensive mistake.

The higher the level of hockey you play, the greater the speed of the game and the shorter the shifts will be. For example, in a "AA" or "AAA" hockey game, a shift would normally be 45 to 60 seconds maximum. If you skate as fast as you can for the entire shift, you will be exhausted and want to get off the ice. You will need the 2-3 minute rest to recover. However, if you coasted most of the shift, hung out around the Red Line and didn't work hard at both ends of the ice you won't be tired, but you won't have helped your team either. You still must come off, tired or not. If one player on your line comes off, all should come off. If you gave a 100% effort for most of the shift you will be tired!

TYPES OF SHIFTS

- C A **Successful Shift** is one in which **no goals were scored against your line**. To achieve this you must work very hard for the entire shift by forechecking and backchecking correctly.
- C An **Unsuccessful Shift** is one in which **a goal was scored against your line**. For a goal to be scored against your line, a forward, defenceman or goalie, or a combination of all three had to make a defensive error/mistake.
- C A **Fantastic Shift** is one in which your line played as a team, passed the puck, **scored a goal** and **did not give up a goal** while you were on the ice. Congratulations and Well Done!

SUMMARY

The more successful shifts you achieve, the better your chances of winning the game.

Remember: "Preventing goals is just as important as scoring goals."

CHANGING ON THE FLY

Sometimes it's necessary to change players while the play is still underway. This is called **changing on the fly** and the player coming off should call out his position (centre) so the correct and same position player on the next line is alerted to go on. The substitute player can go on if the player coming off the ice is within 5 feet of his players bench. But, the player coming off or going on **cannot** play/touch the puck until the change is complete or the team will get a penalty for too many men on the ice. Don't change on the fly if the puck is in your defensive zone, but if you are over the Red Line, dump/shoot the puck deep into the offensive zone corner and it should be safe to come off to get a rest.

Icing the puck is not an option as the current icing rule prohibits the team icing the puck from changing players. However, the non icing team can chance it's tired players.

PLAYERS GAME EVALUATION

At the end of the game a method used by many coaches to **evaluate** your contribution is to determine your Plus (+) and Minus (-) record. If your unit scored more goals than those scored against you **at even strength**, for example 5 on 5, or 4 on 4, you are a (+) player. However, if you had more goals scored against your line, you are a (-) player. To calculate your + or - total, subtract goals scored by your line from goals scored against your line (while you were on the ice) to equal a + or - balance.

If you are a (+) player, you have made a valuable contribution to your team, even if your team lost the game. Here are 3 examples of calculating + and - :

- C If your line scored 3 goals, but gave up 4 at even strength you are -1.
- C If your line scored only 1 goal, but gave up none at even strength you are +1.
- C If your line scored 2 goals but allowed 2 goals at even strength you are even.

A SHIFT IN THINKING FROM OFFENCE TO DEFENCE

In Minor and Youth Hockey, most players think **offence** "scoring goals" first and **defence** "preventing goals" last. However, it's unrealistic to think you will score a goal on every shift. It is more realistic for you to prevent a goal against your line on every shift. If you can shift your thinking slightly, to preventing goals every shift, then your team will be competitive in every game, even against the best teams. Learn to play your position correctly when your team doesn't have the puck by preventing odd man rushes and you will prevent many goals against thus helping your team even more. **Score goals when you have the puck, prevent goals when the opposition has the puck.**

The higher you progress in hockey, from 9-10 "C" to 16-17 "AAA", etc., the more your Coach will expect you to play sound defensive hockey to prevent goals when the opposition have the puck with good forechecking and backchecking systems. If you can grasp this idea in the 9-10 and 11-12 age levels today, you will be miles ahead of your competition and contribute greatly to your team's success. Speed when forechecking and backchecking is the secret to success during the season.

SUMMARY

It is very important to remember that hockey is a **Team Game** and should be **fun** and **enjoyable** for everyone at any age. It is not life and death at the Minor/Youth Hockey level. If you have tried your best, that's all anyone can ask. But play to win. You will find it's more enjoyable to win than to lose at any age, in any sport, but don't go crazy if you lose because it's still only a game!

"Think positive, have fun, play fair."

PLAYING RULES

There are **3** basic **playing rules** all players **must learn** in order to play the game correctly.

OFF-SIDES

Players of the attacking team must **not precede the puck** into the attacking/offensive zone.

The puck carrier of the attacking/offensive team can carry the puck, pass or shoot it into the offensive zone, but his teammates **must not precede the puck** into the offensive zone or it is whistled down by the Linesman as an **off-side** and a face-off will take place just outside the blue line.

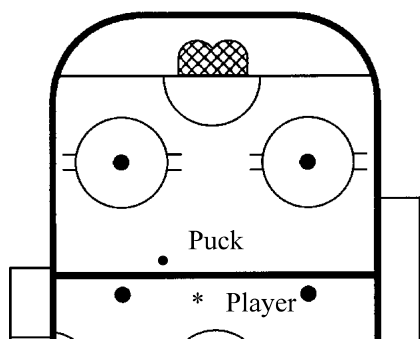
If you skate across the offensive or opposing team's Blue Line **before the puck enters the offensive zone** and one of your players **carries** the puck across the Blue Line, or if he checks their puck carrier while you are still inside the zone, the whistle will blow and you will be called for being **off-side**.

The **puck must cross** the opposing team's Blue Line into the offensive zone before **any** player on your team can enter the zone to retrieve it. If the puck exits the zone, you must exit the zone.

The position of the **player's skates**, not the stick, will be the determining factor for an off-side.

Straddling the **Blue Line** is permissible as both skates must be completely over the Blue Line to be off-side. This is a revised new rule for offsides.

If your team is called for being **off-side**, the Linesman will blow his whistle, the play will stop and a face-off will take place just outside that Blue Line in the Neutral Zone on the red face-off dot.

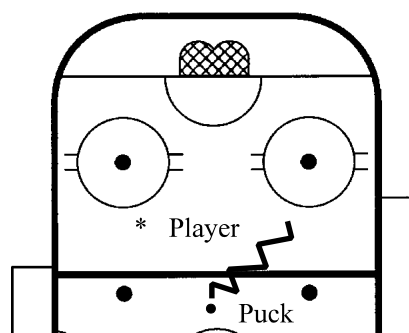


Player carried puck across
Blue Line and no offensive
players were inside zone

Puck Preceded Player
Over Blue Line = **No Off-Side**

**OFFENSIVE
ZONE**

BLUE LINE



Puck carried across Blue Line
while offensive player was still
inside zone

A Player Preceded Puck
Over Blue Line = **Off-Side**

DELAYED OFF-SIDE

If an attacking player **precedes** the puck that is a shot, passed or deflected into the offensive zone (but not carried across the Blue Line by a team mate,) the Linesman shall signal or yell **delayed off-side**.

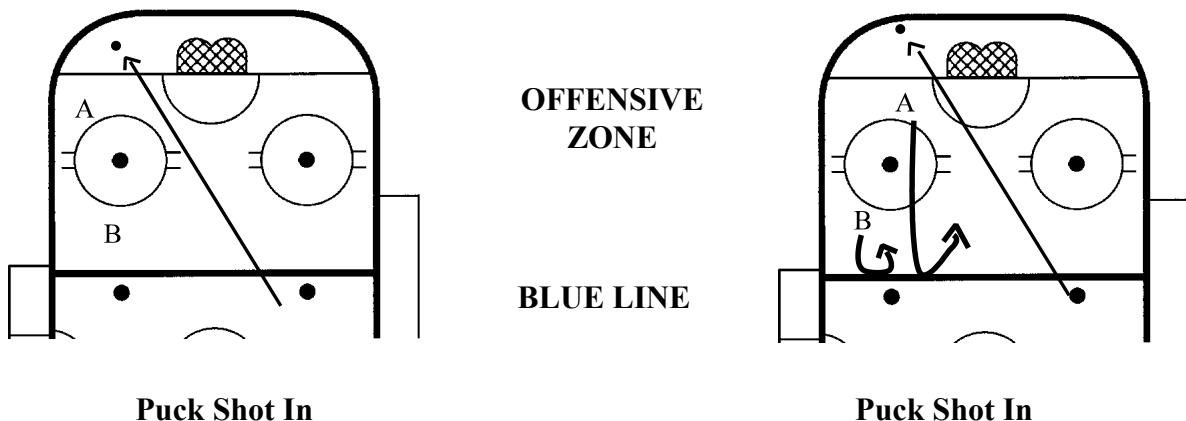
This is a very good rule which allows the game to continue without a whistle/stoppage if **all** the offensive players leave the offensive zone **without touching the puck** and tag up on the Blue Line.

The Linesman will raise his arm to indicate a delayed off-side is in progress. He may even yell "delayed off-side" to warn the offensive players to clear the zone and when completed will yell **ok**.

He is giving your team **a chance to clear the offensive zone** to prevent an **off-side** whistle.

When **everyone** on your team has completely cleared the offensive zone and tagged the Blue Line, then and only then can you re-enter it to go after the puck without it being called for an off-side.

Note: A goal cannot be scored when the puck is shot on goal in an off-side situation.



Puck shot in from outside the Blue Line with team mates A and B caught inside the offensive zone.

DELAYED OFF-SIDE SITUATION

Players A and B must make contact with or tag the Blue Line before re-entering the offensive zone. Player B cannot re-enter while Player A is still inside the zone.

The offensive team must wait until both players A and B have made contact with the Blue Line before re-entering the offensive zone. Timing is crucial.

INTENTIONAL OFF-SIDE

1. A player deliberately plays the puck in a delayed off-side situation, knowing that he is off-side.
2. A player deliberately carries the puck over the Blue Line into the attacking zone knowing that players from his team are in an off-side position and inside the zone ahead of him and the puck.

When either of these 2 situations occur, play will be stopped immediately by the Linesman, and the puck shall be faced-off back all the way down the ice in the **defensive end zone** of the offending team.

OFF-SIDE PASS/2-LINE PASS - if playing with the **Red Line** for 2 line offside pass purposes.

If the puck is passed from **inside** your defensive Blue Line to your receiver who has **both skates completely over** and on the far side of the Red Line the Linesman will blow his whistle for an **off-side pass/2-line pass**. The face off will come back to the closest spot to where the pass was made.

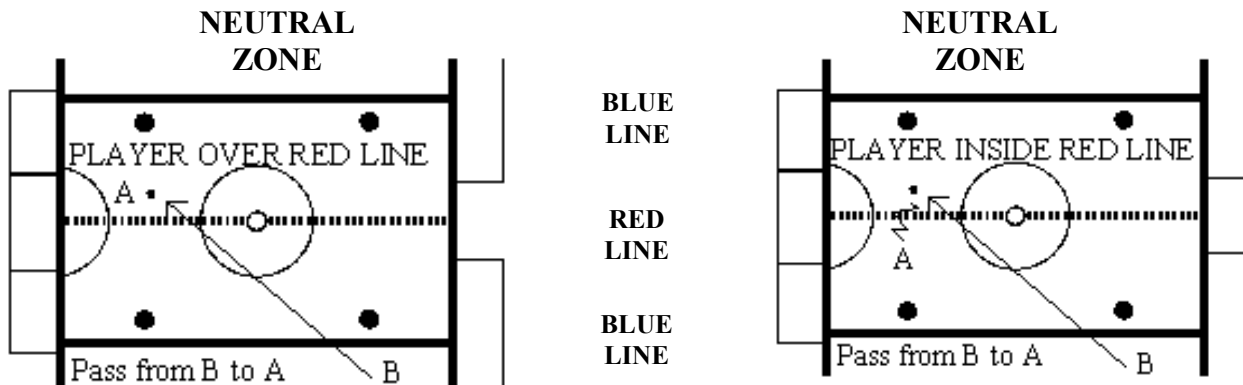
Note. Most Minor/Youth and Junior Hockey Leagues in Canada and the USA are now playing with **No Red Line** to speed up the game by eliminating 2 line off-side passes. Effective 04/05 season.

LEGAL 2-LINE PASS - if still playing with the **Red Line** for off-side pass purposes.

If the puck is passed from **inside** your defensive Blue Line and your receiver is positioned **inside your Red Line**, not over it, and the puck precedes him over the Red Line, he can go after the puck without it being an **off-side pass/2-line pass**. The receiver was on-side at the Red Line.

It is not an off-side pass/2-line pass because the **puck preceded** the receiver over the **Red Line**.

Note: As stated earlier above, most leagues are now allowing 2 line passes. Effective 04/05 in Canada and the USA.



**OFF-SIDE PASS/2-LINE PASS
IF PLAYING WITH RED LINE**

Player A received pass over Red Line - Player preceded puck over Red Line.

**LEGAL 2-LINE PASS
IF PLAYING WITH RED LINE**

Puck preceded player over Red Line and player skated "to" the puck

The position of the **Puck** when it leaves the passers stick, not his skates, determines the starting zone of the pass. The position of the receivers **Skates**, not his stick, must be on-side at the Red Line to be legal. **Note. The NHL in 05/06 season also began playing without the Red Line.**

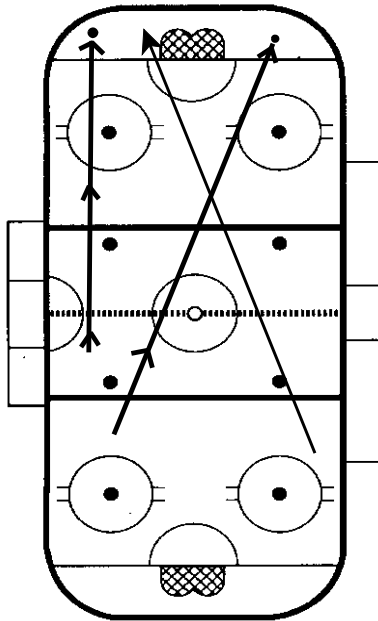
STRATEGY FOR PLAYING WITHOUT THE RED LINE - for legal 2 line passes in 04/05

Some coaches will allow or instruct their top goal scoring forward to hang out around or beyond the Red Line. This is not necessarily a bad move if your defencemen or forwards can pass the puck up to him quickly as he could be positioned behind the defence for a breakaway and score.

This play also puts pressure on the opposition's defencemen to back off at the Blue Line to prevent the red liner from getting behind them. If the puck carrying defenceman or forward can bank the puck up to fast wingers positioned near the far blue line, this could also lead to more scoring opportunities. It is now legal to pass the puck from your defensive zone to far blueline.

ICING THE PUCK and NON ICING

If your team shoots the puck from its side of the **Red Line** to over the opponents **Goal line**, while you are equal or superior in numerical strength, the Linesman will blow his whistle for **icing the puck** and the face-off will come back to your end zone. A Linesman may **nullify the icing call** if he is satisfied that a defending player could have played the puck but made no effort to do so, or if the shooter's stick blade (not skates) was over the Red Line when the puck was iced. The team icing the puck **cannot** change tired players or call a time out.



ICING

Puck shot from your side of Red Line to over the Goal Line without being touched by a defender.

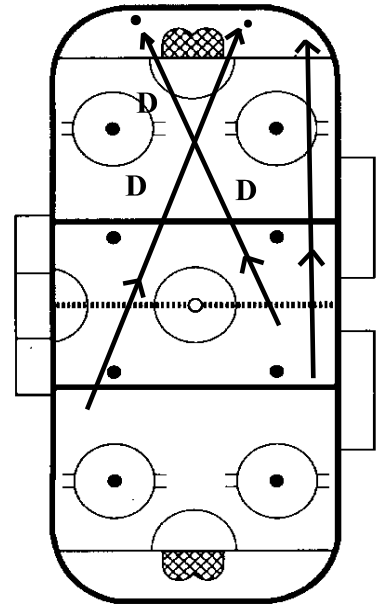
GOAL LINE

BLUE LINE

RED LINE

BLUE LINE

GOAL LINE



NO ICING

A defending player D could have played the puck, but made no effort to do so.

SUMMARY Both forwards and defencemen must be aware of where they are positioned on the ice in relation to the puck to prevent Off-sides (their feet) and Icings (the puck leaving the stick).

Icing: the Team icing the puck cannot change its tired players or call a timeout and the faceoff comes back into your end zone. The non icing team can change its players if it so desires.

ROLE OF THE REFEREE AND LINESMEN

The **Referee** is like a policeman and is the individual in charge of the hockey game and must be respected for the difficult task s/he must perform. He wears the red arm bands and is responsible for calling penalties against a player or team that, in his opinion, has committed an infraction of the rules. He should try to explain to **young** hockey players why they got the penalty and how to correct it so they won't get that penalty again. Female hockey is oftentimes Refereed by females.

The Referee basically tries to keep the game safe and fair for everyone.

The 2 **Linesmen** are responsible for calling Off-sides and Icing infractions. They can **inform** the Referee of any Major penalty infraction they saw behind the play and can **call** a Minor penalty for too many players on the ice and a Bench Minor. They can also point out to the Referee any offender who warrants a double Minor (a four minute penalty), Match, Misconduct, Game or Gross Misconduct penalty. In Minor Hockey, 2 Officials may act as a Referee and Linesmen to keep costs down. NHL & Jr. Leagues are using 2 Referees now to call penalties behind the play.

PENALTIES

Penalties are called by the Referee for breaking specific rules. Penalties are sub divided into 4 categories: Minor, Major, Misconduct and Match penalties. Each category having increasing degrees of consequences based on the seriousness of the infraction.

Delayed Penalties are called after the fact because the **non offending** team of the penalty still had possession of the puck. The penalty is called when the **offending team** touches the puck. If a goal is scored on a delayed penalty, the penalty is wiped out unless it was a 5 minute Major which is served in it's entirety.

MINOR PENALTIES

Minor penalties are called for minor infractions such as tripping, holding, interference, hooking, body checking, etc. But when they are deemed serious, or when injury results, Major penalties will be called. A **game ejection** is assessed for 3 or more stick infractions in the same game. Stick infractions include: high-sticking, cross-checking, slashing, butt-ending and spearing.

A player must serve up to **2 minutes** in the penalty box for all Minor penalty infractions. If the opposition score while the Minor penalty is being served, the player serving that penalty is allowed out of the penalty box. If they were off setting penalties in which the other team received a 2 minute Minor penalty on the same play, both players must serve the entire 2 minutes. However, Teams **do not** play short handed if they receive equal minutes in off setting penalties they play at full strength.

MAJOR PENALTIES plus and an automatic Game Misconduct and Game Ejection

Major penalties are called for more serious infractions in the Referee's opinion for such as: high sticking, checking from behind, fighting, cross-checking, slashing, etc., or when injury results.

A player on the ice must serve **5 minutes** in the penalty box for Major infractions and he will **not** be allowed out of the penalty box until the **entire 5 minutes** have been served, even if a goal is scored against his team The player **receiving** a 5 minute Major penalty is **ejected** from the game.

MISCONDUCT PENALTIES

Misconduct penalties are called for cursing, swearing or not obeying the Referee's instruction.

A player must serve **10 minutes** in the penalty box for a Misconduct penalty and cannot leave it until the full 10 minutes is served. The team does not play short handed during a Misconduct. If he receives a second Misconduct during the game, he receives a Game Misconduct and Ejection.

GAME MISCONDUCT and GAME EJECTION PENALTY

A **Game Misconduct penalty** can be called for verbally abusing the Referee, and is an automatic penalty when called in conjunction with a specific Minor penalty, for example 3 stick violations and **all** 5 minute Major penalties such as fighting, checking from behind, cross-checking etc.

If you receive a Game Misconduct penalty, you are **ejected** from the game. The Minor or Major Penalty is served by a player who was on the ice.

Minor/Youth Hockey and Female Hockey players receiving a Game Misconduct in last 10 min. must sit out the next Meaningful Game. In Junior Hockey it's just the remainder of that game.

GROSS MISCONDUCT PENALTY

A **Gross Misconduct penalty** is a very serious penalty and is called when a player acts in such a manner as to make a travesty of the game. This is the Referee's decision as to a player's conduct.

The player is **Ejected** from the game and is given an **additional 1- 3 or more game suspension**.

Your team does not play short handed during a Gross Misconduct penalty.

MATCH PENALTIES

A **Match penalty** is called for the most serious and dangerous offences. Butt-ending, spearing, checking from behind, attempting to injure another player and pushing or striking a Referee or Linesman are considered very serious infractions in the game of hockey.

Any player given a Match Penalty will be assessed a **5 minute penalty**, a **game ejection** and a **minimum 3 game suspension**. If it is for physically abusing an official, there will be a League or Association hearing and if found guilty, the suspension could be for 10 games, to 2 years, or life.

Another player **on the ice** at time of penalty must serve 5 minutes and he cannot leave the box until the entire five minutes have been served. The Coach decides who will serve the penalty.

SUSPENSIONS

Suspensions are served in the following manner: Time Specified, i.e. 7 days, Game Specified i.e. 2 games, or a combination of both i.e. A maximum of 3 games or 10 days which ever is longer.

Suspensions must be served using meaningful games not exhibition games and they do carry over to the next season. Coaches must be aware of any carry over suspensions for next season.

REASONS FOR PENALTIES

Following is a **brief** but **incomplete** overview of the situations leading to penalties the Referee might call during a game. The team receiving the penalty, the faceoff takes place in your end.

Young Minor Hockey players should have a basic understanding of the reasons for calling specific penalties. Coaches should demonstrate and explain to their young players what they can do and can't do, to avoid taking penalties. Players should have a good understanding of penalties so they won't hurt their team by taking a senseless or undisciplined penalty late in the game.

For a more complete description of the Rules and Penalties for either Canadian or American Amateur Hockey, you should purchase an **Official Hockey Rule and Case Book** from

Hockey Canada
801 King Edward Ave, Suite N204
Ottawa, ON. K1N 6N5
Telephone 613 -562-5677

USA Hockey
1775 Bob Johnson Drive
Colorado Springs CO. 80906
Telephone - 1 (719)-576-8724

Some NHL Rules and Penalties differ from Minor and Youth Hockey Rules and Penalties. The NHL uses the NHL Rule Book and Minor/Youth Hockey uses the Hockey Canada or USA Hockey Rule Book.

LIST OF PENALTIES - RULE and DESCRIPTION CONSEQUENCE in MINUTES**Adjustment of Equipment = 2 minute Minor**

A Minor penalty shall be assessed to any player who delays the game for adjustment of any equipment. (i.e. to tie loose skates) You must leave the ice to adjust your equipment. The goalie has to receive permission from the Referee and remain in the goal crease to adjust his equipment. If he goes to his bench the alternate goalie must enter the game.

Attempt to Injure or Deliberate Injury = 5 minute Match Penalty & Suspension

Any player who deliberately attempts to or deliberately injures an opponent, official, team official or spectator in any manner will receive a 5 minute Match penalty and a minimum 3 game suspension, but it could be much higher depending on the specific incident. e.g.: head-butting with force, kicking, attempting to kick, pulling hair or face mask, helmet or chin strap to gain advantage, biting, butt-ending, spearing, slashing, high sticking, or cross checking, could be interpreted as attempting to injure by the Referee.

Bench Minor Penalty = 2 minute Minor

A bench Minor Penalty is assessed against a team for yelling at the Officials, or for too many players on the ice. A player on the ice must serve the Minor penalty.

Boarding and Body Checking = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct

A Minor or Major penalty and Game Misconduct will be called, based upon the degree of violence of the impact with the boards, shall be assessed any player who body checks, cross-checks, elbows, charges or trips an opponent in such a manner that causes the opponent to be thrown violently into the boards. If injured a Major penalty and Game Misconduct is assessed.

Note: Body checking is not allowed in Female Hockey and most 7-8, and 9-10 age divisions and below in Minor/Youth Hockey and a Minor or Major penalty will be assessed.

Accidentally bumping into an opponent at this level is allowed by most Referees.

Broken Stick = 2 minute Minor

A player, including the goaltender, cannot play with a broken stick or you will receive a Minor penalty. Drop it immediately to the ice, do not throw it over the boards or you will receive a Misconduct Penalty.

No sticks can be thrown on the ice to you, you must go to the bench to get a new stick. Goalies and players may use a stick handed to them from a teammate who is on the ice.

Butt-Ending = 5 Minute Match Penalty & Suspension or 4 Minute Double Minor

A 5 minute Match penalty and suspension will be called if a player uses the top end or knob of his stick above the upper hand to check an opponent by jabbing forcefully, or attempting to jab him, or injuring a player with the butt-end of the stick.

A double Minor penalty is called for using the upper end of the shaft of the stick to hook or impede the progress of an opponent.

Charging = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct

A Minor or Major penalty will be assessed if more than 2 steps or strides are taken to run or jump into or charge an opponent and make contact with him. A Major penalty and Game Misconduct is called for charging the goalie in the crease or injuring a player.

Checking from behind = 2 minute Minor & Game Misconduct or 5 minute Major & Game Misconduct or a Match Penalty and Minimum 3 Game Suspension

Penalties are based on the degree of violence of the impact when a player intentionally pushes, body checks, or hits an opposing player from behind, anywhere on the ice. The Referee will call a Minor penalty and a Game Misconduct, or a Major penalty and a Game Misconduct and the player is automatically ejected from the game.

A **Match penalty** and suspension could be assessed if a player is hit from behind and propelled into the boards or goal net with no opportunity to defend or protect himself.

Checking to the Head = 2 minute Minor & Misconduct or 5 minute & Game Misconduct

A Minor and Misconduct, or Major and Game Misconduct, will be called based on the degree of violence of impact to the head area in any manner. A Match penalty will be called if it was deemed a deliberate attempt or he deliberately injured an opponent.

Cross-Checking = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct or a Match

The action of using the shaft of the stick between the 2 hands to check/hit an opponent at any height will result in a Minor penalty. If you cross-check a goalie in his crease it's a Major. If you cross check a player above the normal height of the shoulders it's a Major penalty plus a Game Misconduct penalty. A Match penalty is called for a deliberate injury.

Delay of Game = 2 minute Minor or Penalty Shot

Any player or Coach deliberately delaying the game in any manner i.e. slow change of players /line, goal net being knocked from its position in defending zone will be assessed a Minor penalty. If, in the last 2 minutes of regular playing time or overtime, the goal net is deliberately dislodged from its position by the defending team a Penalty shot is called. A goaltender or player who accidentally or intentionally shoots or bats the puck out of the playing surface with his stick receives a Minor penalty for delay of game.

Diving/Embellishing = 2 minute Minor

A Minor penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct shall be imposed on a player who attempts to draw a penalty by his actions (diving) or embellishing a bodycheck or foul.

Elbow and Kneeing = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct

A Minor penalty will be called for striking an opponent with your elbow or knee in any manner. A Major penalty and Game Misconduct will be called if you injure a player.

Falling on the Puck = 2 minute Minor or Penalty Shot

Any player, except the goaltender, who deliberately falls on or gathers the puck into his body by any means, while standing or lying on the ice will receive a Minor penalty.

Any goaltender who, **while entirely outside the goal crease**, deliberately falls on or gathers the puck into his body, or holds or places the puck against any part of the goal, thus delaying the game unnecessarily will receive a Minor penalty for Delay of Game.

Note: A Penalty shot is awarded if anyone but the goaltender deliberately falls on, holds, or gathers the puck into his body in any manner, or picks up the puck with his hand while the puck is within his goal crease.

Fighting and Roughing = 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct, or 2 minute Minor

Fighting is defined as 2 or more blows or attempted blows and will result in a 5 minute Major & Game Misconduct penalty. If deemed to be the instigator or aggressor an additional Minor penalty is called.

Roughing is defined as pushing, shoving, striking 1 blow, or a player makes deliberate physical contact with an opponent after the whistle receives a 2 minute Minor.

Goaltender Penalties = 2 minutes, 5 minutes and a Game Misconduct or a Match Penalty

No goaltender will serve a Minor, Major or Misconduct Penalty, a player who was on the ice must serve the penalty. The goaltender will be ejected from the game if he receives a Game Misconduct, a Gross Misconduct or a Match Penalty.

If the goaltender leaves his crease during a fight he will be assessed a Minor Penalty.

If the goaltender leaves his crease to join in a fight, act as a peacemaker or join in another fight during the same stoppage of play, he shall receive a Game Misconduct and be ejected from the game.

If the goaltender participates in the play beyond the Red Line a Minor Penalty is called.

If the goaltender drop kicks the puck after catching it a Minor penalty is called. If injury results as a result of this action a Major and Game Misconduct penalty shall be issued.

Handling the Puck = 2 minute Minor

A Minor penalty is called if a player except the goaltender closes his hand on the puck and while doing so, gains an advantage on the opponents. If he picks up the puck with his hand it results in a Minor penalty or a Penalty Shot if the puck was in his goal crease.

Hand passes however, batting the puck in the air with an open hand, or sliding the puck along the ice with your open hand to a team-mate are legal if done in your defensive zone.

Harassment of Officials/Unsportsmanlike Conduct/Misconduct = 2 or 10 minutes

A Minor penalty shall be assessed to any player or team official who challenges or disputes the rulings of any official, Referee or Linesmen, during the game or who displays unsportsmanlike conduct.

A Misconduct penalty shall be assessed if the player persists with this manner of conduct.

If a player or team official persists, he will be given a Game or Gross Misconduct penalty.

High Sticking = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major & Game Misconduct or Match Penalty

A Minor penalty shall be assessed any player who checks or intimidates an opponent while carrying his stick above the normal height of the shoulder of his opponent.

A Minor or Major penalty and Game Misconduct shall be assessed to a player who contacts an opponent above the normal height of his shoulders. If injury results, a Major penalty plus a Game Misconduct. A Match penalty is assessed for deliberate injury.

Holding/Holding Stick = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major & Game Misconduct if injured

A Minor penalty will be assessed for using your free arm or hand to clutch, grab, hold, hold his stick, or impede a players forward progress whether they have the puck or not.

Hooking = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct if injured

A player who impedes or seeks to impede the progress of an opponent by tugs or hooks the toe if his stick blade, or butt-end hooking with the knob of his stick to any part of an opponents body, arms, stick in the hands or stick shall receive a Minor penalty.

If the player is injured on the play, a Major penalty and Game Misconduct is assessed.

Interference = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct

A Minor penalty will be assessed to any player who interferes with or impedes the progress of an opponent who is **not** in possession of the puck by using a “pick or block”. Deliberately knocks the stick out of an opponents hand or; Preventing an opponent from regaining possession of his lost or dropped stick by shooting the stick away.

Note: The last player to touch the puck is considered the player in possession of the puck, however the stick will not be allowed to in any way impede a player's progress. If the receiver of a pass has not received the puck, and the puck is still in transit/motion, the passer is the last man in possession and can legally be body checked within a short time frame of 1- 1.5 seconds.

You **cannot** hit, interfere with or impede the **goalie's** movement with your stick or make physical contact inside or outside his crease. A Minor, or Major and Game Misconduct penalty can be called for unnecessary contact/charging/interference/injuring the goalie.

Kicking = 5 minute Match Penalty and Suspension

Any player deliberately using his skates to kick or attempt to kick an opponent with no intent to play the puck will receive a Match penalty and Suspension.

Kick Shot = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct if injury results

Any player **except** for goaltenders placing the blade of the stick behind the puck and then propelling it by kicking his stick blade will receive a Minor penalty.

Kicking the Puck Into the Goal = No Goal and no penalty

Kicking the puck is permitted in all zones, however, an attacking player cannot kick the puck into the net. This is not a penalty, but the goal is disallowed. However, deflections of the puck off your skates or body into the net are allowed and the goal will count.

Kneeing = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct

A Minor penalty will be called for striking an opponent with your knee in any manner. A Major penalty and Game Misconduct will be called if you injure a player.

Leaving the Player's or Penalty Bench = 4 minute double Minor and Game Misconduct

A double Minor penalty plus a Game Misconduct is called for the first player leaving either the player's or penalty bench during a fight on the ice or to start a fight.

Penalty Shot Situations

A Penalty Shot will be awarded by the Referee if any of the following rules are broken:

- 1) - for specific delay of game situations by the goaltender/team.
- 2) - for specific falling on the puck situations by a defending player.
- 3) - for picking up the puck from the crease by a defending player.
- 4) - for specific interference situations from the players or penalty bench by a player who illegally entered the game.
- 5) -for specific throwing of a stick in defensive zone situations.
- 6) - for specific fouling from behind on a breakaway situation.

Physical Harassment of Officials = 5 Minute Match Penalty and Suspension

Any player or team official who threatens or attempts to strike, or intentionally touches, holds or pushes the Referee or Linesman before, during or after a game shall be assessed a Match penalty and suspension. If a player deliberately strikes, trips or body checks an official, a Match penalty will be assessed. A **hearing** will be called and if found guilty, the player's suspension could vary between 10 games, to the rest of the season, to a lifetime suspension.

Puck must be kept in motion = 2 minute Minor

A team in possession of the puck in its defending zone shall always advance the puck towards the opposing goal, except if prevented from doing so by opposing players.

A Minor penalty shall be assessed any player who deliberately holds the puck against the boards or any part of the goal in any manner, unless he is being checked by an opponent.

Puck Deliberately Shot Out of Bounds = 2 minute Minor

A Minor Penalty will be assessed any player who **deliberately** shoots, bats, or throws the puck outside the playing surface of the rink. Shots tipped by a player are not penalized.

Roughing After The Whistle = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct

A Minor or Major and Game Misconduct will be assessed to any player for making deliberate physical contact, pushing, shoving an opponent after the whistle has blown.

The instigator would be assessed a 4 minute double Minor and the retaliator a 2 minute Minor. If there is no retaliation, the instigator would be assessed a single Minor penalty.

Slashing = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct or a Match Penalty and Suspension

Hitting an opponent by swinging your stick, slashing his body, or stick in hands while holding it with one or both hands will receive a Minor penalty. A player who swings his stick at an opponent and misses making no contact shall still be guilty of slashing.

A Major and Game Misconduct penalty will be assessed to any player who injures an opponent with a slash. A Match penalty and Suspension will be assessed to any player who deliberately attempts to injure or deliberately injures an opponent with a slash.

Slew Footing = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and a Game Misconduct

A Minor penalty or a Major and Game Misconduct penalty shall be assessed any player who uses his feet to knock an opponents skates out from under him with a kicking or leg dragging motion from behind. This is a very dangerous act and a player could be seriously injured and receive a concussion or head injury.

Spearing = 4 minute double Minor or 5 minute Match Penalty and Suspension

Poking or attempting to poke/jab an opponent with the toe of your stick blade will receive either a 4 minute double Minor or 5 minute Match penalty, based upon its severity.

Spitting = 5 minute Match Penalty and Suspension

A Match penalty and Suspension shall be assessed any player or team official who deliberately spits on or at an opponent, official, team official or spectator.

Throwing Stick or Object = Penalty Shot or 2 minute Minor

When any player of the defending team, including the goaltender, deliberately throws his stick or any other object at the puck or puck carrier in the defending zone a **penalty shot** shall be awarded if **no** goal is scored on the play.

A Minor penalty will be called for deliberately throwing your stick or any part thereof in any other zone. i.e. Neutral or Offensive zone.

Too Many Men/Players on the Ice = 2 minute Minor or Penalty Shot

A bench Minor Penalty will be called for having too many players on the ice.

If during the last two minutes of a game or anytime in overtime a bench minor penalty is imposed for Deliberate illegal substitution, a penalty shot will be awarded

Trash Talking = Game Misconduct, Gross Misconduct or Suspension

Any player or team official who engages in verbal taunts, insults or intimidation based on discriminatory remarks such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or language will be assessed a Game Misconduct or Gross Misconduct penalty.

Based on the content of the remarks the guilty player could receive a long Suspension.

Tripping = 2 minute Minor or 5 minute Major and Game Misconduct, or Penalty Shot

A Minor penalty will be called where a player uses his stick, knee, hand, foot, arm or elbow in any manner, slew foots, or falls or slides along the ice directly into the path of the puck, causing the puck carrier to trip and lose possession of the puck. If on a breakaway and fouled from behind preventing a clear shot on goal, a Penalty Shot is awarded.

Note A player in the process of falling or sliding along the ice hits/ knocks the puck from an opponents stick (by a diving poke/sweep check) prior to making body contact, no penalty shall be called.

GOOD PENALTIES, BAD PENALTIES and RETALIATION PENALTIES

Believe it or not, there is such a thing as **good penalties and bad penalties**. Good penalties are taken in the **Defensive zone** to prevent a goal on a high percentage goal scoring opportunity or breakaway. **Bad** or dumb penalties are taken in the Offensive and Neutral zone or away from the play/puck because of a lack of self discipline or laziness on the part of a specific player. Referees are human and may miss the original infraction but **never** miss the **retaliation**. and will call a penalty.

SUMMARY beginning in 2006/07 the use of the stick was limited to only playing the puck. Hooking, holding and interference which were rarely called prior to 06/07 will now be penalties. Hockey is the fastest team game in the world and to play it well you have to understand its basic rules and penalty system. The Referee and Linesmen have been assigned the very difficult job of interpreting and enforcing the rules of hockey. Each Referee may have a slightly different interpretation of the rules including when and what penalties to call. He is in charge of the game and you must respect him. Please be patient with him or her, it is a thankless job. Remember some Referees, like some players and Coaches, are better than others, but if you don't have a Referee, you don't have an official game.

Some Minor/Youth Hockey Rules and Penalties differ from the NHL. For example, Icing in the NHL, it's a race by a defensive and offensive player to the top of the circle. In Youth/ Minor Hockey it's no touch icing. This is a lot safer and players rarely get injured on an icing situation.

Penalties should serve as a learning experience at the lower age groups of Youth/Minor hockey. If you do not understand why you received a penalty, politely ask the Referee or your Coach to explain why you received a penalty and what you should do in the future to avoid the penalty.

CONDITIONING TIPS

To play hockey well you must be in very good physical condition. If you are serious about making a Representative or “AAA” Travel Team, you must begin physical training by mid July.

Conditioning quite simply is your body's ability to perform a physical task (like skating) without tiring within a specific time period. For example: a 1 minute shift and an entire game.

Players who are in great physical shape have both quick recovery after a shift and long lasting stamina to play the entire game (with specific rest periods on the bench) without tiring.

Avoiding injuries in hockey is important and if you do happen to get injured, you will heal much quicker if you are in good physical condition/shape.

Conditioning for skating stamina is a major requirement of hockey and it doesn't happen naturally, you must work at it, almost daily, to improve your breathing, wind and leg strength.

If you are not in good physical shape you will not make the Representative/Travel Team and your contribution to your House League Team will be minimal.

If two teams of equal ability are playing, the team in better condition will win 9 times out of 10.

HOCKEY REQUIRES 2 TYPES OF CONDITIONING:

ANAEROBIC

Anaerobic conditioning is your body's ability to utilize oxygen and to skate hard non stop (short term) for a 1 minute shift without getting winded or exhausted. It is most important to develop this sprinting ability even ahead of aerobic conditioning. A hockey shift is composed of a series of sprints & glides. Today hockey is even faster than last year. Conditioning is essential.

AEROBIC

Aerobic conditioning is your body's ability to intake oxygen and to work hard (long term) every shift for the entire game, or even 3 games in one day at a Tournament. It's your ability to skate and check, then recover, for an entire game, without getting exhausted. A Hockey game is like a marathon, it's not a sprint but you'll need both Anaerobic (sprint) and Aerobic (marathon) conditioning to excel.

DRYLAND TRAINING WILL IMPROVE YOUR CONDITIONING

A hockey player requires 4 physical qualities to excel at this game and they can be done and improved upon away from the rink.

FLEXIBILITY, SPEED, ENDURANCE AND POWER

All of these qualities can be improved upon with dryland training exercises. These can be done inside your home, outside in your neighbourhood, at the fitness centre prior to and during the hockey season, in a gymnasium, at team meetings, or at practices. Different days of the week would be used to develop different components and to achieve different results.

FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is your body's ability to bend or flex in a full range of motion.

To improve your flexibility and help prevent injuries, a series of bending and stretching exercises are required prior to a workout, practice, or game, and can be done in the dressing room prior to dressing and continued on the ice during your pre game warmup. Stretch all the muscles you will use in the game for a specific length of time.

Warm up slowly for 5-7 minutes to increase your body heat and to work up a light sweat. After the warm-up, stretch your leg muscles including your thigh, hamstring and calf.

Include a groin stretch to both sides, left and right. Each stretch should last for at least 15 seconds and repeat 2 times.

Loosen up your upper body by twisting and turning your shoulders and trunk left and right. Bend at the waist and touch your toes and hold for 10-15 seconds. Your coach can explain or demonstrate other exercises to do. Now you are warmed up and ready to practice or play a game.

ENDURANCE (AEROBIC) = Long term performance for the entire game.

To improve your **endurance** or aerobic energy, you must perform an activity that will raise your heart rate up to about 80% of your maximum. The goal is to continue it for 60 minutes non-stop.

Start slowly the first day. Limit yourself to 5 or 7 minutes. Then gradually build up to 20 - 30 minutes over 2 weeks, then up to 60 minutes over a 25- 30 day period using a **medium** speed.

Activities such as **medium speed** jogging, swimming, bicycling, skipping rope, or cross country running are all excellent activities and can increase your heart rate to 150 beats per minute or more.

Endurance exercises could be done Monday, Wednesday and Fridays.

SPEED (ANAEROBIC) = Short term performance for the entire shift.

Special anaerobic training is required to improve your break away **speed**, quick acceleration to pull away from a back checker and top **sprint** speed to break into the clear for a breakaway pass. The goal of this exercise is to continue non-stop for 30 seconds using your **top speed**.

To improve your speed there are a number of activities you can do including **short term** running as fast as you can, running up hills or stairs, bicycling very fast and skipping rope at top speed. Also try sprinting the distance between 2 telephone poles then walk a bit for a brief rest then **sprint** again.

Start with 10 seconds at the beginning of your program then stop and walk 20 seconds and repeat about 6 to 8 times. Then over a week to 30 days, try to build up to a 30 second non-stop activity.

Continue for a total of 30 minutes consisting of hard/sprint exercises for 1/2 minute followed by resting/walking for 1 minute. Repeat up to 20 times and watch your speed improve. To make a really good "AA" or "AAA" hockey team, conditioning and speed will be very important skills to possess. Today's game is so fast that dynamic skating speed, skills, conditioning are essential.

A hockey game is really composed of a series of sprints and glides. The faster and longer duration of your sprints the better hockey player you will become. Speed exercises could be done Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays.

POWER / STRENGTH

A hockey player needs both **leg strength** for skating and **upper body strength** to stick check and body check players to create or recover a loose puck, to move opponents from in front of your net, or just to increase your skating and shooting speed. Upper body exercises should be done on one day and lower body exercises on another in order to let those specific muscles grow, rest or heal on alternating days.

LEG POWER

You can use weight training to improve your **leg power** and strength. This develops your thigh muscles, calf muscles and hamstring for skating speed. Both leg lifts and leg squats will develop this particular muscle group which will help your skating and improve your explosive power to get to loose pucks and pull away from any backchecker.

Also 2 legged 6-10 inch high jumps: using 1 or both feet jumping forward, backward and sideways using any obstacle like a step, or an 8 sided stop sign shape will also help develop your explosive skating power and agility.

UPPER BODY STRENGTH

Also use weight training to strengthen your forearms, wrists, shoulders, biceps, triceps and chest.

This newly developed **upper body strength** will help you improve the speed of your shot, move an opponent from in front of the net and allow you to give or take a body check safely along the boards.

WARNING: I strongly recommended that you consult with a qualified weight training professional before starting any program. **If you lift too much weight or use the wrong lifting method, you could seriously injure yourself. Players aged 5-10 don't need weight training Players 11-12 might.**

The YMCA, a Private Gym or a fitness Centre could advise you and set up a specific weight training program for you based on your age, height, weight and specific hockey playing position.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS

The intake of specific foods are essential for your health and hockey performance.

A well balanced diet consisting of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals are essential for your overall health.

Carbohydrates convert quickly into energy and fuel the brain and muscles. They break down quickly in your body and supply you with a surplus of energy to draw from during an entire hockey game or practice. This will help prevent tiring and fatigue of your muscles.

Pasta is the magic energy food for all hockey players. Foods such as Kraft Dinner, spaghetti and macaroni contain carbohydrates which convert quickly to energy. If playing an early morning game, eat cereal such as Rice Crispies or Corn Flakes with sugar for breakfast as they contain a lot of carbohydrates.

Water is also an essential liquid that is needed to replace body fluids lost through perspiration during a practice in particular (when you're on the ice most of the time) and during the game. Drink water or Sports Drinks during the practice, the game or between periods to replace the body fluids you have lost through perspiration/sweating to help prevent dehydration, fatigue and exhaustion.

PRE-GAME MEAL

Nutritional experts recommend that you should eat a **light meal 2 to 3 hours** before your game or practice. This will allow enough time for complete digestion to take place.

A light meal would total only 500-600 calories.

For example: A high carbohydrate **pre game meal** or **breakfast** consisting of

1-cup of spaghetti or Kraft Dinner	1- cup of Rice Crispies or Corn Flakes + sugar
1-cup of 1% or 2% milk	1- cup of 1% or 2% milk
1-slice of bread	1- slice of toast
1-cup of fruit, e.g. banana, orange, raisins	1- cup of fruit e.g. banana, orange, raisins
1-cup of water	1- cup of orange or apple juice

You can eat a more nutritious and substantial meal **after** your game or practice unless you are at a tournament and play again the same day a few hours later, then eat more carbohydrate rich foods.

AVOID THESE FOODS BEFORE A GAME OR PRACTICE

High fibre foods: e.g. apples, grapes, whole grain breads, beans and spicy foods that may upset your stomach or cause diarrhea.

Carbonated soft drinks should be avoided before a game or practice.

Chocolate bars - do not digest quickly enough and they slow you down. They are mostly fat, not carbohydrates, and are not recommended as a food to be eaten before or during the game.

SUMMARY

Conditioning and nutrition are two very important components for a successful hockey season.

They must work hand in hand to have a positive effect. It is a long term process that must begin by early August and continue throughout the entire season.

There is no sense in working very hard at conditioning then going home and undoing all your hard work by eating all the wrong non nutritious (fast) foods. A well balanced diet is the best policy.

Remember, if you eat more calories than you burn off, you will store it as fat. If you eat less than you require to play hockey, you will become tired very quickly. Strive for the proper balance of carbohydrate, protein and fat intake to match your energy output.

Also, get the proper amount of rest before a game and during the season. You cannot be a night owl and expect to perform your best the next day going on 4-6 hours sleep. 8 hours of sleep is recommended for all hockey players and a nap before the game if possible.

“You are what you eat”

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

A healthy lifestyle consists of the following components and is essential for a successful hockey career.

- C **BALANCED DIET:** A well balanced diet consisting of a variety of foods in proper portions is essential for a healthy lifestyle and for playing hockey.
- C **REST/SLEEP:** A hockey player requires adequate rest and sleep prior to a game or tournament.
- C **NO ALCOHOL:** Drinking beer, wine or alcohol contributes to an ineffective performance and an unhealthy lifestyle.
- C **NO SMOKING:** Smoking is both dangerous to your health and will reduce your wind for skating sprints and endurance and should be avoided at all cost.
- C **NO DRUGS:** The taking of non-prescription drugs or street drugs are both illegal and dangerous to your health and can seriously injure or even kill you.

SUMMARY

Adopting the above lifestyle means achieving the second component of the hockey equation.

PERSONAL QUALITIES + HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

+ ACQUIRED SKILLS = A SUCCESSFUL HOCKEY CAREER.

REVIEW AND TEST TIME

If you are a **Coach** or **Parent** trying to teach your players or children about hockey, now would be a good time to review the content of **Unit I** with them. Young players between 5 and 8 would not be expected to understand all the information listed in this section but players 9 and older should.

A few oral or written questions about hockey

- C **Objectives**
- C **Rules**
- C **Skills**
- C **Penalties**
- C **Conditioning**
- C **Nutrition etc.**

would be appropriate now to ensure your players are learning.

The answers you receive will inform you if your players have learned or need more explanation to understand these important facts. You may need to repeat specific sections with certain players.

UNIT II

BASIC SKILLS AND EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

SKATING

Skating is the most important skill required to become a good hockey player, but it must be properly combined with the 4 other major skill groups: puckhandling & stickhandling, passing & receiving, shooting & scoring and checking skills: stick, body, forechecking & backchecking.

Skating ability alone does not make a good hockey player, but it's an excellent starting **point**. To develop your forward & backward skating skills takes time, patience and a lot of practice. The earlier you start to skate, the easier it is to master. Most Canadian hockey players start skating around age 4 and many use a chair or skating device to hold on to to keep them upright. The hockey stick also provides youngsters with extra upright support and acts like the third leg of a stool.

SKATES and FIT

Price Range: \$65.00 - \$350.00 +

Your **Skates** must fit snugly, but not cramp your toes. You should just be able to insert a feather between your toes and the steel toe cap of your skates for a **perfect fit**. Younger players between 4 and 9 years of age can allow up to a finger width in the heel area for some growing space during the season but no larger or the skates will be too big. Also, keeping your heel locked in place is very important, don't let it slide up and down inside your skate. Kick your heel on the floor to lock it securely inside the skate boot.

Your skate size is usually 1 to 1.5 sizes smaller than your street shoes or running shoes. The **ankle support** should be firm enough so you can't bend to the inside or outside, but it still allows flexing in a forward and backward direction. **Note:** Young players, 5 to 12 years old, usually out grow skates sizes every year. When trying on skates, undo the top 4 eyelets and pull the tongue upward and your foot will slip right into the boot.

You should wear a **thin** pair of socks, preferably 100% cotton so your feet can breathe. If skates are too big, 1 pair of heavy sport socks are fine to wear in order to take up space inside your skates, 2 pair is too many. Some NHL players wear no socks at all to achieve the perfect glove like fit.

LACING

Lacing of the skate is to the individual's choice, but the criss-cross "X" method seems to provide the most support and comfort. Don't wrap the laces around your ankles, as this cuts off your blood circulation to your toes and reduces the flexibility of the ankle in a forward and backward motion, the natural motion required for skating. Tie the laces with a bow knot at the front of your skate.

The top 3 eyelets of your skates should be tight to provide good ankle support, the middle 3 medium tight to allow mid foot expansion, and the bottom 3 semi-tight to allow some toe movement allowing your toes to contract and relax as you stop and start. This also prevents your toes from freezing, by allowing blood to circulate to them. The eyelets should be 1.5 - 2 inches apart. If the laces bite into the top of your foot, insert a thin piece of foam rubber or cotton batten under the tongue for comfort. If your laces dry out or fray they lose their elasticity and should be replaced.

SHARPENING**Price Range: \$5.00 - \$7.00 +**

Your skates must be just sharp enough to bite lightly into the top layer of the ice. Skates that are too sharp will cut deeper into the ice making turns and stopping very difficult. The blades seem to stick to the ice reducing your mobility and agility. Skates that are too dull will affect your stability and you will slip and fall frequently as there will be little cutting edge in the blades to provide you with good traction or grip.

The proper **skate sharpening** is a medium hollow ground and its depth is based on your height and weight. A hollow ground sharpening is the amount of steel removed from the centre of your blade from toe to heel by a special stone to create a hollow “U” shape in the bottom of your blade. This creates 2 sharp edges, an **inside edge** and an **outside edge** as both are required to skate well.

If your skates are too sharp, you can rub them on a piece of wood or the shaft of a wooden hockey stick to dull them. A special eraser stone is also available to dull the edges and can be purchased from your skate sharpening pro shop. Rep or Travel team players will sharpen their skates more often than Recreation players because of the more games, practices and tournaments they play in as this dulls their blades faster. There is also a new liquid skate blade product available called Fastrax. It reduces friction and improves glide when added to the hollow ground groove on your blades.

Sharpen your skates as required, not every game. Every 6 - 8 hours of game plus practice time is average unless you get a burr/nick on an edge. When you find a good skate sharpener, stick with him because a properly sharpened pair of skates could mean the difference between a great game or a terrible game. Also, skating on hard outdoor natural ice your blades will become dull quicker.

As well, try not to walk on concrete but if necessary try to walk on the tips of your toes to protect the edges of your blades. If possible, stay on the rubber mats to avoid nicks or **use skate guards**.

SKATING EDGES

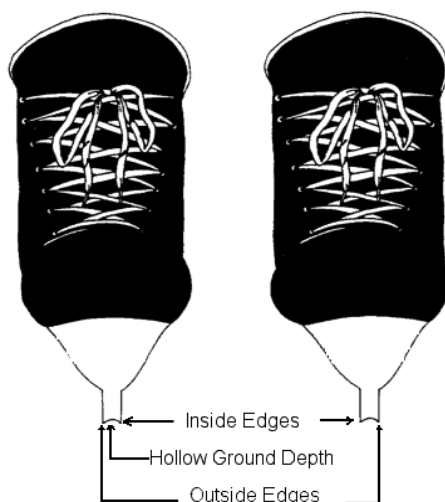
There are 2 edges on each skate blade, the **Inside** edge and the **Outside** edge, and to skate well you must have a good understanding of the function of your edges. Specific edges are used in turns, stops and starts and will be discussed in more detail later in this section. Both edges must remain smooth yet sharp with no nicks or gouges on them. Otherwise, you will fall when stopping, starting or turning. This is usually the tell tale sign that your skates need sharpening as you’ve lost an edge.

You can purchase a special skate sharpening stone to remove any small nicks on the side of the blade by sliding it back and forth along the side of the blade like sand paper. If you can't remove the nick or gouge, take it to your skate sharpening professional immediately.

How the Edges Work: like a hot knife on butter

The sharp edges of the skate blade cut into the ice, this creates friction which produces heat and melts the thin top layer of ice to produce grip or on ice traction so you won't slip or fall when skating.

A dull set of blades will not provide this cutting grip into the ice and you will slip and fall all over it. If player's skate blades come together in a collision or in your hockey bag it might create nicks on the blades. Protect your blades with skate covers in your hockey bag.



RADIUS ROCKERING / PROFILING OF THE BLADES

To **rocker** (increase the rounding of the blade) or not to rocker your skate blades, that is the question?

One hockey theory states that the **less** blade you have on the ice, the less friction and the easier it is to turn left, right and pivot 180 degrees from forward to backward etc. This is very true.

Another theory states that the **more** blade you have on the ice, the more thrust and better balance you have for stops, starts and straight away speed. This is also true. So here is a compromise.

For beginners, I would recommend **no added rocker** as you will need all of the blade on the ice for balance, stability and skating thrust. As you get older and better at skating by ages 11-12, I would suggest a **small radius rocker** be added/profiled to your blades to make sharper and quicker turns. Try an 11 foot radius rocker initially to see how you like it, then you could go down to a 9 foot radius later.

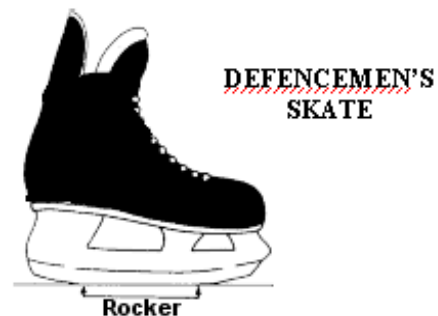
New skates right out of the box have a slight rocker and are suitable for beginners. The skate manufacturer has rounded the blades like this so you can turn on the ice, otherwise you couldn't. A rocker is simply a further rounding of the blades to make them more circular like the runners of a rocking chair. Your professional skate sharpener can advise you and can cut a rocker on your blades of anywhere from a 9 to 13 foot radius with his sharpening machine and special radius rocker plates.

A **Forward's** rocker/profile is different than a defenceman's rocker/profile because the centre point is slightly **back of centre**. This allows the skate to be lower at the front thus creating a feeling of skating down hill while skating forward and it seems to be less tiring for the player because there is less friction with the ice.

A **Defenceman's** rocker/profile is placed slightly in front of the centre point and this makes it lower at the heel area making backward skating easier. Defencemen still have less of a rocker for more balance and stability for physically pushing/moving opponents from in front of their net.



**BACK OF CENTRE POINT
FOR FORWARDS**



**IN FRONT OF CENTRE POINT
LESS ROCKER FOR DEFENCEMEN**

To determine the current rocker of your blades, set them upright on a flat surface and **shine** a light from behind them. You will be able to see how much blade is in contact with the ice. If you rock the skate forward or backward, the same amount of blade should touch the surface. If it doesn't, you don't have a true radius rocker and it should be checked by your skate sharpening professional.

Some NHL forwards have as little as ½ inch of blade on the ice at any time. Most Minor/Youth hockey players have about 2.5 - 3.5 inches of blade in contact with the ice. As they get older and become better skaters, the amount of blade on the ice could be reduced to about 1 - 2 inches based on the position they play (forward) and the speed and competitiveness of the League they play in.

SKATE MAINTENANCE

After every game and practice, wipe the snow and moisture off your skate blades, mounting plate and rivets with a dry towel to prevent them from rusting. If a blade gets rusty it won't hold an edge. When you get home, take your skates out of your hockey bag to air them out for drying but keep them away from heat as it may dry out the plastic blade holders possibility causing them to crack.

SKATE PURCHASING TIPS

Skating is by far the most difficult skill to master. Two steel blades about 1/8 inch wide with only about 2-3 inches in contact with the ice, trying to hold your entire body weight upright and balanced 3 inches above the ice. It's like learning to walk a tight rope, but once mastered, it is never forgotten. To master it, I suggest you invest in a **quality** pair of skates that fit correctly right from the start. Companies like Bauer, CCM, and Easton make quality skates at varying prices. In the long run it is wiser to purchase good quality skates that may be more expensive but fit properly, than to purchase cheap, or poor quality skates that are two sizes too big and don't provide proper ankle support. Proper fitting and sharpened skates will help develop excellent skaters at a very young age.

Skates are the biggest hockey investment you will make, but they will bring about the greatest results. If necessary, change your skates every year if they become too small or lose their ankle support. Sell or **trade** in your old ones and invest the money you made in buying new or good quality **used ones** that fit properly, have good ankle support, solid toe caps, tight rivets, no cracks on the plastic blade holders and still have ample rust free blade depth left for sharpening.

FORWARD SKATING

The key to **Forward Skating** is being able to balance your weight on **one** leg, then alternately transfer this weight to your other leg with each skating stride. Take a wide stance, skates shoulder width apart for better balance and stability and to help keep you in a standing upright position. Take about 3- 4 short strides/steps at the beginning, then increase the length of your stride/steps as you start moving forward. Cut the letter "C" into the ice using this stride and glide movement.

Your knees must **always** be bent so they are **slightly in front of your toes like the letter Z**. See Diagram at right! Never lock your knees or skate straight legged. Your upper body is bent at the waist and leans forward over the skates. Head is up.



To move forward, bend your stroking or pushing leg 90 degrees at the knee and push the **Inside Edge** of your blade outward to the side then backward into the ice. Like a letter "C". Power is generated from the thigh muscle and it travels down your leg to the **ball of your foot**. Push the leg to its full extension at about a 45 degree angle on the ice, then recoil the leg, placing it down on the ice to become the gliding leg for just a second or two. Your other leg, the gliding leg, supports your body weight and will move straight forward. It then becomes the driving leg by using its **Inside Edge** and pushing outward and backward. Like a letter "C". Smooth weight transfer is the key.

The rhythm of forward skating is simply stroke and glide, stroke and glide, alternating each leg quickly and transferring body weight from one leg to the other while maintaining your skating bent knee posture, balance and cutting "C's" into the ice.

Starting begins with short choppy strides/steps then lengthen them out as you skate. Within 4 or 5 strides you should reach your maximum speed. The first 4 "V" strides/steps are very important for acceleration and this must be practiced to improve fast get away speed from all stops. Once moving forward, lengthen your stride and glide to get into a smooth and fluid parallel skating motion.

BACKWARD SKATING

To **Skate Backward**, assume a semi-sitting position. Your feet should be shoulder width apart for good balance and stability. Knees must be **deeply** bent like the letter “Z” with your upper body positioned upright directly over your skates and your lower body, rear/butt end flexed out behind. Head up, torso square, with one hand on your stick and your other hand up chest high for balance.

The C- thrust, (backward push) starts directly under your body. Turn one heel outward close to 90 degrees to your glide foot. Push the **Inside Edge** of your thrust skate outward and backward in a semi-circular pushing then pulling motion from the ball of your foot to form the letter **C**. Your other leg will glide straight backward. It then becomes the thrusting leg and repeat the pushing and pulling sequence cutting the letter **C** into the ice. Thrust with one leg at a time to its full C- completion and keep both skate blades on the ice when executing this C - thrust, of a push out , pull in and glide sequence.

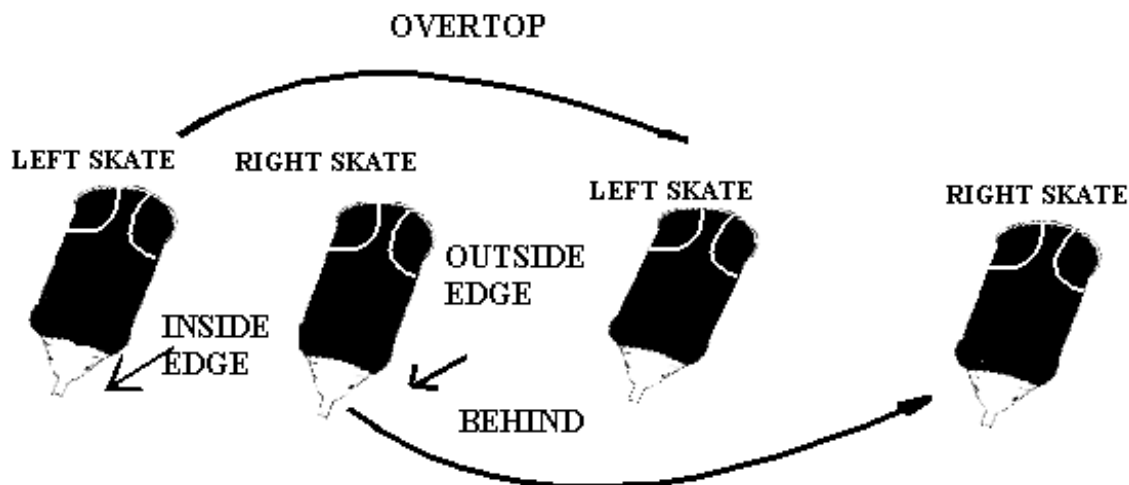
The rhythm of backward skating is push outward, pull inward, or C-thrust & glide, C-thrust & glide alternating each leg quickly at the start of the stride then lengthening your stride when moving straight backward after 4 or 5 strides. You can rotate your hip to swing inward, left then right with each C thrust, to help the backward skating motion.. Defencemen in particular must be able to skate as well, if not better and faster backward, than they do forward, to meet and match an on coming rushing forwards speed.

CROSSOVERS

Variations of **Crossovers** are used: **1.** to move quickly to the left or right, **2.** for quick side step Starts and **3.** for Power Turns when trying to angle an opponent if you’re forechecking or backchecking.

To complete a crossover, lift up & cross outer foot over top of the glide foot, like an X, then place it down on the ice parallel to your gliding skate only about a inch apart. Your glide skate now moves from **behind** the newly planted front skate to the inside of it, feet shoulder width apart, to keep your balance. Repeat procedure quickly 2-3 times in the direction you wish to go for quick side step starts to the left or right. To go right, lift your left foot up and bring it over top of your right foot and place it on the ice inside of and parallel to your right skate. See Diagram below!

On power turns to your right, use the same cross over procedure, crossing one foot over top of the other. Always use the **Inside Edge** on your left skate and the **Outside Edge** on your right skate and lean slightly into the direction you wish to go. To turn left, reverse the lift and placement of the skates and use the Inside Edge on Right skate and Outside edge on your Left skate.



TURNS

Turns, wide and small tight turns, are a major part of hockey. They are used when forechecking or backchecking to angle an opponent towards the boards, to retrieve a loose puck, or to cut to open ice for a pass. Both forwards and defencemen must master sharp left and right turns, and forward and backward 180 degree pivot turns at an early age. Turns must be practiced to be perfected. Skate the 5 circles painted on the ice using a figure 8 pattern to practice both left, right, forward, and backward turns. During wide turns, your upper body must lean into the turn with your front knee deeply bent on your lead/gliding leg, with the **Outside Edge** of your skate blade cutting into the ice for stability. The rear leg or trailing leg and knee is slightly straighter and the **Inside Edge** of your rear skate is used to push and propel you into the turn. By using a pumping up and down leg motion with your rear leg you will create more speed and thrust. All turns originate through the balls of your feet.

180° PIVOTS - BACKWARD to FORWARD and FORWARD to BACKWARD

To complete a 180-degree backward to forward **pivot**, skate backward, then glide on one skate with your body weight balanced over it. Lift your other skate up off the ice then turn your shoulder, trunk, hip, leg and foot, 180 degrees to the forward direction you wish to go, then place this skate down on the ice. Now turn your gliding skate 180 degrees on the ice through the ball of your foot as your body turns, making it parallel to your other foot. Defencemen in particular must practice and master this backward to forward move, both left & right, to angle forwards with the puck toward the boards.

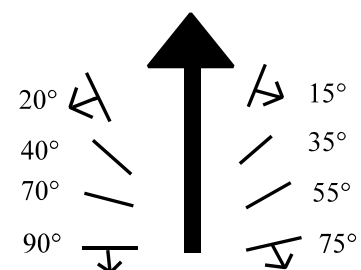
To complete a 180-degree forward to backward **pivot**, skate forward then glide on one skate with your body weight balanced over it then repeat the lifting, turning and planting sequence as stated above. Defencemen again will have to skate forward from their offensive Blue Line towards the Red Line, complete a 180-degree forward to backward turn/pivot in order to skate backward to face and cover or check any on rushing forward now positioned in front of him.

POWER “V” STARTS

To move forward quickly from a dead stop, a **Power “V” start** is recommended. Turn your skates to a “V” position, knees flexed, body leaning forward, with your stroking skate close to 90 degrees to the direction you wish to go. Push this skate outward and backward using it’s **inside edge**, to its full leg extension using your toes and ball of your feet for pushing power. Your glide skate rapidly follows doing the same thing with it’s **inside edge** pushing outward and backward to its full leg extension. Try to complete 4 “V” strokes in less than 4 seconds for quick forward acceleration.

The Power “ V ” Start sequence would resemble this:

- 1st Stroke Left skate 90 degrees - 2nd Stroke Right skate 75 degrees
- 3rd Stroke Left skate 70 degrees - 4th Stroke Right skate 55 degrees
- 5th Stroke Left skate 40 degrees - 6th Stroke Right skate 35 degrees
- 7th Stroke Left skate 20 degrees - 8th Stroke Right skate 15 degrees



As you move forward, the blades pushing angle is reduced from about 90 degrees at the start of the stroke to around 15 degrees in full flight.

The first 4 strokes must be **quick** and **powerful** and are the most important to build top speed.

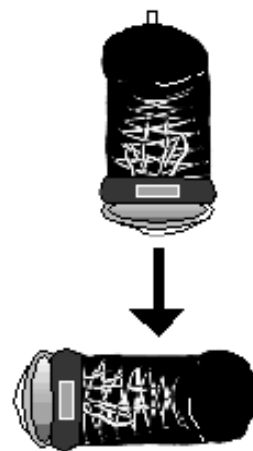
This method can be used for both running starts and standing starts. Short choppy strokes are used at the beginning and they are lengthened out as you begin skating in full stride. Foot speed is the secret for quick acceleration and forwards in particular must master this skill. Knees are **deeply** bent for quick starts, then are gradually reduced to a slight bend when in full flight. Arms swing like you’re marching with only one hand on the stick. Toes dig into the ice, head is low until into full flight.

INVERTED T- PUSH START

Your front skate is the glide skate pointing in the direction you wish to go.

Your back skate is the **Stroking/Pushing Skate**. Place your back skate slightly behind the front skate at a 90 degree angle or to an **inverted T** formation. Back Knee is bent to exert pushing power. See Diagram at Right!

Keep your weight on the back skate and using its **Inside Edge**, push hard until your back leg has straightened out to its full extension. Repeat 2-3 times quickly until you get moving forward then begin normal parallel skating.

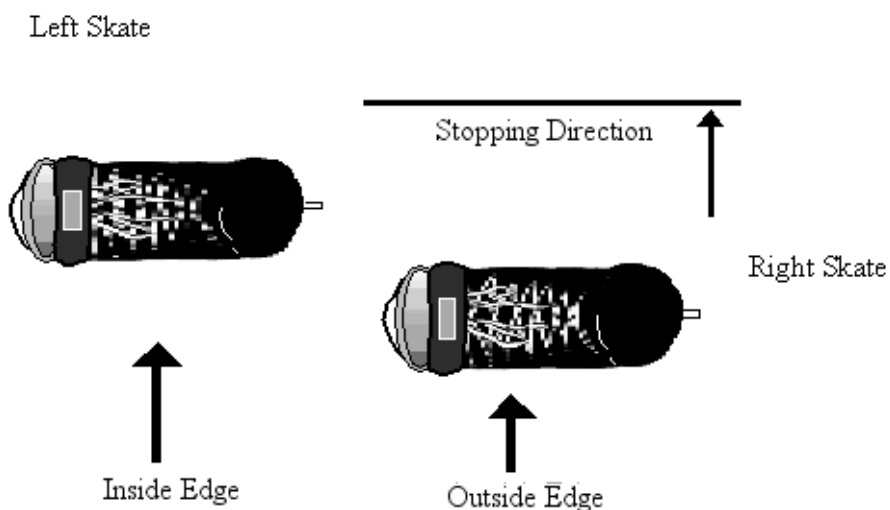
**PARALLEL STOPS**

To stop quickly, facing left or right, the 2 foot parallel stop is the most common but the hardest to accomplish at a young age without falling.

The knees are slightly bent and both skates are turned 90 degrees at the same time to the direction you were skating. They remain almost side by side about shoulder width apart. Your weight is evenly distributed on both skates at the beginning of the turn. Begin the stop by turning your head and shoulders first, with your trunk, hips, legs, and feet following. Thin ice shaving of the top layer of ice now begins. Your body and skates are now leaning inward at about a 45 degree angle.

Lean back from the stopping direction to keep your balance, apply pressure on the **Inside Edge** of your left skate and the **Outside Edge** of your right skate through the balls of your feet. See diagram below for stopping direction if turning right, reverse the skates and edges to stop if turning left.

Let your blades just shave the top portion of the ice. This shaving (friction) will bring you to a complete stop. Your weight is now shifting to your back leg at the end of the stop, knees still bent and you lean back about 45 degrees to the stopping direction to keep your balance. Once stopped, quickly move both skates to a shoulder width "V" stance position ready for a quick start.



The better you get at stopping by using this method, the closer your skates will come together and even touch. This parallel stopping method will require a lot of practice, it doesn't happen 1st try. Practice this method from the left and right side, as both will be required during a hockey game.

INVERTED T STOP

Another simpler method used to stop your forward movement is called the **Inverted T stop**.

To do it correctly, the glide skate or lead skate applies pressure from the blade's heel area, like a steering rudder, on the ice. Lift the toe area slightly up off the ice while applying heel pressure downward cutting into the ice.

The rear skate is now placed at a 90 degree angle slightly behind the lead skate and shaving pressure is applied to the ice with the blade's **Outside Edge**.

Lean back from the stopping direction with knee slightly flexed to help keep your balance and to remain in an up right standing position.

ONE FOOT SNOW PLOW STOPS and 2 FOOT BACKWARD "V" STOPS

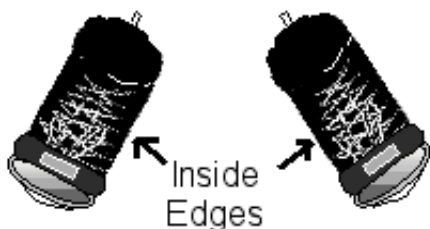
One foot snow plow stops can be used to stop your forward or backward skating motion.

To execute it from a **forward** skating direction, turn only one skate inward about 45 degrees.

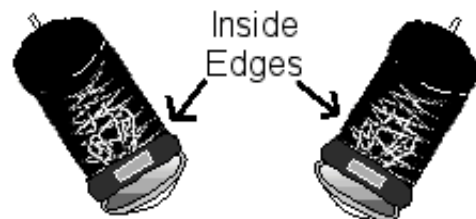
To execute it from a **backward** skating direction, turn only one skate outward about 45 degrees.

Use your **inside edge** to shave a thin top layer of ice. Pressure is applied from the ball of your foot using this **inside edge** of your skate blade. Let your knee bend slightly forward, keeping your back straight and head up. Your other leg, the glide leg and skate faces forward and supports your body by providing balance only. Practice makes perfect.

A second way to stop going backwards is to use a **2 foot "V" stop**. Turn both your heels inward and toes outward about 45 degrees and apply pressure through the balls of your feet using the **inside edges** of both skates. Let your knees and body bend slightly forward to maintain your balance. Defencemen in particular would use this 2 foot backward "V" stop when skating backward.



**LEFT SKATE OR RIGHT SKATE
FORWARD snow plow STOP**



**LEFT SKATE & RIGHT SKATE
BACKWARD "V" STOP**

SKATING STANCE, STRIDE and RHYTHM of Skating

The proper **skating stance** or ready position, has your skates approximately shoulder width apart, weight evenly distributed on each skate. This wide stance improves your balance and stability. It also helps prevent you from falling if someone runs into you. Knees bent, body leaning slightly forward, head up with only top hand on your stick at the start of the stride. From this ready stance position you can move forward, backward, sideways, and initiate turns, pivots and crossovers.

After a few **short “V”** like **starting forward strides/steps**, lengthen them out, legs now parallel. Pump your arms to swing alternately **forward** and **backward**, not left or right, it's like marching, with each skating stride. Top hand only on the stick. **Note:** It's not necessary to carry your stick in 2 hands at all times. Stroke 45 degrees outward and backward with one skate by using your inside edge, cutting “C's” and glide with the other skate. This stroke and glide sequence, alternating each leg, leads to skating rhythm. The **rhythm** of your legs and arms are similar to running and it will increase your skating speed and help keep your balance. It's like riding a bicycle with no hands, alternately pumping your arms at right angle at the elbow, moving them forward and backward.

GETTING UP FROM FALL

If you **fall, or are tripped on the ice**, an easy way to get back up on your feet is as follows:

1. Bring both knees together and assume a kneeling position with your head up and back straight.
2. Keep both hands on your stick, take a wide grip, then place it across both thighs for balance.
3. It is not necessary to place your hands on the ice for support.
4. Slide one leg forward so that the skate blade is on the ice and your shin is upward and facing forward at right angles to your thigh and skate like the letter “Z”. Your other leg is still on the ice.
5. Now, push and lift upward, bringing your other leg forward and upward to a standing position.

SUMMARY

Skating is considered to be the most important, yet most difficult skill to learn by the majority of hockey coaches. The earlier you master this skill the better player you will be. Hockey skating really consists of **quick bursts/sprints over short spaces** both offensively and defensively with and without the **puck**. Today's hockey is all about speed and skating generates top speed.

To progress to a higher level of hockey, "AA" or "AAA", skating speed and agility will be essential. To achieve this, **practice** skating very chance you get. Go **public skating** for more ice time because the 15 minutes you get during a game or in a 50 minute practice will not be enough.

Enrolling in a **Power Skating School Program** could prove very beneficial for your skating development, improving your speed, agility, stops, starts, turns, pivots and overall confidence.

Developing a change of pace, that is being able to go from half speed or glide speed to full speed while going around a player or breaking into the clear for a pass, will give you a major advantage.

The first 4 “V” strides when starting from any stop are extremely important for carrying the puck, getting to a loose puck, checking their puck carrier, or getting into the clear for a breakaway.

Overall speed and quick acceleration are 2 elements of skating that separates the good Minor and Youth hockey prospects from the others. Hockey skating is a series of sprints, jogs and glides used during different parts of a shift, so keep your feet moving at all times, don't be standing still.

Note: Brand new skates should be sharpened before using and get them sharpened regularly.

STICKS**Price Range: \$25.00 - \$300.00 +**

After skates, your **Stick** is a very important piece of equipment because it is needed to score and prevent goals. Sticks today are made of wood, aluminum or graphite and come in Senior and Junior models. Graphite is lighter and more durable but far more expensive than a wooden stick. Senior sticks are longer, with thicker shafts and blades and are made for under 15, under 18 and adults.

To play hockey well, your stick must **fit** your body correctly when skating, this allows you to pass accurately, shoot harder, receive a pass, stickhandle better, deke an opponent and to stick check.

A stick is manufactured for either a **left** or **right** hand shot. The blade's curve will be angled to its left or right side. One piece top of the line graphite sticks now come in Junior models but are very expensive. Players 5 to 12 years of age only require a less expensive wooden or aluminum stick.

To determine which stick is correct for you, take one in your two hands and pretend to shoot the puck. Your lower hand on the stick (left or right hand) determines whether you should purchase a left or right hand stick. New players should try shooting both directions, left and right, to find the most natural and powerful side before making a purchase. Left handed people usually shoot right.

STICK LENGTH

Generally a new stick is too long for a young player. It needs to be cut off and customized for your height and skating style. This is done at home **with your skates on!** A stick one inch too long or one inch too short could affect your performance of Shooting, Passing, Receiving, Deking etc.

The **length of the stick** varies for forwards and defencemen. Defencemen usually use slightly longer sticks for checking purposes like Sweep and Poke checks and to reach loose pucks sooner. The stick should come somewhere between the players nose and chin with skates on and the stick being in an upright vertical position. You may have to try a number of sticks while in your street shoes to select the most comfortable length, weight and stiffness for shooting, passing & receiving.

There is no correct length rule, because it varies with each individual's physical makeup, skating style (bent over, shorter stick or upright longer stick) and position they play (defence, centre or wing)

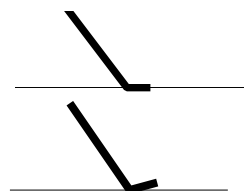
A shorter stick (chin- collar bone) is better for passing and stickhandling, while a longer stick (nose - chin) is better for shooting harder shots and getting to loose pucks sooner.

The blade of the stick should lie flat on the ice when shooting or carrying the puck.

If the toe of the blade is up off the ice for shooting, passing or carrying the puck, this is a sign that the stick is too long for you **or** the lie/angle is incorrect.

Sticks vary in weight and flex depending on what material they are made of. Some players prefer a light stick, while others prefer a heavy one. The task is to find one that is most comfortable for you with the the right amount of stiffness or flex.

Note: You should be able to move the stick back and forth in front of you, blade flat on the ice without the taped knob end getting caught up in your hockey pants or hitting your stomach area. If it does it's another sign that the stick is still either too long for you or the lie/angle is incorrect.



LIE

The **lie** of the stick is the angle where the shaft joins the blade. A player's skating style will dictate the correct lie to use. When assuming your natural skating stance, the blade should lie flat on the ice. If it doesn't, either the lie (angle) is wrong or the stick is too long.

The higher the lie, the closer the stick blade and puck are to your feet.

Tall players, or players who skate upright, use a higher 6 or 7 lie.

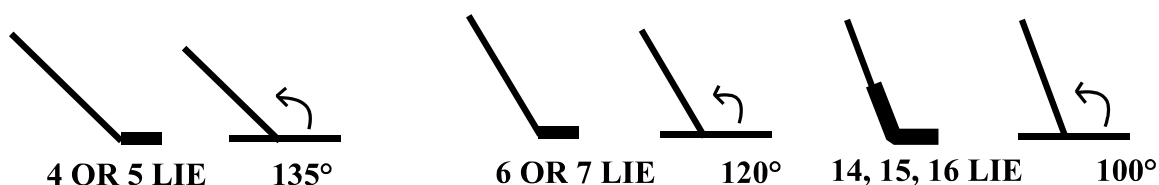
Shorter players, or ones who skate bent over, use a lower 4 or 5 lie.

Goalies use a 13, 14, 15 lie stick.



Sticks today don't have lies printed on them but have NHL players names who they were custom made for. If you have the correct lie, the blade will rest flat on the ice when passing, receiving and shooting. Trial and error is the only way to find out which stick lie and length suits your skating style best. Today's blades are slightly rockered for multiple lies.

Different stick manufacturers produce different angled lies. e.g. a CCM stick lie is not the same angle as a Sher-Wood or a Bauer stick. Stick manufacturers should print the lie angle on the stick e.g. 135 degrees etc. so the purchaser can see and feel the different angles, but for some reason they don't.



CURVES

The normal curve on a stick blade is 1/2 inch in depth measured between its toe and heel. Curves are set either at the toe, the middle, or heel area of the blade by the stick manufacturer.

Some sticks are manufactured with curves exceeding 1/2 inch as there is no such thing as an illegal curve. However, the NHL still has a maximum curve rule and a penalty can be called if found illegal.

Beginners should use a stick with a very small curve or no curve to aid stickhandling, passing and receiving, and backhand shots. As you get older, centres will use just a small curve, this allows them to pass on their forehand and backhand and to take face-offs. Most wingers and defencemen will use full curves to shoot the puck harder.

You can change the size and location of the curve by heating the stick blade and bending it.

SHAFTS

The maximum length of a skater's stick shaft is 63 inches from the heel to the end of the shaft. Stick shafts are either made of aluminum, a graphite composite or wood and come with a stiff or semi-stiff flexibility built into them. Some players prefer stiff shafts while others prefer some give/flex/ bending in them. Shaft stiffness ranges from 85 to 110, the higher the number the stiffer the shaft. Junior stick shafts are shorter and thinner in diameter for a child's smaller hand size. Goaltenders sticks cannot exceed 55 inches from the heel to the end of the shaft.

BLADES

The maximum length of a stick **blade** is 12.5 inches except for a goaltender, which is 15.5 inches. The maximum/minimum height of the blade is 3 and 2 inches, 3.5 and 3 inches for a goaltender. Youth's blades are smaller. Most are **fibreglass** wrapped to provide added strength and durability.

All blades have a slight rocker on the bottom, **they are not flat**. This provides a variety of lies for different playing situations: passing, receiving pucks in your feet, shooting and digging the puck out along the boards. Blades are already attached to hockey sticks and blades can be heated with a hair dryer or propane torch to bend under a door to increase or decrease its curve.

If you want to slightly change the lie/angle or rocker of the stick blade for better shooting and passing you will need to file the bottom of the blade with a carpenter's rasp then sand it smooth.

TAPING

Taping of the stick blade is to an individual's preference. From heel to toe is preferred. This protects the blade and helps cushion & control the puck. Slightly overlap the strands on the blade.

Black cloth friction or hockey tape is preferred (not shiny black electrical tape) because it hides the puck (black on black) and has a slightly sticky outside surface to grip/hold the puck for better control in shooting, passing and especially when receiving a pass. Many use white tape today.

KNOB

The **Knob** at the top end of the shaft helps prevent the stick from sliding out of the player's hand. It can vary in thickness and depth. It must feel just right for you and only you. Some players file the end thinner or round it like a broom handle for a better grip, while others place thin rings of tape wound in a tight spiral pattern on the outside for a special grip and feel between their fingers.

Experiment with the **taping** of the knob to get the right feel. Black tape was used years ago to provide a sticky grip, but colored or white tape is now used to prevent the leather palm of your hockey glove from breaking down or rotting. Sticks must have a covered knob for safety reasons.

GRIP

The hockey stick is **gripped** in both hands for passing, receiving, stickhandling and shooting, but if you are skating without the puck only the top hand is gripping the stick the majority of time. Your top hand should grip the end of the shaft with your baby finger slightly over the end knob.

Hold the stick firmly, with the fingers wrapped around the shaft, the thumb is placed on the outside then under the shaft, meeting the forefinger and forming a V between thumb and forefinger. The action of gripping the stick is similar to shaking hands or gripping a bat or golf club.

The **lower hand** is the power hand and is gripped the same way. It generates most of the power when shooting slap shots and wrist shots. The top hand is the guide hand that maintains control of the stick and reacts/swings like a door hinge and swings inward when shooting wrist shots.

The **width** of the grip varies: for shooting (wide- 3 feet), passing & receiving (medium- 2 feet), stickhandling (narrow- 1 foot). This is covered in more detail later in this Unit.

The stick rests at the **base** of the **fingers** in both hands, **not** in the palms like a baseball bat.

SUMMARY

The stick is really an extension of your arms and to work properly it must fit **you** correctly while handling & carrying the puck, passing & receiving, stickhandling, shooting and stick checking.

A lot of time should be taken in selecting a stick. The length, its weight, shaft thickness and flexibility, the amount of curve and balance are very important factors to consider. It must feel just right for you. Try at least 3-5 sticks before making your final selection. Don't just take the first one you see off the rack because no two sticks from different stick manufacturers feel exactly alike.

Sticks come in Junior & Senior sized models. Beginners to players aged 5 to 10 will use a Junior model. Two sticks should always be taken to your games and practices, in case one breaks.

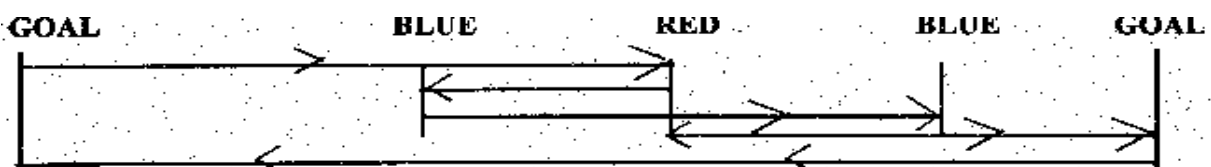
One stick could be a little longer (1 inch) than the other one. The longer one is for shooting, the shorter one for stick-handling and passing. Depending on how the game is going, and how you are playing that day, or the amount of time left in the game, you may want to change stick lengths during the game for specific reasons such as to score or prevent goals against.

Youth sticks are now available at most sports shops. They are shorter, have thinner shafts, smaller blades and fit a child's hands much easier. They vary in price between \$15 to \$20 for a wooden model, \$25 to \$70 for an aluminum model and \$100 to \$200 for a super graphite/composite model. **Note:** Print your child's name on the shaft of the stick with a black marker to identify it and to prevent possible theft.

SKATING AND CONDITIONING DRILLS

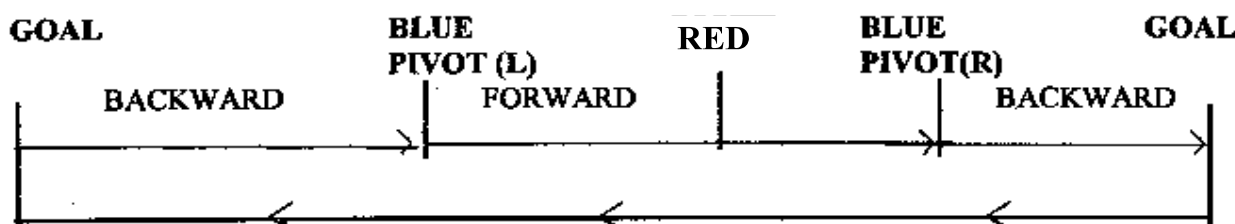
Forward skating drills or backward skating drills to develop speed and stamina.

Have players start across the Goal Line, skate forward to Red Line, come back to Blue Line, go forward to far Blue Line, come back to Red Line, go forward to Goal Line, then skate all the way back to far Goal Line at top speed. This will also help develop stops and quick starts. You can add variety to this drill by adding full backward skating or a combination backward & forward skating



Backward to forward with 2-180 degree pivots left then right at both Blue Lines.

Start across Goal Line, skate backward to Blue Line, pivot 180 degrees left, skate forward to Blue Line, pivot 180 degrees right, skate backward to Goal Line, stop, then go forward all the way back to far Goal Line. This will help develop both defencemen and forwards pivoting ability.



PUCKHANDLING / PUCK CONTROL

Puckhandling & Puck Control is the starting point for **all** offensive hockey skills. Puck control is required for stickhandling, deking, carrying the puck, passing, receiving, shooting and scoring.

The objective of puckhandling is to control the puck from getting away from you by rolling **both** wrists outward then inward when angling the stick blade 45 degrees. It should be one of the first skills taught and demonstrated by coaches to young players.

Puckhandling is simply controlling the puck with your stick blade by sliding the puck back and forth to yourself with soft, short, feather like passes, while in a semi- stationary/standing position.

The puck is usually in front of you or to one side and the distance it slides is between 6" to 2 feet.

The puck should be positioned in the middle of your blade for better control. Hands about 1 foot away from your body, elbows pointing outward and **roll** both wrists with each sliding movement.

The stick blade is cupped about 45° when passing & receiving and hands are **about 2 feet** apart .

Try to keep your **head up** and use split vision to feel/see **both** the puck and the opposition or open team-mates around you. **Note:** If you keep looking down at the puck someone will check you.

By cupping the stick blade about 45°, turning the toe of the blade inward and the heel outward with alternating passes, you will control the puck better and keep it from slipping away from you.

Keep your shoulders, arms, elbows, wrists and fingers relaxed. The movements should be smooth and rhythmical, with very little sound created by your blade against the puck or the ice surface.

PUCKHANDLING PRACTICE DRILLS

In a semi-stationary/standing position: Practice the following movements sliding the puck:

LEFT TO RIGHT**RIGHT TO LEFT****SMALL TRIANGLES****FRONT TO BACK****BACK TO FRONT****CIRCLES****FRONT TO SIDE****SIDE TO FRONT****SMALL FIGURE 8**

STICKHANDLING

Stickhandling is the next natural extension of puckhandling and is a skill used to carry the puck. Stickhandling is simply **moving** or passing the puck **back and forth** to yourself with short feather passes about 6 to 10 inches wide **while skating**, either moving straight ahead or cutting around an opponent. Feel the puck on your **blade** through your fingers, roll your wrists, elbows slightly out.

Stickhandling should be utilized when there is no open team-mate ahead of you to pass to.

When leading an offensive rush, it is used to cut around all opponents, including the goaltender and when perfected, it is an excellent offensive weapon, and can be used to score goals.

Getting around a player is accomplished by cutting/turning sharply with the puck to the inside or the outside of an opponent, with the puck either on your forehand or backhand stick blade side.

Stickhandling does not need to be used in open ice or on a breakaway because there is no opponent to beat 1 on 1 and the puck could get away from you. Simply carrying the puck in this situation is faster and safer. **Note:** When practising stickhandling, everyone should have a puck.

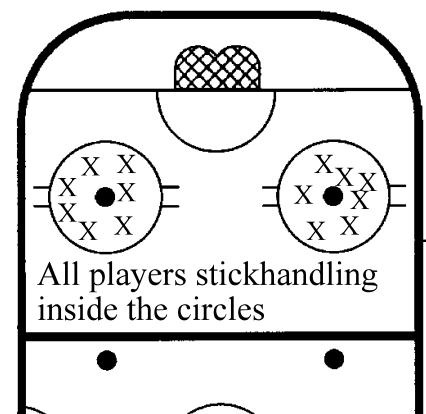
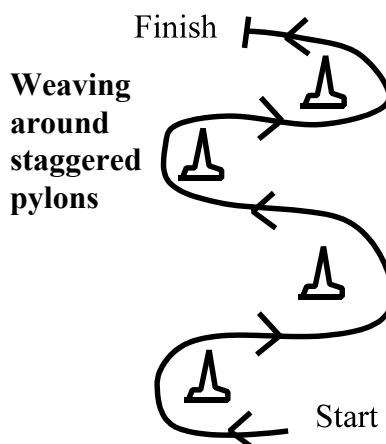
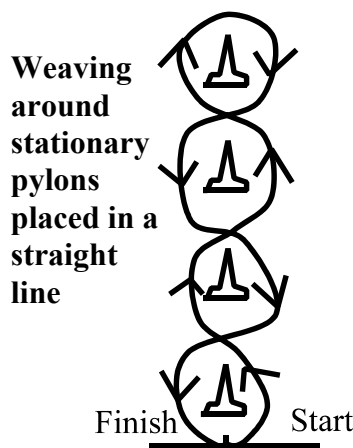
Four variations of stick-handling maneuvers to beat an opponent 1 on 1 include:

- 1) Passing the puck between a player's legs, then picking it up on the other side, behind him.
- 2) Passing it between a player's stick and their skate and receiving it on your backhand side.
- 3) Passing the puck around the outside of a player, then cutting around and skating behind him to retrieve the loose puck in open ice behind the defender.
- 4) Stickhandling to your back hand side of a defender on a 1 on 1 has a high rate of success.

When stickhandling, the hands are out from your body, spread between **12 to 16 inches apart** on the shaft and your elbows are pointing outward. **Keeping your head up** is suggested but very hard to do at a young age. Roll your wrists outward and inward like a swing to control the puck and use smooth, quiet, rhythmical, light touch stick movements not noisy, choppy, movements.

Practice stickhandling as often as you can as it's becoming a lost art. Use split vision to see your opponent and see/feel for the puck at the same time. Practice during road hockey games or shinny to develop this forgotten skill. Practise stickhandling in a confined and congested space is best.

STICKHANDLING PRACTICE DRILLS



DEKING/FAKING

Deking goes hand in hand with stickhandling, and is a skill used to go around and beat forwards, defencemen, and goaltenders 1 on 1 while carrying the puck. It is also used to score goals at close range by deking the goaltender out of position, then scoring on the vacated or open side of the net.

Deking is simply **faking** one way to get the defensive player or goalie to believe, then commit himself by turning slightly and shifting their weight, in that direction, then you cut sharply with the puck and go in the other direction. This faking motion and body action, causes the defender to shift his weight to the wrong side allowing you to blow by him with the puck to other side.

To accomplish this, some players use a head fake to deke, while others use a shoulder fake or a stick and puck fake to get an opponent to think they are going left. The defensive player turns slightly to that side for just a second and the puck carrier goes around him to the right side.

Deking moves include: fake going outside then cutting inside; faking inside, then cutting outside.

Speed is essential, you can't deke in slow motion, the defensive player will recover & check you.

The hand position on the stick shaft is a little wider apart than stickhandling or about **16 to 20** inches apart when deking. This allows for better puck control using the middle of the stick blade when faking.

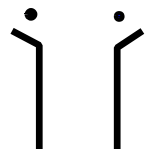
You will need to **practice your dekes** at home as they do not come naturally to all young players.

CARRYING THE PUCK

It is not always necessary to stickhandle or deke while carrying the puck.

If you are in the clear with no one checking you, simply carrying/pushing the puck is acceptable. You can **carry the puck** on your forehand or backhand whichever is most comfortable for you.

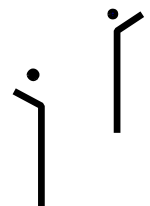
Carrying the puck requires you to hold the blade of your stick at **almost 90 degrees** to the puck situated out in front of you or over to one side. Use the bottom edge and heel area of your stick blade to push the puck forward for short distances. See Diagram at right!



Your top hand is holding the stick, and your lower hand is free and off the stick. You push the puck forward by straightening your arm at the elbow from 90 to 180 degrees and repeat.

Push the puck forward with the blade of your stick, or push it in short thrusts, moving the puck about 1 to 2 feet ahead of you per thrust, then skate to it.

The stick blade can be alternated if necessary, pointing left then right with each forward thrust to help you control the puck in a straight line. See Diagram at right.



Carrying/pushing the puck on your backhand side is much easier, safer and more comfortable and you have much more control than on your forehand side.

By carrying the puck on your back hand, you can beat a defenceman to the outside. Just swing around him to the outside of the rink then once by him, cut sharply in toward the net. Don't grab the defender with your free hand or you will get a penalty for holding. Warding off is allowed.

SUMMARY

Puckhandling, Stickhandling, Deking and Carrying the Puck are 4 very important components of offensive hockey. They are skills used to beat opponents 1 on 1, anywhere on the ice. These skills don't come naturally; they must be practiced to be perfected. They can be learned during practice and utilized during your game. But they can be perfected playing street/road hockey, pond hockey and floor hockey during the winter and roller hockey during the summer. **Tip:** if a player tries to sweep check or poke check the puck off your stick, simply pull the puck back toward your body or feet and let their stick swing by in front of you then move forward past them with the puck.

It is advantageous for defencemen to practice carrying the puck in order to lead rushes out of their defensive zone. This adds a whole new element to offensive hockey and provides the team with another means to get the puck out of their defensive zone and into the neutral and offensive zone.

Bobby Orr revolutionized hockey defencemen with his puck carrying ability, his end to end offensive rushes and scoring ability. I believe every coach could use a Bobby Orr on their Team. Cale Makar and Quinn Hughes are regarded as today's up and coming rushing NHL defencemen.

"Practice makes perfect."

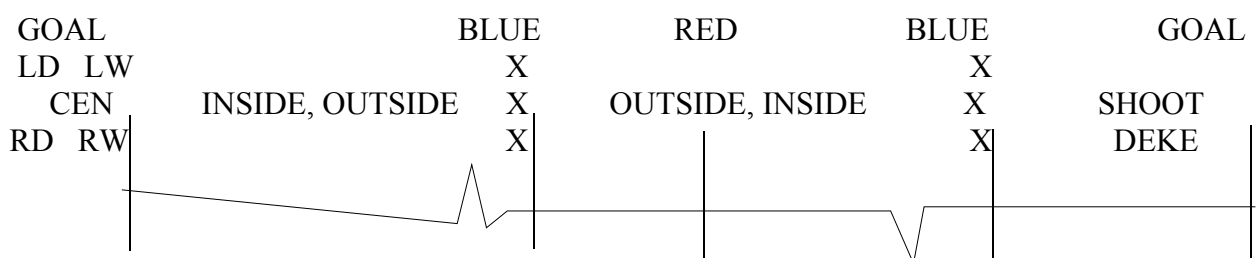
DEKING AND PUCK CARRYING DRILLS

Inside, outside deke; outside, inside deke, shoot.

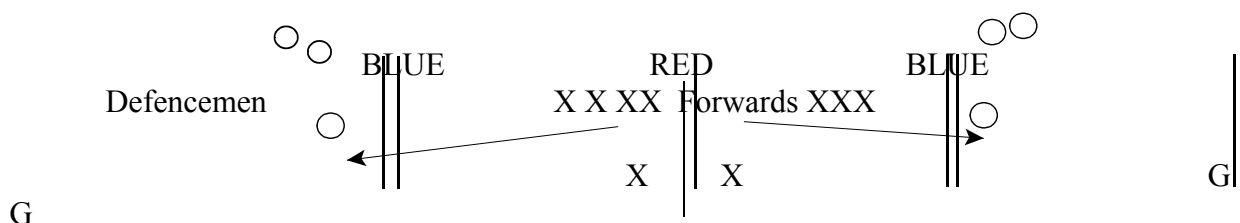
Start with 3 lines of players on the Goal Line, LW & LD, C, and RW & RD and have 3 pylons stationed about 20 feet apart across the 2 Blue Lines and a goaltender in the net.

Alternately, about every 5 seconds apart, have 1 player in the different lines, skate with the puck and at the first pylon fake inside but cut outside, at the second pylon, fake outside but cut inside, then continue toward the goalie and shoot or deke trying to score a goal.

As the players progress over the course of the season, use stationary coaches then defencemen instead of pylons and try to sweep check or poke check the puck carrier to make it more difficult.



One on One Deking Drill -Both defencemen and forwards should learn how to play a 1 on 1. Divide into 4 groups then rotate shooters and defenders. Everyone is a shooter then a defender.



PASSING SKILLS

HOCKEY GLOVES

Price Range \$35.00 - \$75.00 +

Hockey gloves are required to protect your hands and wrists. They come in Junior and Senior sized models with different cuff lengths and widths. Their total length in inches is printed on the cuff so it is possible to try them on and purchase a pair that fit properly. The top of the cuff should come up to where the lower part of the elbow pad ends leaving no open space to be slashed.

Remember, not too big or too small, and the cuff must cover your wrist area. Proper fitting gloves improve your puck handling, stickhandling, passing, receiving and shooting skills. You can loosen or remove the cuff laces on some models to provide greater wrist flexibility for shooting power.

The gloves should have soft, thin palms, and very flexible, not stiff fingers, in order to grip the stick and feel for the puck. A flexible inner or under side wrist cuff will allow you to pass the puck better and shoot harder on your follow through. Try on both gloves, to ensure a perfect fit.

Forwards like small cuffed gloves for flexibility in shooting. Defencemen prefer the longer cuff for more protection from sticks in front of their net and for blocking shots. To provide extra protection in the wrist area, expandable slash/wrist bands with plastic inserts are now available.

PASSING THE PUCK

Passing the puck is a term used to describe moving the puck quickly to an open or uncovered team mate. This must be explained and taught at an early age or puck hogs are going to develop.

Passing is the second most important skill to learn after skating as 10 + passes are made per shift.

Eight types of passes should be learned because passing is used more than any other skill in hockey. Over 200 passes are tried per team, per game, but they must be accurate to be effective.

Short passes of 8-15 feet are safer than 50 - 80 foot rink wide passes that might be intercepted.

RULES OF PASSING

- 1) Always look for an **open** team-mate in a good scoring position (slot, side of net, point) with an open passing lane or seam to get the puck to him. If open, pass him the puck.
- 2) If a team-mate is open and **ahead of you**, pass the puck to him. It should be automatic. Don't carry the puck until you can't go any farther, that's being a selfish puck hog.
- 3) You can pass the puck ahead of you, to either side or behind you to the open man. If the receiver is moving, pass the puck slightly ahead of him so he can skate to it in full flight.
- 4) Passing the puck is much, much, **faster** than carrying it. Try it and you will see what I mean.
- 5) Look to make sure the passing lane is **open to the receiver** before you pass him the puck.
- 6) **Never** pass the puck across the ice in front of your net **without looking first** as it could be intercepted by an opposing player. Come up the boards it will be much, much safer.
- 7) Don't **show** or indicate where your passes are going or the opposition will intercept them.

MECHANICS OF PASSING

FOREHAND AND BACKHAND PASSES

To pass the puck accurately, you must **draw/pull the puck back** of your body's centre line, 12 to 24 inches beyond your back skate then cradle/angle your stick blade about 45 degrees over it.

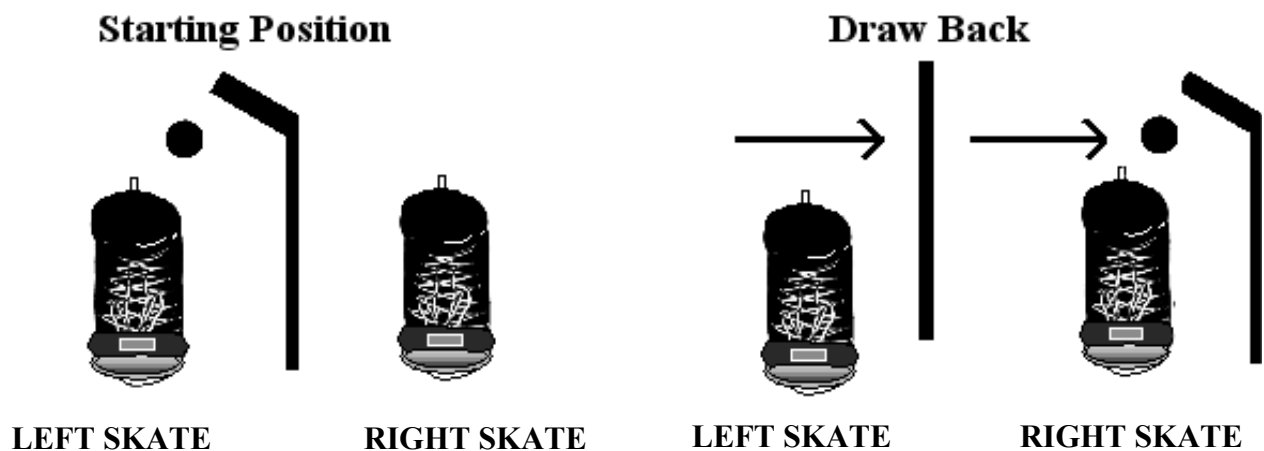
Slide your stick forward or backward and release the puck in a smooth, sweeping motion from the centre of your blade. **Don't** snap your wrist or slap the puck, **it's not a shot**. Push with your lower hand toward the target and pull your top hand into your stomach area. Push and pull at same time.

Look at your target, **his stick blade**, & lead the receiver passing slightly ahead of him if skating.

Follow through the passing motion with your lower arm extended forward to increase accuracy.

Keep your **wrist, forearm & elbow locked** on your **lower** hand for all passes except the flip pass.

Transfer your weight from the back leg at the start of the pass to your front leg on a completed pass with your follow through motion. Hands are about **2 feet apart** on your shaft when passing and receiving.



TYPES OF PASSES

C **FLAT PASS / SWEEP PASS**

C **BANK / BOARD PASS**

C **DROP PASS**

C **GIVE AND GO PASS**

C **FLIP PASS / SAUCER PASS**

C **BACK PASS / BEHIND BACK PASS**

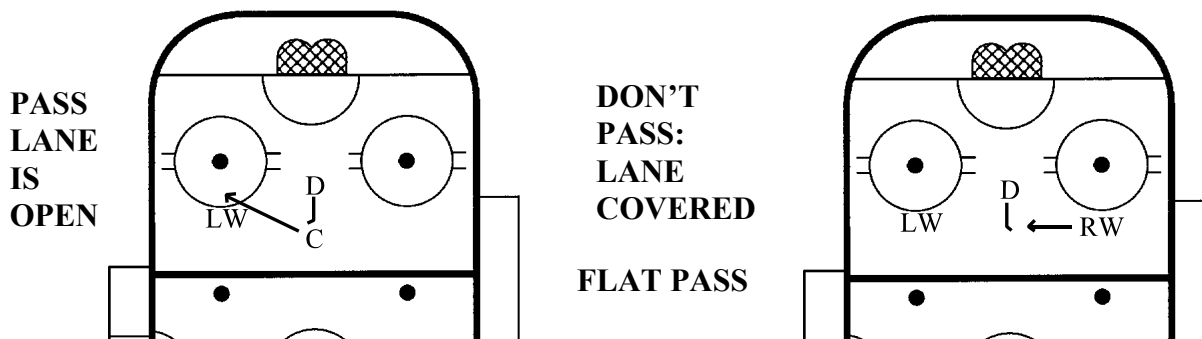
C **SHOVEL PASS**

C **TAP / TOUCH PASS**

FLAT PASS / SWEEP PASS

A **Flat Pass or Sweep Pass** is used when **no opponent** is positioned to intercept the pass between the passer and the receiver. The puck is passed flat on the ice, slightly ahead of the receiver so he can skate into it on the move. A soft feather pass is easier to receive and control over a hard pass.

A sweeping motion is used to execute this pass either on your forehand or backhand. Hands are about **2 feet apart** on the shaft. Start the flat pass when you are at least 7- 8 feet away from any defender directly in front of you because of his long stick reach. Look to receiver and if there is a good chance it could be intercepted, don't pass the puck. Either carry it, or dump/shoot it into a retrievable corner if over the Red line to avoid an icing call. If receivers open then pass the puck.

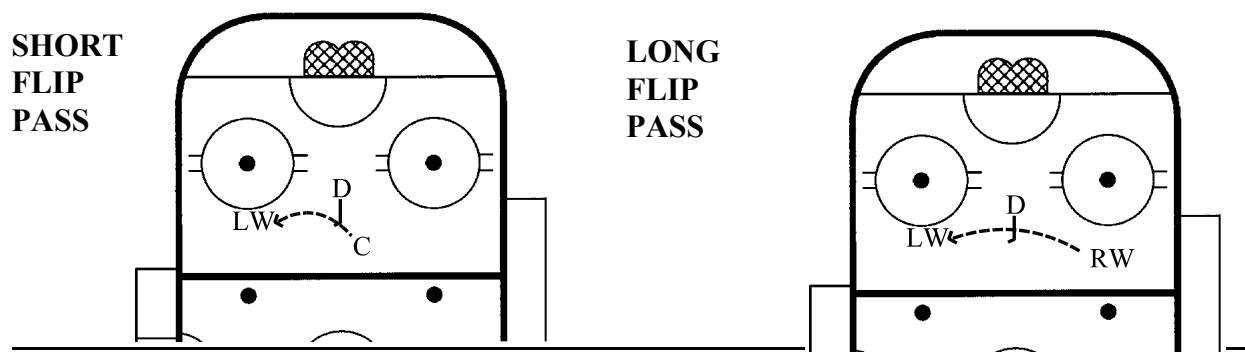
**FLIP PASS / SAUCER PASS**

A **Flip Pass /Saucer Pass** is used when there **is an opponent** between the passer and the receiver. He will intercept the puck with his stick if you use a flat /sweep pass that is on the ice.

You must flip the puck **up and over** the opponents stick blade. To do this, flip your **bottom wrist** in a soft wrist shot like motion upward and forward to make the puck float over the opponents outstretched stick. The puck should rise about 6 inches to 1 foot off the ice and land about 3 to 4 feet in front of the receivers stick then slide along the ice toward him, like a spinning saucer/frisby.

To complete a short flip pass, the puck is positioned at the heel of the blade and you rotate it forward to the toe and flip upward. For a longer 50' across ice flip pass from RW to LW flip from the heel to the middle of your blade and flip upward. This longer pass is like a soft wrist shot.

By pulling your stick blade backward, along the side of the puck, it rotates the puck up to the toe of your blade. You are causing it to spin or rotate like a frisbee. This causes the puck when shot or flipped to lie flat when it hits the ice (because of this spinning effect) and slide onto the receivers stick without bouncing. This will take some practice to perfect with young players.



BANK PASS / BOARD PASS

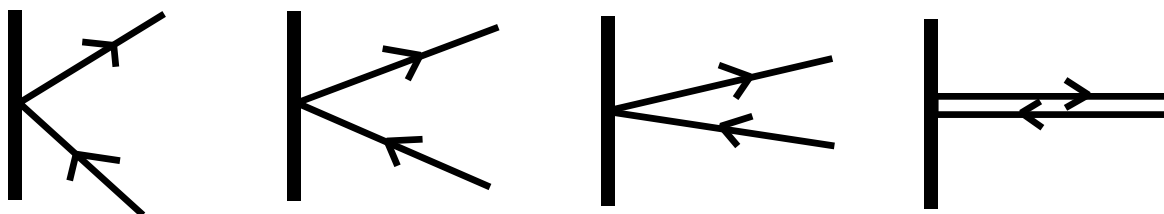
A **Bank /Board Pass** is any pass made using the boards to move the puck around any opponent standing near them. It's used to pass the puck from defenceman to defenceman behind your net and to create offensive plays by angling the puck off the corner and side boards to a breaking forward.

This is one of the most effective passes in hockey and can get you out of a lot of trouble and ease pressure especially in your own end of the rink. If under pressure some players just chip/bank the puck off the glass or side boards to clear their defensive zone and get it into the safer neutral zone.

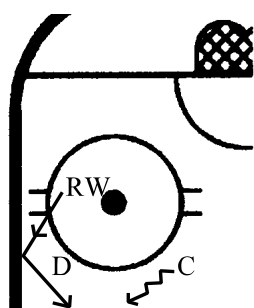
You can **Bank** the puck off the **Boards or Glass**. The bottom 8" yellow base/kicker board gives truer rebounds: 1. To an open team mate 2. To an open area 3. To retrieve it yourself.

A **Bank Pass** is like a pool/billiard shot off the cushioned rail. Study this table game to become a creative passer. The angle the puck hits the boards equals the angle it comes off the boards. It can be used on the side boards, end boards or from defenceman to defenceman behind your net. Hands about 2 feet apart on stick. Science theory; The angle of incidence = the angle of refraction.

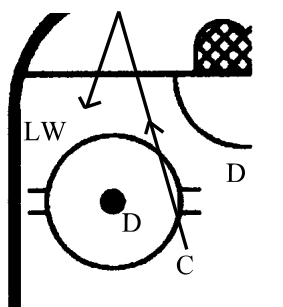
EXAMPLES OF ANGLES THE PUCK HITS then COMES OFF THE BOARDS



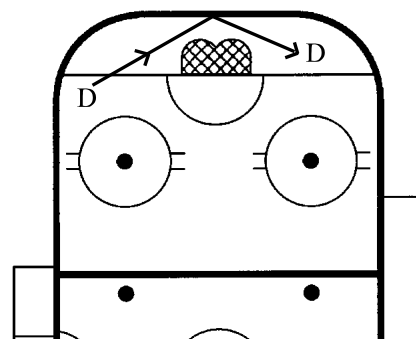
The **BANK PASS** is one of the most **intelligent passes** you can use and it takes skill and knowledge of rebound angles to complete it from the passer to the intended receiver.



OFF SIDE BOARDS



OFF END BOARDS



DEFENCE TO DEFENCE

Know how the boards are going to react, ie, plexiglass boards, wooden boards and the bottom kick/base boards. The boards in all arenas will react differently in speed and rebound distance.

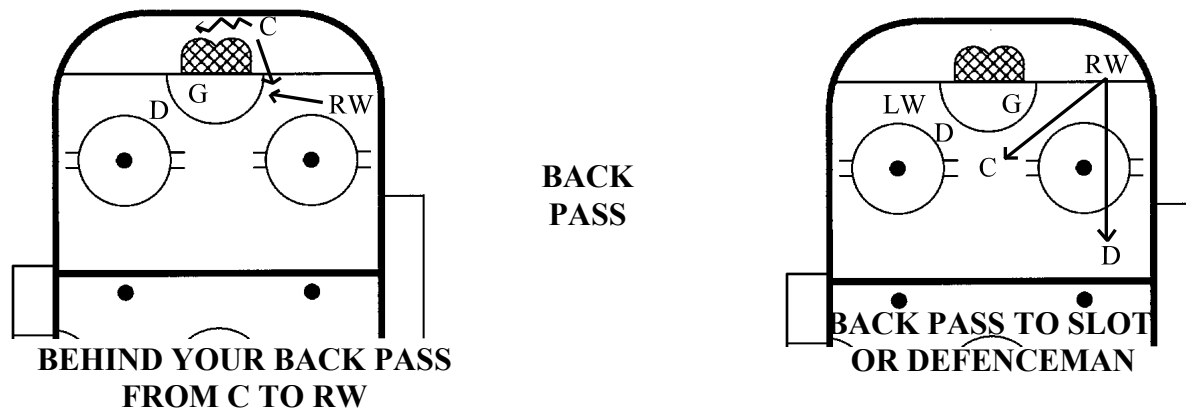
It would be wise for you to try the boards in other arenas during your pre-game warm up to see their rebound reaction. Some boards are lively and will give long rebounds while others are dead.

Practice your bank passes to see for yourself what angles they come off the boards and how you could use them to get the puck around an opponent (defencemen) and to your open man. Goalies must also be aware of the boards behind/beside their net to see how fast rebounds come off them.

BACK PASS and BEHIND YOUR BACK PASS

The **Back Pass** and the **Behind your back Pass** are 2 used in the offensive zone to create good scoring chances. There are 2 types of **back passes**, one is safe, the other is somewhat dangerous.

The safe back pass is simply a flat pass, **passed back** to an open defenceman or the man in the slot area after you have drawn a defenceman over to the boards or into the corner to check you. The dangerous back pass is a **blind** pass, **behind your back**. It looks great if you complete it, but if a defenceman sees it coming and intercepts it, he has a semi breakaway. Make sure any back pass is going to your open player, the lane is clear and he is ready to receive the puck before you try it.



An example of a good behind your back pass is a right shooting centre carrying the puck behind the opponents net and passing it **behind his back** to his Right Winger cutting toward the goal.

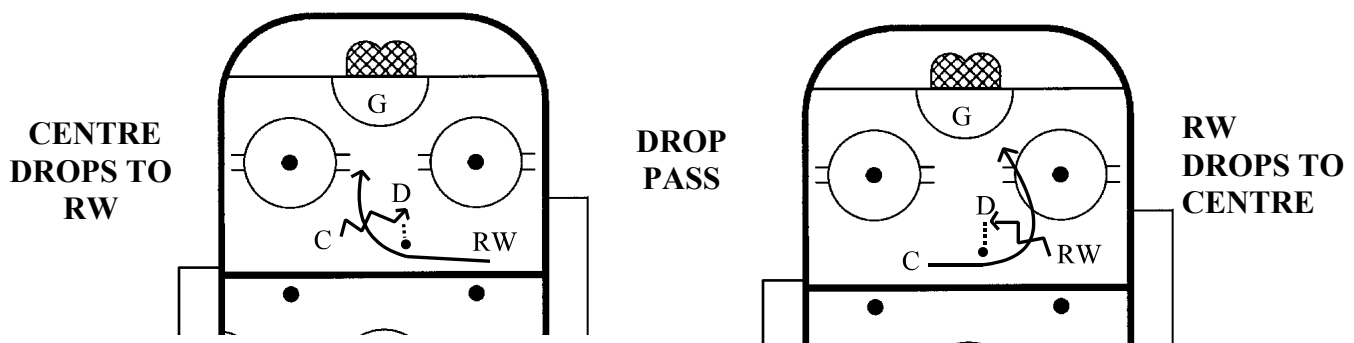
DROP PASS

A **Drop Pass** is used to isolate/block a defensive player and allows the pass receiver/trailer easier entry into the offensive zone. It is a very effective pass in hockey. There is very little defence for a drop pass, and it usually results in a quality opportunity for a shot on goal. It can be a straight drop, back to the trailer behind you or a criss-cross drop to a crossing forward. Hands 16-20 inches apart.

To execute a drop pass, the puck carrier stops the puck with the blade of his stick by just putting it in front of the puck at 90 degrees to stop its forward momentum.

He then blocks the defenceman from getting to the puck or the new receiver by running a **little** interference, **like a pic play in basketball**. The trailer picks up the drop pass and has several options: to shoot, pass, or carry it in further toward the net. The player who dropped the puck has several options also: block the defenceman first, then, go to the net to screen the goalie or get to a rebound, or get into the clear for a return pass, all decisions will depend on different situations.

Note: Referees have been instructed to start calling interference on some pic plays.

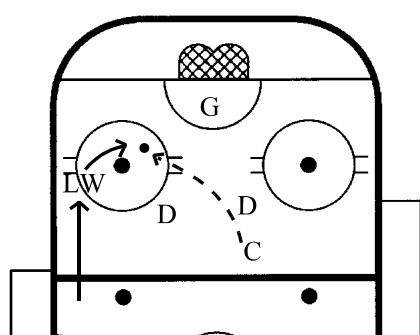


SHOVEL PASS

A **Shovel Pass** is used to lift the puck up **very high** between two defenders so a breaking player can receive it in behind them. The puck is lofted into an **open area** and the receiver skates to it.

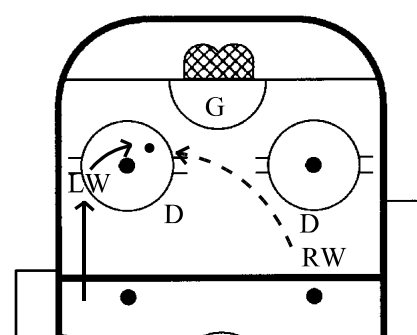
To execute a shovel pass, the puck must be pulled back onto the middle of the stick blade, tilt it 45 degrees then lift the puck up in a shovelling motion. Your **hands about 2-3 feet apart** on the stick shaft, then shovel the puck high toward the area the player is breaking to. The puck lands in an open area so the winger can cut in behind the defenceman to take it in full stride. The higher the lift, the higher the puck will sail, a 5 foot high shovel pass can be just as effective as a 15 foot high one in specific situations but it must get between the 2 defenders or up and over their heads.

A defenceman might use a shovel or flip pass to get the puck up high and outside his defensive Blue Line or to a breaking forward for a breakaway. It can beat many forechecking systems and move the puck from deep inside your defensive zone, all the way down to the far Blue Line. With 2 line passes now being legal a good team will try to use a shovel pass to set up breakaways.



**SHOVEL PASS
BETWEEN
TWO
DEFENCEMAN**

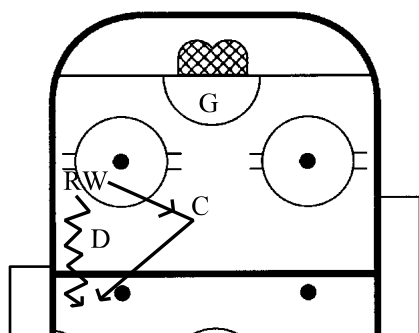
SHOVEL PASS



**SHOVEL PASS
TO YOUR
BREAKING
LEFT
WINGER**

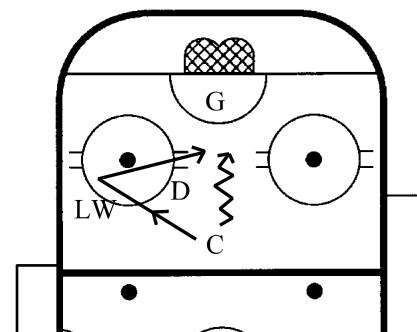
GIVE AND GO PASSES

A **Give and Go Pass** is used to move the puck by an opposing player. It is simply **giving** a short pass to a receiver, then **going** around a defender, and receiving the puck back on a return pass.



**RW PASSES TO CENTRE THEN
SKATES BY DEFENCE FOR A
RETURN PASS**

GIVE AND GO PASS



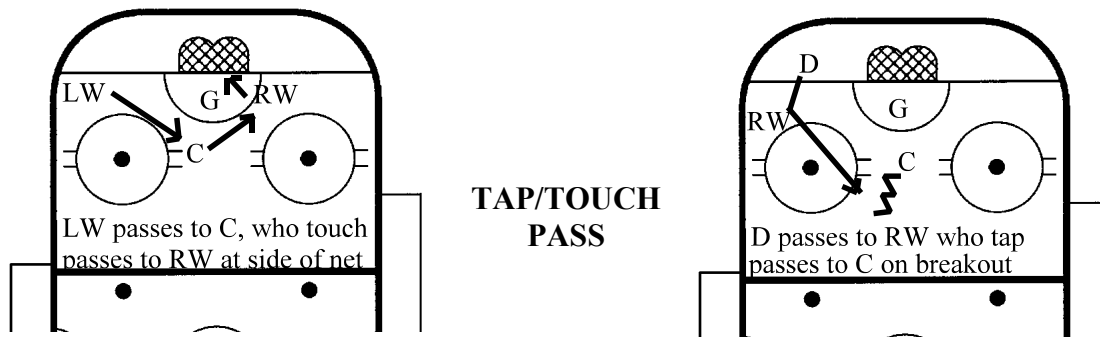
**CENTRE PASSES TO LW THEN
SKATES BY DEFENCE FOR A
RETURN PASS**

TAP PASS / TOUCH PASS

A **Tap/Touch Pass** is used to re-direct the puck to an open team-mate and is used in all 3 zones.

The receiver receives the puck and just re-directs it a short distance to a nearby open teammate **without stopping or handling the puck**. Hands are about 16 - 20 inches apart on the stick shaft.

A tap pass is very effective if used close to their goalie and re-directed to your open player at the far side of the net for a possible goal. It can also be used on breakout plays in your defensive zone.



SUMMARY

Executing a variety of Forehand and Backhand passes is one of the most important team skills you should learn then practice. Passing is the **quickest** way to move the puck from point A to B.

If you can learn the skills of passing at a **young age**, and understand how, when and where to pass the puck, you will be a big offensive asset to your team. You'll be very successful at setting up goals and creating and executing offensive 2 on 1 plays which lead to goal scoring opportunities.

A major fault of most young Minor/Youth hockey players is that they want to carry the puck too much, or too far before they pass it. They don't realize the receiver may be only open for a second. Pass the puck when he wants it, not when you want to give it to him. If you carry it for 10 or 20 seconds, he is going to be covered or perhaps go off-side when you want to pass it to him.

Give him the puck quickly, anticipate where the open receiver is going to be and put the pass onto his stick blade, or into an open area for him to skate to it. Don't wait until he is almost covered.

If you can get the puck to the open man in the clear, you will be a valuable **playmaker** on your team. An assist is equal to 1 scoring point the same as scoring a goal and it's just as important.

Different passes must be explained, demonstrated, practiced, and corrected by the coach/teacher/parent at an early age. Players 9 and older should be encouraged to pass the puck to their open team-mates in both games and practices to avoid getting into any bad puck hog habits. Players 5 to 8 will be working more on skating, puckhandling, stickhandling, deking and shooting skills.

An average of 5-10 passes per team, **per shift** should be attempted. A total of 150-200 passes per team, **per game** should be encouraged in a 50 minute Youth/ Minor hockey game. Teams that pass the puck accurately will beat teams that play as individuals 8 out of 10 times. Passes produce goals

Coaches, for all practices it is a good team policy to have at least 1 puck for every player.

Note: You can legally pass the puck from inside your Defensive Zone to anywhere in the Neutral Zone right into the Offensive Zone by staying onside. Effective 2006/07 Season.

RECEIVING A PASS

FOREHAND AND BACKHAND

To receive a pass, the **receiver** must first get into a clear area where the passer can get the puck to you. Make sure you are not off-side and give the passer a target to shoot at, your stick blade. Also make sure the passing lane is open from the passer to the receiver, if not, cut to an open ice area.

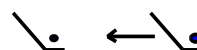
Secondly, you must control the puck when it is passed to you on your forehand or backhand side, by keeping your stick blade flat on the ice. Hands are about **2 feet apart** when receiving a pass.

MECHANICS OF RECEIVING A PASS

To **receive a pass**, the blade of your stick should be as close to 90 degrees to the pucks incoming direction as possible and flat on the ice.

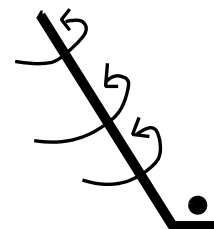


Upon impact, draw the blade of the stick backwards 6 inches or so to cushion the puck and to prevent any rebound off the blade.



Turn the top of the blade slightly over and downward about 45° to trap the puck.

Keep a firm grip on the stick but allow your arms and wrists to remain loose and **roll** both wrists for better puck control on impact. Hands 20-24 inches apart.



To control long flat passes ahead of you, simply bend down on one knee and lay the **shaft of your stick** flat on the ice and let the puck hit it. Then get up and go.

For short passes in your feet, use your skate blades to deflect the puck forward up to your stick blade, or you can **choke up** on the stick shaft to dig out passes in and around your skates.

SUMMARY

Give the passer a **target** to pass to by showing him the blade of your stick and where you want it.

Keep the blade of your stick **flat** on the ice and at a 90 degree (right angle) to the incoming puck.

Yell if you are wide open and want the puck, this includes open defencemen. Don't be shy, yell.

Try to receive the pass **on the move** not standing still and you will be able to skate by defenders.

Cut to **open ice** to get away from any backchecker and into a clear area to receive a pass moving.

Receivers must be **observant** & creative, seeing where the passer is located and where they must go in order to receive a pass or to help support the passer by providing additional passing options.

Short passes are just as effective as long passes. Soft/feather passes are easier to control over hard passes and should be used if **no opponent** is between the passer and receiver to intercept them.

Practice passing and receiving long and short passes on your forehand and backhand side because you will need both of these skills to advance to the next level. The Hands position on your stick varies between 16 and 24 inches apart in passing and receiving on a variety of passes.

Use the passing diagrams on page 52 to set up drills at your next practice.

HOCKEY EQUIPMENT

Previously, we discussed skates, sticks and gloves and how important it was for them to fit properly in order to play hockey correctly, safely and skillfully. Now we are going to discuss the remaining hockey equipment you will require to play safely and to protect your body from serious injury. Young players should be with their parents when buying equipment to try it on for a proper fit. Prices range upward from Junior to Professional models in a quality Sporting Goods Store.

SHIN PADS

Price Range: \$45.00 - \$55.00 +

Shin pads are designed to protect your shins and knee caps but they also wrap around the side and back of your lower leg to help protect you from skate and stick cuts. They come in Junior & Senior models and vary in different lengths and widths but you should be able to purchase a pair that fit correctly without any difficulty. Measure from mid kneecap to top of skate while child is sitting. There should be some flexible bending movement between the kneecap and shin guard section.

The proper length and fit is from the knee cap to the top of the skate, where the laces are tied. Their length in inches is now stamped on the side of most shin pads for accurate sizing. A shin pad 1 inch too long will ride up while skating and 1 inch too short will leave a space for injury. Defencemen's shin pads are wider for blocking shots and Forwards are slimmer for quick speed.

Cotton batten applied to the knee cap cavity will act as a cushion if you fall on your knees or when you block a shot. Defencemen who block shots regularly will need this extra cushioning.

Clear shin pad tape or Velcro straps are used to hold the pads in place. One strip goes just below the knee and the other strip just above the ankle. Some shin pad models have straps attached.

SHOULDER PADS

Price Range: \$45.00 - \$65.00 +

Shoulder pads are designed to protect your shoulders, collar bone, rib cage, upper & mid back, biceps & triceps, chest, yet provide a full range of motion for shooting & giving or taking a check.

They come in Junior and Senior models in different sizes, shapes and weights for different positions and should conform to your shoulders. Forwards would wear smaller and lighter models while Defencemen's would be bigger, heavier and have thicker chest padding for blocking shots.

Shoulder pads must fit properly to protect you and are secured in position by Velcro straps so they won't shift if body checked by an opponent. They should extend down far enough to meet the top of your hockey pants. See your sporting goods sales person for advice and sizing requirements.

ELBOW PADS

Price Range: \$35.00 - \$45.00 +

Elbow pads are designed to protect the space between your shoulder pads and hockey gloves. They cushion your elbows if you fall and your forearm if you are slashed. They are very important for youngsters because they usually fall more on their elbows than other parts of their body.

Purchase a quality pair, preferably leather rather than plastic, with some cushioning if you fall. Some flexibility built into them so your arms can freely go from 90 degrees to 180 degrees at the elbow without too much effort. This range of motion is important for accurate passing & receiving and generating shooting speed & power. Elbow pads come in Junior and Senior sized models.

HOCKEY PANTS**Price Range: \$65.00 - \$75.00 +**

Hockey pants are designed to protect your thighs, back of leg, kidneys, tail bone, hip area and the padded top, wraps around to protect your lower rib area then extends down to the player's knee.

The pants should come up high enough to cover the area between the bottom of your shoulder pads and the top of your shin pads. Pants come in both Junior and Senior sized models, so try them on as different hockey manufacturers and models fit differently. The pant size should be 4- 6 inches larger than your waist size. This provides extra room for bending and feeling unrestricted while skating yet still provides plenty of protection. Make sure you can deep knee bend with your hockey pants on, if not, they are too small. Hockey pants should fit semi loosely, not be tight fitting.

The pants are held up with suspenders or a belt on specific models.

ATHLETIC SUPPORTER AND CUP - JOCK /JILL STRAP **Price Range: \$10 - \$20 +**

An **Athletic Supporter** and **Cup** is a combination of a hard plastic/metal cup, held in position by a cloth pouch that protects your groin area. They come in Male, Female and goalie models with various waist and cup sizes. They should fit snugly, not tightly over your underwear/longjohns. The "CCM Compression Shorts" with jock is now available for between \$25.00 to \$50.00.

GARTER BELT**Price Range: \$7.00 - \$10.00 +**

A **Garter Belt** is worn around your waist to hold your hockey socks up. They come in stretchable waist sizes with 4 adjustable clips that attach to the top of your socks.

NECK GUARD/THROAT PROTECTOR**Price Range: \$15.00 - \$20.00 +**

It is now mandatory in Canada for all Minor Hockey players to wear a BNQ approved **Neck Guard/Throat Protector**. This will protect your neck/throat from minor skate/stick cuts.

MOUTH GUARD**Price Range: \$15.00 - \$20.00 +**

A coloured **Mouth Guard** (so Referees can see them from a distance) is now mandatory in Minor and Youth hockey to help protect your teeth, and perhaps a serious concussion or head injury.

HELMET**Price Range: \$50.00 - \$95.00 +**

Your hockey **Helmet** is **the most important** piece of protective hockey equipment you will purchase. It helps protect your skull and brain from serious head injury. A **New** helmet is recommended because a used one could have been smashed on the ice a number of times thus weakening its structure. Fine cracks that you can't see may be in the plastic or the plastic could have dried out making it unsafe. The foam inside the helmet could also be very hard or dried out. Helmets should be **replaced after 5 years**. It's not worth taking a chance by buying a used one.

In Canada, the helmet must be CSA approved by a government agency and in the USA by the HECC to meet specific safety standards. Helmets can be adjusted with a small screw driver to make it fit securely with little movement inside for optimum protection. Minor Hockey Coaches must now wear a helmet when on the ice running a practice. The chin strap must be secured properly to hold the helmet in place. Failure to comply, by playing/touching the puck with an unfastened chin strap or loss of helmet will result in a 2 minute Minor penalty for "Ineligible Player." **Note:** Don't paint or put decals on the helmet as it could weaken the shell and void the warranty. Adding small numbered stickers, signifying your sweater number is allowed.

FACE MASK**Price Range: \$25.00 - \$45.00 +**

In Minor Hockey in Canada, a full CSA approved **Face Mask** must be securely attached to the helmet to protect your eyes, nose, face and teeth. These masks come in two approved styles:

- 1) a wire cage with small spaces allowing for air to circulate about your face.
- 2) clear plastic shield with air vents at the bottom around the chin area and at the top forehead.

Some face masks come already attached to the helmet and cost between \$50.00 and \$75.00.

Each style has it's own pros and cons but make sure the cage fits snug against your chin. Also some face masks may not fit all model helmets. Take your helmet with you when buying a face mask.

HOCKEY BAG**Price Range: \$45.00 - \$75.00 +**

Every player needs a **Hockey Bag** which is large enough to carry all your protective equipment to and from the rink. Goalies can purchase larger goaltenders bags that will accommodate all of their extra large and bulky equipment.

The newly designed bags have a series of pockets on the outside for storing your skates and wet underwear. Some models now have 2 wheels and a handle on them to make it easier for rolling. The inside area stores all your large protective equipment and has a small zippered pocket.

MISCELLANEOUS SUPPLIES

Every player should have **some** of the following **miscellaneous items** in their hockey bag:

- 1) An extra pair of skate laces. (Proper length)
- 2) Black and/or white tape for your stick blade and knob.
- 3) Clear tape or extra Velcro straps for your shin pads.
- 4) A small skate stone to remove any minor nicks on the blades of your skates.
- 5) Band-aids in case you get a cut, a cloth to dry your skate blades and a water bottle.
- 6) A small saw to cut a new stick & screw driver to tighten your helmet/mask screws.
- 7) A puck for practice, and a towel and bar of soap for after the game if showering.
- 8) A pair of skate guards if having to walk across stones or cement to get to the ice.
- 9) A small piece of carpet to stand on if changing on a wet floor before or after game.

GETTING DRESSED

This is a **general**, though not specific, order to follow when **getting dressed** for a hockey game or practice, either at home or at the rink. It should be similar to the following:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Light 100% cotton socks. | 9. Skates- tie skates up now |
| 2. Cotton undershorts. | 10. Tape shin pads in place or use velcro strips |
| 3. Long cotton underwear, 1 or 2 piece. | 11. Shoulder pads. |
| 4. Athletic Supporter and cup. | 12. Elbow pads. |
| 5. Garter Belt or ITECH shorts. | 13. Neck Protector and mouth guard. |
| 6. Hockey Socks around ankles. | 14. Hockey Sweater. |
| 7. Shin Pads then pull socks up | 15. Helmet. |
| 8. Pants. | 16. Gloves. |

Don't forget to remove your skate guards in the dressing room, or before going on the ice.

SUMMARY

It is extremely important to purchase hockey equipment that fits properly to protect specific areas of your body. The padding must conform to your body for proper protection. Try it on before purchasing it or get a professional hockey equipment sales person's opinion about proper fit.

To reduce the possibility of injuries, equipment must be secured in position with tape or velcro straps to prevent shifting or moving if you are body checked or if you fall to the ice.

It is not necessary to purchase brand new expensive equipment **except** for Helmets which should be new. **Used equipment** in good shape will be much cheaper and can be purchased at some sports shops like "Play It Again Sports" or at the local used hockey equipment and skate exchange at the start of the hockey season. Kids grow very quickly so used/worn equipment is a very good alternative if it still has its safety features. Check the stitching, padding and for excessive wear.

Ideally, cracked equipment should be replaced but sometimes this is impossible due to budget constraints. If the plastic splits, use duct tape to hold it together until you can replace it.

Youngsters can wear breathable cotton long johns or polo type pyjamas that absorb sweat under their equipment. It's not required to have new, expensive "Under Armor" performance apparel.

Dry **all** of your equipment including underwear & skate towel after every practice or game. Take it out, Hang it up and Air dry it properly at room temperature or use the new Hockey Airing Racks that can be set up almost anywhere. Make sure your under garments are washed and odour free. Baking soda will reduce equipment odour and do not put equipment in clothes dryer as it'll crack.

CCM, Bauer, Warrior and Sher-Wood make quality hockey equipment for all ages and sizes.

Bauer and CCM offer starter youth packages from \$99.00 to \$125.00 at Dick's and Canadian Tire.

Remember to stretch your legs and groin area prior to dressing. Then warm up and stretch some more including upper body and legs when on the ice, prior to the start of the game or practice.

Note: Minor & Youth hockey Coaches in Canada and the United States must now wear CSA or HECC approved helmets during all on ice practices, but visors are optional.

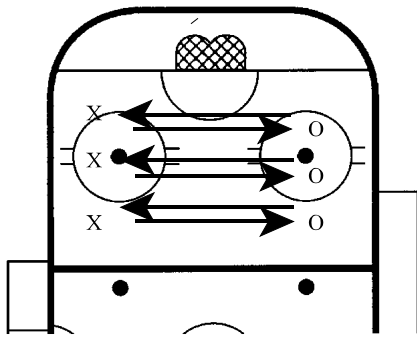
REVIEW AND TEST TIME

Now would be an excellent time to review specific sections of **UNIT II**.

Your child or players must have a sound understanding of the following if they are going to progress:

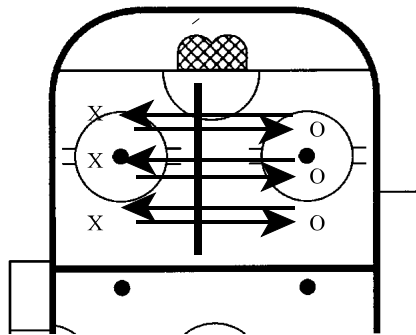
- C **Skates: Fit, Lacing, Sharpening, Edges,(Inside and Outside) Stops, Starts, Turns, Crossovers and 180 Degree Pivots (forward to back & back to forward)**
- C **Sticks: Length, Lie, Curve and Grip with proper hand spacing for various skills**
- C **Puckhandling, Stickhandling, Deaking, Shooting and Carrying the Puck Skills**
- C **Rules of Passing, Types of Passes, Giving & Receiving a pass, Skills required**
- C **Equipment: Size, Fit, Safety, Protection, Drying, and Getting Dressed Order**

If any player is having difficulty with this unit, spend more time on that section.

PASSING DRILLS**FLAT PASS AND RECEIVING DRILL**

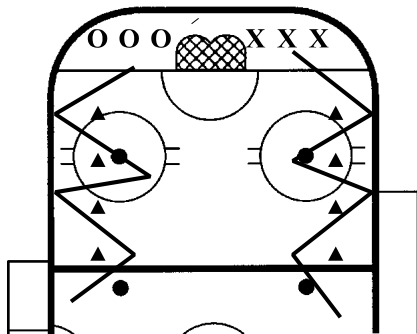
Have players line up across from each other about 25 - 35 feet apart. Pass the puck on the ice back and forth on your forehand and backhand. Practice receiving passes on your forehand and backhand.

Variation - Go from one end to other end of rink passing on forehand, then return, passing on backhand side. Lead the receiver by passing ahead of him so he can skate to the puck

FLIP /SAUCER PASS AND RECEIVING DRILL

Similar to previous drill but with an obstacle down the middle of the ice. i.e. a bench or hockey sticks laid on the ice etc. Players must flip the puck over the obstacle (hockey stick, bench, etc.) On their forehand and then on their backhand.

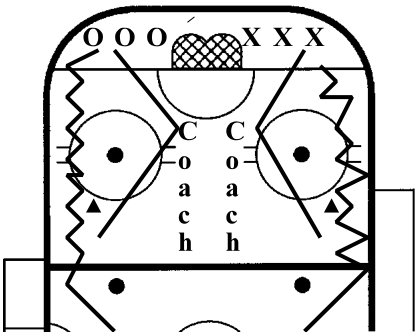
Variation - go from one end to other end of rink on forehand then return on backhand side, passing and receiving puck over the obstacle.

BANK PASS DRILL ON FOREHAND & BACKHAND

Place a series of pylons 4 feet from the boards on both sides of the rink. Players must study the angle puck enters and exits.

Players start at both corners and bank pass puck off the boards to yourself, finish at opposite end of rink.

Reverse drill using your backhand bank pass off the boards from the opposite end of rink.

**GIVE AND GO DRILL**

Have players at both corners **give** a pass to the coach in slot area, then **go** down the boards and around the pylon cutting into the middle, taking a return pass in full flight, and shoot on the goalie.

UNIT III

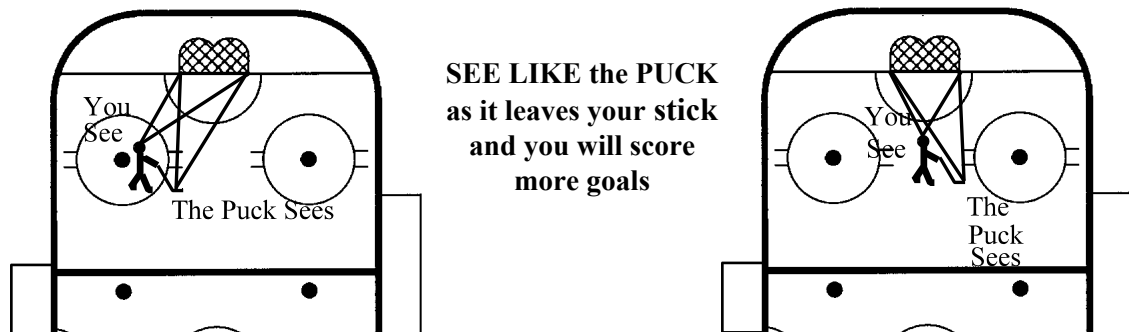
SHOOTING AND SCORING

SHOOTING - Quick releases before goalie can get set or across net to far side.

Shooting the puck is the third most important skill for a hockey player to possess. It requires both physical strength, arm and wrist coordination, mental concentration and shooting accuracy, but it is a learned skill that can be **taught** to young players and perfected with practice on and off the ice.

On average, a Youth/Minor Hockey Team will take between 12-20 shots on goal in a 50 minute game. Players must score on some of those shots in order to tie or win the game.

- C A player must be able to shoot the puck to score a goal. On average, and depending on which position you're playing, you may get between 0 (zero) to 5 shots on net per game.
- C The **harder** you shoot, the better your chance of scoring, but you must get your shot on goal.
- C Your **lowest** hand on the stick shaft determines if you shoot left or right. It is also the power hand propelling the puck toward the goal. Your **top** hand acts like a hinge pulling inward toward your body. It's this combination of push and pull action that moves the puck forward.
- C Stick speed, like bat speed in baseball, is very important and will greatly increase the velocity/speed of your shot. The downward striking speed behind the puck on a slap shot, and the forward dragging speed and snapping of the wrist in shooting a hard/heavy wrist shot.
- C Accuracy and quick release of the puck are two other essential elements for scoring goals.
- C The wrist shot should be the first shot explained, demonstrated, and practiced.
- C What **you** see as an opening on goal is not necessarily the same opening the **puck** sees.
- C In order to score, you must **see like the puck** and understand the best shooting angles to the net from your **stick** not your eyes because the puck is positioned 2-3 feet to the left or right side of you. The pucks angle to the net is some what different than what your eyes see. If you can visualize **the direct line to the net that the puck will travel** you will score more goals.
- C If you are in the offensive zone and you're not sure what to do with the puck, shoot it toward the net because it could go in on a screen shot, a deflection, or there could be a rebound.

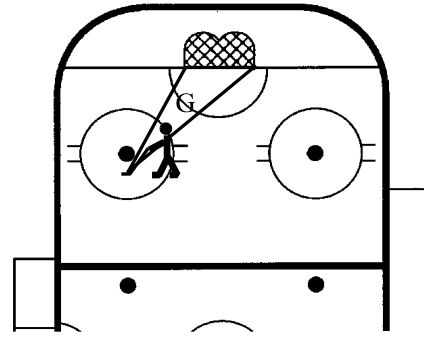


SHOOTING/SCORING ANGLES FROM YOUR STICK

**Left Winger with Left Hand Shot,
Some Space To Score.**

GOOD SHOOTING ANGLE

But beyond the face off dot and
deeper into the corner = a poorer angle to score from

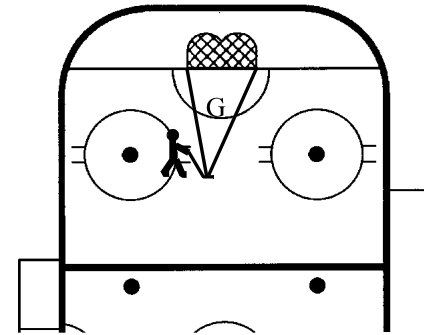


**Left Winger (in the same on ice location) but with
Right Hand Shot,**

More Space to Score.

MUCH BETTER SHOOTING ANGLE

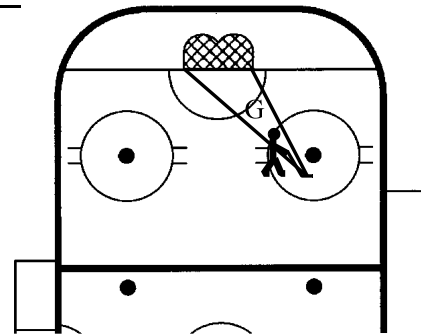
from the slot area and a great place to score from



**Right Winger with Right Hand Shot,
Some Space to Score.**

GOOD SHOOTING ANGLE

But beyond the face off dot and
deeper into the corner = a poorer angle to score from

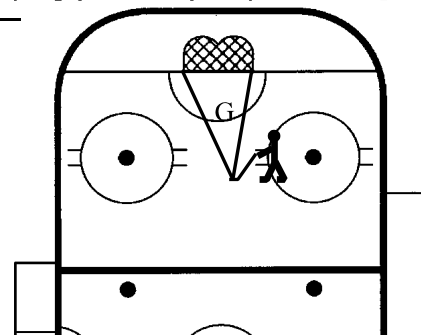


**Right Winger (in the same on ice location) but with
Left Hand Shot.**

More Space to Score.

MUCH BETTER SHOOTING ANGLE

from the slot area and a great place to score from



"See like the puck as it leaves your stick to score more goals"

By playing the **off wing** ie: left wing with a right hand shot, or right wing with a left hand shot, you have a far better **shooting angle** to the net and your chances of scoring are greatly increased. Many **Power Plays** have the wingers playing their off wing to improve their chances of scoring because they have more open net to shoot at. Right hand shooting Alex Ovechkin scores from around the left face-off dot on the Washington Capitals Power Play. But shooting from the **slot** area, between the circles and near the hash marks, whether you shoot left or right, are a left wing, right wing or center will increase your chance of scoring even more. Many, many goals are scored from here.

SHOOTING MECHANICS

To **shoot** the puck hard, you must be able to transfer your weight from your back leg at the start of the shot, to your front leg with the completion of the shot on your follow through motion.

The puck speed generated by the shot is a combination of:

- 1) **Stick Speed - in striking or dragging the puck forward**
- 2) **Arm Strength - and correct Hand Positioning/Spacing on the Stick Shaft**
- 3) **Striking/Hitting Power - a few inches behind the puck on a Slap Shot**
- 4) **Weight Transfer - from your back leg, to your front leg on a Wrist Shot**
- 5) **Wrist Snapping Action - as puck leaves middle to heel area of the stick blade**
- 6) **Quick Release - of puck near your front foot and before the goalie is set for it**
- 7) **Follow Through - of the stick for accuracy on a high or low shot**

The **height** of your shot is dependent upon your release and follow through. For a high shot to the top corners, snap your wrist upward and release and follow through with your stick to the height you want the puck to go. This release and follow through action propels the puck toward the target.

For a **low** shot to the bottom corners of the net, or a shot right on the ice, roll the wrist of your lower hand over and downward. Keep the blade of the stick low to the ice with **no** upward release or high follow through, but release the puck and follow through along the ice toward the target.

Your 2 hands are placed on the shaft, one at the top around the knob and the other hand, the power hand, between **2 and 3 feet** down the shaft. Bend at the waist, arms outstretched, feet shoulder width apart, weight on back foot, stick blade cupped around the puck which is positioned slightly behind you. Look at the target or open spot where you want the puck to go, drag the puck forward and shoot.

Your bottom hand is your **power hand**. It moves quickly across the front of your body, forward towards the net. Cock your wrist and snap it as the puck leaves your stick for powerful wrist shots.

Your top hand or hinge/guide hand moves in the opposite direction, pulling the top of your stick inward toward the front of your body. This is a coordinated hands pushing and pulling action.

The power energy created by your legs(weight transfer), arms, wrists and hands,(bottom hand pushing and top hand pulling) in opposite directions, propels the puck at top speed toward the net.

SUMMARY

It takes a lot of practice to develop shots, it does not happen overnight. The more you practice, the faster the puck will travel. Some kids shoot over **100** pucks a day trying to improve the speed and accuracy of their shot. You can strengthen your wrists by doing light weight dumbbell curls.

Practice shooting a variety of shots every day using a regulation size and weight puck. Buy an old net at a yard sale and get a piece of cardboard or slippery surface (less friction) to shoot off and start shooting. Also, try putting an big soft object in front of the net to act as the goalie cutting the angle or place a piece of plywood 4 feet by 6 feet with cut out spaces in the 4 corners and 5 hole. This will improve your accuracy by hitting specific spots. Always hit the net because there could be a rebound. Your shooting and scoring improvement will be amazing in just a short period of time.

“A hard, low shot on the ice is just as effective as a high shot.”

TYPES OF SHOTS

WRIST SHOT *Auston Matthews has a great and heavy wrist shot.*

Wrist shots are very accurate and they are used when you're close to the goal. Their range varies from about 3 to 25 feet out: from the face-off dots, the slot area and right into the goal crease area.

Wrist shots, if released quickly, don't allow goalies to get into their set position because there is no back swing of the stick to tip them off the shot is coming. Hands are about 2-3 feet apart on the shaft.

They should be used on breakaways instead of slap shots because you have much more control and accuracy of where the puck is going. Wrist shots are far more accurate than most slap shots.

The key to shooting a wrist shot is the drag & sweeping speed of the puck & stick blade on the ice.

Most wrist shots begin with the puck positioned beyond your back foot. The puck should be located near the middle to heel of your stick blade, with the top of the blade angled /tilted over the puck.

Your arms are then fully extended backward in order to drag the puck forward quickly in a sweeping action, then snap the wrists at the last moment in opposite directions to create power and flight.

Your weight transfer is from your back leg at the start of the shot, to your front leg at the conclusion of the shot as the puck is swept quickly along the ice. You should be leaning well over the puck and the puck should not leave, or be released from your stick blade before **reaching your front skate**.

The wrists are snapped hard in opposite directions at the end of the sweeping motion to create speed and power. The bottom wrist pushing toward the net, the top wrist pulling inward toward your body.

The release and follow through action work together and is very important for height and accuracy.

Remember it's what the puck sees, not what you see. Become the eyes of the puck and you will score a lot more goals. Follow through upward, or downward along the ice for the height you want the puck to go. Top corners, mid height or into the lower bottom corners of the net.

To develop a powerful wrist shot takes a lot of practice. It can be practised at home in your drive way, at a school yard, etc. Use an official puck when you practice shooting because it is the proper size 3 inches by 1 inch, weighs 5 ½ to 6 ounces and is used in all games except beginners. There is a new puck on the market with a special plastic coating for shooting. It slides on asphalt and cement.

Wrist Shot

START WITH THE PUCK WELL BACK, WEIGHT IS ON THE BACK LEG, FEET ABOUT SHOULDER WIDTH APART, LOWER HAND IS DOWN THE SHAFT, WRIST IS COCKED, DRAG FORWARD, RELEASE AND FOLLOW THROUGH



SNAP SHOT

The **Snap Shot** is a half slap shot, half wrist shot, but with no back swing to tip the goalie off.

It's used during scrambles for loose pucks around the goal crease, or on rebounds from 5 to 10 feet from the net. Get the shot on goal because there could be a big fat rebound if the Goalie stops it.

It is not as accurate as a wrist shot, but it is quicker and more powerful often surprising the goalie.

To shoot a snap shot there is no back swing. Simply turn or cup the **toe** of your stick blade downward resting it on the ice about 6 inches behind the puck. The **heel** of the stick is now **up** in the air about 4 - 6 inches off/above the ice. Your hands are about 2 to 3 feet apart when puck is released/shot.

The **bottom** wrist is cocked then snapped upward as the arms move forward to hit the ice just behind the puck. Its like completing a letter C with your stick's heel at the top of the C then brought down.

The puck is positioned slightly ahead of you and to your stick side. Glide into the puck and strike it hard, or you can also pull the puck toward your body then snap it upward while gliding into it.

Hit the puck in the middle of the blade and follow through to the height you want the puck to go.



SNAP SHOT

SNAP SHOT

CAN BE INITIATED WITH THE WEIGHT ON EITHER FOOT, THE BLADE IS CUPPED OVER THE PUCK.

THE PUCK IS DRAWN TOWARDS THE BODY, AS THE PUCK IS BEING PULLED, THE BOTTOM HAND SLIDES DOWN THE SHAFT OF THE STICK SO THE PLAYER IS NOW IN THE POSITION TO MAKE THE SNAP SHOT

SLAP SHOT

Slap Shots are the most powerful shots in hockey when the puck is hit/shot correctly. Some NHL slap shots travel close to 100 miles per hour and feel much heavier than 6 ounces if they hit you.

For the beginner and players aged, 5 to 8, it is more important to develop the other shots first and leave the slap shot until you are bigger and stronger in Pee Wee or Bantam hockey.

Slap shots are taken by both forwards and defencemen from the Blue Line, right into the slot area.

It is not a very accurate shot, but it is very powerful if shot properly and can frighten or hurt some young Youth/Minor Hockey defencemen and goalies with its speed and powerful heavy force.

Slap shots are an excellent shot to deflect if on the ice, but very dangerous if shot high. If you are screening their goalie in front of the net, always be facing the incoming shot to see how high the puck is coming so you can get out of the way if it's coming toward your head.

Note: Don't turn your back to the puck if screening for a slap shot, keep your back to goalie.

Some slap shots, if stopped by the goalie, create big rebounds which can be converted into goals.

To shoot a slap shot, draw your stick back up in an arc, over your shoulder and head, like a golf club. Have the puck positioned slightly ahead of your front foot and about 2 feet off to your shooting side.

Drop your lower hand, the power hand, to mid-way on the shaft or about 3 feet down the stick and **lock your wrist, forearm, and elbow** in a firm straight line position.

Swing down on your stick using the speed and power in your arms, forearms, locked wrists and hands to **hit the ice 1-2 inches** behind the puck. The stick shaft will bend/flex slightly as you hit the ice, then drag it forward along the ice catching the puck in the middle of the stick blade and propel it forward toward your target. Rotate your shoulders and hips forward when striking the puck on your release and follow through toward the target.

The faster your down swing, the greater the strike force, the more speed is generated on your shot.

Strike puck and follow through, high for a shot to the top corners of the net, **or** roll your bottom wrist over and downward for a low shot right along the ice with your release and follow through.

Make sure you bend over the puck and transfer your weight from your back leg on the downswing to your front leg on your follow through toward the target. Hit the net as it could create a rebound.

SLAP SHOT



THE FIRST THING TO NOTE IS THAT CONTACT IS MADE WITH THE ICE (ONE TO TWO INCHES) BEHIND THE PUCK BEFORE SLAPPING IT.

THE EYES ARE ON THE PUCK SLIGHTLY AHEAD OF THE FRONT FOOT. THIS SHOT REQUIRES A GREAT DEAL OF FORCE AS EVIDENT FROM THE BEND OF THE SHAFT ON CONTACT WITH THE ICE & PUCK.

THE FOLLOW-THROUGH IS LOW AND TOWARDS THE TARGET .FOR A LOW SHOT.

ONE TIMED SLAP SHOT or a “**One Timer**” by both Forwards and Defencemen

As you get older and bigger in under 13 and under 15 hockey, you will want to develop a **one timed slap shot**. This shot is very quick and is used before the goalie can get across the net to his set position. To execute it, you must be positioned on your off wing side and facing the incoming puck. A team mate will send you a slow to medium speed pass and you must one time its speed and slap the puck without stopping it. This takes skill, timing, concentration, and a lot of practice, but once perfected it is a valuable asset and you could score a lot of goals or get assists from rebounds.

BACK HAND SHOT



A **Back Hand Shot** is rarely used because of the curved blade.

It is used close to the net when the puck is on your back hand side and when attempting specific wrap around shots.

It is good for lifting rebounds high into the top corners of the net, and when cutting across the front of the goal on your backhand.

The back hand shot is basically a wrist shot from your back hand side. The puck is dragged from behind you, blade cupped 45 degrees, then lifted upward with your release and follow through.

Going to your back hand on a breakaway is a very effective play if you are deking the goalie or if he goes down. You can score by **lifting** the puck high over his leg or arm at the last moment.

Goalies hate back hand shots because they don't know where the puck is headed. Most think that they are going to get hit in the face by the shot so they generally pull up, or freeze on the shot, allowing a slower or weaker shot along the ice to score.

To execute a Back Hand Shot, the puck is positioned in the middle of the blade on your backhand side. Arms are fully extended backward, your weight is on your back leg and is transferred to your front leg with your rotating arm swing. The stick blade is cupped about 45 degrees over the puck.

Drag the puck forward quickly then snap and lift your bottom cocked wrist upward as it reaches your front foot to create speed and height. Puck is located on middle to heel area of stick blade.

Release by front foot, lift upward and follow through to the height you want the puck to go.

Hands are 2 to 3 feet apart on the shaft, feet are about shoulder width apart.

Follow through high for a top corner shot or follow through low for a shot along the ice.

You will get more power and speed into the back hand shot if you are completing a sharp turn around a defenceman, or are coming out from behind the net on your backhand side.

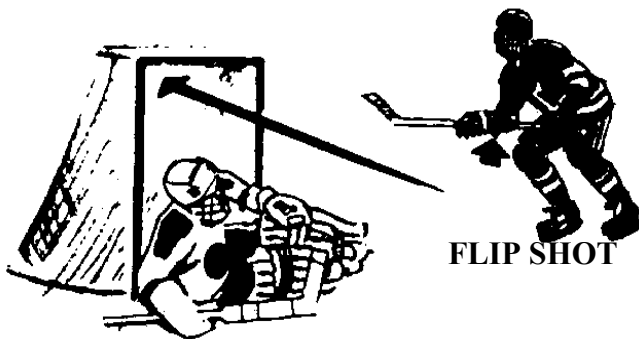
The swinging and twisting momentum of your body's trunk and shoulders will help propel the back hand shot much faster toward the goal. Backhand shots are also used in some wrap around attempts

FLIP SHOT

A **Flip Shot** is a very effective shot for scoring goals on loose pucks lying in the crease, or on short rebounds just outside the crease. Hands 2-3 feet apart, use wrists and forearms to flip puck upward.

There is usually a scramble around the crease and the goalie goes down on his knees or is lying in the crease, leaving the top of the net wide open. Scoop puck upward from in front of your front foot.

Your job is to gain control of the loose puck, get the front 1/3 part of your stick blade under it and just flip it up off the toe of your stick with an upward flick of your bottom wrist, high into the net. Follow through to the height you wish the puck to go. The lower wrist flips up, the upper wrist pulls down. Quickness, shooting/wrist power, release and follow through are essential to score goals.

**FLIP SHOT**

USED MOST FREQUENTLY TO GET THE PUCK UP QUICKLY WHEN IN CLOSE TO THE NET OR TO CLEAR A PUCK FROM ONE ZONE TO ANOTHER. TO PROPERLY EXECUTE THIS SHOT, THE HANDS MUST COORDINATE IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS, BE SURE TO EMPHASIZE QUICK WRIST ACTION IN ORDER TO GET THE PUCK UP QUICKLY.

SHOVEL SHOT / ROOF SHOT

A **Shovel Shot** is similar to a flip shot. It is another effective shot for scoring goals from close range on rebounds or loose pucks in the crease area. Keep knees bent, use forearms & hands, lift upward.

The difference between using a flip shot or shovel, the goalie is down but the loose puck is in or near his pads. The flip shot won't clear his pads, however a shovel shot will if executed properly.

To execute a shovel shot, you must **pull the puck back towards you** at least two feet from the goalie's pads and tilt your stick blade at a 45 degree angle to get under the puck, then **lift** up in a shovelling motion towards the top part or roof of the net. Your both hands, lift together, upward.

The puck should be positioned near the middle of your blade, not the toe, and you must draw it back to you in order to clear the downed goalie's pads. Hands 2-3 feet apart in a **shovelling** grip. Some players panic and attempt this shot too close to the goalie and hit him with the puck. Stay relaxed.

Your weight stays on your back foot for leverage throughout the shovel shot. Your hands and lifting motion are exactly the same as if you are shovelling snow or sand, both lifting upward at same time.

Follow through to the height you wish the puck to go. A shovel shot could also be used on a breakaway if the goalie goes down. Shovel the puck up over his shoulder into the top corner of the net. The puck and stick are usually positioned just off to the side of your front foot.

The shovel shot is a difficult shot to master at an early age (7-9) but when perfected by age (11-12) will work well for you in scoring goals from close range. **Practice, Practice, Practice!**

SECRETS OF SCORING GOALS - Quick release of Puck

Every hockey player I know loves to **score goals** and it is a learned skill. To win a hockey game your team must score at least one goal. The more goals you score, the better your chance of winning.

TIPS TO HELP YOUR TEAM SCORE MORE GOALS

- 1) **Shoot** the puck yourself if there is a good chance to score, but make sure you hit the net.
- 2) If the goalie cuts the angle, **Pass** puck off to a team-mate who is in a better scoring position.
- 3) If you're in front, or at the side of the net, **Tip** or **Deflect** a team-mate's shot into the net.
- 4) Go hard to the net to get to a **Rebound** before their defenceman does and shoot to score.
- 5) **Deke** (fake direction) the goalie on a breakaway or a close in scoring opportunity.
- 6) **Screen** the goalie's view and a team-mate scores because he couldn't see the puck.

Everyone can learn how to score goals, but some players are more natural goal scorers than others.

Remember, any puck shot on the net could result in a goal. It does not have to be a 100 mile per hour slap shot, an easy 1/8 mile per hour shot could go in under the right circumstances i.e.(screen)

Getting the goalie to move out of his set position and over to one side of the net, getting him to make the first move by dropping to his knees or leaving the post, are all situations the shooter should be trying to get the goalie to do by head faking, deking or waiting. You can then shoot to the open spot or pass to the open team-mate in a better scoring position after seeing how the goalie reacted.

SECRETS FOR SCORING GOALS- " See Like the Puck "visualize it's direct path to the net

- C **Look** - Where the goalie is positioned and for any openings. Is he standing or on his knees
- c **Think** - Can I score or create a rebound on a shot taken from here or not?
- c **React** - Shoot, deke, pass to team mate, or carry the puck to a better shooting location.

TO SCORE A GOAL

To **score a goal**, you must propel the **entire puck**, not 1/2, not 3/4, but 100% of it, in a legal manner **over the Red 2 inch wide Goal Line** and into the goal/net which measures 4 feet high by 6 feet wide. If one of your team mates is illegally inside the goal crease, the Referee will disallow the goal. He must exit the crease before the puck enters it. Once this is done and if a loose puck is lying inside the goal crease you are allowed to enter the crease and try to score.

THE PUCK

The **puck**, which should be frozen before every game to reduce bouncing, is made of vulcanized rubber, and measures 3 inches wide by 1 inch high and weighs approximately 5.5 to 6 ounces. There is a lighter 4 ounce puck with the same 3 inch by 1 inch dimensions available for Beginners, aged 5-6 and some 7-8 to use if the local Association approves. This lighter puck helps all new players 5 to 8 years of age just coming into the program, to carry, pass and shoot the puck easier.

OTHER IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF SCORING GOALS ARE LEARNING:

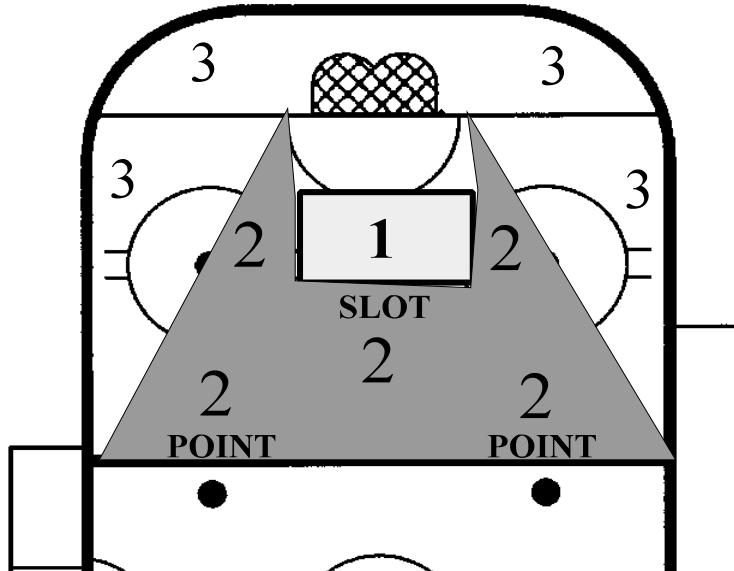
- 1) The **Best Shooting and Scoring Areas** from on the Ice
- 2) The **Best Scoring Locations** on the Goalie
- 3) **Knowing** where **Rebounds** are likely to **End Up** and positioning yourself there

BEST SHOOTING AND SCORING AREAS FROM ON THE ICE

1. The **best shooting area for scoring goals** is **#1**, 12 - 15 feet, right in front of the net, between the hash marks of the 2 face-off circles. The **Slot Area**. See Diagram below.

The area just outside the goal crease is excellent for tip ins, deflections, rebounds and screen shots. You cannot be standing in the crease to score a goal until the puck enters the crease.

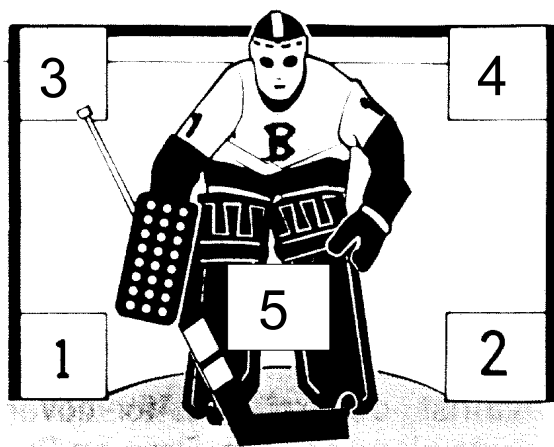
2. The **second best** shooting area is **#2**, between the face-off dots and out to the Blue Line. You still have a good angle to the net from just outside the slot area right to the points.
3. A **Poor** shooting area is **#3**, along the side boards, deep in the corners or behind the net because of the extreme angle or location in relation to the goal. A smart play you can make from these areas is to pass the puck into the best possible shooting/scoring area for a high percentage shot on goal if the player is open to receive a pass. If no one is open, keep the puck yourself and try to carry it to a better shooting or passing location if possible. If you have no other options, a shot from here is a long shot, but long shots sometimes deflect in.

**SCORING AREAS AND TYPES OF SHOTS**

The highest percentage **scoring area** is directly in front of the net between the hash marks and the goal crease. "**The slot area.**" A wrist shot, slap shot, tip in, deflection, rebound, pass off or screen shot all could result in goals from this area. Try to get the puck into this area for a shot on goal. Likewise, some lucky shots will go in from almost impossible angles by banking in off someone's skate or body on a shot from in the corner or from behind the net, but the percentage is very low.

THE 5 BEST SCORING LOCATIONS ON THE GOALIE

- 1) Experts say the **best location to score** on a **Stand Up** goalie is low to the stick side.
On a **Butterfly** goalie who goes down and covers the low corners its high stick side corner.
- 2) The second best location on a **Stand Up** goalie is low glove side.
On a **Butterfly** goalie who is usually down on the ice its high glove side.
- 3) The third area on a **Stand Up** goalie is high to the stick side, over his shoulder,.
- 4) The fourth is high to the glove side, close to his shoulder and head but away from the glove.
- 5) And the fifth location is the small space between his legs. This is known as the **5-hole**.



Look before you shoot to see what the goalie is giving you. He can't be in all 5 spots at the same time. Is he standing, or has he dropped to his knees, is the 5 hole open or closed?

A good goalie shows you a spot, then takes it away by cutting the angle.

Some goalies will give you the glove side as an opening because they want you to shoot there. Then they will use their quick glove hand to snare your shot.

Coaches should study there goalie in the pre- game warmup to detect his weaknesses. Every goalie has a weakness, it just takes time to discover it's location. When you do, inform your players.

The openings they give you are small, only 5 - 10 inches, but with shooting practice and pin point accuracy you will score. During practices try to score, don't just blast away, **look, think, react**.

Statistics say: Over 55% of Minor/Youth Hockey goals are scored below the goalie's knees. Practice shooting & scoring every chance you get, even in road hockey games. Practice makes perfect

Remember: It's what the puck sees, not what you see. You must see like the puck to score goals.

ALL GOALIES CAN BE BEATEN

The more shots you get, the better your chances of scoring. The net is 6 feet wide and the goalie's pads are only 2 feet wide so there is about 4 feet to score if he doesn't cut the angle properly.

SUMMARY

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| C | If they go down - shoot high | C | If they back in - shoot low to corners |
| C | If they stand up - shoot low | C | If they open their legs shoot at the 5 |
| C | If they come out-deke wide | | hole between their goal pads |

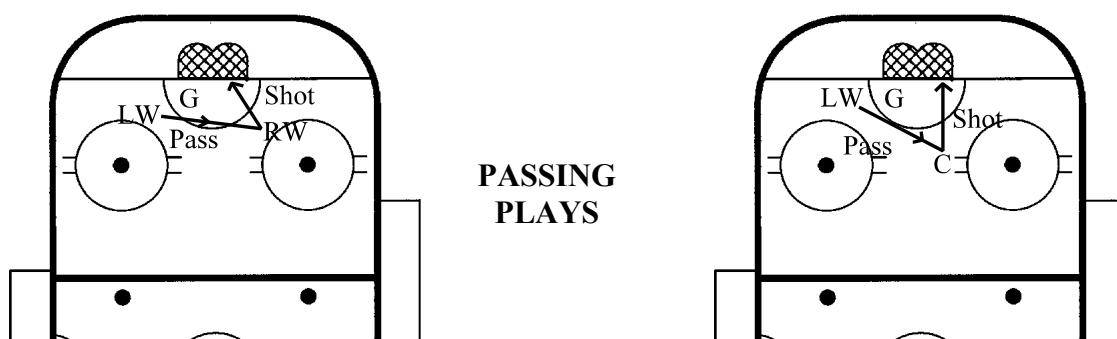
SCORING PLAYS

PASSING PLAY

One of the smartest and most unselfish scoring plays a player can make is **passing the puck** off to a team-mate who is in a better position to score a goal than you are. This requires intelligence and vision on the part of the passer. Open positioning and soft hands on the part of the receiver.

The player with the puck must draw the goalie out of his set position and over to one side of the goal to cover you. As he moves toward you, this opens up the far side of the net. Make sure your pass is not too close to the goaltender or he will stop or deflect the puck or pass with his stick.

You pass to your open team-mate by the far goal post. He has a wide open net to shoot at. You can also pass to a player in the deep slot for a good shot on net. A soft pass is preferred if there is no one checking the open receiver. If covered, spin away from your check and get into the clear for a pass.

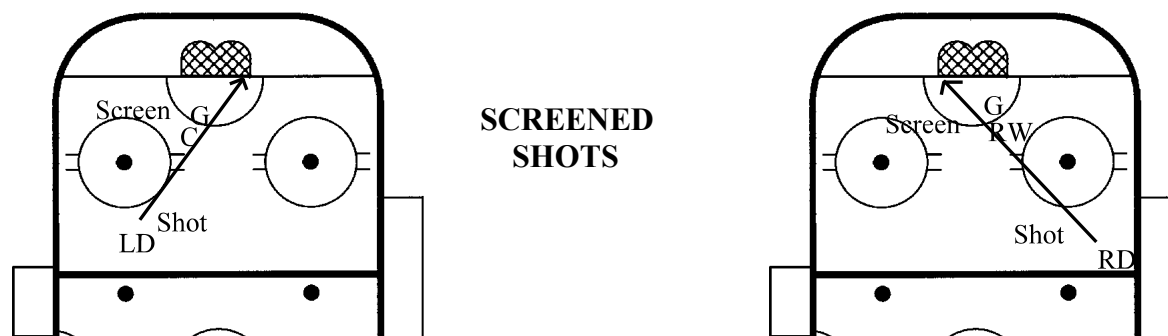


SCREENED SHOTS

A player can legally stand just **outside** the goal crease and block the goalie's view of the puck on shots from the point, deep slot, etc. This takes courage to stand there as some shots are high and hard. If the puck goes to the point, 1 forward should go to the front of the net and block goalie's view.

The opposition's defencemen will try to move you by physically pushing and shoving you - but stand tough, you have a right to be there. Take a wide stance, skates shoulder width apart to avoid being knocked down. Now there are 2 of you **screening** the goalie's view - their defenceman and you.

Be alert and ready to shoot any rebound or deflect the shot with the blade or shaft of your stick. But the shot could also sail directly into the net untouched, because the goalie didn't see it coming since you were screening/blocking his view of the puck. Getting **Traffic** in front is a very good strategy. As stated earlier, do not turn your back on any shot from the point, face outward to see it coming.



DEFLECTED SHOTS AND TIP INS

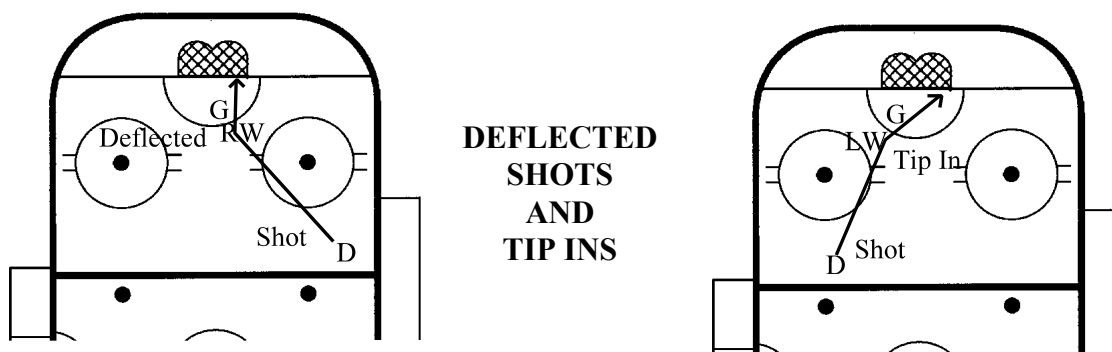
Deflected Shots and **Tip Ins** are 2 excellent ways to score goals. Goals off your body will count, but you **can't** kick, throw or deliberately direct the puck into the net. The goal will not be allowed.

Goalies have very little chance to react to a tip in or deflected shot because the puck changes direction so quickly they cannot recover. A slight change of direction is all it takes to score.

Low shots on the ice from the point, or the deep slot, can be **deflected** by the blade of your stick upward or sideways if you are in front of the net screening or just off to the side. Pucks accidentally banking in off any players legs, skates, body, hands or stick would count as a goal.

A high shot can be **tipped** providing your stick is below your shoulders or the cross bar of the net. Try to get your blade or shaft on the flying puck to change its direction up, down, left or right.

Remember: You must be positioned **outside** of the goal crease or the goal won't be allowed.



BREAKAWAYS

A player who gets a **Breakaway**- the puckcarrier breaking in alone, against the goalie, has 2 basic choices on how to score. He can either shoot, or deke, depending upon what the goalie does and how much time he has in relation to any defencemen or backcheckers trying to catch him.

If the goalie comes out to cut the angle, **deke/fake** him to one side then go around him to the other side. If he opens his legs, **shoot** for the 5 hole between them or **shoot** high just inside near post.

Deking can be done on your forehead or backhand. Players should practice both methods regularly.

If the goalie moves back deep in his net, he usually gives you the low corners. Shoot with an accurate wrist shot or snap shot right on the ice. If he drops to his knees in a butterfly style, shoot high to the top corners over his shoulder. You can sometimes make the goalie drop to his knees by faking a shot.

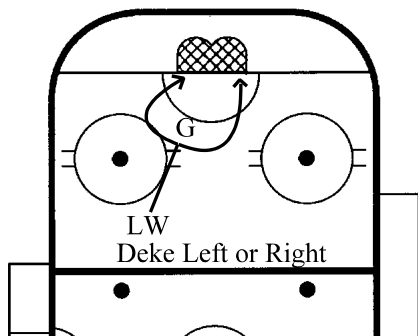
If the goalie is positioned at the edge of the crease and you decide to shoot, the best distance to score is from the **hash marks** of the circles. This is 12-15 feet from the net. If you move in closer and shoot, the goalie has the advantage by cutting the angle and you will either hit him or miss the net.

Players must not drop their head or shoulder to look at the puck or move their lower hand down the shaft too early or the goaltender will know you are going to shoot. Try to keep him guessing longer. **Remember, you must try to get the Goalie out of his set position & to make the First Move.**

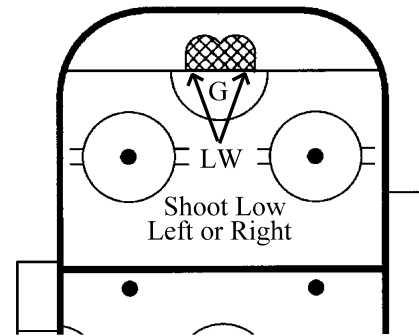
Watch to see if he:

- 1) Comes way out beyond the goal crease to cut the angle - **Deke wide L or R, then shoot**
- 2) Goes back deep into the crease, near the goal line - **Shoot Low and Hard to Corners**
- 3) If he drops to his knees in a butterfly, as most do now - **Shoot High Over His Shoulder**
- 4) Moves from one post to the other post opening his legs - **Shoot for the 5-Hole or far Post**

Most Goalies will drop to their knees if you wait long enough. Watch the goalie closely. What defensive action you caused him/her to do will tell you how to score.



IF HE COMES OUT - DEKE

BREAKAWAY

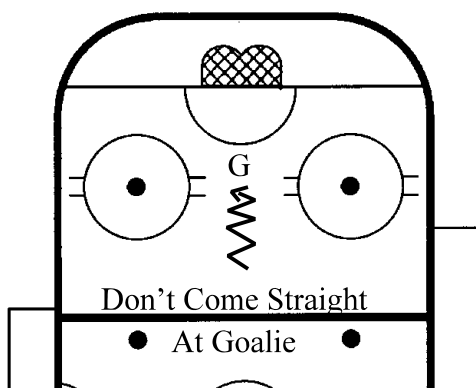
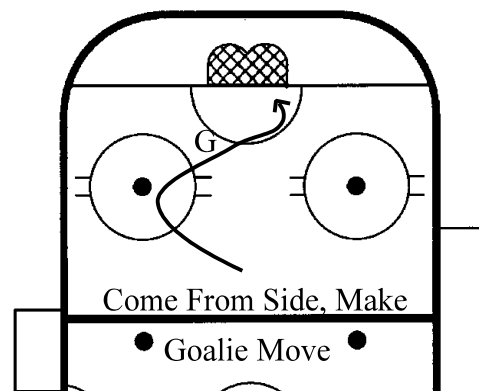
IF HE BACKS IN SHOOT LOW

PENALTY SHOTS / SHOOT OUTS

On a **Penalty Shot** or **Shoot Out**, the shooter has a lot more time with no backcheckers trying to catch you. Take your time, look at what the goalie is giving you and **think**- don't rush your shot.

On most penalty shots, the shooter is very nervous and rushes straight at the goalie and either shoots straight at him or shoots wide of the net, scoring about 2 out of 10 times. You must try to get the goalie to **move** out of his set position and to one side of the net, or to **drop to his knees** by using a deking head fake, then go to the far side of the net and shoot high into the top corner.

To improve your scoring average, come towards the goalie **from your off wing side**, not straight in. Freeze the goalie by faking a shot. Now go around him on your forehand and score inside the post. If he recovers and starts across the net you can still beat him between his legs or 5 hole.

**PENALTY SHOT OR SHOOTOUT**

REBOUNDS

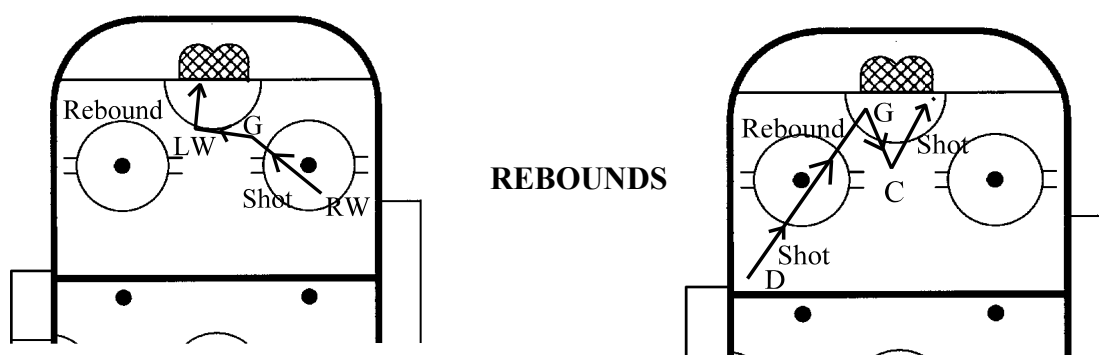
Many goals are scored on **Rebounds** (a loose puck that bounced off the goalie) He makes the first save but can't control the rebound. Skate hard to the net to recover the rebound then shoot quickly.

If the goalie doesn't catch the puck, there is a rebound off his pads, chest, arms, etc. on every shot.

Foot speed and quick hands are the keys to scoring on an uncovered rebound lying near the crease.

You must beat the goalie and the defenceman to the loose puck to get the shot off. Be aggressive to get there first and don't be afraid of being knocked down. You must fight hard for any loose puck.

Anticipation and positioning are essential to get to rebounds. If you know where the shot is coming from, you have a good idea where a rebound might end up. Position yourself there, usually around the crease to mid slot, with your stick blade on the ice, ready to fire the puck quickly at the net.



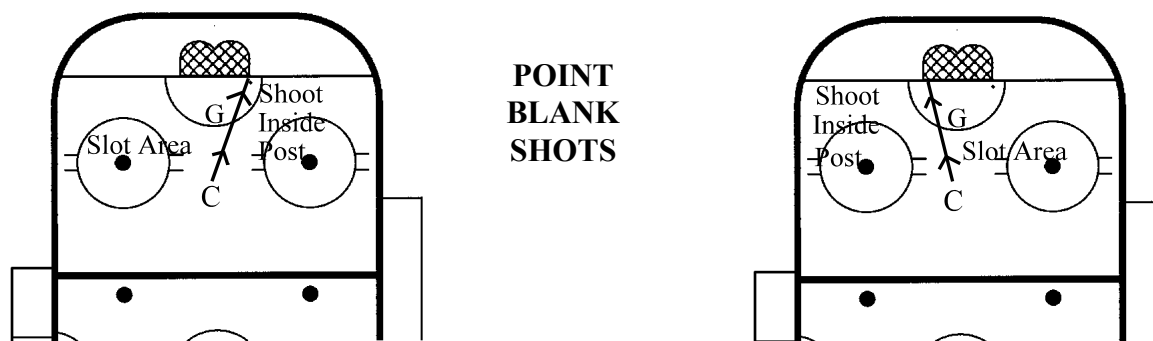
POINT BLANK SHOTS

Point Blank Shots usually result in a quality shot on goal. They are taken from the slot area situated directly in front of the net. The highest percentage of goals are scored from this area.

The **slot area** is that area located between the hash marks of the two face-off circles 12-15 feet from the net. The closer the shooter moves toward the goalie from here, the less net area there is to score.

If you find yourself with the puck in the slot area, look for an opening to the net and when you see it, shoot hard, quickly and accurately. Even if the goalie stops it, there could be a big fat rebound.

Wrist shots are more accurate than other types of shots from this location and by shooting just inside either goal post usually results in a goal. Don't stickhandle the puck if receiving a pass in the slot, cradle/cup it then get the shot off quickly before the goalie gets set and is still moving across the net and you will score a lot more goals.



WRAP AROUND SHOT

A **Wrap Around Shot** can be taken by the puck carrier coming out from behind the opponent's goal on either his forehand or backhand side. The goalie is at one side of the net and the shooter fakes coming out that side then quickly comes around the net and out the other side.

As he emerges from behind the net with the puck, he sees that all his team-mates are covered and has no chance to pass the puck to them so he decides to try a wrap around shot.

He's going to try and wrap the puck **hard around the near goal post**, between the post and the goalie's skate, using a semi-circular sweeping motion with his stick. The puck remains on the ice, as you try to jam it in the short side of the net. Try Forehand and backhand wrap around shots.

If the puck didn't go in on the initial shot, it could go between the goalie's skates and deflect in, go over to the far post and bounce in off a defenceman's skate or lay in the goal crease uncovered.

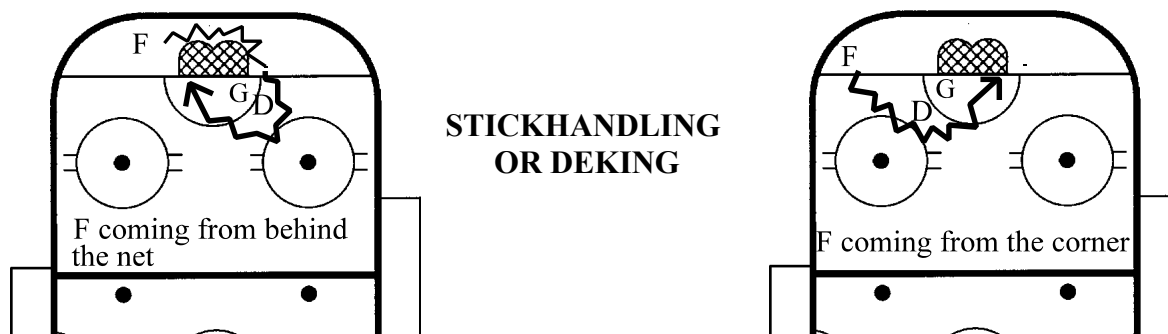
It is a shot worth trying if no better option is there as it may create a rebound or even score a goal.

By faking that you are coming out from behind the net in one direction, then coming out the other side usually causes the goalie to hug that post momentarily and increases your chance of scoring because he can't get over to the far post before the puck arrives. Stick speed's essential.

**STICKHANDLING / DEKING THE GOALTENDER**

If you have the puck in the offensive zone corner and there is no teammate open to pass to, you may choose to **stickhandle** to the front of the net, **deke the defenceman or goalie** and attempt to score.

A number of goals are scored by stickhandling out of the corner, or from behind the net, beating a defenceman one on one, then shooting, passing or deking the goalie on your forehand or backhand. You can also use the defenceman as a screen and beat the goalie with a quick wrist shot.



QUALITIES OF A GOALSCORER

Gifted goal scorers possess the following qualities:

- QUICKNESS:** Goal scorers possess a quick release of the puck. As soon as it touches the blade of their stick it's shot toward the net before the goalie is set.
- They are also quick to get to rebounds and quick to get to the front of the net to receive a pass, deflect a shot or screen the goalie.
- POSITIONING:** Goal scorers can get into an open area/seam between checkers and have perfect one timing to shoot the arrival of the pass or a rebound.
- Keeping their stick blade on the ice produces goals from deflections and rebounds. The puck seems to follow goal scorers.
- ANTICIPATION:** Goal scorers can anticipate where rebounds or passes are likely to go and they position themselves there to get a quick shot off.
- They can also anticipate the set position of the goalie, the open net and the puck, where their team mates will be, the positioning of the opposition and when and where they must shoot from to score a goal.
- CONCENTRATION:** A goal scorer can mentally block out everything that is going on around him by just concentrating on the puck and deciding what method he is going to use to score. "He sees like the puck"
- He can play in heavy traffic and still get the shot off, or jump on a loose rebound while being covered or bodychecked by a defender.
- VARIETY OF SHOTS:** A goal scorer has in his possession a number of scoring methods, including shots and dekes. This makes him unpredictable and goalies never know what method he is going to use to score a goal on them.
- DETERMINATION:** Goal scorers never give up. They can smell a goal and are never stopped from going to the net. They give a second and third effort.
- They are always on the lookout for rebounds or loose pucks and will take a hit to get a goal. Montreal's Maurice "Rocket" Richard was one of the best goal scorers in the NHL, you could see his determination.
- CONFIDENCE:** Goal scorers believe they can score on any goaltender under all circumstances. They have confidence in themselves and in their ability to score. Confidence is crucial to become a good hockey player.
- GOOD HANDS** Goal scorers possess "Soft Hands" free of tension. They can score by stickhandling or by using other shots close to the net. They keep their cool and don't tense up their hands/wrists in scoring situations.
- EXPERIENCE** Most Goal scorers have been scoring goals all of their life since their younger days in Beginner Youth Hockey programs as a 7 year old.

SUMMARY

To win a hockey game, your team must score at least one more goal than the opposition.

To score goals, you must practice shooting for accuracy and with speed. Practice shooting just inside the goal posts. Set up a goal in your basement or driveway and practice a variety of shots daily.

Once you have mastered one shot, go on to another shot and develop it. Don't just practice one shot, practice them all. If you can, take 100+ practice shots per day it will greatly improve your scoring.

The wrist shot, snap shot, backhand, flip shot, shovel shot and slap shot would be an ideal order for the beginner to follow in developing his shots. Get your shot on net to create rebounds, try not to shoot wide or the puck could sail all the way out to the Blue Line and the opposition could get it.

Study how other players score goals: Watch NHL games, or highlight clips on TV, attend local Minor Hockey, Junior or Senior games, try to remember then copy the scoring methods you have seen. You can always learn more from hockey instruction books and videos about shooting and scoring.

Scoring goals can be mastered with practice. Learn the best shooting angles on the net and the best shots to use from a specific distance or situation. If in a high percentage scoring position take the shot rather than trying to set up the perfect play. Goalies can be beaten in 5 specific locations.

If you can, develop one successful scoring method on a breakaway, keep using it until the goalie realizes it and stops you. You may score 5 goals using this method before he will stop you.

As you get older, in under 15 and under 17 'AA' to 'AAA', the goalies will be bigger, better, quicker and smarter. You will need to develop a variety of scoring methods to beat them.

Don't become a puck hog, shooting at every opportunity trying to score a goal on poor percentage shots or bad angles. Be smart, **look, think and react** as there may be an open team mate in a better scoring position (the slot, point, or side of net) than you. If so, pass him the puck and get the assist.

A goal is worth one scoring point and an assist is also worth one scoring point. Be a team player.

Against a good team or great goalie, don't expect to score on the first shot, it may require 3 or 4 shots on the same play to score. Keep trying until the whistle blows. If the puck is lying in the goal crease, you can go into the crease after it, trying to score. Give the second, third effort and you will score.

Remember, hockey is a team game and it doesn't matter who scores the goals as long as someone on your team does. Coaches should explain, demonstrate, then practice how to score goals.

Scoring is a special skill. If you can learn to score at an early age (6, 7, 8) it will remain with you for the rest of your hockey career and you will score at all levels of hockey until you retire.

The secret to scoring is to always **look, think, react** and remember to “**See Like The Puck**” because the puck is at a slightly different angle to the net than your eyes are. Visualize the puck's flight path.

And please, don't become a hotdog or show off and put on a wild show after you have scored a goal. This only motivates the opposition. Celebrate, of course, but not to an extreme, this is not the NFL after a touchdown. Show your class as a good hockey player and sportsman with controlled celebrations. You don't see Sidney Crosby showing off after scoring a goal, use him as your role model and you will be in good company.

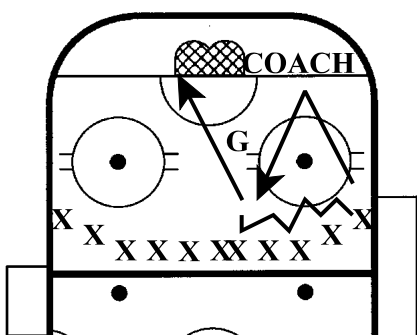
REVIEW AND TEST TIME

Now would be a good time to review specific sections of **UNIT III** if you are teaching players how to shoot and score goals.

A few written or oral questions concerning:

- C **Shooting Mechanics of various shots**
- C **Types of Shots and when and where to use them**
- C **Best Shooting Angles from the Ice on the Net**
- C **How to Score Goals: count the ways**
- C **The 5 Best Scoring Locations on the Goalie**
- C **Different Scoring Plays: name a few**

are suggested. If your team is having difficulty scoring goals, an in depth review should be considered.

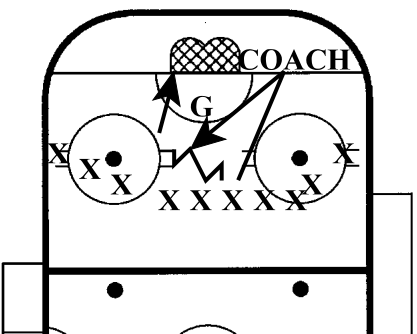
PRACTICE DRILLS FOR SHOOTING AND SCORING**PASS, SKATE, RECEIVE, SHOOT TO SCORE**

Players line up in a semi circle just inside the Blue Line. Coach is positioned in the corner.

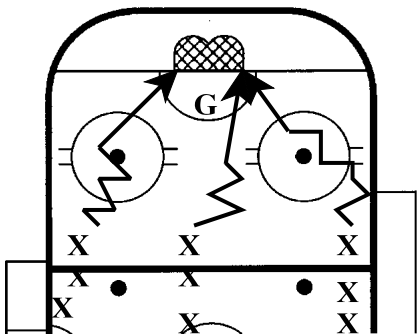
Players pass to coach, who gives them a return pass

Player then shoots trying to score using a variety of shots.

On second try, pass to other corner so you can take a return pass on your backhand or forehand from the coach, then shoot trying to score.

**REBOUND, GO TO NET DRILL**

Similar to above drill but players start at face-off circles hash marks. Pass to coach in corner take a return pass and shoot at goalie. If there is a rebound go after it and try to score until you hear the whistle. Practice snap, flip and shovel shots on any close rebounds or pucks lying in the crease.

**SHOOTOUT / BREAKAWAY DRILL COMPETITION**

Line up players in 3 groups outside Blue Line ie: LW, C, RW.

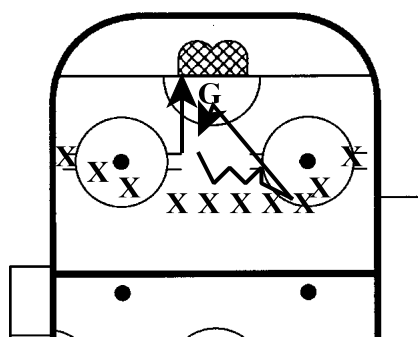
Turn it into a competition and keep score. Players have 7

seconds to shoot or deke trying to score on a breakaway.

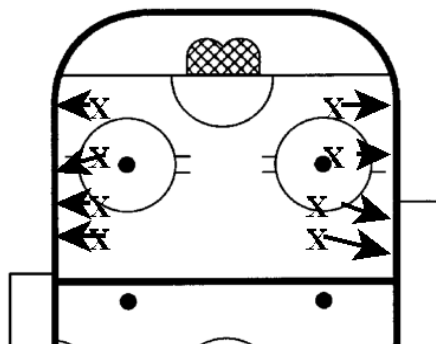
Scorers continue to shoot, while non scorers must drop out.

In the end you have 1 champion scorer for that practice.

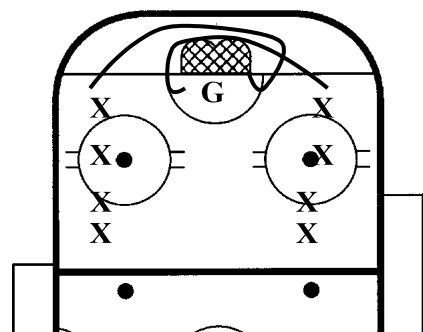
Do it again at the next practice to see if you get another scoring champion.

**REBOUND DRILL**

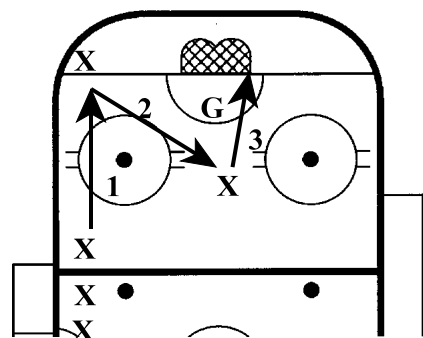
Players line up in a semi circle at the top of circles. Goalie lays flat across the goal line, pads stacked one on top of other. **Note:** Goalie does not try to control rebound. Players shoot at pads, then get own rebound and using flip, shovel, snap or backhand shot to put rebound over pads and into net. This drill develops second effort and going to the net to jump on loose rebounds for scoring experience.

**SHOOTING DRILL FOR ACCURACY AND POWER**

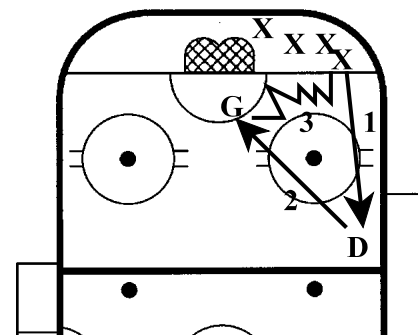
Have all players with a puck spread out around the entire rink approximately 5 feet from the side boards. Coach explains the mechanics, demonstrates, then practice wrist shot, backhand, snap shot, flip shot, etc. for 3 minutes each. Shoot for speed and accuracy at a spot on the boards.

**WRAP AROUND DRILL**

Players line up on both sides of the rink as shown, then alternately carry puck into corner then behind the net and attempt a wrap around shot. At end of attempt, go to other line and attempt wrap around from this side. Both forehand and backhand attempts should be tried.

**PASS IN, PASS OUT, SHOOTING DRILL**

Position 1 player in slot, 1 player in corner, rest of players with pucks just inside of Blue Line. Player at Blue Line passes to corner. Player in corner passes to slot. Player in slot takes quick shot without stickhandling puck. After shooting, rotate; slot to Blue Line, Blue Line to corner, corner to slot. Do from both corners to gain experience.

**SCREEN, TIP, DEFLECT REBOUND DRILL**

Defencemen on points
Forwards in corner with pucks
Forwards pass to defencemen on point then go to front of net to screen, tip, deflect or get rebound from defenceman's shot. When everyone finished, move to other corner and do again. Players screening, deflecting puck should face the shooter.

UNIT IV

POSITIONAL PLAY

ROLE OF FORWARDS

The **Forwards primary role** is to **Score Goals** when their team controls the puck. This is called “**Offensive play.**” Their offensive positioning in all 3 zones: Defensive, Neutral and Offensive zone is: get into the clear to receive a pass, then create a 2 on 1, or go to the net, shoot & score.

Their secondary role is to **Prevent Goals** when the opposition control the puck. This is called “**Defensive play.**” Their defensive positioning now changes and they should get into a defensive position in the offensive zone by forechecking to create a turnover and regain loose pucks which lead to an offensive play. In the neutral and defensive zone their job is to cover specific open players to prevent odd man rushes, intercept passes, prevent goals and recover any rebounds then start a rush. To accomplish both of these objectives, Forwards must play with on ice discipline as a team and as individuals. Everyone should be in a **specific** location/position offensively then defensively on the ice. Players must Forecheck and Backcheck correctly while working together as a 5 player unit.

Forwards must be creative when on **offense**, trying to create 2 on 1 situations and goal scoring opportunities by getting into the clear, passing the puck, carrying it, or shooting the puck on goal.

Forwards and defencemen also have to develop their **Transition** game, quickly going from **Offence** to **Defence**, or **Defence** to **Offence**, with every change of possession of the puck.

FORWARDS POSITIONS

There are three specific positions for forwards, namely: **Centre, Right Wing** and **Left Wing**. Each position requires skills, but different skill levels and abilities to play that position effectively.

Before assigning positions, Minor and Youth Hockey coaches should evaluate each player's skating ability, size, speed, shot, creativity, passing and scoring skills, face-off success, hockey intelligence, aggressiveness, **corner work**, physical play along the boards and in front of the oppositions net.

Most Minor hockey forwards possess different skill levels but will excel at 2 or 3. Outstanding prospects will excel at 4 to 6 skills. i.e. Skating, Passing, Shooting, Scoring, Body Checking etc.

A **Power Forward** is big, strong and tough, who can execute most skills well especially **Body Checking and Scoring** and can play centre or wing. Examples of power forwards in the NHL would include Tom Wilson, Alexander Ovechkin, Nathan MacKinnon and Auston Matthews.

When playing together as a line, players skills must **compliment** each other to create an effective unit both offensively (scoring goals) and defensively (preventing goals). They must get into an open “X” position to receive or intercept a pass and to provide on ice balance for their line mates.

Players must work together offensively to create **2 on 1**, or **3 on 2** situations in all 3 zones (Defensive, Neutral, Offensive), which will lead to good scoring opportunities and eventual goals. The Forwards on ice “X” positioning varies in relation to the location of the puck. Offensively get into the clear to receive a pass, defensively, cover your specific man and try to intercept any pass.

SPECIFIC SKILLS OF FORWARDS

CENTRE

The **Centre** is an unselfish player who has good hockey sense. He sees the ice well and has great anticipation and vision to see where his wingers will be in different situations to receive a pass.

He is a **good passer** both on his forehand and backhand and he uses only a slightly curved stick.

Carries the puck well and is a better than average stickhandler when leading a rush.

Is a good skater and forechecker, has a quick accurate shot and can score goals.

Is a good face-off player, winning most draws. Today's top centre is Connor McDavid - Oilers.

He is referred to as the **Playmaker** on the line, getting the puck to both wingers and defencemen, whichever one is in the clear for a good shot. **The Centre is usually the brains of the line.**

WINGERS

The **Wingers** are generally big, strong and are **goal scorers** or **checkers**, or a combination of both.

They possess a hard accurate shot on goal coming off the wing and score on many of their chances.

They should have the speed and ability to cut to the net after taking a pass and are not afraid of being bodychecked/hit. They are strong along the boards and in the corners with or without the puck.

Being a strong and speedy skater would be a definite asset for any winger.

Aggressive forechecking, strong backchecking, solid body checking and scoring ability are qualities every coach desires of his wingers. Boston's Brad Marchand and David Pastrnak are 2 of the best.

Wingers must be willing to go to the net in heavy traffic to get to rebounds or screen the goalie.

The Wingers are usually the pit bulls or scorers of the line. They must have lots of courage!

COMPOSITION OF LINES

The Coach will assemble the **lines** and they normally consist of the following qualities and skills: a goal scorer, a playmaker and a very good checker (forechecker, backchecker and body checker).

A **Goal Scorer** has soft/good hands for handling the puck, can finish the play and score in heavy traffic around the net. He usually plays on the side that the playmaker passes to on his forehand.

He can score goals with either a hard, accurate shot on most of his scoring opportunities or on dekes, rebounds and deflections from the edge of the crease. He is not afraid to go to the net in traffic.

Goal scoring is a skill, which should be taught at a very young age 5 - 8. If you learn to score goals as a **Novice or Mite**, you will likely score goals throughout your entire hockey playing life.

The puck seems to follow goal scorers, and goal scorers seem to always be around the puck.

Goal scorers possess a variety of scoring methods and are not afraid of being checked in front of the net. Pucks will somehow, deflect off gifted goal scorers' bodies or skates right into the net.

They have a natural ability of knowing where the puck will be, where the goalie will be positioned and can put the puck into a small opening in the net under all circumstances and conditions.

Each line must have **at least one goal scorer on it** if coaches expect that line to score regularly.

A **Playmaker** is an excellent passer to both his left and right side, to players in the clear ahead of or behind him, using forehand, backhand, bank and drop passes. He generally plays centre on a line.

He has the uncanny ability to see or find the open man, and can get the puck to him using a variety of accurate and creative bank passes. **He is the thinker of the line with good hockey sense.**

Playmakers have an inner sense/ability to know where his wingers are going to be and can effectively pass the puck to them, or to an open area for them to skate to it, sometimes without even looking.

He can read the opposition's defensive system and will be creative in getting the puck deep into the offensive zone by reacting to it, then setting up an offensive 2 on 1 scoring opportunity.

A **two-way Checker/Grinder** is the third component of the line. He is usually big, strong, courageous and an excellent corner man. He is not afraid to hit or be hit, nor does he hesitate to be first into the corner, take a hit and still come out with the puck and pass it to an open team mate. He usually, but not always, plays the wing the playmaker/centre passes to on his backhand.

He is generally the leader of the forechecking, physically taking the puck carrier off the puck.

Is an excellent backchecker, covering his man all the way back to the goal line to prevent a goal.

When allowed in specific Youth/Minor Hockey age groups, Body checking would be a primary role of a checker. **He finishes the check and is physically tough along the boards and in the corners.**

Checkers' aggressiveness allows them to crash the net, screen the goalie and get to loose rebounds.

If all three members of the line possess scoring, passing and checking skills, they have the potential to be a very successful line. If all three are fast skaters as well, they should have a tremendous line.

To become a great line, forwards must backcheck correctly to prevent goals against their 5 man unit. All players must work extremely hard to become and stay a **Plus (+)** line and not a **Minus (-)** line.

The Head Coach is responsible for determining the style of team play and the game plan. It could be either more **offensive**, (trying to out score the opposition) for one line, and more **defensive**, (trying to prevent goals) for another line. This will depend upon your team's overall offensive depth, individual skills and the skills and style of play of the opposition for that particular game.

Or, he may want to play a combination of both systems, like in the NHL, creative offence when you have the puck, and disciplined defence when you don't have the puck. It's his/her decision.

Line combinations and style of play could change every game or every period depending on circumstances and the score. Be flexible and listen to your Coaches for direction and adjustments

Playing disciplined hockey will lead to team success.

SUMMARY

No one forward position (Centre, Right Wing or Left Wing) or player (Goal Scorer, Playmaker, or Checker) is more important than another one. Each is **equally important** for a line's success.

A line without one of these three key elements (Scoring, Playmaking or Checking), will be less effective and their goal scoring ability could be greatly diminished. Here is what I mean.

If the **Checker** doesn't get to the loose puck in the corner first, before an opponent does, there will be no pass out to an open team-mate in the slot area and no goal scoring opportunity.

If the **Playmaker** doesn't pass the puck quickly ahead to the open goal scorer who was in the clear and in a great position to shoot and score, no goal is scored. Timing of a pass is crucial.

If there is no natural **Goal Scorer** on the line, you will become easily frustrated because of missed scoring opportunities by less talented players who cannot finish the play and score the goal.

Everyone on the line is important and they must work together cohesively for the success of the team. Try to create as many 2 on 1 offensive situations as you can and success will come your way.

If any of the line-mates become a puck hog by not passing the puck, or by carrying it too long, or by shooting from bad angles, the line will become ineffective with in fighting between line-mates.

The Coach must talk to them immediately, identify the problem, then get the trio back on track. If he can't restore harmony, he may have to break up the line for the good of the team.

All lines must communicate both on the ice and on the bench. They must accept and respect one another and each's special hockey skills and ability and the contribution they bring to the line.

The Head Coach makes the final decision as to who plays with whom and at what position. He may even experiment with different players playing defence, centre or wing for the good of the team.

He may move players to different lines throughout a game or the season to get the results he desires. Be flexible and willing to try these different positions (forward and defence)(centre or wing) at an early age to understand their different roles, the hockey skills required to be effective at this position and to learn their offensive and defensive responsibilities. It will benefit you in the long run.

Most Minor/Youth Hockey Coaches desire to have **two balanced scoring lines** and one checking line to play against the oppositions top scoring line, trying to neutralize their scoring ability.

One way to measure a lines success is based on the plus and minus system, done after every game.

If one line scored 3 goals but had 4 goals scored against them, they are **minus 1**.

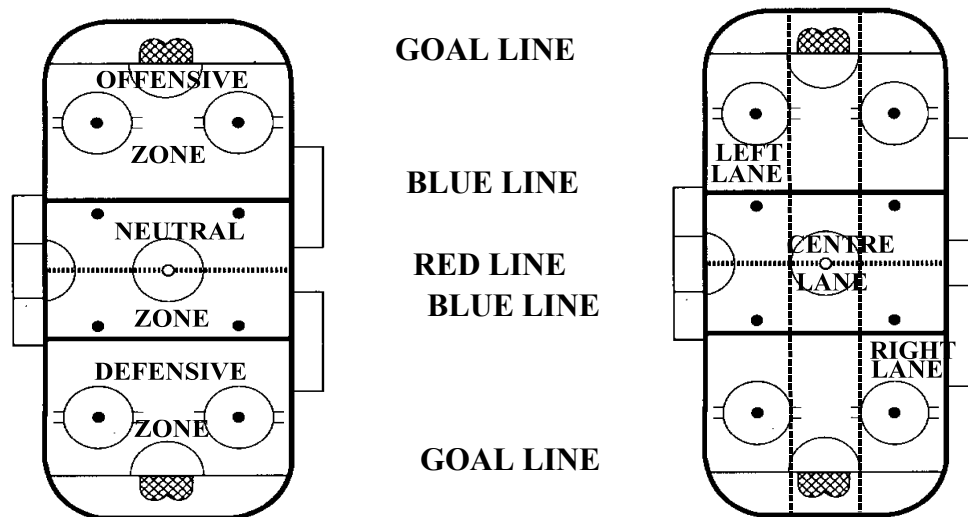
If another line scored only one goal but had none scored against them, they are **plus 1**. The plus 1 line made a significant contribution to the team for that particular game.

Lines composed of your 3 best goal scorers **sometimes** backfires and could be ineffective because each one wants to score. Usually no one will pass the puck at the right time, or dig it out of the corner for his line-mates. It could also leave your second and third lines without a natural goal scorer, for **secondary scoring**. Also the opposing coach could put his checking line against your 3 scorers. Trial and error is one way to see how 3 players play together and if there is line chemistry or not.

ZONES AND LANES

The ice is divided into three **Zones**. The **Defensive Zone** extends from your Blue Line back to your Goal Line and behind your net to the boards. The **Neutral Zone** runs from your Blue Line to the oppositions Blue Line. The **Offensive Zone** goes from the oppositions Blue Line to their Goal Line and behind their net to the boards. The Red Line divides the ice in half for icing purposes.

The ice is also divided into three **Lanes**, but there are no lines painted on the ice to identify them. Just imaginary lines dividing the ice into three equal lanes. They run from end to end, not side to side like the Red or Blue lines. The **Left Lane**, which the left wing patrols; the **Centre Lane**, which the centre patrols; and the **Right Lane** for the right winger. One player is normally in each lane for balance.



ON ICE BALANCE FOR FORWARDS

On ice balance is a term used by coaches to describe the positions the **forwards** can move to in order to create both **Offensive** and **Defensive** on ice balance at different times across the 3 lanes.

On Offence when your team has possession of the puck, there is usually no more than 1 - 2 forwards in a lane at any one time. **Defensively** 1 is usually in each lane in the neutral & defensive zones.

Sometimes 3 forwards are forechecking in the same offensive zone corner trying to create or retrieve a loose puck. However, if the opposition gets control of the puck, all 3 forwards are trapped in deep and out of position defensively to backcheck. Defencemen, must stay back if 3 forwards are in deep.

On an **Offensive Rush**, try to keep on ice balance by using the width of all 3 lanes. Spread out, and take advantage of the wide ice surface, usually 1 player in each lane. If the puck is loose in the corner, 2 forwards could occupy one lane of the ice if forechecking while the third line member generally keeps to the center lane (slot Area) for offensive (scoring) and defensive(backchecking) purposes.

In a **Defensive Role**, there is usually not more than 2 forwards in a single lane at any one time in a forechecking system and there should be only one forward in each lane in a backchecking capacity, covering both their wide wingers and trailer through the neutral and defensive zones. Your defencemen, should play their puck carrier 99 % of the time in the neutral and defensive zones.

On ice discipline is essential to be competitive and a successful team.

INTERCHANGEABLE POSITIONS OF FORWARDS

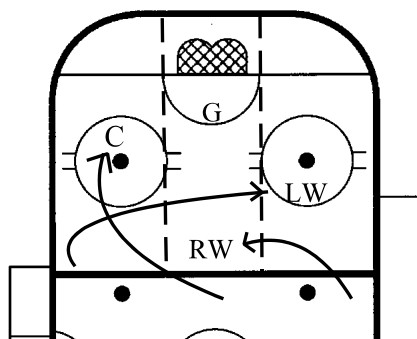
Interchangeable positions simply mean forwards (wings and centre) when on offence, do not have to go up and down the ice in their lanes. They have the **creative freedom** to move from lane to lane and another forward moves to their vacated lane. This maintains **on ice balance** both offensively and defensively (forechecking or backchecking) across the 3 lanes with 1 player still in each lane.

The Russians, in the 1972 Canada vs The Soviet Series, showed the world how to be creative offensively by criss-crossing, going from one lane to another lane. This is now the norm in hockey.

Forwards should criss-cross, or change positions and lanes for a reason: To get into the clear to receive a pass, to get away from a backchecker or to confuse the oppositions defence.

EXAMPLES OF INTERCHANGEABLE POSITIONS ON OFFENCE - “Criss-Cross”

Criss-crossing of forwards is allowed on an “offensive rush.” Only the 3 players have moved to different lanes. There’s usually only one player in each lane (on ice balance) heading toward the net.



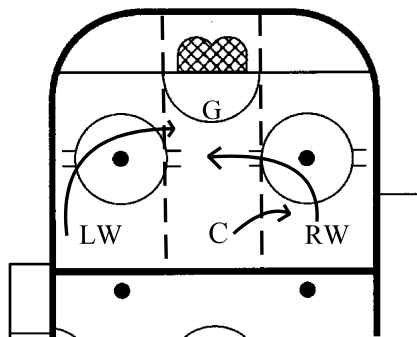
INTERCHANGEABLE POSITIONS

- 1) Left wing cuts to right wing to take a pass.
- 2) Right wing cuts to centre for a drop pass.
- 3) Centre cuts to left wing for a pass and shot or goes to the net for a rebound.
- 4) On ice balance is maintained with 1 in each lane

If you criss cross, there must be a good reason.

- 1) to get away from a backchecker and into the clear to receive a pass,
- 2) to execute a drop pass and the receiver has a clear path to the net for a shot.
- 3) to get into an open area to receive a pass or to take a good shot on net.

Even then, you should try to maintain on ice balance for defensive and backchecking purposes.



INTERCHANGEABLE POSITIONS

- 1) Right wing cuts to centre for a pass.
- 2) Centre cuts to right wing.
- 3) Left wing goes to the net to screen or for rebound. There is still some form of on ice balance.
- 4) If a turn over occurs backcheck, 1 in each lane.

Note: Some coaches want on ice balance while others want to overload or **flood** a zone with 3 players. Listen to your coaches for game plan forechecking and backchecking instructions.

COMMUNICATION FOR FORWARDS

It is very important to **talk** to your line mates, both on the ice and on the bench during a rest period.

On the ice, you can give valuable verbal information to your line mates as to where you are going, what type of pass to give, ie. "Bank pass off the boards." "Up the centre, I'm open." "Drop pass, I'm right behind you." On the bench, discuss what went right or wrong, how to correct it, and where you will go next time on a similar play, etc. Today in the NHL I pads are used on the bench to review plays.

ROLE OF DEFENCEMEN

The primary role of **Defencemen** is to **Prevent Goals** when the opposition control the puck. To do this effectively you must always **position** yourself on the ice between the puckcarrier and your goal and not allow the puck carrier to get by you or have a direct straight line access to your net.

Their secondary role is to **Pass the Puck** up to their open forwards when they regain control of it.

Defencemen still have the most important role **defensively** and that is to analyse every rush, then play **1 on 1's** and **2 on 1's** correctly, and defend the defensive zone properly, especially in front of your net.

If defencemen make a mistake, it usually results in a golden scoring opportunity for the opposition or a goal against. If you're in the right **on ice position**, they have to go around you to get to your net.

Offensively, over the past 30 years, specific defencemen have emerged as rushing defencemen who can contribute by carrying the puck out of their end, setting up an offensive play or scoring goals.

Defencemen skilled at end to end rushes and setting up or scoring goals are desired by all teams. Most successful teams have at least one rushing defenceman who can carry the puck out of their defensive zone or jump up into the offensive play to create an odd man 3 on 2, or 2 on 1 situation and become a scoring threat. However, you must know when, & when not to use this skill if the Last man.

SPECIFIC SKILLS OF DEFENCEMEN

Today's defencemen must be excellent skaters, both **Backward** and **Forward**, skilled at breaking up plays outside their Blue Line and angling the puck carrier away from the slot area toward the boards.

They must be able to **Turn** to either side quickly while skating backward or forward, **Pivoting** 180° from backward skating to forward skating, or from forward skating to backward skating, almost immediately. And **Stop** and **Start**, forward and back, with every change of possession of the puck.

They must be an accurate passer, especially on the quick **first outlet pass** in their defensive zone.

Both defencemen must move up the ice on an offensive rush reducing the gap between your forwards, keeping the puck inside the oppositions Blue line and being in position to take a pass or shot on goal.

They must know when to Pinch, if they have a 60% chance to keep the puck inside the offensive zone.

Defensively, they must be able to **analyse every rush** and react correctly to play a 1 on 1 by **playing the man**, not the puck and to play a 2 on 1 correctly by **playing the puck** and not the man.

It takes **brains** to be a very good defenceman because they have to be thinking and making the right decisions and plays **all** of the time. **Poor decisions by defencemen could lead to goals against.**

Defencemen should possess a hard, accurate (on net), low or high slap shot from the Blue Line.

They must have good checking ability either bodychecking or stick checking but preferably both.

They must be physically strong in the corners and in front of the net. **Courage** and aggressiveness should be a major asset. They must win all the battles along the boards and get control of the puck.

They should be good at **blocking** shots, intercepting passes out of the corner & clearing rebounds.

Exhibit an overall mental and physical toughness and mean presence on the ice. They can't be afraid.

And last but not least, they must possess the intelligence to analyse **every** defensive situation and react to it correctly to prevent goals against .ie: Do I pinch or pull back into the neutral zone?

DEFENCEMEN PREVENT GOALS BY: Not letting the puck carrier get to your net.

Passing the puck ahead quickly to your open forward thus clearing it from your defensive zone.

Not getting caught up ice deep inside the offensive zone and allowing a 2 on 1 break.

Forcing the puck carrier to his backhand side or a bad angle on a 1 on 1 situation. Taking away the pass on a 2 on 1 situation and not deflecting or screening the opposing team's shots from the point.

Picking up and Covering any player going to the front of the net at all times by lifting or legally controlling his stick to prevent him from taking a pass, getting a shot on net, or getting to a rebound.

By playing aggressively in front of your net and boxing out the opposing forwards. Going into the corners and bodychecking their puckcarrier, not getting caught taking bad or retaliation penalties.

Being the first man into the defensive corner to retrieve a loose puck, "**Win all the 1 on 1 battles**".

Blocking shots in the prime scoring lanes and slot area, or by legally moving players from in front of the net so your goalie can see the shot. You don't have to move him if there is no shot coming.

Clearing loose pucks & rebounds into the corner, off the glass, or flipping it out over the Blue Line.

Not giving up your Blue Line if the wings are covered, but challenging the puck carrier outside it.

Talking to your defensive partner and letting him know what you are going to do on a situation.

Getting the puck out over your Blue Line in a tight situation without icing it. Not panicking, and losing or dumping the puck in your corner, but freezing it for a face-off in your defensive zone.

DEFENSIVE PAIRINGS

Coaches usually pair a rushing or offensive defenceman with a stay home defensive defenceman. The rushing defenceman is skilled at carrying or stickhandling the puck out of the defensive zone and scoring goals at full strength or on the power play. The defensive defenceman is skilled at preventing goals by blocking shots and making it difficult for the opposition to enter or set up inside the defensive zone or front of net. He plays aggressively in front of your net and finishes his check in the corner.

The teams best pair of defenceman always play against the oppositions best forward line trying to take away any scoring opportunity. Coaches, if you are the home Team you have the last change of players.

RUSHING DEFENCEMEN

A **rushing defenceman** is offensive minded first, defensive minded second. He can score or set up goals and has a hard, accurate shot. He hits the net with his shot which goes in or creates rebounds.

He is a good skater, puck carrier, excellent stickhandler and has the ability to get the puck out of his end and down the ice by leading a rush. He can also get back quickly to break up any counter rush.

He knows when to join the rush and skate into the offensive zone if the opportunity presents itself to create a 3 on 2, or 2 on 1 situation, or be the late man arriving and get a quality shot on goal.

Examples of current or former NHL rushing defencemen are: Cale Makar, Roman Josi, Drew Doughty, Scott Niedermayer, Paul Coffey and the very best, Bobby Orr.

DEFENSIVE DEFENCEMEN

A **defensive defenceman** is defensive minded first, offensive minded second.

He takes pride in preventing goals, is excellent at blocking shots, and moving men out front.

He can break up plays at the Blue Line and passes the puck quickly up to the forwards.

He is excellent at playing the 1 on 1, 2 on 1 and 3 on 1 situations and never gets caught up ice.

He stays back as a safety man when his defence partner rushes the puck in case anything goes wrong.

He is good at covering the opponent in front of the net and clearing rebounds into the corner.

He is not afraid to be first into the corner after a loose puck and finishing the check. He intercepts passes from the corner to the slot area or front of net by lying his stick shaft across the passing lane.

He would be considered a good bodychecker and tough along the boards and in the corners.

Good examples of past or present NHL defensive defencemen are: Chris Chelios, Chris Pronger, Victor Hedman, Dustin Byfuglien and 4 time Norris Trophy winner Nick Lidstrom.

SUMMARY

Offensive defencemen receive most of the glory and the recognition from the fans and media. However, every coach and player knows the invaluable contribution defensive defencemen make towards the success of every good hockey team.

Ask any Stanley Cup Champion where they would be without their defence.

Every team needs both offensive and defensive defencemen, but not 100% of one over the other.

Championship teams are built from their goaltender and defencemen out. Some Minor Hockey coaches try to convert their best forwards to play defence, because it is such an important position.

Parents and players should remember, Defencemen usually get every 2nd shift while forwards get every 3rd shift in a Minor or Youth Hockey game. It could be worth more ice time by playing defence.

“A good defenceman is worth his/her weight in gold.”

PLAYING SITUATIONS FOR DEFENCE MEN

1 on 1 To Play a 1 on 1 Situation Correctly: “Play the Man”

Position yourself in front of the puck carrier and back up slowly, keeping your stick well out in front of you in your top hand. Now force the puck carrier to go around it preferably on his back hand. Your bottom hand is off the stick, up chest high and ready to push back (not grab) the puck carrier. Your backward skating speed must match the puckcarrier’s forward speed otherwise he will beat you to the inside or the outside. Keep your knees bent, feet shoulder width apart, weight on balls of feet/toes, not heels and ready to spring forward, left or right into the puck carrier separating him from the puck.

Play the man, don’t even look at the puck, move into him, then use your open free hand to push him off the puck or towards the boards. Don’t grab him with your free hand or you will get a penalty for holding, but pushing him backwards with an open hand through his chest area is still considered legal.

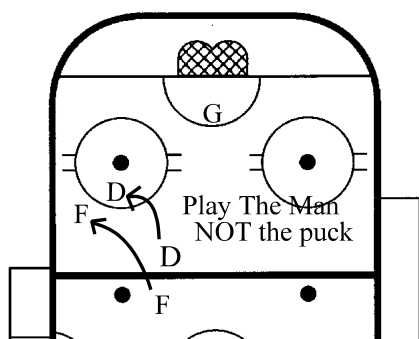
Never give him the centre of the ice, the prime scoring area. Force him wide to a bad shooting angle outside of the **slot** area. You can still poke check or sweep check on a 1 on 1, by using your stick. Back in slowly, but not too deep or you will screen your goalie. Check the puck carrier at the top of the circle if possible. Create a loose puck, and your D partner or backcheckers should recover it.

Keep the player in front of you, look at his chest & not the puck. He’ll use head fakes to get by you, that’s why you keep your eyes on his chest. He can’t deke you out of position with a chest fake.

If he puts the puck between your feet let it go, but block him from getting to it. This is not interference for .8 seconds as he is the last player to touch the puck, but don’t put your head down to watch the puck or he will go around you in a flash. If it’s U 13 or higher, try to body check the puckcarrier.

Note: Be aware of any close trailers, as the current 1 on 1, may really be a 2 on 1, in creative disguise for a drop pass as you would play the 2 on 1 situation differently.

Playing a 1 on 1



- 1) Play the Man, not the puck and force/angle puck carrier to the outside and away from the slot area.
- 2) Don't back in beyond the top of the face-off circle. Stop, then skate into the puckcarrier forcing him wide.
- 3) Watch his chest not the puck, and play the man.
- 4) Block player for .8 seconds getting to any loose puck. Your Defence Partner or Backcheckers take puck.
- 5) Don't get caught standing still or flatfooted on a 1 on 1. Skate fast enough to match the puckcarrier's speed.

The term “**play the man**” simply means watch/take the man, **not the puck**. You can use your stick or body to check or cover him, but don’t lunge for the puck. Concentrate on preventing the puck carrier from getting around you and having a direct line to the net, and don’t let him get into the slot area for a shot. Physically block or push him toward the boards/corner separating him from the puck. Your closest team mate can pick up any loose puck and start an offensive rush.

2 on 1**To Play a 2 on 1 Situation Correctly: "Play the Puck"**

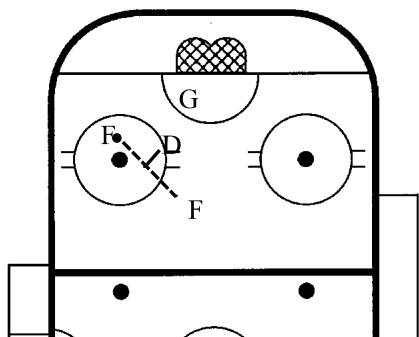
Position yourself about equal distance between the 2 players, keeping your stick well out in front of you to deflect or intercept any across ice passes and backup slowly. **The Goalie plays the puck carrier.**

Stay in the **middle** between the puck carrier and the receiver and backup slowly. Do not edge over too closely toward the puck carrier or bodycheck him but stay between them and **play the puck**.

Stay between the two rushers, near the puck side hash marks, but watching for a pass back to the open receiver. Do not run after the puckcarrier into the corner and leave the man open out front.

The goalie's responsibility is to always play the puck carrier. He has the puck and it's the goalie's responsibility/job to play the angle and stop the puck/shot, not guess if he is going to pass it or not.

The defenceman's job on a 2 on 1 situation, is to be in a position to intercept or deflect any pass back to the second man **without** allowing the puck carrier a line to the front of the net. Do not bodycheck the puck carrier and take yourself out of the play. "Protect the Slot. If a pass is attempted behind you, try to slide backwards feet first, body stretched out on your stomach to block the pass to the receiver.

**Playing 2 on 1**

- 1) The Goalie **always** plays the puck carrier at all times.
- 2) Defenceman stays between the 2 forwards, about equal distance between puck carrier and receiver. He takes the slot away and prevents a direct route to front of net. He does not chase the puckcarrier into the corner until help arrives.
- 3) He watches for a pass back to the open man and tries to intercept or block the pass with his stick, do not body check the puck carrier on a 2 on 1 and take yourself out of the play.

3 on 1**To Play a 3 on 1 Situation Correctly: "Play the Puck"**

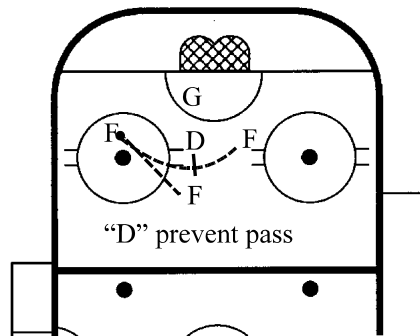
Position yourself in the middle of the 3 rushers taking the prime shooting zone, the slot area away. Keep your stick well out in front of you to deflect or intercept any across ice passes. Try a sweep or poke check puck with your stick to keep them off guard and at a safe distance from your net.

Try not to get caught out of position by moving toward the puck carrier Do not play the man, **play the puck**, by using your stick without leaving the slot area. Stay between the face-off circle hash marks.

Try to delay the rush at the top of the circle as long as you can or until help arrives by way of your backcheckers. Back in slowly toward the goal, but not too deep or you will screen the goalie.

The **goalie must play the puck carrier** at all times, he is the primary shooter. Cut the angle and be square to the puck. He must also be aware of potential passes to the 2 other receivers and be quick enough to move across the goal crease and out to cut the angle with any pass to the open receivers.

The defenceman must **position himself** to prevent across ice passes to the open forwards without allowing the puckcarrier a direct path to front of net. Do not bodycheck on a 3 on 1, or you could be out of position to prevent a pass. Try to stay on your feet and use your stick to intercept any pass.

Playing 3 on 1

- 1) Goalie **always** plays the puck carrier.
- 2) Defenceman stays in the middle and tries to take away passes to open forwards. Cover the slot area.
- 3) Back in slowly but not too deep or you will screen your goalie. Play/deflect the puck with your stick. Prevent the puckcarrier from getting a direct route to the front of your net.
- 4) Try to delay rush at hash marks until help arrives.

2 on 2**To Play a 2 on 2 Situation Correctly : "Play the Man"**

Each defenceman plays it as a 1 on 1 situation by playing the man. Take and cover a man each.

One defenceman plays the puck carrier, the second defenceman plays the open man, but stays a little deeper in the zone in case his partner gets beaten 1 on 1. If beaten to the outside, switching or "X" changing positions must occur. The second defenceman must drive for the puckcarrier, leaving the beaten defenceman to "X" change positions and cover the man in front of the net for his partner.

The Defence partner must keep the open man in front of him and within a stick's length, but don't turn your back to the puck in case you have to help your partner. Turn your head back and forth, like on a swivel, keeping an eye on the man your covering and the puck carrier.

Back in slowly, but never too deep to screen your goalie. Try to block any attempted shot on goal.

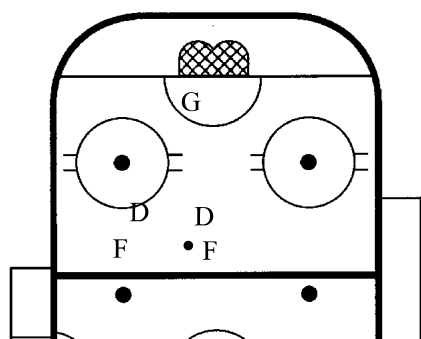
Play the man not the puck. Good defensive pairings rarely get beaten on a 2 on 2 situation.

One defenceman should force/angle the **puck carrier** wide to a bad angle outside the slot area.

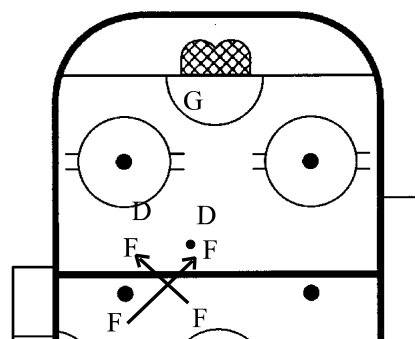
His partner must watch for a pass back to the forward he is covering. Stay within a stick's length.

Watch and Talk to each other, letting each other know what you are doing. Verbally Communicate.

If the offensive forwards **criss - cross** with the puck in front of you, don't cross with them. Pick up the man coming across and still play it as a 1 on 1 situation. Your partner taking the other forward.

**Playing****2 on 2****PLAY IT AS A 1 on 1**

For each defenceman



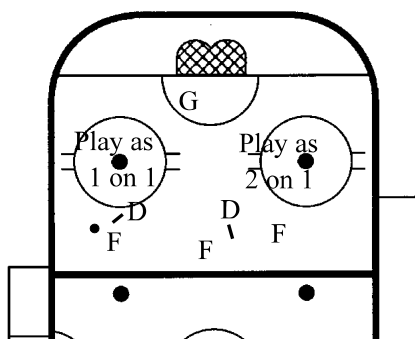
3 on 2**To Play a 3 on 2 Situation Correctly: "Play the Puck"**

Spread out in the defensive zone. Back in slowly trying to delay a rush at the top of the circle. Force the puck carrier to the outside, away from the slot. Your forwards must backcheck to help you out.

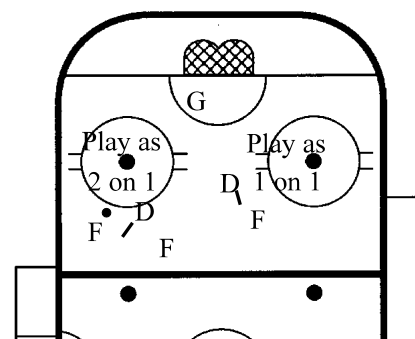
One defenceman plays the puck carrier as a 1 on 1, and the other defenceman plays the 2 remaining forwards as a 2 on 1. You could also play it as a 2 on 1 for both defencemen if they're close enough.

Another variation of this play has one defenceman playing the puckcarrier and closest forward as a 2 on 1 and the other defenceman playing the remaining **wide** forward without the puck as a 1 on 1. (See below Right) The spread out positioning of the attackers will dictate which method you use.

No matter which one you use, try to delay the rush until backcheckers arrive but protect the slot.

**Playing
3 on 2**

**PLAY IT AS A
1 on 1 & 2 on 1
OR
2 on 1 & 1 on 1**

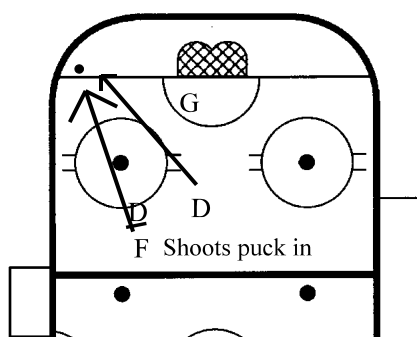
**1 on 2****To Play 1 Forward on 2 Defencemen Correctly: "Play the Man"**

If a situation arises in which you have only 1 puck carrier against your 2 defencemen:

One defenceman must step up and play the puck carrier 1 on 1, preferably **outside** the Blue Line and **block**, bodycheck and delay him just temporarily about .8 seconds from going after any puck he shot into the corner. **Note:** Referees will be calling more interference penalties on this blocking action.

His defensive partner is free to go after any loose puck that is shot into the corner. His partner is the first defender back to retrieve it and to start a clearing play.

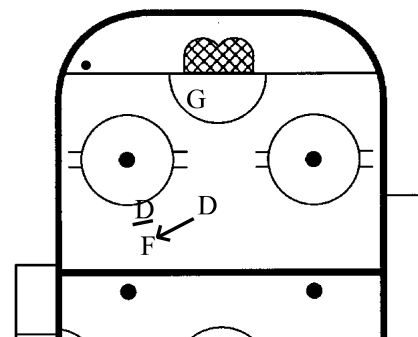
Another variation of this play has the second defenceman rush the puck carrier from the side and force him wide to a bad shooting angle. This surprise move by the defenceman causes the puck carrier to panic and dump the puck into the zone or be bodychecked, his partner then retrieves the loose puck.



**DELAY SHOOTER, PARTNER
GETS LOOSE PUCK**

1 on 2

PLAY THE MAN



**DEFENCE PARTNER RUSHES
PUCK CARRIER FROM SIDE**

NET COVERAGE

Most goals are scored from in front of the net either on a clear shot from the slot, or a rebound near the goal crease. Therefore, **a defenceman must cover the closest man in front of the net at all times.** A forward, usually the centre, should cover the man in the slot area, and the wings cover the points.

THE DEFENCEMAN IN FRONT OF THE NET MUST: “Cover The Closest Man”

Cover the oppositions forward who is closest to the net and is likely to score on a shot or a rebound laying around the crease area. Don't let him screen, tip or deflect the puck, or get to any rebound.

Loosely tie the forward up by putting your stick between his legs, or behind his knee to always know where he is. Do not turn your back on the puck carrier because if he beats your defence partner in the corner and starts toward your net, you must see this, then react and play as a new 2 on 1 situation.

The defenceman must keep turning his head, side to side, back and forth, to look at the puck carrier in the corner, then turn back quickly to the man in front of the net to evaluate the situation and decide when and what to do if the forward successfully comes out of the corner toward the net for a shot.

Be aggressive in front of the net, **(but no penalty)** and try to intimidate/scare any player standing or wanting to return to this strategic goal scoring location. If he is screening your goalie, move him.

Prevent any pass out from the puck carrier in the corner to the man you are covering in front of the net by either intercepting the pass, or lifting his stick so he cannot receive the pass. If possible tie up/control his stick so he cannot shoot. If necessary, push him out of the way. Timing is key.

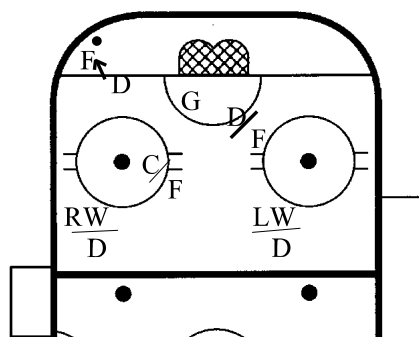
Never leave the man out front unattended to go into the corner after a loose puck unless you are 90% sure you will get it. Watch for your partner coming back to cover the front then go after the puck.

No player should score on a shot from the corner, those players are secondary to the man in front of the net. The front of the net, the slot and the points are where 90% of the goals are scored from.

The other defenceman, your partner, should go into the corner to check the puck carrier. Move toward him on an angle, not straight at him or he could deke and stickhandle around you, out of the corner.

Always talk to one another so your partner knows what you are going to do. ie: "I've got the man out front, you get the man in the corner." Verbal communication between defencemen is critical.

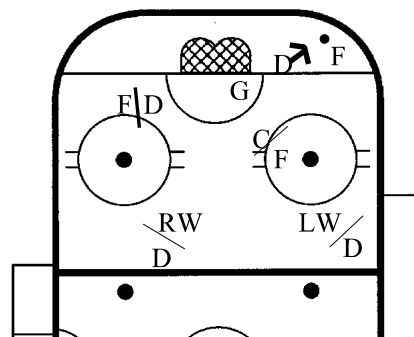
If the shot is coming from the point, you must physically **move** the man out front so your goalie can see the puck. Be careful not to knock him to the ice or you could get an interference penalty.

NET COVERAGE

The defenceman in front of the net covers the closest forward to the net. D. partner in corner

The centre covers the slot.

The wings cover the points.



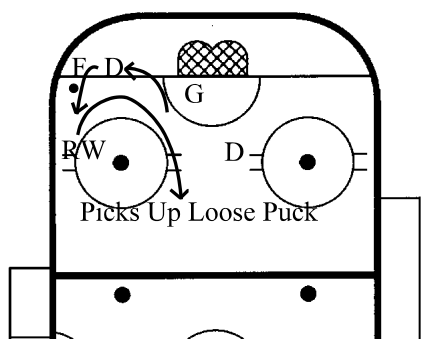
CORNER WORK***“Play the Man” It's a 1 on 1 Situation***

No defenceman should go into the corner after the puck carrier if a man is wide **open** in front of the net. The player out front is the one that has the best chance to score not the man in the corner with the puck. Your goalie should be watching/playing the puck carrier in the corner not the man out front.

Stay between the two players, like a 2 on 1, until a team mate, D or F, gets back and covers the man out front, then you can go into the corner after the puck carrier 1 on 1. **Timing** and positioning are the key, try to block any pass out to the slot and if none keep moving forward to check the puck carrier.

When you go into the corner after the puck carrier, **play the man**, not the puck, and come at him on an **angle**, not straight at him or he could stick handle around you. Play aggressively at all times. Try to pin the player on the boards then your closest backchecking forward should pick up the loose puck and start the clearing play. It's like forechecking, but in your own end by a defenceman. If they sent 2 men into the corner, the winger/center comes back and helps your defenceman not get outnumbered

Talk to your partner, let him know what you are doing. "Get the man out front, I've got the puck carrier in the corner." **Communication and timing are essential.** And Switching positions is normal.

**CORNER WORK**

Defenceman in corner angles puck carrier 1 on 1 to boards and pins him creating a loose puck.

Closest forward picks up the loose puck and starts the clearing play

Note: If there is a **loose** puck in the corner and you are 90% sure you can get to it before the opposition, then and only then, should you leave the man uncovered in front of the net to go after it.

INTERCHANGEABLE POSITIONS FOR DEFENCEMEN “X-Change”- Switching

There is no rule that says only right defencemen go into the right corner and only left defencemen, go into the left corner after loose pucks or puck carriers. **Switching positions** is part of the game.

Hockey is such a fast game that defencemen have to be flexible and work together as a 2 man unit to prevent goal scoring opportunities and to get to loose pucks quickly before others do, anywhere on the ice. Split second decisions and timing are essential. Communicate with your defence partner.

Defencemen cover up for each other depending on where the puck is located. Don't be afraid to **“x-change”** or switch positions with your partner under specific situations. The letter “X” serves as a guide as to how this “x-change” will work. The left defenceman goes into the right corner to retrieve the loose puck, the right defenceman goes to the front of the net. An “X” has been completed and on ice balance has been maintained by switching positions. One defenceman in the corner and the other one in front of the net. Also in open ice defence can change places offensively and defensively. If the opposition send 2 men into the corner to forecheck the defenceman, your closest winger or centre must come back to help him. Never get outnumbered in your defensive corner.

Here is an “x-change” example: On a puck dumped into the right corner from outside the Blue Line.

The closest defenceman plays the puck carrier outside the Blue Line and delays him from going after the loose puck he shot into the corner. He then goes to the front of the net, switching positions.

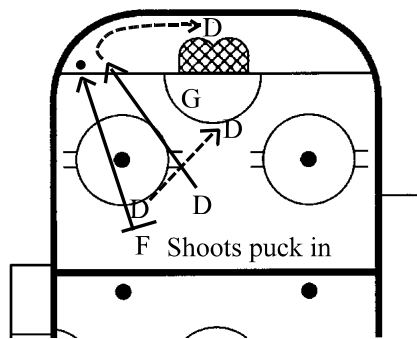
This delay tactic of .8 seconds, gives his defensive partner a head start to go into the corner and retrieve the loose puck before anyone else. He then initiates a clearing play. The ‘X’ is complete. One defenceman in the corner with the puck and his partner now covering the front of the net for him.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF INTERCHANGEABLE POSITIONS

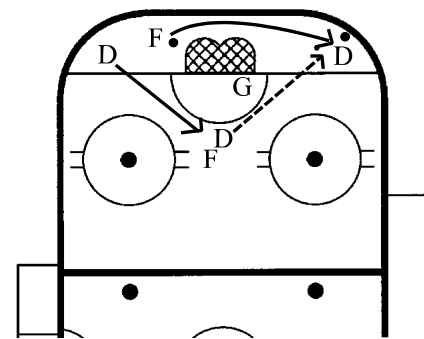
An opposition forward has carried the puck behind your net and is coming out of the far corner.

The defenceman in front of the net will only go after him and into the corner when his partner has come over to take over the coverage of the man he was covering in front of the net.

Timing and communication is again the key to this plays success. See Right Diagram below.



**INTERCHANGEABLE
POSITIONS FOR
DEFENCEMEN**
“SWITCHING”



One defenceman blocks the forward while his partner goes after the dumped in puck. The defenceman who did the blocking now goes to the front of the net. An ‘X’ is completed.

The defenceman out front goes to the left corner only when his partner comes out of the right corner to cover the open man out front.

COMMUNICATION FOR DEFENCEMEN

Talking to your defence partner is **essential** to be an effective and successful defence pairing.

It is just smart hockey to let your partner know what you are doing and where you are going. Talk to your partner both on the ice and on the bench to correct any previous misplayed situations.

You are a defense pair/team and must respond with teamwork to be effective. Take pride in preventing goals against and preventing puckcarriers from getting to the front of your net.

By playing together regularly, defence pairs gain valuable experience and will be able to make plays without even looking. Switching positions is a good example of this. It becomes automatic.

Listen to and talk to your goaltender as he can let you know what is going on around you and can be your extra set of eyes especially if someone is coming after you from behind to bodycheck you.

New rules for interference, hooking and holding went into effect as to what defencemen can and cannot do. Coaches must explain these rules early in the season to prevent taking penalties.

7 ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR DEFENCEMEN - Look, Read the Play, Think, React

1. **Position** yourself to legally **prevent** their puckcarrier from taking puck to your net.
2. **Read** the play Correctly - “**Is it a 1 on 1, or a 2 on 1**” situation?
3. Play a **1 on 1** Correctly - “**Play the Man**” not the puck.
4. Play a **2 on 1** Correctly - “**Play the Puck**” not the man.
5. **Pass** the Puck quickly up to your open Forwards with an- “**Accurate Outlet Pass**”
6. **Cover** The Man In Front of the Net - “**Control his Stick**” and get “**Inside body position.**”
7. Be **Aggressive** when In The Corners - “**Finish the Check**” to “**Create a Loose Puck.**”

SUMMARY Coaches, make sure your players understand the rules and penalties or Explain them.

Correct positioning on the ice by both forwards and defencemen, is the physical on ice location you take both offensively and then defensively in relation to the pucks location to score and prevent goals. **This on ice positioning is very important for the success of your team with & without the puck.**

Knowing how to play a specific position (forward or defence) and understanding its role and responsibilities, especially what you are expected to do without the puck is the key to team success.

Your Coach should explain **what** he wants you to do, **when**, and **why**. He is responsible for explaining the game plan, team play, strategy and any systems he wants used for a specific game or situation.

At an early age, (5-10) mistakes are going to be made, that is expected. It is the Coaches job to explain, then try to correct them as quickly as possible, preferably when you return to the bench.

As you get older (11- 18) and into a higher level of hockey, you will be expected to do a specific job to the best of your ability without errors. If you continue to make costly errors, you may get benched.

On ice discipline is the key to positional play and the coach is the person you must listen to.

The sooner you realize you have a specific job to do both offensively then defensively and cannot run around all over the ice chasing their puck carrier or trying to help do another players job, the sooner success will shine on you and your team. “ **Play your position, not someone else’s.**”

Both Forwards and Defencemen must practice playing 1 on 1, 2 on 2, and 3 on 3, **play the man**. And 2 on 1, 3 on 2, 3 on 1, **play the puck**, as forwards **will** have to cover up for pinching Defencemen.

Preventing goals is a special skill that will keep your team competitive. Always cover the front of the net, the slot area, and the points because that’s where the majority of goals are scored from.

Both forwards and defencemen must play strong along the boards, with the puck on **offence**, trying to get into the clear, or without the puck on **defence**, checking there puck carrier in all three zones.

If a defenceman is beaten wide to the outside by the puck carrier, try to angle him to the boards using a 45 angle and you will catch him in the corner. Don’t lunge at him but turn through the balls of your feet If a defenceman is beaten badly to the outside near the top of the circle, switching places begins. Your D partner goes after the puck carrier & you turn & go to the front of the net to cover his man.

Defensemen -“ Play the Man”- by using your body. “ Play the Puck,” - by using on ice positioning and your stick. Pinch if you are 60% sure of keeping the puck inside the offensive zone.

Coaches must try to correct/explain players physical and mental errors as soon as they come off.

REVIEW AND TEST TIME

This would be an excellent time to review specific components of **UNIT IV**.

A few questions either written or oral regarding:

- C Role of Forwards and Defencemen both Offensively & Defensively**
- C Composition of Lines - scorer, playmaker, checker**
- C On Ice Balance**
- C Interchangeable Positions and Switching "X" Changing Positions**
- C Specific Playing Situations for Defencemen**
- C Corner Work, Net Coverage and Switching "X" Changing Positions**

are suggested for review.

This is a very important unit as players must understand their role and how to perform their specific duties using on ice positioning both with the puck on Offence and without the puck on Defence.

PRACTICE DRILLS

- 1 on 1 Drill** - 1 Forward starts at Red Line, one defenceman at Blue Line, goalie in net.
Objective - try to beat defenceman 1 on 1 and score a goal in 10 seconds.
- 2 on 1 Drill** - 2 Forwards start at Red Line, one defenceman at Blue Line, goalie in net.
Objective - try to beat defenceman and score on goalie in 10 seconds.
- 3 on 1 Drill** - 3 Forwards start at Red Line, 1 defenceman at Blue Line, goalie in net.
Objective - Forwards should use a variety of methods (criss cross, bank pass, drop pass, wide flat pass, and an offensive triangle etc., to beat defenceman then score on goalie in 15 seconds.
- 3 on 2 Drill** - 3 Forwards start at Red Line, 2 defencemen at Blue Line, goalie in net.
Objective - Try to set up a 2 on 1, beat a defencemen and score in 15 seconds.
- 2 on 2 Drill** - 2 Forwards start at Red Line, 2 defencemen start at Blue Line, goalie in net.
Objective - Defence Play it as a 1 on 1, Forwards get 10 seconds to score.
- Corner Drill** - 1 Forward in corner with the puck trying to maintain puck control.
Objective - 1 Defencemen goes into corner 1 on 1 to check him in 10 seconds.
- Net Coverage** - 1 Forward in front of net, trying to get free of D to take a pass and score.
Objective - 1 defenceman must check/cover man out front legally.
2nd Forward in corner with puck trying to pass to him in 10 seconds.
- Corner Drill** - 2 Forwards vs 1 Defenceman - puck starts in corner with Forward.
1 Forward in the corner with the puck, 2nd forward in front of the net vs
1 Defenceman out front. D plays it as a 2 on 1 trying to prevent a goal.

UNIT V

OFFENSIVE PLAY

INTRODUCTION TO OFFENSIVE PLAY

Offensive play is a combination of your individual skills (skating, puckcarrying, stickhandling, shooting, and scoring) and team skills (passing to open team-mates) used attempting to **score a goal**.

Scoring Goals is the objective of all offensive play and goals can be scored in a number of ways. Review pages 64 - 68. Remember, at least one goal must be scored to win the hockey game.

Offensive play begins the moment your team gains or regains possession of the puck. It could start in your Defensive Zone, the Neutral Zone or in the Offensive Zone from successful forechecking.

When you gain possession of the puck, all **five** players must work together as a cohesive unit to create scoring chances by skating to open space to receive a pass then getting a quality shot on goal.

The puck carrier's job is to move the puck ahead quickly into the offensive zone by either **carrying** it himself, **passing** it to an open teammate, or **shooting** it deep into the zone if over the Red Line. Then charging in after it trying to regain possession of the puck before the opposition does.

An objective of offensive play is to maintain possession of the puck inside the offensive zone and create a 2 on 1 situation which leads to a good scoring opportunity. The ultimate goal of offensive play is to get a quality shot on net and score a goal either directly from the shot or from a rebound.

THEORIES OF OFFENSIVE HOCKEY

DUMP AND CHASE

There are two recognized **Theories of Offensive Hockey**. One is called “**Dump and Chase**,” where you carry the puck just over the Red Line and **dump/shoot** it deep into the offensive corner, then chase after it. This method is used when the opposition is lined up outside their Blue Line making it very difficult to enter the offensive zone by either carrying or passing the puck into the zone.

You try to regain possession of the puck by either forechecking, checking the opposition deep in their end by taking them off the puck, or by beating them to the loose puck and regaining control.

This style of offensive hockey is usually played on smaller ice surfaces, by a good forechecking team with big, strong, physical players who are not afraid to be first into the corner. Dump the puck in with a purpose not randomly, to a location/area where your team can regain possession of it.

If your team has the speed, size, and forwards who like to forecheck, this method is very effective. It physically wears the opposition's defencemen down and creates turnovers. This is more of an NHL or Major Jr. “A” style of aggressive offensive play. But in most Minor/Youth Hockey games in Ages 7-8, 9-10 and 11-12 you should only use the dump and chase method if there is no one open to pass to, or if your opponent is using the “Neutral Zone Trap.” Older House and Rep. Teams in under 15 and under 18 might use the “dump and chase” method to their advantage.

PUCK CONTROL or PUCK POSSESSION

The second theory of offensive hockey is called “**Puck Control.**” With this method you either **carry** or **pass the puck** through the neutral zone, over the opponents Blue Line into the offensive zone with the puck under your teams control and possession. Carry it, or create a 2 on 1 situation and score.

You don't shoot it in. This is a more controlled method of offensive play by keeping possession of the puck. This is the type of play most players aged 7-8, 9-10 and 11 -12 would use.

To play this style requires accurate passers, smart receivers and skilled stickhandlers. Talented players who have a lot of basic puck handling skills and know where to go to receive a pass. They also have to be good thinkers creating openings to go to the net or get in position to receive a pass.

This resembles a **European Style of Offence** which uses skating, puckhandling, stickhandling, deking, passing, speed, team work and cycling to control the puck before taking a quality shot.

This style of offensive hockey is used on longer and especially wider ice surfaces approximately 200' x 85' where there is a lot more open ice to carry the puck, or to pass it to an open team-mate.

Good passing teams like the old Edmonton Oilers with Wayne Gretzky, Mark Messier, Jari Kurri, Glenn Anderson and Paul Coffey played this “run and gun” offensive style of puck control hockey.

The main objective of offensive hockey, regardless of which method you use, is to either **maintain** or **regain** possession of the puck in the offensive zone and then create a 2 on 1 situation, or a clear path/ shot from the point or slot area which leads to a good scoring opportunity and eventual goal.

Your Coach will decide which style of offensive hockey to play based on the skill& skating level of his players, the talent of the opposition, and the size of the ice surface the game is being played on.

One of your lines may play “**dump and chase**” while another line may play “**puck control**”. The bottom line it's the coaches decision, but still the team that scores the most goals wins the game.

DEFENSIVE ZONE POSSESSION and POSITIONING OF PLAYERS

If your team re-gains **possession** of the puck, **deep** in your **defensive zone**, each player must automatically skate to their clearing play or break out positions to receive a pass and exit the zone.

Usually your defenceman gets full control of the puck in a corner. When this happens, the following positional play should take place immediately and automatically.

Wingers, both left wing and right wing, must skate to their wing and position themselves **about halfway** in, between the Blue Line and the Goal Line, **curling** up the boards near the face-off hash marks ready for a pass. Keep your feet moving ready to exit the zone on the move not standing still.

Keep your eyes on the puck, don't turn your back to it. Keep your stick blade flat on the ice ready to receive a pass. Receiving and controlling this **first outlet pass** is extremely important.

If you are covered by a forechecker you can cut to the middle of the ice to get free of him and still be in a position to take an outlet pass from your defenceman or from another team-mate. Try to take the pass on the move not standing still and you will be able to get/skate by most checkers.

Wingers should never leave their defensive zone too early or until they are 100% sure their team has good possession of the puck. If they pull out too early and there is a **turn over** of the puck they are caught up ice and out of position defensively to help defend against any scoring threat.

The **Centre** circles between the face-off circles in position for an outlet pass from the defenceman.

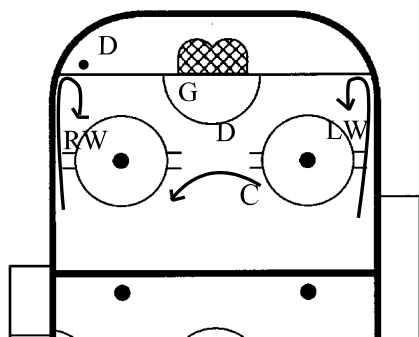
One Defenceman is usually in a corner with the puck looking for an open team-mate to pass to.

The **other Defenceman**, is positioned in front of the net, acting as a safety in case anything goes wrong and there is a turn over of the puck in the corner. But, if he is certain it is safe to do so, he can go into the other corner to provide a bank passing option behind the net for his defence partner.

The **Goalie** watches the **D** puck carrier, giving him verbal advice as to any approaching forecheckers and how much time he has to make the pass or if he should carry it out, or pass it behind the net.

This **Defensive Zone** clearing/breakout play **positioning** must become automatic every time your defencemen or any team-mate gain possession of the puck **deep** in your end of the rink.

The defenceman with the puck must feel confident you are positioned correctly and he can pass the puck to you with only a quick look to see if you are covered or open. Receivers should position their stick blade on the ice as a target for the defenceman to pass the puck to.



POSITIONING

- 1) Wings on wing, curling to hash marks
- 2) Centre circles between face-off circles.
- 3) Defenceman in corner with the puck.
- 4) Defenceman in front of the net.
- 5) Goalie watching play develop.
- 6) Keep your feet moving for quick exit.

CLEARING/BREAKOUT PLAYS

The objective of any **clearing play** is to move the puck **quickly** and **safely** out of your defensive zone and over your Blue Line while still **maintaining possession** of the puck in the neutral zone.

Note: Your **Blue Line** is the most important line in hockey. If you can get the puck out over it, the opposition should not be able to score a goal from outside it, or from anywhere in the neutral zone.

If the puck remains inside your Blue Line for any length of time, or a turnover occurs, a goal could be scored against you under the forechecking and puck recovery circumstances by the opposition.

Remember, the opposition will be forechecking the puck carrier, trying to regain possession of the puck, so get into your clearing play positions as soon as your team is about to regain possession.

Speed is essential to get into an open clearing play position to receive a pass, carry or pass the puck and move out of your defensive zone quickly. But don't leave the player you were covering defensively (your check,) until you are sure your defenceman or a team-mate has good control of the puck. Timing and puck possession is crucial during this Transition Phase from defence to offence.

CLEARING PLAY / BREAKOUT OPTIONS

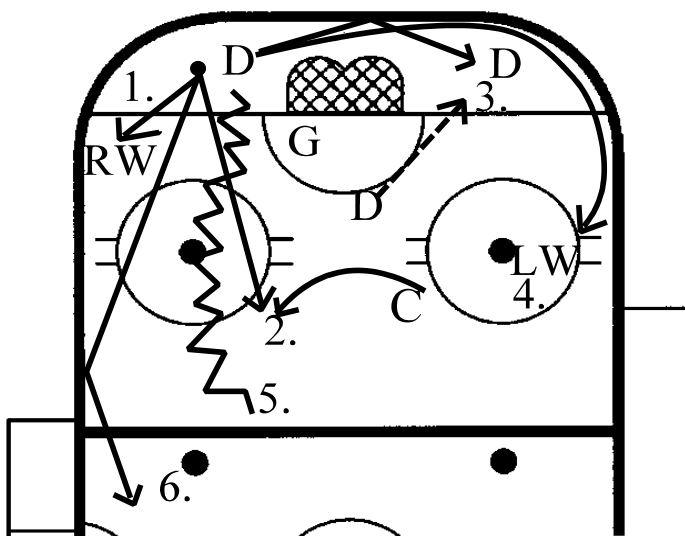
Many **Clearing Plays** start with possession of the puck by a defenceman in the corner or behind the net. From here it could take 1, 2, or 3 quick passes to clear your defensive zone. D- RW- C -LW.

THE DEFENCEMAN HAS 6 BASIC OPTIONS

- 1) Pass the puck to the **near winger** positioned about halfway in and curling up the boards. Wingers will have to learn & practice how to take a hard pass up the boards or in their feet.
- 2) Pass to the **centre** who is circling at a 45 degree angle between the face-off circles. Don't give him a suicide pass where he must turn his head and look behind him for the pass or he could get body checked and seriously injured. Pass the puck in front of him so he can skate to it.
- 3) Use a bank pass behind your net to your **defence** partner who alerted you he was going from the front of the net into the opposite corner when he saw 2 forecheckers approaching you.
- 4) The defenceman shoots the puck hard around the boards, behind his net, to the **wide winger** who is stationed halfway in along the boards. This is also a good play if being forechecked. The reason the wingers are positioned **halfway in** and curling up the boards and not out at the Blue Line is to keep a safe open distance between themselves and the opponents defence.

If you are **out too close** to the Blue line, their defenceman could **pinch**, or cut in front of you and intercept the clearing pass, or they could check you as soon as you get the pass and cause a turn over of the puck. Wingers must **control the puck** along the boards then get it out.

- 5) The **defenceman** could carry the puck out of the defensive zone himself. This is a **dangerous** play if you are the last person back because if you lose the puck or get poke checked the opposition have a breakaway. But if you're like Bobby Orr, or can stickhandle it's a good move. But carry the puck only if your defence partner is still behind you, backing you up.
- 6) The defenceman chips it off the side boards/glass or flips the puck into the neutral zone.

**OPTIONS for DEFENCEMAN**

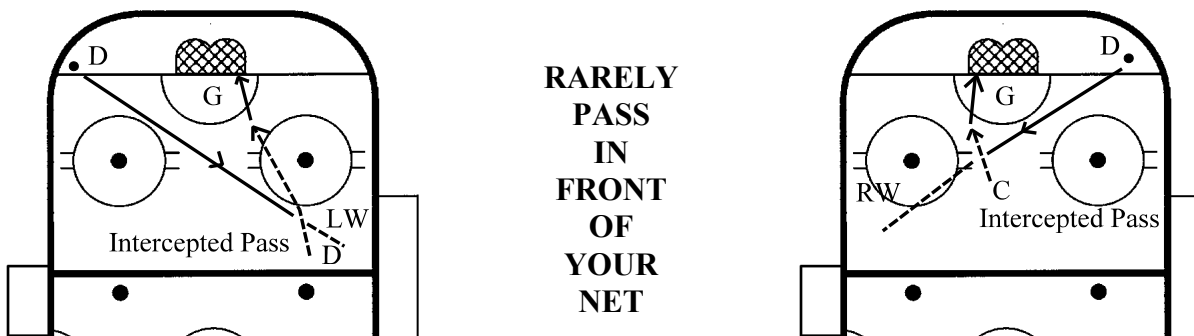
- 1) Pass to near side curling Right winger.
- 2) Pass to circling Centre between hash marks.
- 3) Bank pass to Defence partner behind net.
- 4) Shoot around boards to wide Left winger.
- 5) Carry puck out yourself.
- 6) Chip puck off glass or side boards, or flip puck into the neutral zone

DEFENCE IF YOU'RE BEING PRESSURED BY FORECHECKERS

If you can't make a good play, don't panic and get rid of the puck causing a turnover in your end. Take a hit and **Freeze** puck along the baseboard for a face-off.

DON'T PASS IN FRONT OF YOUR NET -unless you are 100% sure it is safe to do so.

Rarely pass the puck across the front of your net to the wide winger. It could be intercepted by a quick thinking defenceman or forward and result in a goal against you. Come up the boards its safer.

**TYPES OF CLEARING PLAYS**

There are 2 basic types of **clearing or breakout plays**.

FASTBREAK

The **Fastbreak** clearing play is just as it says, **fast**. Puck speed and accurate passing is very important to beat the first forecheckers before they get to the puck carrier or cover your wingers.

Whoever regains possession of the puck in your end zone, pass it ahead as quickly as possible to an open man. If all are covered, carry it yourself. If the wingers are covered by forecheckers, they should criss-cross or cut to open ice to get into the clear for an outlet pass, taking the puck on the move.

Move out of your defensive zone as quickly as possible as a group or a 5 man unit.

It is always safer to come up the boards than up through the centre, but sometimes the centre is open to you. But **Look**, before you pass up the centre. If open, you may send a team-mate on a breakaway.

The **first** initial outlet pass is the most important. It must be fast, accurate and on the receivers stick.

Team speed, individual speed and accurate passing are key assets for this type of breakout play.

It usually takes 2 or 3 quick, accurate, on the tape passes to clear the defensive zone. D passes to C, C passes to RW, or LW and you are safely out of your defensive zone and into neutral zone.

This fast break system can trap the opposition's forecheckers deep inside your defensive zone if executed properly. Pass **behind** your net to the wide winger if they use 2 forecheckers on your defenceman, it's safer and the 2 forecheckers are likely to get trapped in deep on the other side.

Also, don't try to come up the near boards and beat 3 defenders (2 forecheckers and a defenceman), it won't work and there will be a turn over of the puck. Pass it hard behind your net out the long side.

CONTROLLED BREAKOUT

The **Controlled Breakout** is slower and more deliberate than the **Fastbreak**, but just as effective for exiting your defensive zone with the puck under your team's control.

A defenceman retrieves the loose puck in the corner and **carries it behind his net and stops**. This is considered a safe area, as the net provides a barrier between the puck carrier and a forechecker, as most Minor/Youth hockey coaches tell their players not to go behind the net after a puckcarrier.

The defenceman then allows his 2 wingers, centre and defensive partner to take up their proper clearing play positions before trying to move the puck out of their defensive zone.

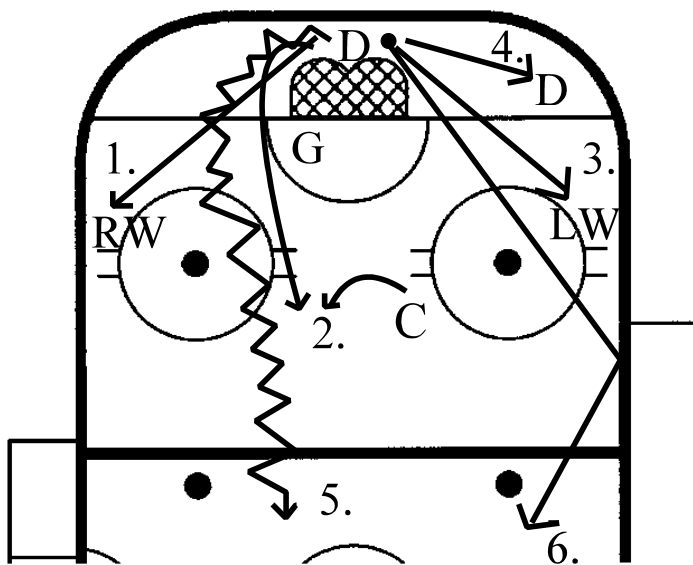
He studies the oppositions forechecking system (1 man in or 2 men in, are the wingers covered or open) then decides on which one of his 6 clearing play options to use.

He is like a football quarterback reading the defence, then either passing to his open receivers or deciding to carry it out himself. If the wingers are covered, they must cut to open ice to take a pass.

This defenceman must be intelligent, confident, doesn't panic, is a good passer able to find his open receivers or an excellent puck carrier if he is going to use the controlled breakout system.

This is not a speed play - this is a **slower**, but controlled breakout play to exit the defensive zone.

Example: Defenceman fakes carrying puck out one side of the net to get forecheckers to react to that side, then he reverses his direction and comes out other side and uses one of his 6 options.



OPTIONS

- 1) Pass to curling Right.Winger.
- 2) Pass to circling Centre.
- 3) Pass to curling Left.Winger.
- 4) Pass to Defence Partner.
- 5) Carry it out yourself.
- 6) Chips it out off boards/glass or flips it into the neutral zone

SUMMARY

The first outlet pass in either of these breakout systems (fastbreak or controlled) is crucial. If the pass is off the mark, either ahead of or behind the receiver, a dangerous turnover could take place in your zone and result in a good scoring chance or worse still, a possible goal against your team.

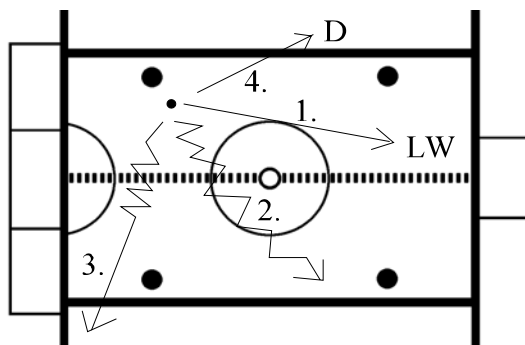
If the wings or centre are covered, carry it yourself or use another option. Look before you pass.

It is still safest to come up the boards not through the centre but sometimes the centre is open.

Wingers don't be standing still, keep your feet moving, knees bent and stick blade on the ice.

NEUTRAL ZONE PLAY

Once you get over your Blue Line with possession of the puck, the puck carrier has 3 options entering the **Neutral Zone**. 1. **Pass** the puck, 2. **Carry** it or 3. **Dump/Shoot** it in deep if over the Red Line.

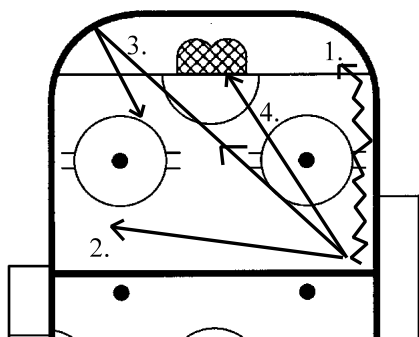
**OPTIONS**

- 1) Pass to an open Forward
- 2) Carry it in yourself.
- 3) Shoot it in, when over the Red Line.
- 4) Pass back to late Defenceman

If encountering a Neutral Zone Trap, with opposition clogging the neutral zone, forwards must break to open ice by criss-crossing but one defenceman must stay back for a possible long back pass to him. (4) Use this back defenceman if encountering a lot of traffic on your side of the ice and pass him the puck and he can carry it or quickly pass it to the open player on the far side thus breaking the trap/traffic on the near side boards. If over the Red Line, you can also play “dump and chase.” (3)

OFFENSIVE ZONE STRATEGY

When the puck carrier reaches the **offensive Blue Line** he has 4 options. **Carry** the puck in, **Pass** the puck in, **Dump** the puck past the defenceman into a corner, or **Shoot** it on goal to create a rebound

**OPTIONS**

- 1) Carry the puck over the Blue Line yourself.
- 2) Pass it to an open player. Forward or Defenceman
- 3) Dump the puck into the corner for wide winger.
- 4) Shoot it on the net possibly creating a rebound.
- 5) Cycle puck in the corner or behind the goal line to your open forwards to maintain puck control.

Maintaining or **regaining** possession of the puck is still a main objective of offensive hockey.

Once inside the offensive zone with the puck under your control, be very creative by passing, cycling or carrying the puck in a direct or indirect line to the net to get a high percentage shot on goal.

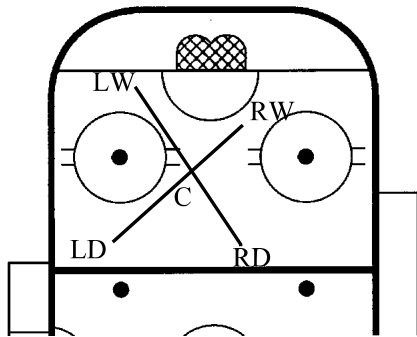
Defencemen are also part of the offence and must be on or inside the Blue Line as well. Once inside, they can pick their spot when to jump into the play from their point position to create a 2 on 1, or 3 on 2 situation. They can break into the clear for a pass, take a shot on goal, or go for a rebound.

Defencemen should move toward the centre of the ice along the Blue Line, or into the slot area giving them a better angle for shooting and the possibility of producing rebounds if the goalie stops the shot.

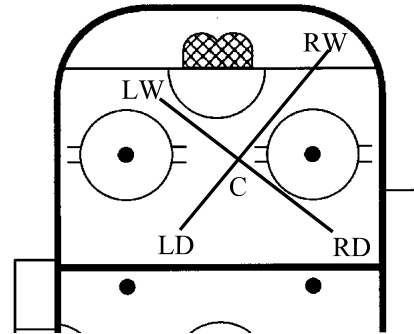
Forwards in the corner with the puck can pass to the points as a option. **Shots from the point** are an extremely good option because they have more time to shoot and forwards can go to the net to screen or deflect the shot. A high percentage of shots taken from the point turn into goals from rebounds.

THE OFFENSIVE X THEORY - players can rotate to different points of the flexible "X"

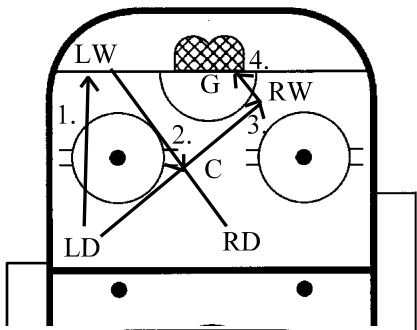
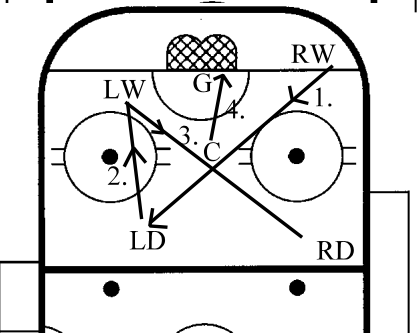
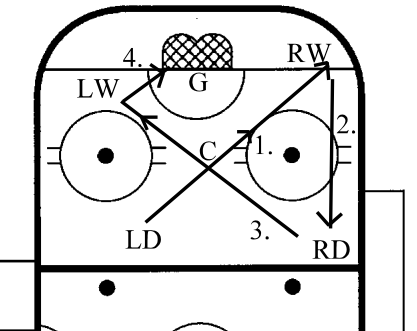
Most teams use the **X theory** on offense, 2 forwards in deep, 1 is back in the slot, and 2 defencemen are up inside the Blue Line. It could be a large or small "X" depending where the puck is located.

**OFFENSIVE
"X"
THEORY**

The flexible X moves
side to side or
in and out.

**OFFENSIVE "X" SCORING PLAYS INSIDE THE BLUE LINE**

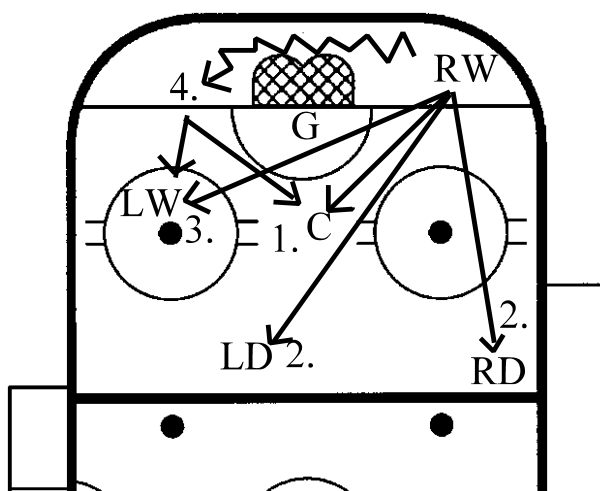
Once you have gotten over their Blue Line with **possession** of the puck there are several creative plays you can use to set up a scoring opportunity. Setting up in an X formation is the basic **offensive positioning play**. You can move the puck along the lines of the X or pass around its perimeter. The "X" sub divides into smaller offensive triangles which provides **two passing options**.

**Examples of Passing and Scoring Plays****1,2,3, 4 SHOOT****LD - LW - CEN - RW SHOOT****SCORE****1,2,3, 4 SHOOT****RW - LD - LW - CEN SHOOT****SCORE****1,2,3,4 SHOOT****CEN - RW - RD - LW SHOOT****SCORE**

BACK PASS

When executing the **Back Pass**, the winger or centre carries the puck over the Blue Line and takes it deep along the boards into the corner, or all the way behind their net and out the opposite side.

If an opposing defenceman skates toward the puck carrier to cover him or tries to check him, the puck carrier has 4 back pass options, including a bank/board back pass to Right defenceman.

**OPTIONS**

- 1) Pass back to trailing Centre in slot area.
- 2) Pass back to open defenceman, LD or RD
- 3) Pass back to a breaking man out front LW.
- 4) Carry puck behind the net then pass back to a breaking man. LW, C or Defencemen. on point, or going to the slot area, or the net.

DROP PASS

When executing the **Drop Pass**, the winger or centre carries the puck over the opponents Blue Line. It could be a straight drop pass to a trailer behind or a criss-cross drop pass to a player cutting across.

The puckcarrier heads straight for the **best** defenceman to isolate him or to draw him out of the slot.

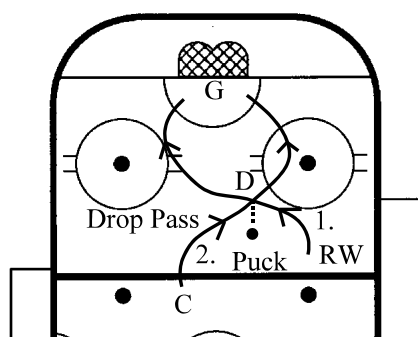
He then drops the puck back to a **trailing** team-mate and bumps into the best defenceman creating a **little** interference preventing him from getting to the dropped pass. It's like a pic play in basketball.

The **trailer** picks up the pass and heads for the net to shoot, pass to a team-mate or deke the goalie.

Drop passes are very hard to defence against and create excellent scoring opportunities.

They can be initiated any where on the ice including your defensive zone and neutral zone.

With **new rule** interpretations coming into effect Pic plays and interference might be called by the Referee. You'll just have to experiment on a Pic play to see what you can and cannot do.

**OPTIONS**

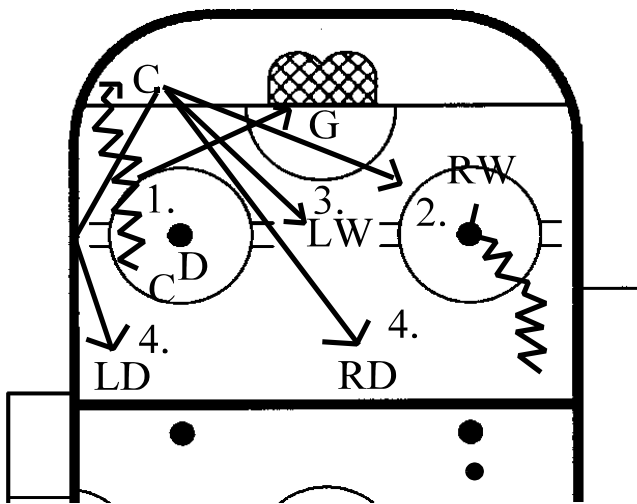
- 1) RW. drops puck for centre and blocks D.
or
- 2) Centre drops puck for RW. and blocks D.
- 3) New puck carrier can now shoot, pass or deke.

FAKE DROP PASS

With a **Fake Drop Pass**, the puck carrier, a winger or centre, skates toward the defenceman closest to the boards and fakes a drop pass trying to isolate him and stop his backward skating momentum.

If the defenceman goes for the fake and tries to poke check the puck, he stops skating which gives you some room and forward skating momentum (change of pace) to blow by him. Accelerate with the puck and beat the defenceman to the outside then head to the corner, or cut to front of the net.

The puck carrier is now free to go to the net for a shot or a pass out to any uncovered team-mates.

**OPTIONS**

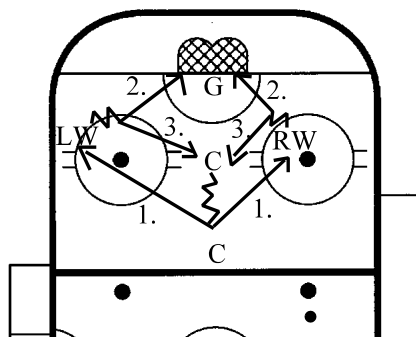
- 1) C takes shot on net himself
- 2) Passes off to wide RW winger
- 3) Passes back to LW in deep slot
- 4) Passes back to points LD or RD

PASS OFF TO EITHER WINGER

The centre carries the puck a few feet over the Blue Line and **stops**, drawing a defenceman to him.

He then **Passes the puck off to either open winger** (left or right) before defenceman arrives.

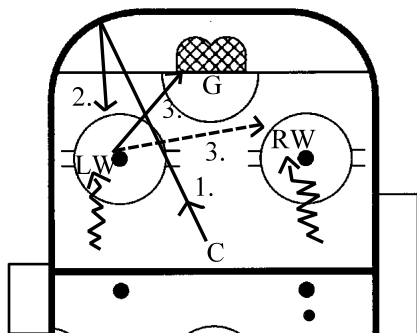
After passing off, the centre slowly moves into the deep slot area for a return pass and shot on goal, goes to the net for a rebound, or either forechecks or turns and backchecks a wide winger if there is a turn over of the puck.

**OPTIONS**

- 1) Centre stops, then passes to either winger LW or RW.
- 2) The winger can go the net for a shot; or
- 3) Pass back to the centre or other winger who takes the shot.
- 4) If there is a turn over of the puck, the center can either forecheck or backcheck.

BANK SHOT INTO EITHER CORNER

When the opposing defencemen are meeting the rush outside the Blue Line and both wingers are covered and can't receive a pass, you may have no alternative but to **Bank the puck** off the corner end boards. Shoot it in hard from outside the Blue Line so it will rebound outwards toward the breaking winger. The winger must be skating fast to beat both the backchecker and defenceman to the loose puck and must not slow down at the Blue Line in order to stay on-side. He then bursts by the defenceman and retrieves the loose puck and gets a shot on goal. Timing and location of the shoot in is critical to avoid an off-side and to retrieve the big rebound off the boards of the loose puck.

**OPTIONS**

- 1) Puck shot hard into left corner by Centre.
- 2) Puck rebounds back several feet off boards.
- 3) LW races in by the defenceman and any backchecker, retrieves loose puck for shot on goal, or pass to RW going to the net for shot or rebound.

SHOOT IN AROUND BOARDS

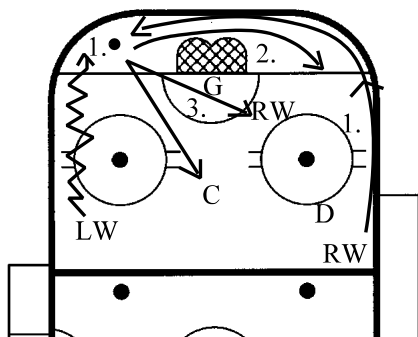
Shoot it hard Around Boards behind Net to your winger

When you are carrying the puck down a wing and there giant 6' 5" defenceman is ready to check you into the boards. You may have no option but to **Shoot the puck hard into the corner and around the boards** behind their net to your awaiting wide winger. It's like a long, calculated cycling play.

To make the play successful, you must shoot the puck high and hard, so it will go all the way around the boards, behind the net, and out the opposite side to your awaiting wide winger in the corner.

The puck must be shot high, hard and fast to prevent the goalie from stopping it behind his net.

The wide winger gets the puck and can cycle it back behind the net to a team-mate, pass it to an open team-mate out front, try a wrap around shot himself or carry it to a better location.

**OPTIONS**

- 1) RW shoots puck high and hard into corner and around net to the waiting LW in opposite corner.
- 2) LW keeps puck in deep by controlling or cycling it along the base board to team-mate RW.
- 3) Passes it out front to C in deep slot, or RW if uncovered, or the open points LD or RD.
- 4) Carries it out from behind the net himself and attempts a wrap around shot.

SPREAD OUT IN THE NEUTRAL AND OFFENSIVE ZONES

When on **offence**, if you play in a rink that is both long and wide, (200' x 85') take full advantage of the extra room and spread out in a large "X" formation in both the neutral and offensive zones.

Three forwards should **rarely** attack on an offensive rush in a straight line across the ice. Use a triangle formation with 2 players leading and a trailer following because it is very easy for 2 defencemen to break up the play, counter attack, and trap all three forwards. LW, C, RW in deep.

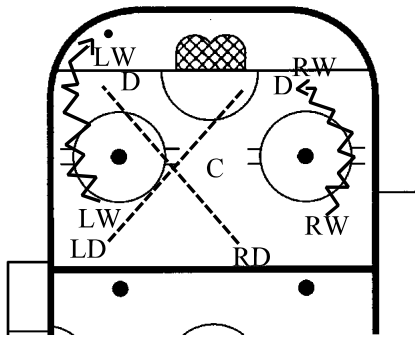
Two forwards should be ahead leading the rush, with 1 trailer back 10-12 feet for a drop or back pass.

One forward, usually an open winger, should skate wide down the wing, this will draw a defenceman with him to open up the centre ice even more for a back or drop pass to the 3rd forward the trailer.

The other forward, the puck carrier, should cut wide drawing the other defenceman out of the centre lane towards the corner. This action draws the 2 defencemen wide apart opening up the slot area.

The third forward, moves slightly to the puck carrier's side, but stays back deep in the slot, in position to receive a pass and to get a shot on goal. He is still in position to forecheck if there was a turn over of the puck and to backcheck if anything goes wrong and the opposition recover and exit the zone.

The two offensive defencemen move up inside the Blue Line to keep the puck on-side and inside the offensive zone. They are now in a good position to receive a pass or to get a shot on goal from point.



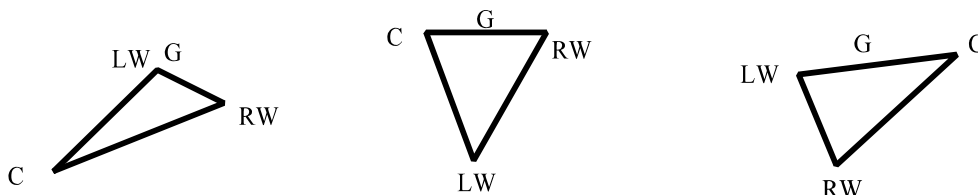
OPTIONS

- 1) RW - Skates wide to net bringing defenceman with him.
- 2) LW - Carries puck deep into corner bringing defenceman with him.
- 3) CEN - Stays deep in slot for a pass, shot or to forecheck or backcheck.
- 4) DEF - Move up inside the Blue Line to keep puck on-side and for a shot.

This completes an offensive "X" formation.

OFFENSIVE TRIANGLES

Forwards should always try to create a triangle formation while leading a rush or controlling the puck inside the offensive zone. By forming a triangle you always have 2 passing options. If you need a goal late in the game, try to get the puck to your natural goal scorer. Study Diagrams below.

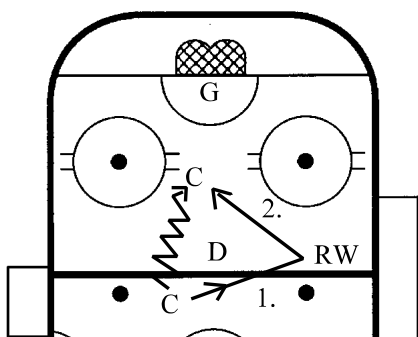


OFFENSIVE 2 on 1 PLAYS

Two offensive forwards against one defenceman.

GIVE and GO PLAY

Forwards, C and RW, use a short give and go pass play to get around the defenceman.

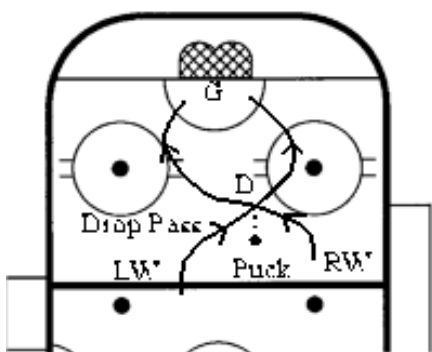


GIVE and GO PLAY

Center **gives** RW short pass and **goes** by defenceman on left side then takes a return pass in full flight and goes to net for a shot on goal.

DROP PASS

Use a drop pass, then lightly block the defenceman (Pic Play) then go to the net for a rebound

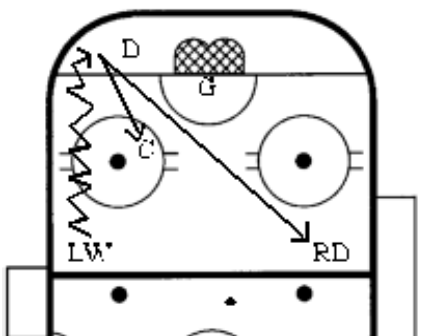


DROP PASS

RW drops pass to crossing LW
LW goes to the net and can shoot, pass, or carry puck
RW blocks defensemen, preventing him from getting to LW, he then goes to net following up for a rebound.

BACK PASS / BEHIND BACK PASS / BANK PASS

The puck carrier draws the defenceman wide and out of the centre lane towards the corner then passes the puck back to a trailing forward C in the slot or open LD or RD on the point. He can use a regular back pass or he may have to use a behind the back pass or a bank pass if being checked.



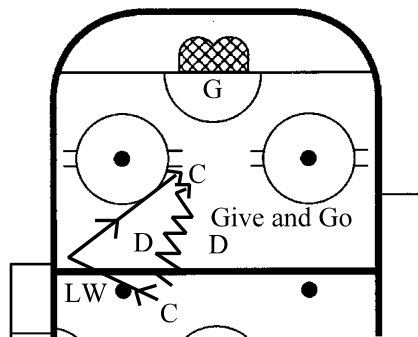
BACK PASS/BEHIND BACK PASS

- 1) LW goes wide and brings defencemen with him.
- 2) LW passes puck back to centre or open defenceman.
- 3) LW bank passes back to Left Defenceman

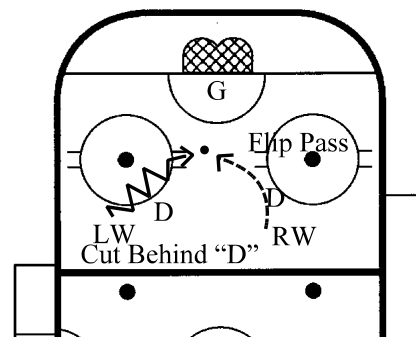
OFFENSIVE 2 on 2 PLAYS

Two offensive forwards, against two defencemen, just inside or outside the Blue Line.

The puck carrier could pass off to LW then skate hard between the 2 defencemen, splitting the two and takes a return pass in full flight, then goes to the net for a shot. Or he then use one of the previous mentioned options. Give and Go Pass, below Left Diagram. Flip Pass or Shovel Pass in below Right Diagram and RW receives pass and goes to net for a shot.

**2 on 2**

Create a
2 On 1
Situation.

**OFFENSIVE 3 on 2 PLAYS**

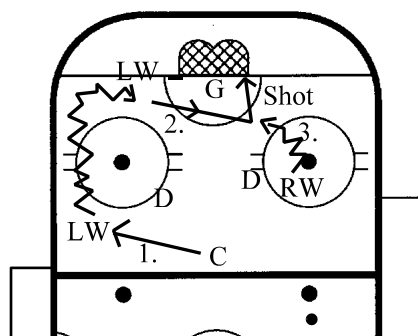
Three Offensive players against two defenders.

Two forwards lead the attack and try to draw the 2 defencemen wide apart to open up the slot area.

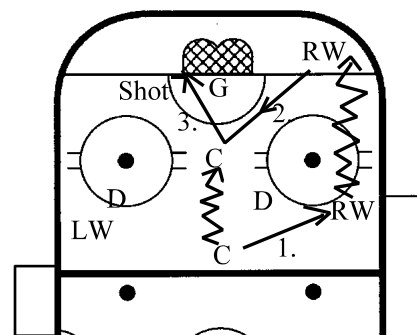
The third forward, the trailer, stays back 10-12 feet in the deep slot area, open for a back pass, or if possible a drop pass.

Rarely attack with 3 players straight across the ice, this makes it very easy for the 2 defencemen to break up the play and trap all three forwards. Use a triangle formation with one forward staying deep.

Spread out, and use the entire offensive zone both width and depth to create a 2 on 1 situation.

**3 on 2**

Create a
2 on 1
situation



1. CEN. - LW
2. LW - RW
3. RW - SHOOT

1. CEN. - RW
2. RW - CEN.
3. CEN - SHOOT

PROTECTING THE PUCK

Protecting the puck simply means the puck carrier gets himself into a specific position and location on the ice near the boards so the opposing player/checker cannot get or take the puck away from him.

This skill is used by both forwards in the offensive zone and defencemen in the defensive zone to keep control of the puck on their stick blade but away from a single checker.

During a game, a number of situations arise usually in the corner or near the boards, that forces the puck carrier to protect the puck until he can complete a pass or break free from the checker.

When a puck carrier is pressured by one aggressive forechecker, he sometimes panics and either dumps the puck away, or turns it over to the opposition.

By “**Protecting the Puck**,” with your body you can buy some extra time to make a good play.

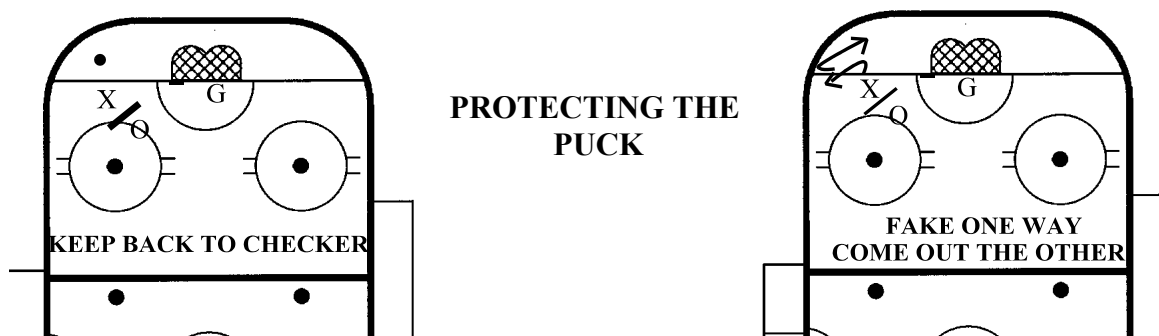
By keeping your “**Backside**” and bum, up against the opposing checker, he cannot get the puck.

By taking this position, it is very difficult for the checker to get to the inside of you or to lift your stick. He cannot poke check you because the puck is too far away from his stick.

Keep turning your head and look over both your shoulders to ensure your back is to the checker.

If the forechecker cross- checks you, holds or checks you from behind, etc. he will receive a penalty.

To get away from the checker, fake going in one direction, then carry the puck out the other direction. It generally works and it gives you a few extra seconds or longer to make a good offensive play.



GETTING PUCK FROM DEFENSIVE ZONE INTO OFFENSIVE ZONE

There are just 4 methods in which to get the puck from your Defensive Zone into the Offensive Zone.

1. **Pass** the puck ahead to an open team mate and he carries it into the offensive zone.
2. **Carry** the puck yourself if no teammate is open ahead of you to receive a pass.
3. **Shoot** the puck past the defencemen into the offensive zone if over the Red Line then try to regain possession before the opposition does. If they retrieve it, start immediately to pressure their defence with aggressive forechecking to create turnovers.
4. Usually it's a **Combination** of all 3 methods. Passing play, Carrying the puck or Shooting it in deep to a specific corner that is retrievable. All 4 are used during **offensive plays**.

Note: To break a **Neutral Zone Trap**, pass D to wide D across the ice, then come up the far side.

OFFENSIVE ZONE FACE-OFFS

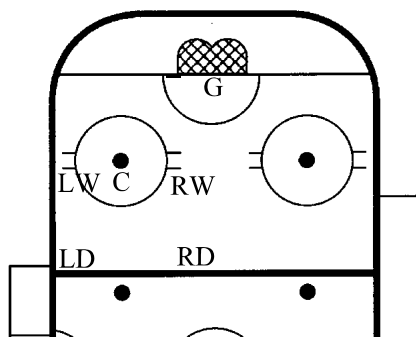
The objective of an **Offensive zone face-off** is to win the draw, regain possession of the puck then get a quality shot on net. The centre must get the puck back to his players then block the other centre from getting out to the puck. The visiting team centre must put his stick down first on all face-offs.

FACE-OFF OPTIONS

The player taking the face-off can:

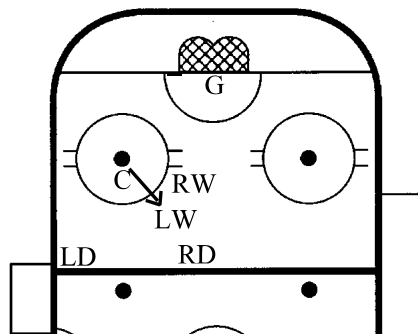
- 1) Draw/pull the puck back on his back hand.
- 2) Draw/pull the puck back on his forehand.
- 3) Pushes puck forward and/or Shoots toward the goal when the puck is dropped .
- 4) Lift up under the heel of his stick or push the blade of your opponents stick backward when the puck is dropped, then draw or kick the puck back to a team mate.

The centre should let his wingers know what he intends to do and where he intends to draw it, so they can set up properly and react to it. Don't let the other team know. Do it quietly or with signals.

POSITIONING OF PLAYERS FOR OFFENSIVE FACE-OFFS**OPTION 1**

Wingers stay in there normal wing position

Defencemen up inside Blue Line

**OPTION 2**

Left side winger sets up deep in the slot for a shot if centre wins face-off draw cleanly.

Defencemen up inside Blue Line.

The Coach or centre usually tells the players where he wants them to be positioned for an offensive face-off. If the face-off is won they react offensively by gently blocking the opposition, (don't take a penalty for interference,) then try to get a quality shot on goal. If they lose the draw, they react defensively, by forechecking, trying to regain possession of the puck deep inside the offensive zone.

The amount of time left in the period and the score may have a bearing on which option you use.

If the centre turns his lower hand over on the shaft, he may have more strength to pull the puck backwards on the draw, but he is also telling the opposition where he is trying to draw the puck.

OFFENSIVE FACE-OFF TIPS AND OPTIONS

If you are taking an **Offensive Zone Face-Off**:

- 1) Keep your eyes on the puck and try to time the Linesman's dropping of the puck with the toe/blade of your stick to draw it back in an C arc formation on your forehand or backhand.
- 2) Poke/ram your blade hard on opponents blade to move it backward, then draw the puck back to a winger with the blade of your stick.
- 3) Lift the opponents stick blade by placing yours under his heel and lift it up, then be quick on the draw and pull the puck back to your winger or use your feet to kick it back to him.

Speed, forearm and wrist strength, timing and wide stance are key elements for winning face-offs. Winning offensive face-offs usually results in quality shots on goal, which lead to rebounds or goals and contributes to winning hockey games.

ROLE OF THE PLAYERS ON OFFENCE *“when your team controls the puck”*

FORWARDS when carrying the puck, keep your feet moving as it could draw a penalty.

The **Forwards** primary role on offence is to try to **score goals**.

They should skate into any open area to receive a pass (making sure they are on-side). If they are already in an open area, stay there and yell for a pass if the passing lane is open to you.

If they are covered by a backchecker or defenceman they have 2 options.

- 1) Cut into an open area, even if it means leaving your lane and going over to the far wing.
- 2) Stay in your lane covered by the backchecker and let the play develop on the other side of the ice. The backchecker may leave you unattended later inside their Blue Line and you become open for a pass or can go to the net, for a quality shot or rebound.

Forwards should try to create as many 2 on 1's or odd man rushes as they can by setting up in a 5 man offensive "X" or a 3 player triangle formation through all 3 zones. This allows for 2 passing options.

Forwards should go to the net to get any rebounds or to screen the goalie. If you are covered by a defensive player in the slot or front of the net and want to receive a pass, you must circle/spin away from your check and get into the clear, or push him gently backward to create some open space.

Any puck carrier in doubt as to what to do with the puck, shoot it on the net if you have a clear shot because any shot could go in under the right circumstance,(deflection) or it could create a rebound. If it's late in the game and you need a goal, try to get the puck to your natural or best goalscorer.

If a defenceman pinches in from the point trying to keep the puck inside the offensive zone, the forward in the slot must come back and cover his vacated point position otherwise you may be giving the opposition a potential breakaway or a 2 on 1 situation. If his defence partner comes across to cover this position, the player in the slot rotates back and covers the other defenceman's point position ensuring there are always 2 players back. Coaches must explain what they want done in this situation at the start of the season.

DEFENCEMENS role on Offence

Make no mistake, the **Defencemen's** primary role is to **prevent goals** against his team. However, anytime they have the puck they are on **offence** and should pass it ahead quickly to an open forward or if the opportunity arises, lead or join an offensive rush to create an odd man 3 on 2, or a 2 on 1.

When their team has possession of the puck on an offensive rush, they should move up the ice with the play and into an open position to take a pass or shot on goal from the point position. Defencemen provide offensive back up support by providing extra passing options for their forwards.

They should follow up the forwards offensive rush as a **safety man** in case anything goes wrong and if the opposition regains possession of the puck they are still in a position to defend against the rush. Defencemen should always be ready for a pass back to them in all 3 zones.

Usually they are 15 to 25 feet back of the forwards on the rush, but never more than one line behind the play. They also provide back passing options if the opposition use the **Neutral Zone Trap**.

Once the forwards get inside the offensive zone, defencemen must move up inside the Blue Line to keep the puck inside the zone and on-side. They are now in a good position to shoot from the point.

Defencemen can pinch in from the Blue Line (i.e. skate deep into the offensive zone along the boards) trying to keep the puck inside the zone **if** they are **60%** sure they can do it. Otherwise, pull back into the neutral zone and defend against a rush. If you miss the puck when pinching or fail to keep it inside the Blue Line, the opposition may get a 2 on 1 break against your partner and possibly score.

Defencemen should **not** get caught up ice on an offensive rush as it usually results in a 2 on 1 against your defence partner because a forward did not covered up for you on defence. If caught in deep, you must skate back hard to get back into your defensive position before the rush crosses your Blue Line.

On face-offs, defencemen should if possible be in the same zone as the faceoff (offensive zone, neutral zone). This prevents off-sides if the puck came back to you.

Try to get all your shots on the net to create a rebound, but if your point shot is going to be blocked, dump it back into the corner. If your shot is blocked, the opposition usually get a 2 on 1, or a breakaway. It is important for defencemen to get the puck past any checker and not get it blocked.

GOALTENDERS role on Offence

The **Goaltender's** primary role is to stop the first shot and prevent the puck from entering the net.

However, he can help both forwards and defencemen with offensive hockey by verbally letting them know if forecheckers are after them or if they have lots of time to make a pass or to carry the puck.

Goalies can **pass** the puck up to an open forward on a power play or **stop** the puck behind the net to initiate a clearing play. They should also **bang** their stick on the ice to alert their team when a penalty is about to expire to make them aware that a player will be coming out of the penalty box shortly.

When they get bigger and stronger in under 15 or 18 hockey, they can try to shoot the puck down the ice **if killing a penalty**. If the opposition pull their goalie late in the game and with a little luck, they might score a shorthanded goal. **Don't try this at even strength** as you could get called for icing the puck if you miss the net. The face-off comes back to your end & you can't change players

BASIC OFFENSIVE HOCKEY RULES

Head man/pass the puck at all times if a team-mate is ahead of you and in the clear, it must be quick accurate and automatic. The receiver may be only open for a few seconds or he could go off-side.

Try not to stickhandle with the puck if you can pass it ahead safely. You normally only stickhandle if your receivers are covered and there is no one open to pass to. Passing is also much faster than carrying the puck. However, if you are **leading the rush** stickhandling is a viable option.

Pass the puck quickly, yet softly, if the man is wide open with an accurate flat on the ice pass.

Don't carry the puck 3 or 4 steps needlessly then pass it. Give it to the receiver when he wants it and is in the clear, not when you decide to give it to him because he may be open for only 2-3 seconds.

Receivers, if covered by a backchecker, must cut to open ice to get into a position to receive a pass.

Work the short give and go pass. Pass, then go around a defender to a clear opening for a return pass. Always cut into an open lane where you can receive a pass on the move. Passers, lead the receiver.

The higher the level you play in hockey, "A", "AA", "AAA", the quicker you will have to move the puck. Make short passes rather than long dangerous rink wide passes, they are much safer and faster.

Carry or pass the puck into the offensive zone unless forced to shoot it in. Keep puck possession as long as you can as a 5 man unit, not as an individual. Carry puck to net, or set up a 2 on 1 play.

If you are forced to dump the puck in, get it in deep, then get on their puck carrier (forecheck) as quickly as possible, finish the check and regain possession of the puck or beat him to the puck. When regaining control, you can Cycle the puck in the corner or behind the net to your team mates.

When in possession of the puck, try to develop as many 2 on 1's as possible and feed the man in the slot, at the side of the net, or on the points. If your team has the puck, the other team can't score.

If it's late in the game and you are a goal or two behind, you will have to forecheck with 2 or 3 men to score a goal and get back into the game. Change your strategy and take some offensive chances, you have nothing to lose. Consider pulling your goalie for an extra attacker with 2-3 minutes left.

Once inside their Blue Line set up in a 5 man offensive "X" formation or a 3 forward triangle.

If a shot is coming from the point, one forward should screen the goalie's view, while another forward goes to the net for any rebounds. Defencemen, if possible, time your point shot when players are screening or are skating across in front of the goalie. If a goalie can see the puck he usually stops it.

If you can deflect a low shot or tip a high shot on net do so, it could result in a goal.

Forwards try to carry the puck to the net and get a shot on goal, because anything can happen. If a defenceman on the point has no clear shot on the net, look to pass the puck diagonally to the open forward positioned at the far side of the net and he may score through the back door.

Defencemen must not let their point shot get blocked near the Blue Line by an approaching forward or it could turn into a breakaway for the opposition. If in doubt as to whether the shot will get by the approaching/shot blocking checker, dump the puck back into the corner, it is much safer.

TO PLAY OFFENSIVE HOCKEY OR DEFENSIVE HOCKEY - that is the question?

Your coach will make a major decision whether to allow your line or 5-man unit to play wide open **Offensive Hockey**, close checking **Defensive Hockey**, or a **combination** of both.

His decision could be based on the following criteria:

If his players are excellent goal scorers, as well as being great skaters and passers and he has reasonably good goaltending, the coach may be successful at trying to outscore the opposition 7- 5 with wide open, fire wagon, **throw caution to the wind, Offensive Hockey**.

If his players have limited goal scoring ability, but they are very good checkers and he has strong defensive defencemen but only average goaltending, the coach may choose to play a more disciplined defensive style and still win the game 3-2 by limiting the opposition goal scoring opportunities with close **in your face** checking. **Defensive Hockey with sound disciplined backchecking works.**

Also taken into consideration by the coach are the strengths and weaknesses of the opposition. This could be a determining factor as to which system to play. Remember, the St. Louis Blues beat the Boston Bruins, in the 2019 Stanley Cup Playoffs with a no name defence and rookie goalie.

The size of the ice surface could also play a part in the coaches decision for offensive or defensive hockey. Playing on a small ice surface which tends to be short and narrow allows you to forecheck with 2 men and permits your defence to catch and punish speedy puckcarrying wingers along the boards or in the corners because there is no extra wide ice width for them to skate with the puck.

On a larger ice surface, sending only one man in to forecheck while covering both wingers is a smart defensive play for some teams because of all the extra room they have to carry or pass the puck.

In Defensive Hockey - You **Wait** for your chances to score.

In Offensive Hockey - You **Take** and **Make** chances to score.

In Today's Hockey - most **NHL** and **Youth** teams are playing a combination of both. By that I mean, they are playing very offensive, trying to score goals, when they have possession of the puck but when they loose it, they quickly revert back to defensive, preventing goals against hockey right away. Todays teams play with speed without the puck and are after it as quickly as possible.

Regardless of which system is used, you will have to work very hard at both ends of the ice by playing disciplined positional hockey. Coaches, if one system is not working, change to another one.

TRANSITION GAME

In hockey terms, the word "**Transition**" refers to the change of possession of the puck from one team to the other. Players must go **immediately** from offence (scoring mode) to defence (puck recovery and preventing goals mode), or from defence (preventing a goal mode) to offence (scoring a goal mode) with every change of possession of the puck throughout an entire shift and the complete game.

The **quicker** you can adjust and go from offence to defence or vice versa, the more successful your team will be. Once the puck changes possession or a turn over occurs, you must either forecheck in the offensive zone to regain possession or backcheck in the neutral or defensive zone to prevent an odd man rush leading to a goal scoring opportunity. If you regain possession of the puck, quickly start an offensive rush. This is no time to go for a general skate, **stop**, then go on offense or defence. Your transition **reaction time** must be quick and automatic if your team is going to be successful.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS - between Coaches and Players, and Players and Coaches

Your Head Coach is in charge of the team and it is his responsibility to develop the game plan and discuss what forechecking and backchecking system is to be used for this particular game. He must explain to the players how it must be executed to be successful. On ice discipline and playing your position **both** offensively & defensively for 60 minutes are the keys to winning any hockey game.

The Coach should also **talk to the players** individually, giving them encouragement, correcting errors, providing positive feedback and in some cases issuing corrective discipline for breaking a team rule, taking a bad/undisciplined penalty, or not doing what he asked you to do on the ice.

The players also have to **talk to the coaching staff** if they don't understand something, like a forechecking or backchecking system, or what specifically they are suppose to do with and without the puck in certain situations. Make sure you understand your role and responsibility. Players must also talk to their line mates and team-mates, both on or off the ice, (when on the bench) to discuss plays and to build team spirit and good team chemistry.

If you are having difficulty understanding the coaches instructions or are experiencing a problem, ask for a private minute or a simple explanation to help you understand and correct the situation.

SUMMARY

Playing as a team both offensively and defensively for the entire game will bring success and personal satisfaction. **The best team**, not the team with the best players, wins the Championship.

However, trying to supply all the offense by yourself could bring frustration and failure because at the **higher levels** of hockey, in under 15 and under 18, "AA" and "AAA", one player can't do it all by himself/herself. To beat a good team you need 2 balanced lines with secondary scoring.

The more each player handles the puck (if only for a second), the more each player feels he has made a positive contribution to the team. Passing the puck is the key to both offensive play (scoring goals) and team success (winning games and playoff Championships).

When you receive a pass or retrieve a loose puck, your first thought should be is there a team-mate open and in the clear ahead of me to pass to. Not, can I carry it by myself all the way to the other end.

Remember, "**Success Breeds Success.**" You must think you can win in order to win!

You don't have to score a goal to make a positive contribution. Passing, checking, and preventing goals will also lead to team success and is equally important. Coaches and good players know this.

REVIEW AND TEST TIME

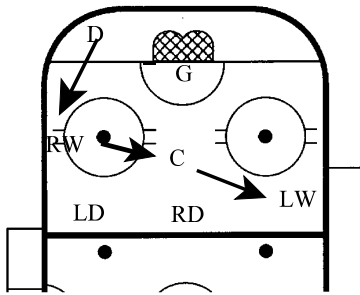
Review the key points of this unit with your players before going on to **UNIT VI**. Subjects such as:

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| C | Dump and Chase | C | Puck Control |
| C | Clearing Play Positioning | C | 6 Clearing/Breakout Plays |
| C | Face-Offs Offensive & Defensive | C | The Offensive "X" Theory |

are very important to understand.

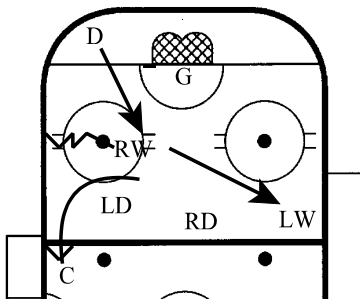
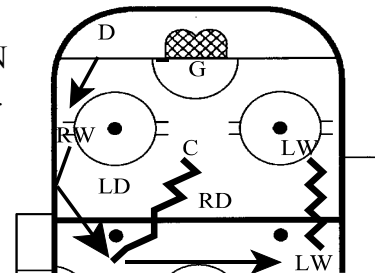
FASTBREAK CLEARING PLAYS - 5 on 0 DRILLS, then 5 on 2, 3, & 5 DRILLS

A five player unit consisting of two defencemen and three forwards are assembled outside the Blue Line. The coach shoots the puck into the corner or at the goalie and all five players quickly skate back into their clearing/breakout positions with a defencemen getting the puck and starting a clearing play. Start on right side then switch to left side. **Speed** is the objective of the fastbreak. Later you can add 2 to 5 defensive players to forecheck and make this drill more difficult and game like.



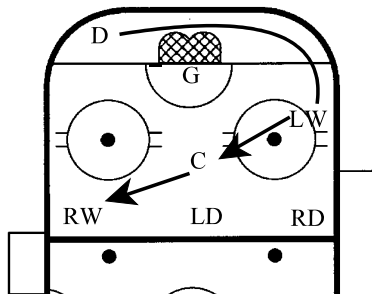
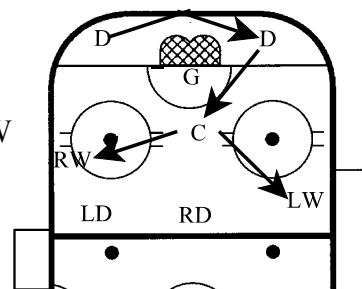
1. Defence passes to RW
2. RW passes to CEN
3. CEN passes to LW

1. Defense passes to RW
2. RW banks puck to CEN cutting behind defence.
3. CEN passes to LW



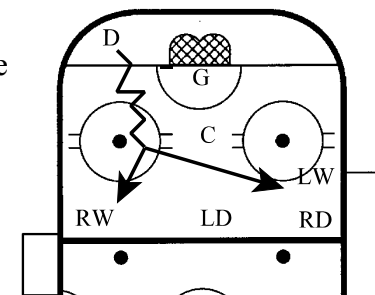
1. Defense passes to RW cutting across center
2. CEN cuts to RW
3. RW passes to LW or CEN

1. Defence bank passes to Defence partner
2. Partner passes to CEN
3. CEN passes to LW or RW



1. Defence fires puck behind net and around boards to LW
2. LW passes to CEN
3. CEN passes to RW

1. Defence leads rush up centre
2. Passes off to LW or RW

**CONTROLLED BREAKOUT PLAYS**

Defenceman picks up loose puck in corner or from goalie and goes behind his net and stops. Players get into position, he comes out on either side of net and initiates one of the previous six plays.

To make all of these drills harder, add 1 or 2 forecheckers then add 2 defencemen at the Blue Line. To make it really hard and challenging send 3 forwards in to forecheck and have 2 defencemen on the Blue Line. This will really challenge the line to find creative game like ways to get out of their end.

UNIT VI

DEFENSIVE PLAY

INTRODUCTION TO DEFENSIVE PLAY

Defensive play is a combination of your individual skills (stick checking & body checking, blocking shots) and team skills i.e. executing (forechecking and backchecking systems) used trying to **regain possession of the puck** and **preventing goals against** by eliminating odd man rushes & **open** men.

Preventing Goals is just as important as scoring goals and is required to tie or win a hockey game.

Specific checking skills and defensive systems must be learned and utilized to prevent goals. Both **Forwards** and **Defencemen** must learn and practice how to play 1 on 1's and 2 on 1's correctly.

Defensive play **begins** the moment your team **loses possession** of the puck. It could start in your Offensive Zone, Neutral Zone or Defensive Zone. When you lose possession of the puck, all five players have a specific checking job to do, to either regain possession of the puck or prevent a goal.

Players must work together as a cohesive unit to either **forecheck** in the offensive zone to regain possession of the puck, or **backcheck** in the neutral or defensive zone to catch and cover, an open player to prevent an odd man rush, or catch and check the puck carrier preventing him from getting to the net and having a quality scoring opportunity. On ice discipline by all 5 players is essential.

The quicker you can switch from offensive play to defensive play (your **transition game**) the more successful your team will be at regaining possession of the puck, preventing goals and winning.

Your ultimate objective in defensive play is to prevent a goal being scored against your line. You achieve this by reducing quality scoring opportunities, by covering players in front of the net, the slot area and on the points. When you recover the puck, move out of your end as quickly as possible.

The higher the calibre of hockey you play, be it "A", "AA" or "AAA", the more defensive hockey skills & systems will be emphasized by your Coaches. Learn to play away from & without the puck.

Basic checking skills, i.e. stickchecking (using your stick) and bodychecking (using your body), to separate the puck from its carrier, plus the timing and execution of forechecking and backchecking systems, plus blocking shots, are used **to recover the puck** and are key to your defensive game.

Defensive hockey allows your team to stay close in every game if you play your position correctly. **Defensive hockey wins key games & Playoff Championships.** Play with speed without the puck

Preventing goals requires skill, discipline, intelligence, correct on ice positioning and guts. Start today to learn how to check, eliminate odd man rushes and prevent goals to help your team win.

Coaches love players who can check, who aren't afraid to play physical in the corners and along the boards, who know how to prevent goals and who win the 1 on 1's to regain possession of the puck..

Remember- when the game **starts** you already have 1 point by way of the 0 - 0 tie score. **Prevent the opposition from scoring and you receive 1 point without even scoring a goal.**

WHAT IS CHECKING?

Checking is a hockey term used to describe skills used “**Trying to Recover the Puck**”

Checking skills are used to regain possession of the puck by legally separating the puck carrier from the puck thus allowing you or your team mates to retrieve the loose puck. Checking skills are also used to win the one-on-one battles for loose pucks in the corner and/or to prevent a goal against.

TYPES OF CHECKING

There are 4 categories of checking skills used trying to separate, then regain possession of the puck:

- 1) **Stick Checking**
- 2) **Body Checking**
- 3) **Forechecking**
- 4) **Backchecking open wingers & Back pressure on the puck carrier**

The success or failure of your defensive play is based on your **Checking Skills** and **ability to execute them**. These skills are just as important to learn, understand and develop as your offensive skills and should be explained and taught by coaches and learned by players at a younger age rather than an older age. Players aged 5 to 12 should have some understanding of why and how to check.

PURPOSE OF CHECKING

- 1) To cause/create a loose puck or turnover by **legally** taking or knocking the **puck carrier** off the puck. **Note:** You cannot bodycheck a player without the puck or you will get a penalty.
- 2) To regain possession of the puck anywhere on the ice. “**Winning the one-on-one battles.**”
- 3) To prevent a goal or scoring opportunity by covering open players. “**No odd man rushes.**”
- 4) To slow down and physically wear out the puckcarrier with constant forechecking, backchecking, and if allowed bodychecking (deliberate and intentional legal hitting)
- 5) To intimidate (frighten) the puckcarrier into costly turnovers by passing or getting rid of the puck before they want to, with solid but clean bodychecks every chance you get in the 11 & 12 age groups to under18 age groups. “**Finish your check on the puck carrier.**”

REMEMBER

1. There is no body checking allowed in the Beginner and 5 to 10 year old age groups and divisions, (for now) or in any Female hockey games. But **body contact** (accidental bumping) and Stick checking is allowed to help you try to regain possession of the puck.
2. As soon as a player on your team loses possession of the puck, you must immediately try to get it back by forechecking in the offensive zone, or cover a potential receiver of a pass by backchecking in the neutral and defensive zone. Your defencemen should play their puck carrier. Everyone does not simply chase the puck carrier. You have a specific job to do.

SPECIFIC CHECKING SKILLS

STICK CHECKING

In the lower age groups of Youth/Minor Hockey: Beginner, in the 5 to 10 year old age Divisions and all Female Hockey, **Stick Checking** is the only legal method players may use to check the puckcarrier trying to regain possession of the puck because body checking (hitting) is illegal.

Body Contact, bumping into someone accidentally or semi-intentionally, then using your size, positioning and body weight to out muscle a player should not be a penalty, but it's up to the Referee.

However there are a number of **legal** stick checks you can employ to regain possession of the puck.

STICK LIFT

The **Stick Lift** is used by a defensive player chasing after the puck carrier. It's a skill used to regain possession of the puck. It can be executed from the front, side or from behind the puck carrier.

Lift under the heel area of his stick, using the shaft or top part of the blade of your stick, utilizing a **quick upward lifting motion**. His stick goes up about an 4 - 6 inches, the puck becomes free, and you or your team-mates can go for the loose puck, recover it and start an offensive rush.

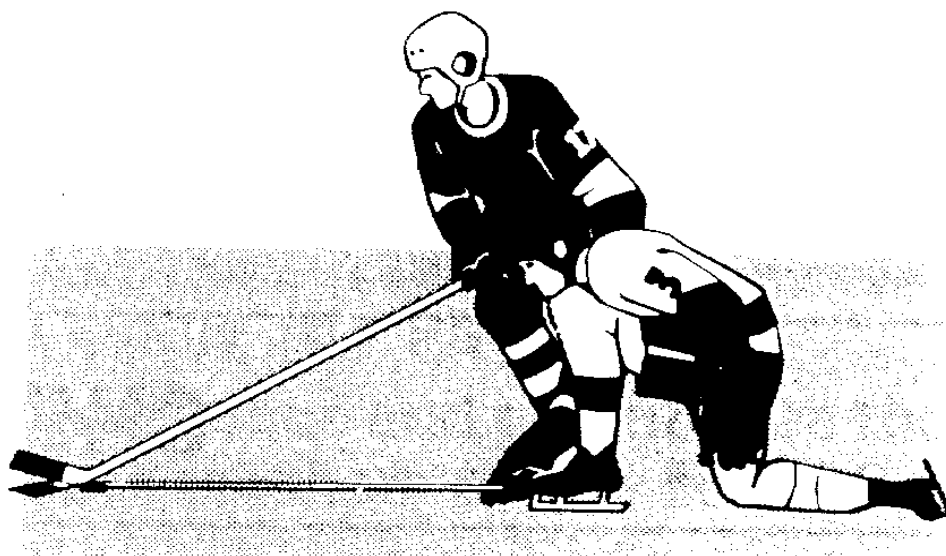
Arm strength, quickness & a surprise move are three elements that can be used to successfully complete this check, because the puck carrier is not really expecting his stick to be lifted upward.

HOOK CHECK

To execute a **Hook Check**, approach the puck carrier from behind or from the side, bend down on your inside knee and stretch out your arm that holds the top of the stick. Lie the stick blade and shaft flat on the ice and hook the toe and top of the blade around the puck and pull it back towards you right off the puck carrier's stick. Once you recover the puck, stand up and start an offensive rush.

Skating agility, balance and surprise will be required to execute this puck recovery manoeuvre.

THE HOOK CHECK



POKE CHECK

The **Poke Check** is used by goaltenders, defencemen and forechecking or backchecking forwards to poke the puck off the blade of the puckcarrier's stick creating a loose puck.

To execute the poke check, hold the knob end of the stick in your top hand about waist high. Your fingers pointing downward with the stick blade resting on the ice and the stick shaft at about a 45 degree angle. Your other hand is free and off the stick, elbow in to your side. See Diagram below.

Your elbow (which controls the stick) is bent at a 90 degree angle and is positioned close to you ready to dart straight forward.

When the puck carrier gets close to you, within 3 feet, shoot/dart the heel and lower blade of your stick straight ahead quickly, along the ice trying to knock/poke the puck off the carriers stick.

Do not lunge at the puck carrier or he may stickhandle around you. Stay in an upright position.

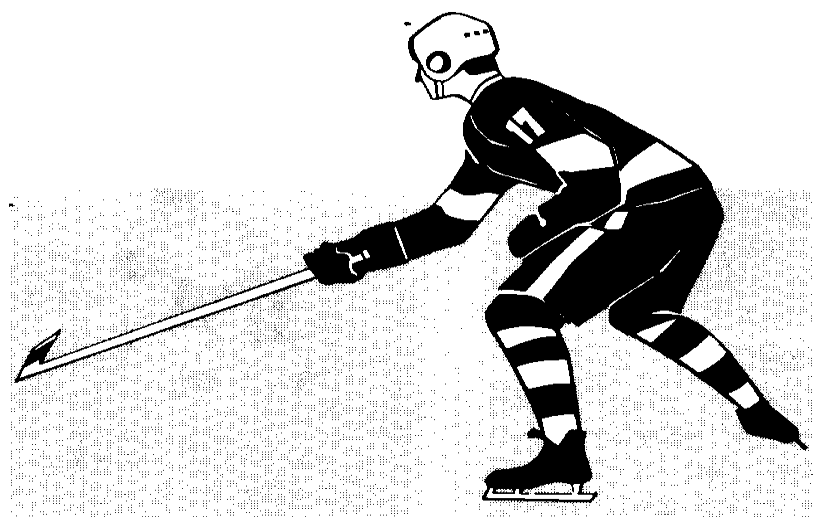
If you missed the puck or blade of his stick on the first try, you are still in position to pull back your stick, arm and elbow, recoil and start over again.

If you were successful at poking the puck off his stick, stop quickly and go after the loose puck or one of your backcheckers can pick it up, then initiate an offensive rush.

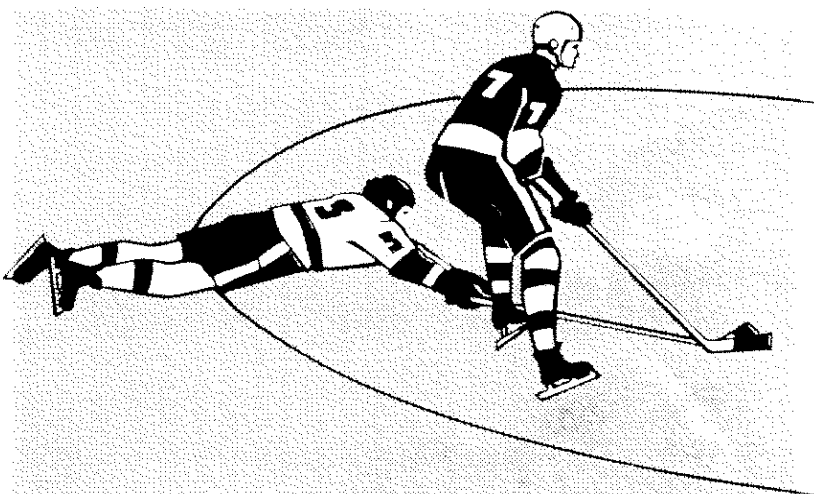
Note: Make sure the opponent is close enough to you before you dart your stick out at the puck. Quickness, timing and surprise are the 3 elements necessary to make poke checking successful.

If the puckcarrier cuts to your **backhand side**, rotate your wrist outward 180 degrees, fingers now pointing upward. The blade of your stick has been turned over but it is still resting on the ice and in the right position to execute a poke check properly from the backhand position. Thrust it forward at the puck dislodging it off the carrier's stick blade. See Diagram below for backhand poke check.

POKE CHECK



DIVING POKE CHECK / SWEEP CHECK



The **Diving Poke Check/Sweep Check** is used when you are the last man back and beaten by an opponent for a break away.

You know you can't catch him and a diving poke/sweep check is your last resort trying to stop him.

To perform it successfully, **Dive Head Long** along the ice, arms fully outstretched with your stick shaft and blade flat on the ice.

Try to poke/sweep the puck off the carriers stick by sliding or sweeping your stick across the ice to hit his blade or puck. Don't trip him, or let go of your stick, or you will get a penalty which could result in a penalty shot. If you hit the puck first, then he trips over you or your stick its not a penalty.

Timing, angling and arm extension are the keys to execute a perfect diving poke check/sweep check.

SWEEP CHECK

The **Sweep Check** is like a poke check and it's used to sweep/knock the puck off the opponents stick when he is 2 - 3 feet directly in front of you. Sweep in a forward then backward semi-circular arc. The name sweep check comes from the sweeping action people use when sweeping their sidewalk.

The checker approaches the puck carrier head on, in a semi crouched skating position. The stick blade is on the ice and a sweeping motion is completed to the left and right trying to knock/sweep the puck off the opponents stick. If successful the puck becomes free and you can go after the loose puck.

The stick is gripped in one or both hands and your head is up looking at your opponent. Don't look at the puck or he will stick handle around you. Keep him in front of you and sweep in a semi circle.

5 to 12 year old Forwards in the offensive zone, and all defencemen and **penalty killers** in the defensive zone use the sweep check to try to create a loose puck & to regain possession of the puck.

Timing, frontal positioning and aggressive sweeping action are required to execute this check.

STICK PRESS

The **Stick Press** is employed by wingers on a face-off and defencemen in front of the net to prevent the opposing players from shooting, passing or receiving a pass by legally **tying up their stick**.

Place your stick over top of your opponents stick shaft or his lower arm and press down exerting enough pressure to prevent him from moving his stick. By squeezing it between your forearm and leg, like a vice, this immobilises any arm or stick movement of your opponent.

Upper body strength and arm strength are essential to execute this check.

BODY CHECKING

The second category of checking is **Body Checking**. (Girls and Women's Hockey do not allow it) Body checking is simply intentional, crashing into or hitting the puck carrier with your body.

The objective of Body checking is to **create a loose puck**, not hurt or injure the **puck carrier**, by **legally** hitting him with different parts of your body, usually your shoulder or hip. The goal is to separate the puckcarrier from the puck so you, or your team-mates, can recover the loose puck.

This does not come naturally to all players, especially small players 11 and older, being told by their coaches to go out and hit the bigger puckcarrier. It must be taught by the coaches. Pinning the puck carrier along the boards is just as effective as smashing him into them and still creates a loose puck.

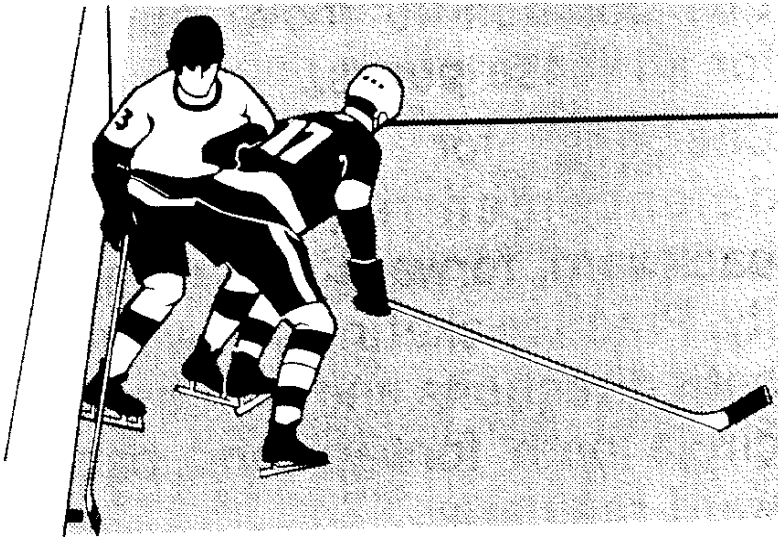
Note: If a player does not have the puck, you cannot legally hit him and you will get a penalty if caught. However, if the puck is being passed and is still on the move but not received, the player who passed the puck (last puckcarrier) can be legally body checked for a short .8 second time period.

It is also very important to know how to take/receive a body check as well as give one. (Page 121)

Body checking starts in most Youth/Minor Hockey programs at the 11 & 12 ages for **Rep Teams**.

However, some Minor Hockey Associations do not allow body checking in any of their **House League/Recreation Programs** to encourage more participation as there is less possibility for injuries with no body checking. This ensures a **fun** and recreational element prevails and is an excellent idea!

HIP CHECK



The **Hip Check** is a very effective body check used primarily by defencemen skating backwards. It is used when an opposing **puckcarrier** tries to go around him to the outside or inside.

When the puck carrier is almost beside you, turn your hip sharply 90 degrees and angle it into his mid section. See Diagram

Bend at the waist with knees bent, feet shoulder width apart to maintain your balance and stability. Head is up.

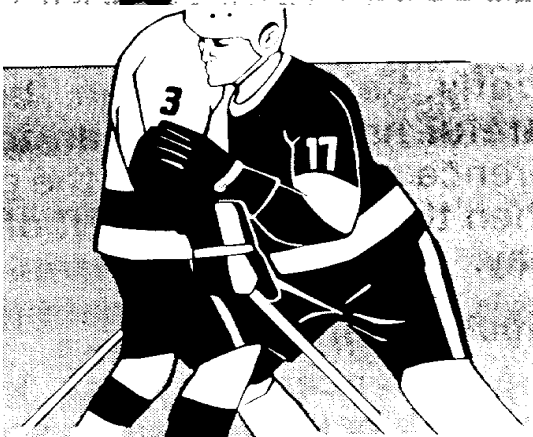
A hip check can be used in open ice or along the boards to stop the forward progress of the puck carrier and to separate him from the puck. The closest Backchecker should pick up the loose puck.

Timing, angling and balance are extremely important to execute the hip check successfully.

Keep your feet about shoulder width apart and knees bent to help you maintain your balance and to remain in an upright position so you could go after the loose puck if it's within your reach.

Practice Hip Checks to your left side and right side as both could be used throughout the game.

SHOULDER CHECK



The **Shoulder Check** is used by both defencemen and forwards. Initiate hit from the side or from the front, **Shoulder on Shoulder**, or **Shoulder to Chest** to create a loose puck for yourself, if close enough, or a team mate.

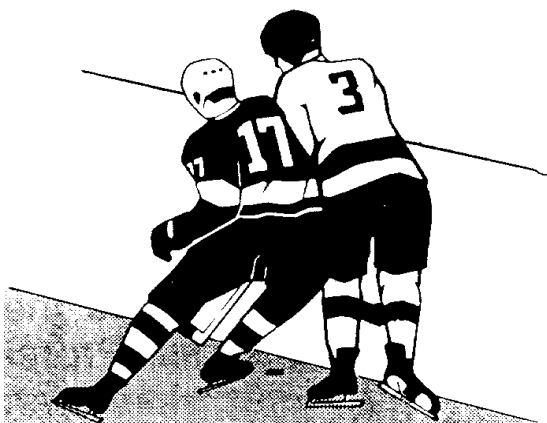
Defencemen use this check on opposing puck carriers in open ice, crossing the Blue Line with their head down, along the side boards and in the corners. Forwards use it when forechecking to pin the puck carrier against the boards in the offensive or neutral zone.

To carry out a successful shoulder check, bend at the knees with your feet shoulder width apart. One foot is slightly back of the other for balance and stability. See Diagrams Left

The upper body is bent slightly forward and the stick is held in your top hand, blade on the ice. Shoulder into puckcarrier's shoulder or chest. Your other hand is chest high and free to push upward and forward upon contact with an opponent. Use your leg strength to help push forward and through the check upon impact.

It is not necessary to hit the opponent head on, by just getting a piece of him with your shoulder on his shoulder, will knock him off stride or balance and will spin him around, creating a loose puck.

CHECKING ALONG THE BOARDS



This checking skill is utilized by both forwards and defencemen to effectively stop the forward or backward progress of any puckcarrier to create a loose puck.

Squeeze the puck carrier using your shoulders, arms, hips and legs to stop his forward progress.

Time your check and location to be slightly ahead of the puck carrier. Use your body weight and strength to angle and squeeze him into the boards and pin him there. See Diagram at left.

Be positioned to be slightly in front of, not behind the puck carrier or he will avoid the check. Block his path both forward and backward with you body using your legs and knees to pin him, so he cannot get to the loose puck. By keeping 2 hands on your stick gives you better leverage and pushing power. Be careful not to cross check your opponent or you could get a penalty. Your **closest** team-mate or the checker himself picks up the loose puck and initiates an offensive rush.

CHECKING PLAYERS IN FRONT OF YOUR NET and THE SLOT AREA

Checking/covering men in front of your net and the slot area are the 2 most important defensive responsibility in your end zone and both forwards and defencemen must learn how to do it.

- C It is required to prevent goals against your team.
- C This is the area where the majority of the goals are scored against teams on either point blank shots from the slot, or on rebounds, screen shots or deflections and tip ins.
- C You must cover the **open** men like a blanket to take away all of those scoring opportunities. If you intercept a pass or recover a loose puck start an offensive rush immediately.

HOW IT'S DONE

One **Defenceman** is responsible to cover the **closest** opponent to the net. If he is blocking the **goalie's view** of the puck, you must use your strength and move him out of the way so the goalie can see it.

One **Forward** is responsible to cover the next closest open player usually stationed in the deep slot.

There are a number of legal stick checks you can use to cover an open player in front of the net.

Defencemen, place your stick between the opponents legs or stay within 1 stick length of him. Don't trip the player or you'll get a penalty, but by feeling you will know where he is at all times.

Never turn your back to the puck carrier, as he may beat his check in the corner and come to the net. Look back and forth from the puck carrier to the man you are covering in front of the net. If he comes out of the corner with the puck, you must adjust your positioning and play it as a 2 on 1 situation.

If the puck is passed out from the corner to the man out front, either try to block or intercept the pass by placing the shaft of your stick on the ice, or lift his stick so he cannot receive the pass, or tie up his stick so he cannot shoot or deflect the puck. In under 13 and older you can bodycheck & knock the man down **when the puck arrives**, not before, if done earlier you'll get a penalty for interference.

Watch for any rebounds and make sure you get to them before the player you were covering does. Clear any rebounds into the corner or off the glass and out of the zone, or lead an offensive rush.

You may get away with **gently** pushing the man out front to the side, but don't knock him down until he receives the puck or you will get a penalty for crosschecking or interference. Timing is crucial.

In the younger Divisions of Youth/Minor Hockey: Ages 5 to 10 you **cannot** push or shove a player in front of the net, so be alert for any passes out front and intercept or deflect them.

Always stay close to your opponent, don't let him get very far away from you or he'll get into the clear, receive a pass and get a quick shot on goal before you can react. Stay within a stick's length.

SUMMARY

If the players closest to the net and in the slot are covered, very few goals will be scored against your team. Play aggressively, but smart, in front of your net and the opposition will have second thoughts about standing there for the remainder of the game. Remember it is illegal to bodycheck any player without the puck and if you get caught by the Referee, you will receive a penalty.

NEVER BODYCHECK AN OPPONENT/PUCKCARRIER FROM BEHIND

Do Not, ever, ever, **Bodycheck/Hit an opponent/puckcarrier from behind**, anywhere on the ice.

This is a cowardly act and is very dangerous because your opponent does not see the check coming and cannot protect himself. You know if he sees you coming or not, so don't hit or bodycheck him.

STOP because you could seriously injure and even cripple a player for the rest of his life. Some Leagues now insist that players wear a Red 3 inch **Stop Sign** on the upper back of their sweater to remind you. Bodycheck from the front or from the side, but never, never, bodycheck from behind.

SAFELY TAKING A BODYCHECK - How to Protect Yourself

Your 11-12, 13-14 and 15-16 & 17 Rep Coaches expect you to body check the puck carrier every chance you get, but sooner or later you will be on the receiving end of one if carrying the puck. Coaches should explain and demonstrate, how to safely take a body check, at the 11 and up level.

It is essential for you to understand how to receive a body check in order to protect yourself and prevent injuries. **Think safety first**, and be careful if cutting into the centre of the ice. Remember Scott Stevens, NJ Devils catching numerous puck carriers with their head down in this situation.

If carrying the puck, try to **keep your head up** so you can see where a potential body check may be coming from, then you can protect yourself when it happens. If going for a loose puck along the boards go **on an angle** to recover it not straight into the boards as you could get checked from behind or ram your stick blade into the boards and the knob of the stick goes right into your stomach area.

If you are going to be **checked along the boards**, try to be close to the boards and absorb the check over as much of your body area as possible. The **danger zone** is being hit 2-3 feet from the boards. Protect yourself by cushioning the blow with your hands, arms, hips and legs. Let your body give on impact, don't tense up. And **avoid** at all cost, going head first into the boards. This is Very Dangerous If you are going to be checked high along the glass, use your padded gloves to cushion your head.

After impact with the boards, rebound off by pushing back both upward and outward after springing off the boards. Most boards and glass will act like springs giving inward upon impact then rebounding slightly outwards after a check. This absorbing action helps to cushion the body check.

If you go into the corner for a loose puck, go after it in a **semi circle type angle** rather than straight in, it's safer. When fighting an opponent for the puck, get up against the boards for added support.

If you receive an **open ice check** or collide with one of your own players, try to bend at the waist in a semi-crouched position and roll, rotate, or spin depending on what part of your body got hit. Use your hands and arms to help cushion any fall to the ice. If seriously injured, stay down to get help.

Proper fitting equipment is essential to protect your body and to absorb shock. Make sure it is strapped or taped in place so it won't shift on impact from a body check, the boards, or the hard ice.

If you get injured, take a check to the head, or feel sick, tell your Coach and parents, especially if you have a headache, are dizzy or don't feel right, (it may be a concussion). Never fake an injury and don't try to play injured, see a Doctor and let it heal completely. Some players try to come back too soon and get re-injured or can't give 100%. Get clearance from your Doctor before returning to play.

DON'T BODY CHECK YOURSELF OUT OF THE PLAY

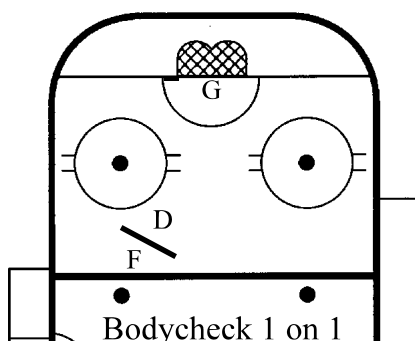
Some players love to hit (body check) puckcarriers so much that they actually **take themselves out of the play** and end up hurting their own team by being caught out of position and giving up a goal.

Example: If there is a 2 on 1, or a 3 on 2 situation against your defence and one defenceman goes to the boards to body check the puck carrier. He is taking himself out of the play by allowing a potential 2 on 1, or breakaway situation to develop. With a simple flip pass from the puck carrier to one of the remaining receivers, they now have a 2 on 1 situation against you defence partner or even a breakaway and a potential goal.

Play the odds, don't body check on an odd man rush situation.

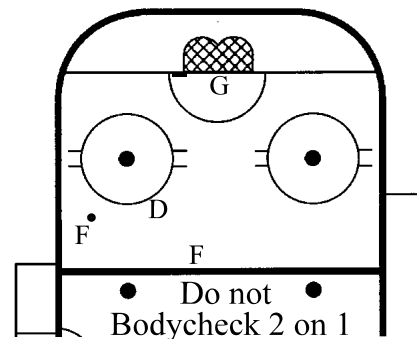
Rule #1 Body check in **Even** situations only, 1 on 1, 2 on 2, 3 on 3. “**Play the Man.**”

Rule #2 Do Not Body check on **Odd** man rushes, 2 on 1, 3 on 2, or 3 on 1 situations. “**Play the puck**” by using your stick and try to delay the rush until backcheckers arrive.



**RULE #1
PLAY THE MAN ON
EVEN SITUATIONS**

DEFENSIVE RULES



**RULE #2
PLAY THE PUCK ON
ODD SITUATIONS**

The term “**Play the Puck**” simply means **don't body check** in **odd man** situations, but use your stick to try to deflect or intercept any pass. Watch the puck and move slightly toward the player it is passed to. If close to the puckcarrier try to poke check, sweep check or deflect the puck and create a turn over by using your stick. If given the opportunity to get the puck, take it and start an offensive rush.

However, stay in the **middle** of the ice between the puck carrier and the receiver. Keep your stick well out in front of you, with the blade and/or shaft on the ice to intercept or deflect any pass.

Keep the puck carrier to the outside and try to intercept or block any pass attempt to the open man. The defenceman tries to prevent the puck from entering the **slot** area and clears all rebounds. He tries to force the shooter to the outside and a bad shooting angle to the net without allowing any straight line access to the front of the goal. **Review** 2 on 1, 3 on 1 and 3 on 2 situations on Page 83.

The goalie should **always** be watching the puck and playing the puck carrier by cutting the angle.

Note: The very first thing a defenceman must do on any defensive play is to **analyse the situation**. Is it an odd or even man rush, where is my partner, where are the backcheckers, then react correctly.

DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS *(when your team does not have possession of the puck)*

There are 2 systems of **Defensive Play** young players must understand completely to be successful at preventing goals. One is **Forechecking**, the other is **Backchecking**, and both must work together instantly (with every turnover of the puck) and together by (doing your job) for team success.

FORECHECKING - *be like the 21/22 Stanley Cup Champion Colorado Avalanche*

Forechecking is a hockey term used by coaches to describe a defensive system where the **Closest Forward** to the puck, skates deep into the offensive zone to **Check**, either stick check, bodycheck if allowed, by angling their puck carrier into the boards to pin him. ie. "To make something happen."

PURPOSE OF FORECHECKING - *Structure is Essential for Success*

The purpose of **Forechecking** is to separate the puck carrier from the puck, thus creating a loose puck, then regaining possession of the puck in the **Offensive Zone** by a team mate or yourself. If done correctly, forechecking can create a turn over which leads to a good scoring opportunity.

SKILLS REQUIRED TO FORECHECK SUCCESSFULLY - *by reducing time and space*

There are **5** basic skills **Forwards** require to forecheck successfully.

1. **Speed** - forwards must use their skating speed to get to the puck carrier quickly before he has a chance to think, to pass, to carry or to shoot the puck out of his defensive zone. The deeper the forechecking is initiated inside the offensive zone, especially in the corners, the better.
2. **Angling** - forwards must understand the theory of angling and be able to turn sharply left or right and force the puck carrier to the outside of the rink and angle him into the boards and pin him before he reaches the hash marks on the circles. The first forechecker must make sure he **takes the centre lane away** from the puck carrier and does not get deked out of position.
3. **Checking Ability** - forecheckers must possess the ability to physically play the puck carrier on a 1 on 1 situation. **Finish the bodycheck** if allowed, **by taking him off the puck** and pin him to the boards without taking a penalty. Do not try to check him straight on or he could give you a head fake and stick handle around you. Don't look at the puck, but take the man, your team mate gets the loose puck. This relentless pressure or pounding of the puck carrier will wear him down. Ages 7-10 and female players can still forecheck using stick checking methods. Approach the puckcarrier from the side on an angle. "**Play the man, Not the puck**" and create a loose puck by using the poke check, sweep check or stick lift method. **Note:** Accidental bumping is allowed.
4. **Hockey Intelligence** - forecheckers must work as a team and know when to move forward and when to retreat. Who goes into the opposite corner to forecheck and when to backcheck and who to cover. Knowing **How** and **When** to react when you don't have the puck. "**On Ice Discipline**"
5. **Agility** - good forecheckers have the skating ability to stop quickly, change their direction immediately, turn 90 degrees instantly and executing perfect cross-overs, to can catch the puck carrier by using semi circular angling before he reaches the Hash Marks on the face-off circles.

Remember - The forechecker must always **play the man first** then go for the puck second. If you just sweep at the puck, a good hockey player will beat /get by you every time. If you can beat their man to the loose puck do so. Win the 1 on 1 battles for the puck in the corners and along the boards.

ROLE OF THE FIRST FORECHECKER

The role of the **First or Closest Forechecker** is extremely important.

His goal is to **Play the Man** not the puck, **bodycheck if allowed, otherwise stick check** and force the puck carrier who is usually a defenceman out of the centre lane by angling, forcing, or directing him toward the side boards. Get on this defenceman quickly with speed and physically check him.

Try to create a loose puck by separating him from the puck. The more pressure the more giveaways.

To achieve this, **angle him toward the boards**, finish the check, take him off the puck and pin him to the boards. In ages 7-8 and 9-10 Youth Hockey and all Female Hockey, you can only stick check, but in ages 11-12 & under 15 & 18 and Junior you can physically bodycheck the puckcarrier.

If you angle him correctly, he will run out of skating room and into the boards before he reaches the hash marks. If you can, try to check him, the deeper in the corner the better or beat him to the loose puck. **Reduce the time and space the puckcarrier has to think, make a pass or carry the puck.**

This pressure checking forces some puck carriers into a **panic pass** before the receiver is ready to receive it, or **creates a turn over** and a loose puck occurs when he is pinned along the boards.

Remember - the first forechecker is in control of where the puck carrier skates with the puck. Get in his face quickly, angling and directing him toward the boards and finish the check.

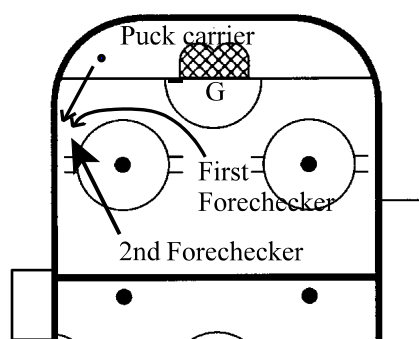
ROLE OF THE SECOND FORECHECKER

The **Second Closest Forechecker** stays very close to the first forechecker if using the 2-1-2 system and **picks up the loose puck** and passes it to an open team-mate or carries it to the net himself.

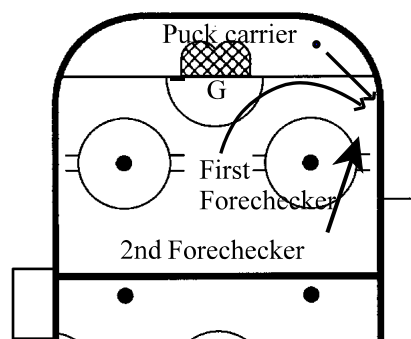
If the first forechecker was **unsuccessful** in pinning the puckcarrier, the second forechecker is expected to **try and check him** along the boards. If the puckcarrier successfully **passes the puck**, the **closest forward** goes after the **new puck carrier** and tries to check him inside the offensive zone. This constant pressure on every **new** puck carrier in the offensive zone is called “**puck pursuit**” or “**pressure forechecking**” and it will produce many loose pucks and numerous turn overs.

If the puck carrier, usually a defenceman, was successful at getting or passing the puck into the Neutral Zone, forechecking automatically turns into backchecking and starts immediately.

ANGLING PUCK CARRIER TO THE BOARDS



**ANGLE THE PUCK
CARRIER TOWARDS
THE BOARDS BY
TAKING THE
CENTRE LANE
AWAY**



FORECHECKING SYSTEMS

There are basically **2** systems of forechecking. One is called the **“In Your Face System”** or the **“Puck Pursuit System”**. But many coaches still call it the **“2-1-2 System.”** These numbers represent **“2- Forwards, 1- Forward, 2- Defencemen”** and it’s easiest to remember by using numbers. This is an aggressive system using 2 forwards in deep trying to force a turnover inside the Offensive Zone.

THE 2 - 1 - 2 SYSTEM

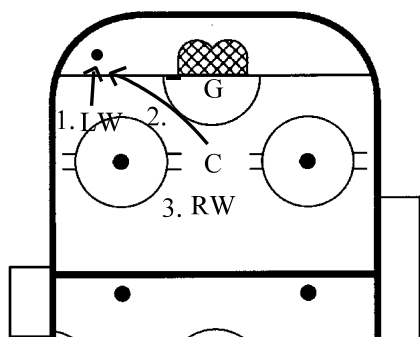
Is usually used in **small rinks**, or larger rinks if your team has good skating speed & checking skills.

HOW IT WORKS - get the puck in deep then establish a physical or pressure forecheck system.

The **Two** closest forwards to the puck carrier must work in tandem as a team and skate quickly, deep into the offensive zone attacking him, by **taking away time and space** and any skating or passing room. The third forward stays back in the slot area watching the success or failure of the first 2 checkers. The two defencemen move up inside the Blue Line to keep any loose pucks inside the zone and prevent an off-side situation. If the puck comes up the boards, the defenceman **may** pinch in, and if he does, the third forward, the one in the slot, takes his vacated place on the Blue Line. (The point.)

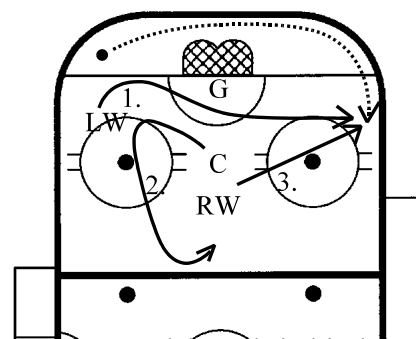
The **First and Closest** forechecker tries to take the puck carrier off the puck. In most ages 7-8, 9-10 and all Female Hockey, you cannot body check, only stick check and angle your opponent. Depending upon the success of the first forechecker, the **Second Closest** forward, who is right beside or behind, will either pick up the loose puck or try to check the puck carrier himself.

The **Third Forward** stays deep/high in the slot area for a pass and a good shot on goal. If the forechecking was unsuccessful, he should turn and backcheck with the wide winger, **or** go after the puckcarrier, this is the coaches decision. However, if the puck was dumped around the boards **behind the net**, he leaves the slot area and becomes the **closest**, or 1st forechecker in the wide side corner.



- 1) LW- Takes man off the puck.
- 2) C - Picks up loose puck.
- 3) RW- Stays deep in slot for a pass or to backcheck or forecheck.

2-1-2 SYSTEM



If puck is dumped around boards behind the net.

- 1) LW - Becomes the 2nd fore-checker.
- 2) C - Comes back to the slot area or becomes the 1st. backchecker.
- 3) RW- Goes to far corner to be 1st. forechecker.

This **2-1-2** system is an **aggressive forechecking** system because 2 forecheckers are always on the puck carrier in the offensive zone. This constant pressure of attacking the puck carrier is called **“In Your Face Hockey”** and produces numerous turnovers or loose pucks. Timing is critical to effectively enforce this system by reducing the puckcarriers **time** to make a pass or **space** to carry the puck. Some coaches want 3 forwards in flooding the corner and pressuring the defence to cough up the puck. It's a coaching decision.. Many NHL and Junior teams are now using this **“Puck Pursuit 2-1-2 Forechecking System”**.

NEUTRAL ZONE TRAP

The other form of forechecking is called the **Neutral Zone Trap** or the “**1-2-2 System**” These numbers represent “**1- Forward, 2- Forwards, 2- Defencemen.**” With this system the wingers back off a bit, watching to see the success or failure of the first forechecker, and are willing to regain possession of the puck in the Neutral Zone rather than aggressively pursuing it in the Offensive Zone.

THE 1 - 2 - 2 SYSTEM - clogging up the neutral zone, taking away passing options

The **1 - 2 - 2 System** of forechecking is usually used in **large rinks** with wide ice surfaces.

It is also used if the opposition have very fast skaters or use the fastbreak clearing play.

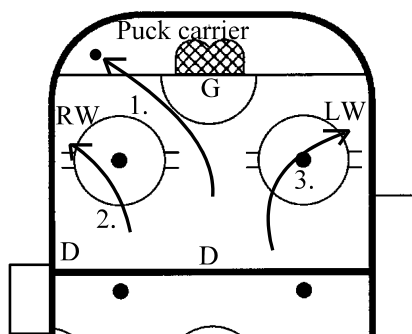
If you are playing a crucial game against a superior team, or a game **you must win**, and don't want to fall behind early, use this forechecking system, its safer and should keep you in the game longer. This system is also used late in the game by most teams trying to protect a 1 or 2 goal lead.

HOW IT WORKS - get the puck in deep then establish a semi- controlled forecheck system.

The **Closest** forward to the puck carrier tries to take him off the puck deep in their end zone by angling him towards the boards. It could be your left wing, right wing, or centre, whoever is closest.

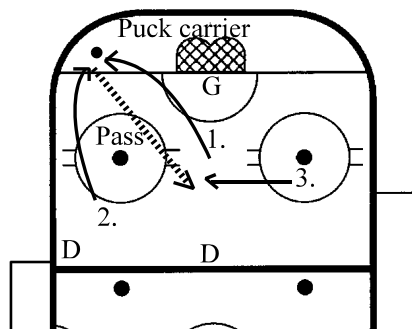
The two remaining forwards **peel off**, staying back covering a winger each, stationed along the boards so that neither their right winger nor the left winger can receive a pass. They are watching, and waiting to see if the first forechecker did his job and created a loose puck. If he did, the closest winger should go after it, if he didn't, they stay back and try to **intercept** any outlet pass to either winger.

The two defencemen are stationed inside the Blue Line, one watching the centre lane to intercept any passes up the middle to their centre ice man, the other one along the puck side boards .



1 - 2 - 2 SYSTEM

- 1) Closest forward Forechecks puck carrier.
- 2) Covers their R.W.
- 3) Covers their L.W.
- 4) Defence inside Blue Line watching for passes up the middle or up the puck side boards.



Depending upon the success of the first forechecker to:

- 1) Angle the puck carrier into the boards.
- 2) Take him off the puck
- 3) Create a loose puck or Regain possession of the puck
- 4) Force a pass up the boards to the winger.

The success or failure of the above 4 actions will cause the following reaction.

The wingers will react to these different situations as follows:

The **Winger** covering the puck side can **go to the loose puck**, or intercept the pass to their winger.

If you are successful in regaining possession of the puck in the offensive zone under either method, your wide winger can skate to the slot or net for a pass or a shot on goal.

If the **One Man** forechecking system was **unsuccessful**, and the puck carrier beat or passed around the first forechecker, the 2 remaining forecheckers must turn and cover their wing into the **Neutral Zone** and backcheck with him into the defensive zone or until a turn over is made. They **do not** go after the puck carrier, that is the defenceman's job to play the puck carrier in the neutral zone. The forechecker who got beaten becomes the 3rd backchecker covering their trailer in the Neutral Zone.

Jamming up the Neutral Zone between their Blue Line and your Blue Line prevents long or across ice passes and forces the puck carrier to carry the puck or dump it in to your zone because there is no one open to pass it to. The passing lanes are blocked with your 2 backcheckers and 2 defencemen.

The 2 defencemen can play the puck carrier before he hits the Red Line maybe forcing an icing, or retreat to just **outside** their own Blue Line to check him. It's 1 puckcarrier against 2 defencemen, so take away the centre of the ice and force the puckcarrier to **shoot it in** from outside the Blue Line.

With a loose puck shot into your end zone your team has a very good chance of recovering it and starting a clearing play because you have 2 forwards and 2 defencemen coming back to retrieve it.

This **1 - 2 - 2** system is considered a conservative, defensive forechecking system but it frustrates the opposition because it clogs up the middle forcing the puck carrier to **dump the puck in** because there is no one open to pass to. He must beat your 2 defencemen by himself which is very hard to do.

You can win with this system, as some NHL teams use this system effectively to win games.

COACHES DECISION

Your Coaches will decide which **Forechecking System** is best suited for your team or specific line based on your skating speed, checking ability and the opposing teams offensive skills and speed.

They may even decide on one line playing the 2-1-2 system, and the other lines playing the 1-2-2 system in order to match the other teams offensive lines, players strength and weaknesses.

Alternatively, they may decide on a **variation of both systems** where there is always **one forward** on the **puck carrier in all 3 zones** trying to create a turn over or loose puck. Listen to your coaches!

SUMMARY

Forechecking is one of the **most neglected team skills** in the 9-12 year old age categories. The irony is, that if Coaches discussed its purpose and showed players how, when and why to execute it, it would bring **immediate success**. Convincing young players to attack (forecheck) the puck carrier in the offensive zone rather than hang back, is difficult, but once convinced watch out, because when forechecking is done properly, it will disarm the most offensively skilled team in your League. Especially if you use the 2-1-2 "**in your face**" system because it will cause numerous turnovers in the offensive zone. The earlier players are taught how to forecheck and backcheck, the more rewarding it is for them and your team. Young players **9 to 12** can understand these concepts.

BACKCHECKING

Backchecking is a hockey term used by coaches to describe a defensive system where the **Forwards** skate **back** hard into the neutral and defensive zone all the way back to their **Goal line** to either **check** the puckcarrier, cover a potential pass receiver or goal scorer and to help out their defencemen by **eliminating odd man rushes** then recovering a loose puck or rebound and starting an offensive rush.

PURPOSE OF BACKCHECKING - Structure is Essential for Success

The primary purpose of **Backchecking** is to prevent a goal. This is accomplished when all 3 forwards come back to **help** out their defencemen to reduce scoring chances by covering open players.

The secondary purpose of backchecking is to **regain possession** of the puck either in the neutral zone or in the defensive zone, then initiate an offensive rush down the ice.

SKILLS REQUIRED TO BACKCHECK SUCCESSFULLY - by taking away passing options

There are **5** basic skills **Forwards** require to backcheck successfully and eliminate odd man rushes.

1. **Covering the Winger** - backcheckers must be able to cover the opposing winger without the puck, by skating close to him and keeping him to the outside of the rink along the boards and preventing him from receiving a pass. **Shadowing him** and eliminating a 3 on 2 situation.

Never let the winger get into the clear or cut into the middle of the ice. **Block his path** to open ice or stay with him, but don't body check him or you could get an interference penalty.

2. **Intelligence** - backcheckers must keep looking back and forth from the puck carrier to the potential receiver they are covering in order to see what the puck carrier is doing, or if there was a turn over of the puck or not. If there was a turn over, and your team mate regained possession of the puck, stop immediately, leave your check and go on the offensive using on ice balance.
3. **Skating Ability** - the backchecker must be a good skater and position himself half a stride ahead of the winger and within a sticks length of him at all times so he can't cut in behind you or ahead of you into the clear for a breakaway pass. You are preventing an odd man rush & potential goal.
4. **Observant** - backcheckers must be alert to intercept any attempted passes made to the receiver they are covering. Intercept it, then go on the offensive with the puck by leading a rush.

Wingers- stay with your check all the way back to your **Goal Line**, and don't leave him until your defence have taken up their positions 1 in front of the net and the other in the puck's corner. Only when this is done, go to cover the points **if** the centre is covering the slot.

5. **Discipline** - backcheckers must be disciplined to stay with their man and not skate all over the ice trying to catch the puck carrier or do someone else's job, thus leaving players uncovered.

Remember - Let your defence play the puck carrier. Your job is to either cover the open winger or trailer and prevent him from scoring. However, when ever there is a turn over of the puck, stop backchecking, and go on the offensive immediately. This is your Transition game quickly going from defence to offence with every change of possession of the puck!

"Don't be a one way player, work hard at both ends of the ice"

BACKCHECKING SYSTEMS

There are 2 basic **Backchecking Systems** and they are the reverse of your forechecking system.

THE 2 - 2 - 1 BACKCHECKING SYSTEM

These numbers represent **2 -Defencemen, 2 - Forwards, 1 - Forward**.

If you use a **1-2-2 “Neutral Zone Trap”** Forechecking System, 1 forward in deep, 2 forwards covering both wingers and 2 defencemen inside the Blue Line watching the centre lane and the strong puck side boards, you will use a **2-2-1 Backchecking System**. Two defencemen play the puck carrier, 2 forwards covering both wingers and the 1 deep forechecking forward picking up the trailer.

HOW IT WORKS

The **2 Defencemen** should play the **puck carrier** at all times, it's a **1 on 2** situation, so try to create a loose puck. If successful, a backchecking forward picks up the loose puck & starts an offensive rush.

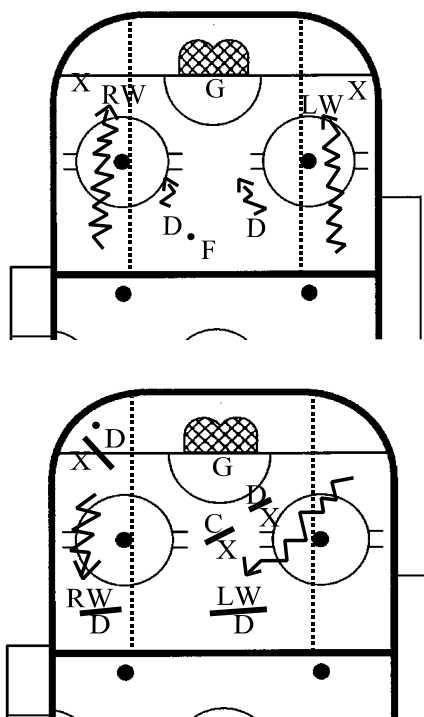
Otherwise, the **wide side winger** should be covered by a **backchecking forward** in order to prevent him/her from receiving a pass, getting into the clear for a breakaway or going to the net.

The **near side winger** should also be covered by the **2nd backchecking forward** to prevent any short passes and to prevent him from getting open in behind your defence and going to the net.

The **3rd backchecking forward**, the one who led the forechecking, **covers the trailer** to prevent a drop pass, or if close enough, he **pressures** the puck carrier trying to create a turnover of the puck.

REMEMBER - All 3 forwards do not simply chase the puck carrier and leave the wingers uncovered. The closest backchecking forward must pick up any loose puck created by your defence.

2 - 2 - 1 BACK CHECKING SYSTEM



- 1) Cover **both** wingers all the way back through the neutral and defensive zone to the goal line and stay with them until your 2 defencemen are in position.
- 2) One defenceman in front of the net, the other one in the corner going after their puck carrier.
- 3) The third backchecking forward covers their open man in the **slot** area, their trailer.
- 4) When your defence are in position, your wingers go back and cover their defence on the points or **help** in the slot.
- 5) Depending on where your team regains control of the puck, either get into your clearing play positions and initiate a clearing play, or start an offensive rush up the ice wherever the turn over of the puck occurred.

THE 2-1-2 BACKCHECKING SYSTEM

These numbers represent **2 -Defencemen, 1 - Forward, 2 -Forwards**.

If you use a **2-1-2 “In Your Face”** Forechecking System, i.e., 2 forwards in deep, 1 forward in the slot area, and 2 defencemen inside the Blue Line, you will use a **2-1-2** backchecking system.

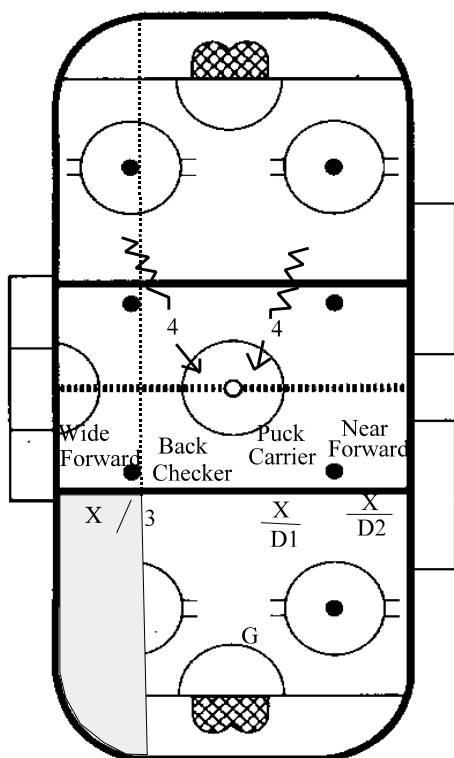
Two defencemen come back, 1 forward covers the **wide** winger and the 2 late forwards who were in deep forechecking come back hard to cover the oppositions defencemen on the points.

HOW IT WORKS

The **2 Defencemen** must play the **puck carrier** and the **closest forward** as a **2 on 2** situation, which is really a 1 on 1 situation for each defenceman starting in the Neutral Zone. **Play the Man.**

The **first backchecking forward** must cover the **wide winger** right to the Goal Line. This makes it a 3 on 3 situation coming across your Blue Line and each defender has a specific man to cover.

The **2 remaining backchecking forwards** must skate back hard to catch and cover the **trailing defencemen** or put **back pressure** on the puck carrier if close enough, trying to create a turnover.



2 - 1 - 2 BACKCHECKING SYSTEM

- 1) Defenceman (1) plays puck carrier 1 on 1.
- 2) Defenceman(2) covers near forward 1 on 1.
- 3) Backchecker (1) covers wide forward 1 on 1 right to the goal line. Keep him to outside, do not let him cut into middle or to the net.
- 4) The 2 late backchecking forwards try to get back to **pressure** the puck carrier or if too late cover their two defencemen on the points.
- 5) Depending on when and where your team regains control of the puck, either get into your clearing/play positions and start a clearing/breakout play or lead an offensive rush up the ice where the turn over occurred. Try to keep on ice balance.

COACHES DECISION

Your Coaches will decide which **Backchecking System** is best suited for your team, or line, based on your skating speed, checking ability and the oppositions offensive skills and speed. They may wish to use a **variation** of these 2 systems and have **1 forward back pressuring the puckcarrier** at all times in the neutral and defensive zone. This is also a good defensive system.

DEFENCEMAN'S BLUE LINE DECISIONS

Do I back in, or step out over my defensive Blue Line and challenge the puck carrier?

Defencemen must analyse the situation immediately, is this an odd man or even man rush, are the wingers covered or open. Make your decision then react correctly. **Look, Read, Think, React.**

Rule #1 - IF WINGS ARE COVERED "STEP OUT" during an Even Man Rush

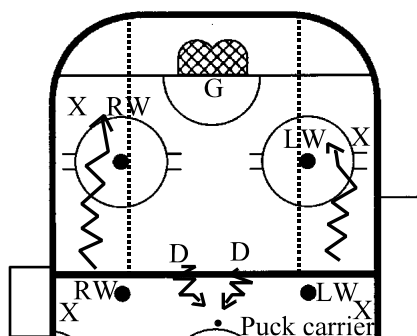
If both wingers are **covered** by backcheckers, or your defence partner, step out over your defensive Blue Line and "**Play the Man**", forcing the puck carrier to dump the puck in.

Delay the shooter, by blocking his forward progress up to .8 seconds only, while your defence partner or backchecking winger goes into the corner to retrieve the loose puck.

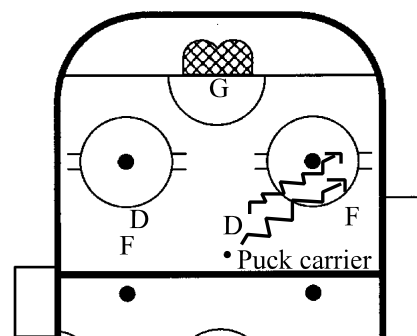
If and when a turnover occurs or you regain possession start an offensive rush up the ice.

Rule #2 - IF THE WINGS ARE NOT COVERED "BACK IN" during an Odd Man Rush

If the wings are **not covered** by a backchecker, "**Play The Puck**" use your stick, back up slowly over the Blue Line to about the top of the circle. Here, try to force the puck carrier to the outside of the slot area and a bad shooting angle. If possible force him to his backhand. Watch for any passes back to the trailing forward or wide winger and try to block, deflect or intercept the pass. Delay the rush, until your backcheckers arrive to help you out by covering any open player. If a turn over happens, start an offensive rush.

**Rule #1**

Wings covered, **step out** over Blue Line and play the puckcarrier

DEFENSIVE RULES**Rule #2**

Wings not covered, **back in** slowly, delay puckcarrier at top of circle.
Goalie always plays puckcarrier

PROTECTING A LEAD - Note: the icing team cannot change players on an icing

To **protect a one or two goal lead** late in the game, flip the puck over your Blue Line into the neutral or offensive zone. Do not shoot it so hard that it will go over the Goal Line or you will be called for icing and a face-off will take place in your end zone. Once over the Red Line, shoot the puck in deep so they have to go back and retrieve it. This will kill some time off the clock. Only one player should be forechecking and the other 4 defenders must be back to defend against the rush. Even if their goaltender is pulled for an extra attacker, don't shoot at the net unless you are over the Red Line. This will prevent an icing if you miss the net. If your team is playing short handed (killing a penalty), you can **legally ice the puck** and shoot at the open net.

If you get a chance to lead a rush or get a scoring opportunity take it, but don't put your team at risk by taking a low percentage chance trying to score then giving them an odd man rush.

BACKCHECKING FORWARDS RESPONSIBILITIES INSIDE YOUR BLUE LINE

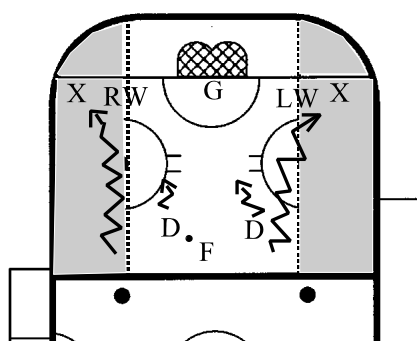
There are specific defensive responsibilities inside your Blue Line that must be followed in order to prevent goals against your team. Systematically forwards must form a defensive “X” inside your defensive zone. They must cover their wing all the way back to their Goal Line. Do not let them get away from you or go to the net until your defence regain possession of the puck or are in their proper defensive position, one in front of your net, and the other with the puck carrier.

Don’t stop backchecking at the top of the circle and let the winger get free and go to the net.

This is the one major **mistake** of young Youth/Minor Hockey players backchecking assignments. Backchecking wingers let the offensive wings they were covering free around the circles so they can go back and cover the points. **This is wrong at this particular time**, you do this a little later.

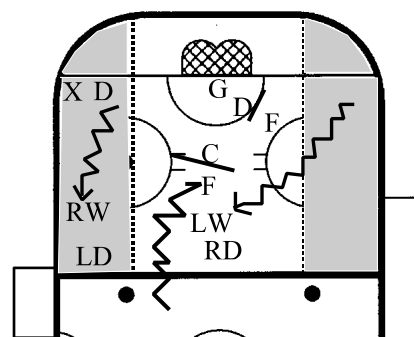
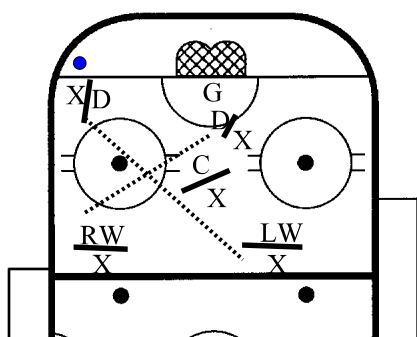
Backchecking wingers must cover the offensive winger as he moves closer to your net, move closer to him and try to prevent him from going directly to the goal or getting to a rebound. Be careful not to knock him down or interfere too much with his forward progress with your stick or body as you could end up getting a hooking or interference penalty.

When your defence are in position, one in front of your net, the other with the puck carrier, then you are ready to help in the slot area around the hash marks or go to the point area if the puck is passed back to their open defenceman. You are still in this 2 way position ready to help in the slot area or go out to the point when necessary. The **Third** forward back, usually the centre, must cover the man in the deep slot area. This is where many shots originate from and most goals are scored from here. The Defensive “X” is complete. It is a combination of man to man on the puckcarrier and a semi flexible zone defence on the other open players.

**BACKCHECKING**

Forwards, come all the way back to the goal line with their wingers.

When your defence are in position, 1 in front of the net and the other in the corner with puckcarrier go to slot **or** points to cover their defencemen.

**DEFENSIVE “X” FORMATION**

The defensive “X” formation ensures all the offensive players are covered.

1. D in corner checking their Puck carrier
2. D in front of net covering their close Forward
3. C in slot covering their deep Forward
4. RW helping cover slot area or point/L defence
5. LW helping cover slot area or point/R defence
6. Goalie always watching the puck carrier

DEFENCEMEN'S DEFENSIVE ZONE RESPONSIBILITIES

One defenceman must go to the **front of the net** to cover the oppositions closest man to the goal. He watches for any pass out from the corner, intercepts it and carries or passes it out of the zone.

His **defensive partner** goes into the **corner and fights for the puck** or takes the puck carrier off it creating a loose puck. If he's too late and a pass was attempted, he must try to block any pass out to the front of the net or to the slot area by using a combination of his body and stick.

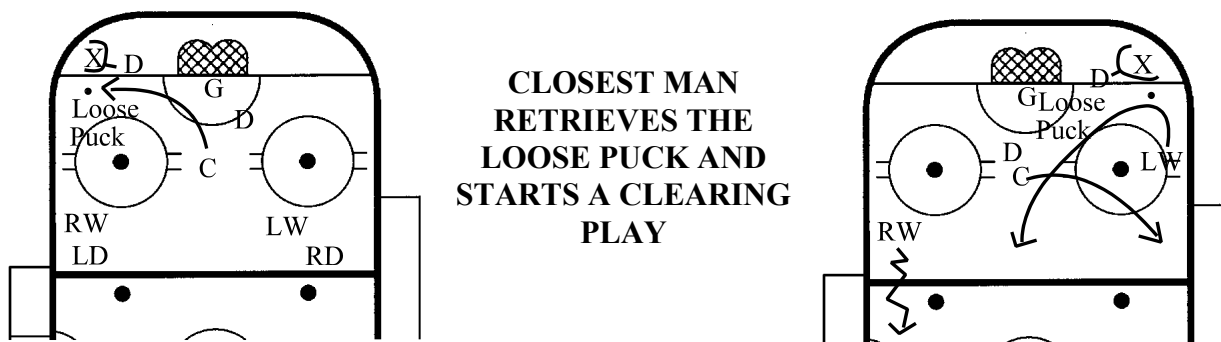
He should take away any direct path the puckcarrier has to his net and angle him into the boards. This is exactly the same action as the closest forechecking forward would do, then pin him to the boards. This is a 1 on 1 situation, Play the man not the puck, and create a turn over or loose puck.

If successful, there will be a loose puck. Depending on the loose pucks location, will determine who should come to retrieve it. If the opposition used 2 men forechecking, the closest winger must leave the point to help the defenceman so he will not be **out numbered** in the corner.

The near wing, the centre or the defenceman from in front of the net may all be close to the loose puck. Even the defenceman who checked the puck carrier could possibly get to the loose puck.

The rule of thumb is the closest man to the loose puck should go after it. Retrieve it, start a rush.

Once you regain possession of the puck in any defensive corner, the remaining players should quickly get into their clearing play positions then start an offensive rush. If you regain it in the slot area or out near the points, start an offensive rush. No need to get into clearing play positions.



COMMUNICATION

To play defensive hockey (without the puck) successfully, both forwards and defencemen must verbally and/or physically with hand motions, **communicate** on the ice to let each other know what they are doing and who they are covering. "I've got the slot, you take the point."

One defenceman must tell his partner, "I've got the man out front, you take the puck carrier in the corner." Or they can point using hand signals for the same thing to ensure who is covering whom.

Forwards must talk to their defencemen, "I've got the wide winger, you take the puck carrier."

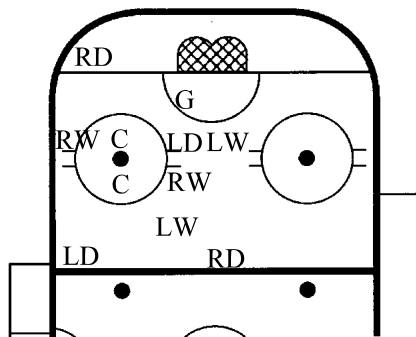
This open communication lets everybody know who is responsible for whom and will prevent 2 players from going to the same man and leaving a man wide open and uncovered. Nothing looks worse than 2 men covering the same player and the uncovered player walks in and scores.

DEFENSIVE FACE-OFF POSITIONING

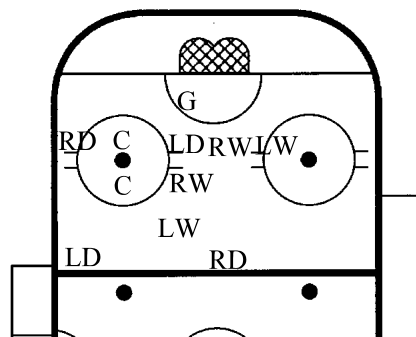
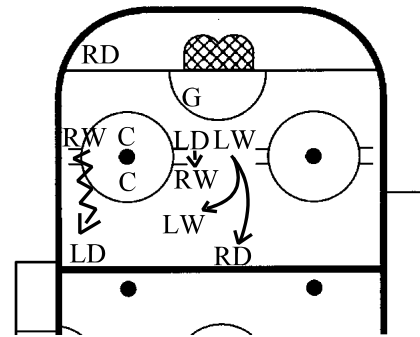
Some coaches believe it is more important to win a **Defensive Face-Off** in your end of the ice than it is to win an offensive face-off. If you win the draw, your team has possession of the puck and can start a clearing/breakout play. **Note:** The visiting player must put his stick down first.

If you lose a defensive face-off it could result in a quality shot on goal or even a goal against you.

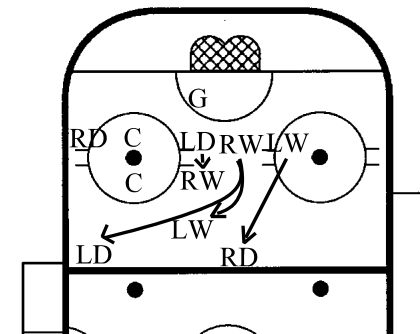
Each defensive player has a responsibility to cover a specific offensive player on a face-off.

**COVERAGE**

Cen. takes Cen.
R.W. takes L.D.
L.D. takes R.W.
L.W. takes L.W.
or R.D. depending
where the puck
went.

**COVERAGE**

Cen. takes Cen.
R.W. takes L.W. or L.D.
depending where puck
went
L.D. takes R.W.
L.W. takes R.D.

**TO WIN A DEFENSIVE FACE-OFF**

To **win a defensive face-off** the centre or player taking the face-off must watch the Linesman's hand to time the dropping of the puck with his stick blade's back or forward sweeping motion.

The defensive centre should **go to the boards** with the draw on either his forehand or backhand sweep. He can just sweep his opponents stick, this will prevent the puck from ending up in the slot area. He could also lift his stick then sweep or kick the puck back to his defenceman.

If he wins the draw, the puck is pulled back to the awaiting defenceman by the boards.

The centre's job on a **won draw**, is to block the offensive centre from getting to the defenceman with the puck. This will give him a few extra seconds to set up a clearing play and find an open receiver, shoot it behind your net around the boards to your far winger, or to carry it out himself. Use the safest way out of your defensive zone with the least number of opposing players.

If the defensive centre **loses the draw**, he must stay with the offensive centre and prevent him from going to the net. The remaining players must cover their assigned men while the closest one to the puckcarrier goes after him. See above coverage diagrams for specifics. A scrambled draw is one that is won by no one, the puck is loose and open to the closest player. Fight for the puck.

SUMMARY

Teaching **young** (9 to 12 year old) Minor/Youth Hockey players how to play **Defensive Hockey and Prevent Goals** will be a very big challenge because its not as glamorous or as much fun as offensive hockey with passing, stickhandling, shooting and the most glamorous fun scoring goals.

However, it is **just as important** as offensive hockey and scoring goals and must be taught before players graduate from age 9-10. Defensive hockey will help your team compete in every game even against the top teams in your district, by preventing odd man rushes & scoring opportunities.

Coaches, if you can adjust your players thinking and physical on ice positioning to think “**What should I do and who should I cover when the other team has the puck?**” and “**What can I do to prevent odd man rushes and goal scoring opportunities?**” You will be on the right track.

Keep developing and practising all your checking skills and finish your body checks if allowed. Forecheck in the offensive zone, backcheck in the neutral and defensive zone. Cover open men.

On ice discipline is essential, don't start running all over the ice. When backchecking, your defence play the puck carrier preventing him from taking the puck to the net. Forwards cover the open wingers preventing any odd man rushes & backpressure the puckcarrier. It's that simple!

Communicate with your team-mates to let them know what you are doing or who you are covering. Make sure their goal scorer is covered at all times in your defensive zone.

2 players should never be covering the same player as this will leave 1 player uncovered and the chance to score. **If puckcarrier beats D the closest Winger leaves check and goes after puckcarrier.**

Should your goaltender break or loose his stick, someone should give him their's until a whistle.

Take pride in yourself every time you prevented a goal or a scoring opportunity. It is much easier to prevent goals than it is to score them. Start checking as soon as your team loses the puck.

Remember - DEFENSIVE HOCKEY wins key games and PLAYOFF CHAMPIONSHIPS.

REVIEW AND TEST TIME

This is an excellent time to review specific sections of **UNIT VI**.

A few oral or written questions regarding:

- C **Stick Checking Skills - name and demonstrate**
- C **Body Checking Skills and Safely Taking a Bodycheck - demonstrate**
- C **2 Forechecking Systems: 2-1-2 and 1-2-2**
- C **2 Backchecking Systems: 2-1-2 and 2-2-1**
- C **Defencemen's Blue Line Decisions: to Pinch, to challenge outside Blue Line or to Back in**
- C **Coverage in Your Defensive Zone: Forwards responsibility, X formation, Corner work and Front of Net Coverage**
- C **Defensive Zone Face-Offs**

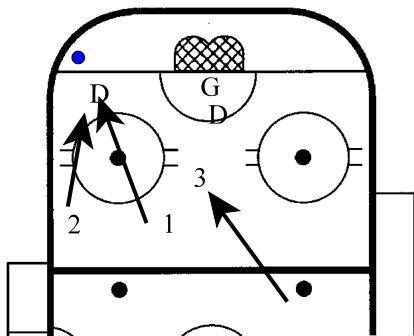
are suggested for review. This unit is extremely important for preventing goals and all players must understand their role especially what to do and who to cover when they don't have the puck.

FORECHECKING DRILL

Objective - Forwards are to regain possession of the puck, then create a 2 on 1 situation and attempt to score a goal.

Drill - 2 defensive defencemen against 3 offensive forwards are stationed outside the Blue Line. The coach shoots the puck into the right corner; one defenceman retrieves the puck and tries to carry it out over the Blue Line, the other defenceman covers the front of the net, then adjusts for a 2 on 1 situation. The 3 forwards start to forecheck as soon as the puck is shot in. The 1st forward takes the defenceman off the puck. The 2nd forward retrieves the loose puck and the 3rd forward gets into position to take a pass and shot from the slot area on a 2 on 1 situation. When drill is complete, do again but coach shoots puck into left corner and the other defenceman retrieves puck and tries to carry it out.

Variation of drill has both defencemen working together trying to pass or carry puck out and the 3 forwards must adjust their forechecking pattern to try to keep it in and regain possession of the puck.

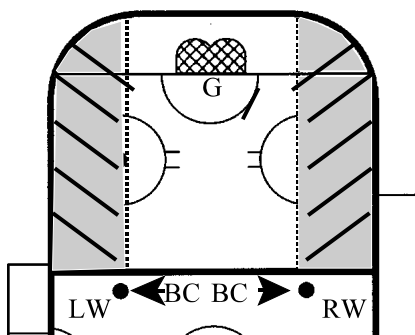


1. Closest forward takes defenceman off puck and pins him to boards.
2. 2nd forward retrieves loose puck and creates a 2 on 1 situation with 3rd forward in slot area.
3. 3rd forward stays in deep slot trying to get pass then shoot, pass or carry it to the net.

BACKCHECKING DRILL

Objective - The puck carrier on a 3 on 2 situation **must pass** (flat, shovel, bank) the puck to either of his wingers. The 2 backchecking forwards must cover their winger all the way back to the goal line, trying to prevent him from receiving the pass or cutting to the net.

Drill - 3 offensive forwards against 2 backcheckers. The play starts at the Red Line and the 2 backcheckers in the neutral zone peel off to cover the 2 wingers. Keeping them to the outside. The play is complete when the coach blows the whistle.



1. Centre carries puck, wingers on both side.
2. Backcheckers pick up wingers in neutral zone and cover them all the way back to goal line.
3. Centre tries to get puck to them using various passes. (Flat, shovel, bank off corner boards)
4. Centre cannot shoot or score.
5. Wingers try to get away from backcheckers, receive a pass and shoot on goal.

UNIT VII

GOALTENDING

ROLE OF THE GOALTENDER

Most coaches believe the **Goaltender** is their most important player and the backbone of their hockey team. Where would the Tampa Bay Lightning have been without Andre Vasilevsky tending goal for them all the way to winning two Stanley Cups in the spring of 2020 and 2021.

The goaltender is key to a team's defensive game of "**preventing goals.**" He must be in the right place, at the right time to stop the puck, then quickly re-position himself to stop any rebound generated from the shot. Goalies can give their Team a chance to win by keeping the score close. If you can stay within two goals of the opposition you are giving your Team a chance to win.

Goalies have the most difficult job in hockey and that is to stop numerous pucks shot 50-90 MPH from going over the Goal Line into the net. He must concentrate on **every** shot including rebounds. Goalies are the last line of defence and any errors they make usually results in a goal against.

If the goalie stops the first shot, they have done their job. If they have to stop the second, third and fourth shots on the same play, someone else on the team is not doing their defensive job correctly.

Defencemen are expected to clear rebounds into the corner or out over the Blue Line, but if they have time and good puck control, they can lead a rush out of the defensive zone or make an accurate first outlet pass to their forwards to exit their zone. Forwards can also recover rebounds & start a rush.

If a goal is scored, someone has made a defensive mistake. It could be a forward,(didn't backcheck to the goal line) a defenceman, (didn't play the 2 on 1 correctly) the goalie (didn't cut the angle) or all three. Coaches should identify the mistake(s), explain it, then try to correct it immediately.

A good goalie on a poor team can keep a game close and even lead them to victory. An average goalie on a good team can allow a soft goal and contribute like everyone else to a teams downfall. Why did the opposition get so many clear shots, scoring chances or rebounds in the first place?

Good Goaltending during the playoffs is critical. An underdog team can win with a good goalie.

GOALTENDING EQUIPMENT

In order for a goaltender to perform well, he must have the proper size and fit of equipment.

Purchasing **goaltender's equipment** is a very expensive proposition. It could cost over \$1,500.00 to outfit a 12 year old goaltender.

Most **Minor/Youth Hockey Associations** realize this and have various sizes of goaltenders equipment on hand for them to borrow for a game, or loan to them for the entire season.

Borrowing is not the same as owning and as you get older (13-17) and better, and think this is the right position for you, you may wish to purchase your own personal goaltending equipment.

SIZING AND FIT

Goaltenders equipment must be the right/correct size and **fit** properly to protect you.

If it's too big, it will be bulky, heavy and slow you down, hindering your movements about the goal crease. But today, goalies are starting to wear oversized pants, shoulder protectors, belly pad and arm protectors to take up more room in the goal and possibly stop more goals by covering more space. The NHL has established new rules to crack down on goalies wearing over sized equipment.

Having said that, if equipment is **too small**, it will be tight, short and restrictive. It won't protect all of your body and you could get seriously hurt by a hard shot to a small unprotected area.

Consult with your local sporting goods salesperson if purchasing goalie equipment, or your coach if borrowing it from your local Minor/Youth Hockey Association for the proper size and fit.

SKATES AND SKATING

Skating is important for a goaltender, but not quite as important as it is for forwards or defenceman. A goalie must have skates that fit properly about 1 to 1.5 sizes smaller than his street or running shoe size, so he will be able to move in and out of the net, side to side in the crease and go behind the net to stop dumped in shots. But to say he has to be the best skater on the team is a little exaggerated. Most Goalies don't buy or start wearing goalie skates until around age of 11-12 or older.

SKATES

Price Range: \$100.00 - \$300.00

Goalie **skates** must fit snug, not tight, and provide good ankle support. The toe cap and the outside of the skate have extra heavy duty fibre glass protection to block shots to the inside of your foot. The blades are wider, longer and flatter than those of a forward or a defenceman to provide better balance and more stability in a standing position and of course to stop hard shots along the ice.

When new, there is no rocker or hollow ground edge on a goalie's skates, just a straight flat blade. Get them sharpened by a professional skate sharpener to provide an inside and an outside edge.

SHARPENING

A **shallow** hollow ground **sharpening** (depth) based on your height and weight, will provide you with an **inside edge** and **outside edge** on your blades. This will give you better traction on the ice. It will also allow you to push off with your **inside edge** to quickly get across the crease post to post

Sharpen your skates about every 12-16 hours of game and practice time unless you loose an edge or get a nick or burr on the blade. If this happens get them sharpened immediately or you will fall.

ROCKERING

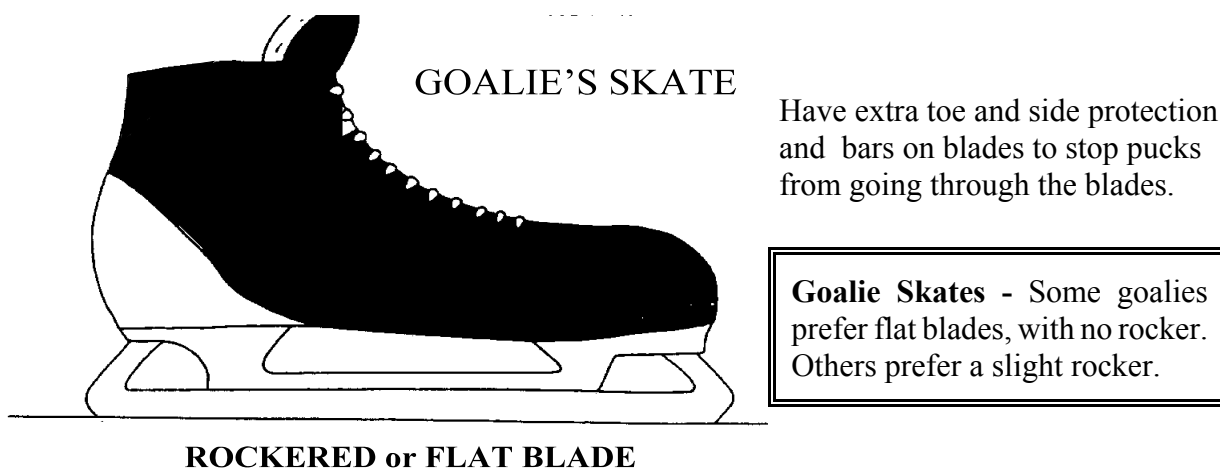
Young goalies aged 11 and 12 should use the flat blade to distribute their weight more evenly giving them better balance and stability. Most players 5-10 will use regular skates if playing goal.

As you get older and more experienced in hockey ages 13-14 and 15-17 you may wish to try a slight rocker between a 16 to 20 foot radius. This will provide you with uniform pivot points for easier turning left and right in the crease and it provides less friction for skating to loose pucks.

MAINTENANCE OF SKATES

Wipe your blades dry with a soft cloth after every game or practice to prevent the blades and rivets from rusting. Air them out at home and remove the foot pad to ensure the boot dries out completely. But keep them away from direct heat as this will dry out any leather part and cause it to stiffen.

When in your equipment bag, try to protect your skate blades with covers or guards to prevent other pieces of equipment from banging into them or you could loose an inside or outside edge.



GOAL CREASE

The purpose of the **Goal Crease** is to provide an exclusive area of safety and protection for the goaltender from aggressive forwards who want to crash the net and run into or hurt the goalie.

If an offensive player hits or charges the goalie in or out of the crease he will receive a penalty for goalie interference. If a goal is scored while the goalie was interfered with, the goal is disallowed.

The crease measures 12 feet wide and consists of a 6 foot semi-circle measured from the centre of the goal line. The crease is colored with light blue paint to identify its total area for the Referee.

No opposing players are allowed to be inside the goal crease until the puck enters it, but if there is a loose puck inside the crease, opposing players are allowed to go in it after puck trying to score.

Should a goal be scored while an opposing player is inside the crease, **prior** to the puck entering it and he interferes with the goalies movements the goal will be disallowed if seen by the Referee.

New: 2016/17 If an attacking player in crease does not interfere with goalie or block his view or movements and goal is scored by a player from outside the crease the goal will be allowed.

At the start of every game and after every flooding of the ice, most goalies will shave or smooth the ice in and around their goal crease by moving their skates sideways in a quick snow plowing motion. This smooth's out any ice ridges in the crease and makes the ice less slippery and easier to move around the crease without falling and going post to post.

The snow also creates some friction on the ice, thus slowing the puck down and possibly preventing a goal on a soft, slow or rolling shot along the ice. Goalies are not allowed to pile snow up in the crease or near the goal post area to prevent the puck from entering the goal.

GOALIE PADS**Price Range: \$300.00 - \$1500.00**

Goalie pads come in different lengths up to 38 inches long but a standard 11 inch, 28 cm width. If they exceed 11 inches in width a penalty could be called if challenged by a Team.

Goalies like the new long pads that cover their thighs and when in the butterfly position they cover the 5 hole much better.

The top strap on a goalie's pad are kept semi loose so they can bend their knees, the lower straps are kept tight to keep the pads in position. There are specific pads for your left and right leg and the thin perpendicular padded strip on each pad goes to the outside.

GOALIE GLOVES**Price Range: \$200.00 - \$1000.00**

Good **goalie gloves** are quite expensive but are necessary to catch or block flying pucks and to protect your both hands and wrists.

They come in different sizes for different age groups.

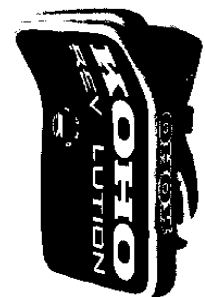
The **Catching Glove** is like a first baseman's mitt with a long narrow web to snag flying pucks. It shall not exceed 18 inches across by 8 inches at the cuff or 45 inches in total circumference or a penalty could be called if challenged by a Team.

It is usually very stiff when new and must be broken in to become softer and more flexible. You must squeeze it very hard to keep the puck inside the web and under control to prevent rebounds. Tie a softball in the glove to form the pocket and leave it tied over the summer to improve its shape. A special oil can be applied to soften the hard leather.

To prevent injury and pain to your finger tips, some goalies wear a baseball batting glove on their catching hand, others tape their finger tips for protection.

The **Stick Hand Glove** or **Blocker** is used to hold the goalie stick and to deflect shots on the stick side into the corner of the rink. It shall not exceed 15 inches in length by 8 inches in width. See rule 3.5 regarding illegal and oversized goalie equipment.

The outer area of the blocker is rectangular in shape and has a cushioned layer of padding between it and the fingers to protect your hand and wrist.

**GOALTENDER PANTS****Price Range: \$100.00 - \$300.00**

Goalie pants are more protective than a forward or defenceman's pants. They are usually 4- 8 inches bigger than your waist size to give you extra room to bend and to take up more space in the net.

There is extra padding in specific locations around the legs so the goalie won't get hurt if he takes a shot there. Some thigh padding is soft and flexible to prevent/cushion any rebounds. Players use their own hockey pants in goal until 11 - 12 and then if serious about goaltending buy goalie pants.

CHEST PROTECTOR**Price Range: \$100.00 - \$300.00**

The **chest protector** is a flexible pad to absorb shots off your chest and stomach. It is made up of small padded rectangles about 3 inches by 2 inches, by 3/4 inch thick, sewn like a quilt. Today goalies wear a one piece combination of chest, arm and shoulder protector.

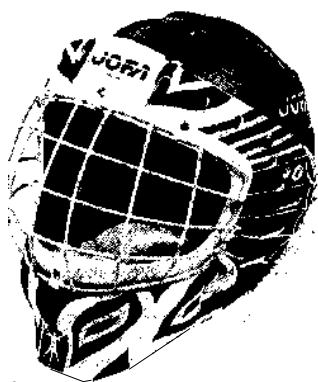
ARM AND SHOULDER PADS**Price Range: \$100.00 - \$300.00**

Goalie **arm and shoulder pads** (upper body protectors) are specifically designed to surround and protect your arms, elbows, shoulders and collar bone. They must be long enough to fit inside gloves.

They are made flexible so you can bend your elbow to hold your stick and still block shots without getting hurt. Newer models have the chest protector with arm and shoulder pads as a one piece unit.

GOALIE JOCK or JILL STRAP and CUP**Price Range: \$30.00 - \$65.00**

This is a specialized piece of equipment with extra padding to protect the groin area.

GOALIE MASK**Price Range \$150.00 - \$350.00**

The newer **goalie masks** are strong, light weight and airy.

They are a combination of a padded fibreglass helmet and mask with a wire cage around the eyes, nose and mouth. They must be CSA approved in Canada and HECC approved in the USA.

The majority of masks are very good, but quite expensive. They provide a lot of protection for your head and face. A hanging throat protector can be added to some masks for extra protection or a neck collar with bib should be worn to protect your neck, and wind pipe from pucks, sticks and possibly skate blades.

Back up Goaltenders on the bench must wear their mask or the same protective head equipment as the players or take a penalty.

GOALIE STICK**Price Range \$50.00 - \$200.00**

The goalie **stick** has a wider blade and shaft than a forward or defenceman's stick. The blade cannot exceed 3.5 inches in width or 15.5 inches in length. The shaft can be 55 inches from end to heel. The lie/angle is quite extreme to accommodate the goalie's stance. It can vary between 110 degrees. to 120 degrees .**Note:** Sticks now come in different paddle shaft lengths to fit different age groups. The blade should rest flat on the ice in the goalie's set position and natural stance. Tape the blade and knob using white tape so the Referee and goal judge won't think the black puck is in the net .

EQUIPMENT BAGS**Price Range \$50.00 - \$200.00**

Goaltenders can purchase extra large **equipment bags** that are specifically designed for them. They are larger than a forward's or defenceman's bag to accommodate their extra long and bulky equipment. Skates should be kept in the outside pockets so you won't damage the blades or loose their edges. When you get home, take all of your equipment out of your bag to air dry. You can use soda bicarbonate to help control any equipment odour. **Note:** You should have your own water bottle.

COST TO OUTFIT A Player aged 11-12 and older playing GOAL

EQUIPMENT	MANUFACTURER	RANGE OF PRICE
Skates	Bauer, CCM,	\$100 \$300
Pads	CCM, Bauer, Vaughn,	\$300 - \$1500
Pants	Bauer, CCM	\$100 - \$300
Chest & Arm Protector	CCM, Bauer	\$100 - \$300
Mask	Bauer, CCM	\$150 - \$350
Gloves (Pair)	CCM, Brian, Bauer	\$200 - \$1000
Sticks	Warrior, CCM, Bauer	\$50- \$200
TOTAL COST		\$1000 - \$3950

SPECIFIC RULES and PENALTIES TO GOALTENDERS

If the Goaltender loses his mask the **play is stopped immediately** by the Referee.

Goaltenders will receive **penalties** for breaking any rule, the same as all the skaters, but the following are specific rules for goaltenders. Goalies do not serve **Minor, Major, or Misconduct** penalties, as it must be served by a player who was on the ice at the time of the infraction. e.g tripping, slashing, etc. The coach must decide who will serve the goaltender's penalty.

Note: Goaltenders who receive a **Game Misconduct, Gross Misconduct, or a Match Penalty** are **automatically ejected** from the game. e.g. Major for fighting and a Game Misconduct.

Specific Penalties Goaltenders could receive:

1. Illegal or oversized equipment = 2 minute Minor penalty if proven correct.

Note: The opposing coach must ask the Referee to measure a specific piece of equipment.
If proven wrong and the equipment is legal, the opposition receive the Minor penalty.

2. Leaving the goal crease during a fight = 2 minute Minor penalty.
3. Intentionally participates in the play in any manner when he is beyond the centre Red Line = 2 minute Minor penalty
4. After catching the puck then drop kicks the puck = 2 minute Minor penalty.
5. Delay of Game = 2 minute Minor penalty
6. Intentionally dislodging the goal = 2 minute Minor penalty or Penalty shot if done in the last 2 minutes of play, or player is on breakaway, anytime in Overtime.
7. Shooting the puck over the glass and out of the playing surface = 2 minute Minor penalty.
8. Falling on the Puck While Outside his Goal Crease = 2 minute Minor penalty
9. For delaying the game unnecessarily = 2 minute Minor penalty.

For complete details of penalties and rules specific to goaltenders, and the other players, please read the **Official Hockey Canada or the Official USA Hockey Playing Rules** book.

PHYSICAL QUALITIES REQUIRED TO BECOME A GOOD GOALIE

HAND AND EYE CO-ORDINATION

Goaltenders must possess excellent **hand and eye co-ordination**, first to see the puck, then to move their hands quickly to catch or block the shot. Playing table tennis will improve your hand and eye co-ordination as well as your foot and hand speed.

QUICKNESS / REFLEXES and FLEXIBILITY

A goalie must have overall **quickness**, not just in his hands, but in his feet, legs, arms and stick. Tennis, racquetball and squash are 3 excellent sports to develop quick feet and reflexes. He must also be quick to fall on the puck or clear rebounds into the corner and to get back up on his feet to block any rebounds. Quick reflexes and reaction speed to the puck are essential. To improve his flexibility the goalie must stretch his groin, hamstring and quads before every practice and game by doing specific goaltender stretches to these areas. Your coach can show you these.

SKATING / MOBILITY / AGILITY and LEG STRENGTH

A goalie must acquire the skill of moving in and out of the net, moving side to side from post to post, going behind the net to stop any dumped in shot, and getting up and down effortlessly. Good goaltenders will have developed their **skating ability**, but it is not required that he be the best or fastest skater on the team. But having good balance & agility would be a definite asset.

Goalies also have to develop strength in their legs and groin area in order to move those big and often bulky pads around quickly and to get up and down, then recover from the Butterfly position by using strength from their legs, ankles and knees to get up. Leg squats can improve this area.

PHYSICAL SIZE of the GOALTENDER and DEHYDRATION

A big goaltender covers more net than a small goaltender and won't get knocked over as easily. However, the previously stated physical qualities can make up for lack of **size** in a small goalie. To avoid dehydration at practice/games, keep a water bottle on top of the net and drink at breaks.

MENTAL QUALITIES

Goaltenders are a unique breed of hockey player with personalities that tend to differ from the norm. There are, however, certain common mental **qualities** required of all goaltenders.

COURAGE

A goalie cannot be afraid of the puck, nor can he be worried about getting hurt or being injured. Young goalies, 5 -10 rarely get hurt because most players can't shoot very high or very hard.

CONCENTRATION / FOCUS / RESOLVE

Goalies must **concentrate** on the puck at all times. They cannot get caught day dreaming. Keep your eyes on the puck at all times even when it's in the other end of the rink. Concentrate on a square positioning on all shots and on controlling any rebounds. **Stay mentally tough**, relax and refocus after a bad/soft goal, don't sulk, but make a conscious decision to correct that error.

CONTROL OF TEMPER

Goalies must be self disciplined. They cannot afford to become upset if they let in a soft goal or when an opponent runs the crease or crashes the net. Control your emotions and temper.

When a goal is scored against you, you must forget it and concentrate on stopping the next shot. Stay focussed on the game and mentally under control. **"Keep your cool and stay relaxed"**

Note: Good goalies don't get too high with a win or too low with a loss but stay on a even keel.

STRONG WILL / DETERMINATION / DESIRE / HEART

Goalies must possess a strong will and determination to keep the puck out of the net at all cost.

KNOWLEDGE AND ANTICIPATION

A goalie must learn to think like the shooters and anticipate where they are likely to shoot from and toward what spot. And what they are liable to do in a specific situation, **shoot, deke** or **pass**.

This knowledge comes from experience, observation and learning to read specific shooters habits over a number of games then storing it in your memory bank for future reference.

CONFIDENCE / ATTITUDE / CONSISTENCY

The goalie must exude **confidence** in his ability to stop the puck. He hates allowing goals even in practice. He is very **consistent**, playing well nearly every game.

He has to be so sure of his puck stopping ability he is considered **cocky** by both his teammates and the opposition. His attitude inspires confidence in the rest of the team knowing he is going to stop the puck and puts doubts into the opposing shooters head that they will ever score.

GOOD GOALIES NEVER BLAME OTHERS

Good goalies never blame other players for goals scored against them, even when it was the other players mistake that caused the goal. This inspires his team to work even harder for him.

And players should never blame the goalie for a loss. The entire team is responsible for both winning and likewise the entire team is responsible for losing. If a goalie can keep his team close and within 2 goals of the opposition, his team still has a good chance to tie or win the game.

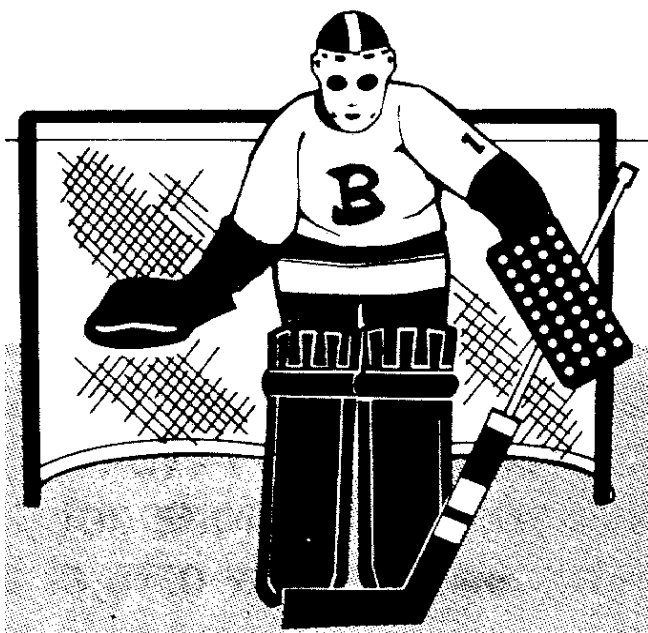
MENTAL TOUGHNESS / POISE UNDER PRESSURE

And last but not least, all goalies must exhibit a **mental toughness**. The fans, the opposing players and even the opposing coaches may be verbally abusive towards you trying to break your concentration and confidence, to get you off your game. Phrases like sieve, red light and loser must not get you upset. Remain **calm** and **cool** under pressure and display your inner strength. Keep your emotions under control not getting too high or too low, before, during and after the game. You must block all verbal assaults out of your mind and concentrate on the job at hand. Never get into a shouting match with anybody, this will only let them know you have been listening to them and they have gotten to you. Let **"stopping the puck."** do the talking for you.

GOALTENDING STANCES

There are 3 basic goaltending stances: **Stand Up**, **Crouch** and **Butterfly**. All 3 of these stances are used in different situations during the game to stop the puck. Using the same stance all the time will not help you stop pucks directed to different locations of the net, High, Low or Corner

Start with the natural stance that you are most comfortable with then develop the others later.



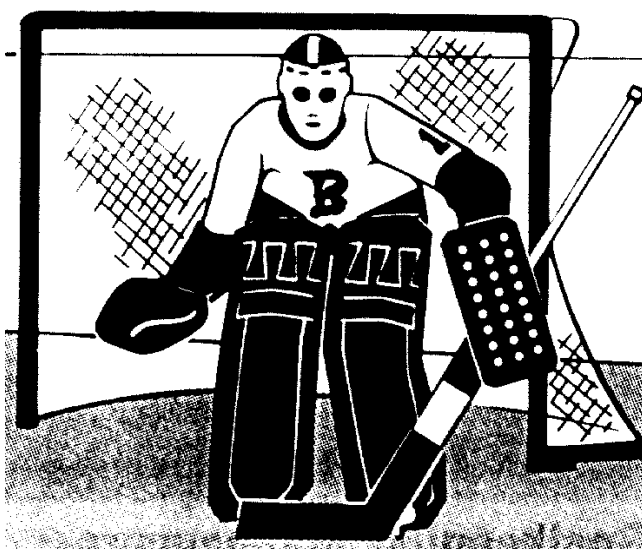
STAND UP

The **Stand Up** stance requires the goalie to stand tall with his legs together and knees slightly bent. Feet about shoulder width apart. The upper body is leaning slightly forward at the waist.

The stick is held 3 to 4 inches out in front of the skates and the blade is flat on the ice to cushion any shots along the ice.

The catching hand is held up and open at the side of the pad above the knee, ready to go up to top corners.

THIS STANCE FAVOURS STOPPING HIGH SHOTS



THE CROUCH

The **Crouch** is a semi stand up stance.

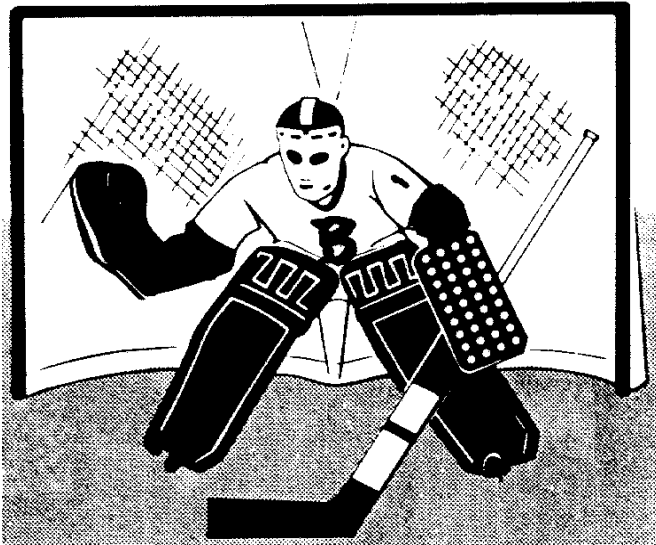
The legs and feet are further apart and the knees are bent deeper than the stand up position.

The upper body leans well forward from the waist.

The stick is positioned 5 to 6 inches in front of the skates with the blade flat on the ice to cushion any on ice shots.

The catching glove is open and out to the side about knee level.

THIS STANCE FAVOURS STOPPING KNEE HIGH SHOTS

BUTTERFLY OR V STYLE

In the **Butterfly** or “**V**” style, the feet are wide apart but the knees are close together, almost touching to form an inverted V. The upper body is bent at the waist and leans well forward over the pads.

The stick is positioned further out in front of the skates, about 12 to 14 inches, with the blade flat on the ice but tilted slightly backwards.

The catching glove is up and open to the side about chest high above the pads. On low shots or screen shots the knees go down on the ice, and the legs go out toward each goal post.

THIS STANCE FAVOURS STOPPING LOW and SCREEN SHOTS

KEYS TO GOOD GOALTENDING

There are 8 keys to good goaltending but try to make yourself as big as possible to fill the net.

STAY ON YOUR FEET - Goalie shuffle moving L or R across net while standing.

Stay up on your feet as long as you possibly can to stop the first shot. Don't drop down early before the shot is even taken or you will be in trouble by leaving the top corners of the net exposed and good shooters will wait for you to go down then pick the top corners. You can go down, but only if the shot is low or on the ice, not on every shot. If it's a high shot stay standing.

WATCH THE PUCK and be SQUARE to THE PUCK CARRIER/SHOOTER

The goalie must **keep his eyes on the puck and play the puck carrier** at all times. Be square to the puck and at **top of the crease** cutting the angle to make his shooting angle and the net much smaller. Be aware of any possible pass to an uncovered receiver and ready to react to it.

POSITIONING / AGGRESSIVELY CUTTING THE ANGLE

The goalie should be standing at the outer edge of the crease. A shooter will always tip off a goalie he is going to shoot by looking down at the puck to make sure it is on his stick, then by sliding his hand further down the shaft. When he does this, move out one or two more feet toward the puck and you will **cut the angle** even further leaving him little or no net to shoot at.

CATCH EVERY PUCK YOU CAN / QUICK GLOVE HAND

By **catching every puck you can**, you are in control by preventing any rebound and you can get a stoppage in play and a whistle when you want it. If it's safe to do so, give the puck to your defenceman and he can clear it to safety or start an offensive rush. Your Catching Glove should be always open and pointing downward for shots below your waist and pointing upward for shots above your waist, just like a first baseman. If a shot is directed to your blocker side, try to block it, and if possible cover the puck with your catching glove, to prevent any rebound.

CONTROLLING REBOUNDS / HANDLING PUCK

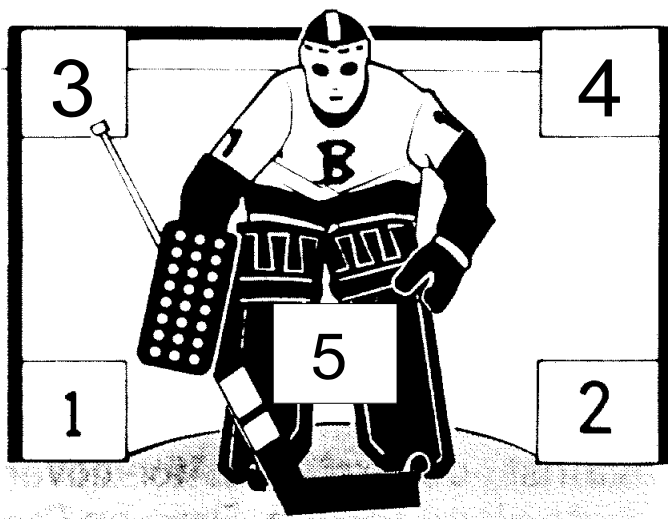
If you don't catch the puck, it generally **rebounds** off your pads or body. When this happens you have 3 choices: **1.** you can quickly fall on the puck, getting a face-off. **2.** deflect/clear the puck with your body or stick into the corner. **3.** let your defencemen clear it out of harms way. Don't let the puck just sit there in the crease or slot area or the opposition will get a shot on net. Many goals are scored from rebounds, not the original shot. If the puck is shot/dumped in along the boards, you must go behind your net to stop it, handle it, and leave it for your defenceman.

TALK TO YOUR DEFENCEMEN

Goalies should always **talk to their defencemen**. Let them know when a man is **uncovered** in front of the net or if you are **screened** and can't see the puck. Also let them know if an opponent is going into the corner to bodycheck them, or if they have enough time to make a play or should freeze the puck. If you verbally help them, they will physically protect you if someone body checks you inside or outside your crease. **Tip:** If you give your defencemen some compliments like "great hit Bobby," "good shot block Joey," they will try even harder for you.

KNOW WHERE THE OPPOSITION IS POSITIONED

As a goalie you must be aware of where the **opposing players** are going to be positioned to try to score against you. Plan for this so you can get into the best square position to stop the second or third shot from a rebound or from a lateral or drop pass on an odd man rush. Also be aware of players stationed just off the far goal post waiting for a diagonal pass from their defenceman.

KNOWING WHERE MOST GOALS ARE SCORED

Minor/Youth Goalies must understand that most goals are scored in the following **5** locations.

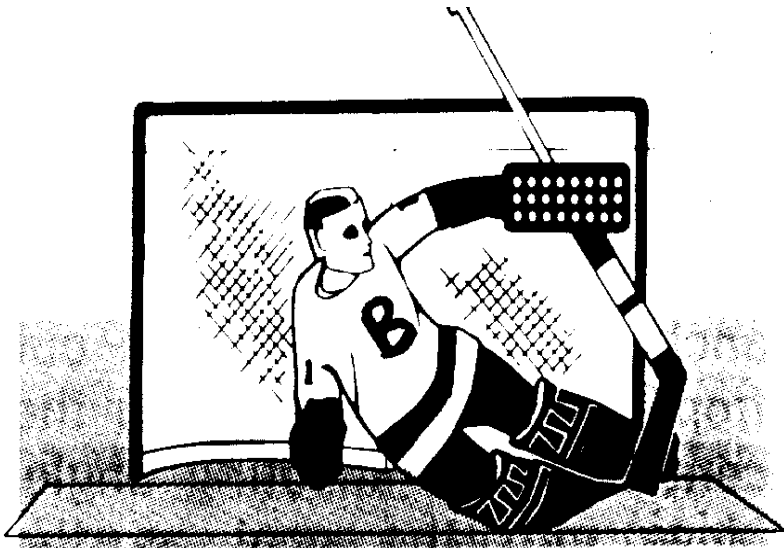
- 1) The lower corner - stick side - 33%.
- 2) The lower corner - glove side - 27%
- 3) The top corner- stick side -21%
- 4) The top corner - glove side - 13%.
- 5) Between the legs - 5 hole - 6%.

Over 60% of all Minor goals, are still scored into the lower half of the net.

To protect the **lower corners** use your stick, (paddle shaft upward) and pads in the Butterfly position with your feet/legs spread to each goal post on all low shots. Stick in front of knees. To protect the **top corners** on high shots, stand up and use your gloves and get your body in front of the shot. To protect the opening between your legs, keep them together as much as possible and place your stick blade flat on the ice to stop all shots along the ice. Quick reflexes in both your hands and feet are essential. Try to deflect or direct all shots and rebounds into the corner. **Note:** Use all 3 stances at different times to stop pucks shot toward different locations of the net.

SPECIFIC GOALTENDING SKILLS

2-LEGGED SLIDE TO EITHER SIDE



The **2-legged slide** is used on across ice/crease passes to an opposing forward situated off the far post.

Slide both legs, with your pads stacked one on top of the other and facing outward, toward the far post.

When sliding to your stick glove side, hold the catching glove open and low away from your body. The stick hand glove is extended high toward the top corner of the net facing outward to cover more open net.

MOVING SIDE TO SIDE TO PREVENT WRAP- AROUNDS



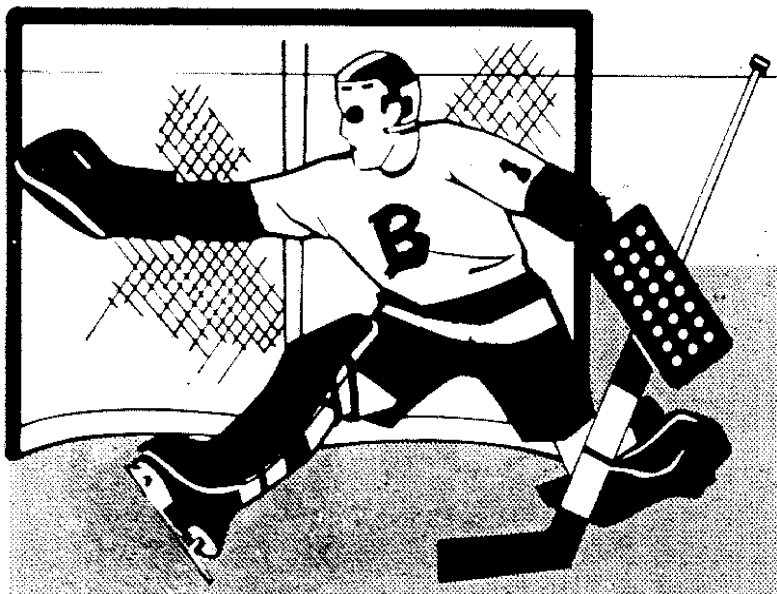
To **prevent a wrap around goal**, the goalie must push off from the near goal post using the **inside edge** of his skate blade.

The other skate glides parallel across the goal line to the far post then turn it 90 degrees to the inside post.

The goal stick blade or paddle shaft is positioned on the ice and to the outside of the post to prevent any pass out or wrap around attempts.

The goalie can stay in a standing position or go down on one knee with the paddle shaft in an upright and horizontal position, on the ice to stop any wrap around attempts. It's up to the goalie to experiment with both methods to see which one is most comfortable and successful for him. Lateral or quick side to side, post to post movements are essential to stop wrap around attempts.

THE FULL SPLIT SAVE



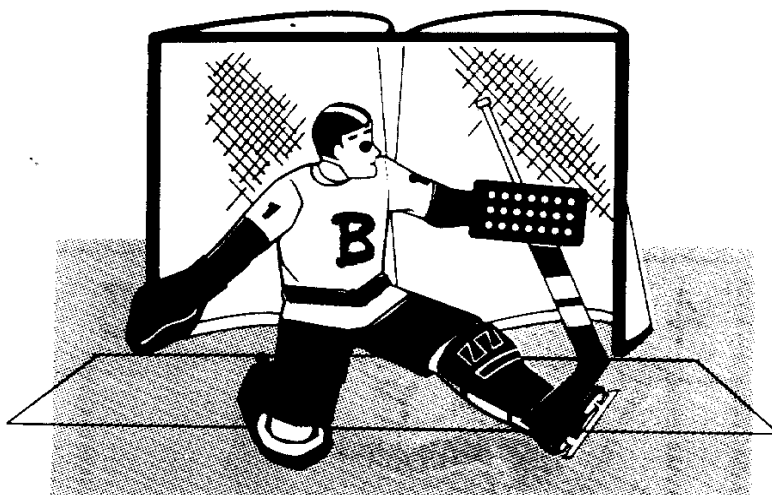
The **full split save** is used as a last resort to stop any puck shot to the far post. It could be a high or low shot just inside the post.

The legs split apart with one knee on the ice and the far leg split wide toward the far post, with the toe pointing upward.

The catching glove is open and the body leaning toward the far post.

The stick is held between the legs, blade on the ice to provide some balance and to cover the open space between the legs in case there is a deflection.

THE HALF SPLIT SAVE



The **half split save** is used to stop low shots and shots to one side of the net. It is used instead of the full split when ever possible because of its better and quicker recovery position.

Drop to one knee and kick out the other leg toward the corner of the net where the puck is headed.

Use the pad, stick or glove to stop the puck and direct it into the corner of the rink.

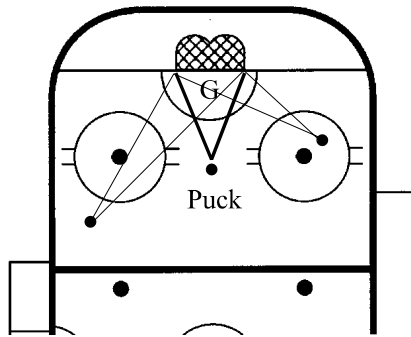
Note: Goalies should try to direct all rebounds into the corner not into the slot area.

PLAYING THE ANGLES / POSITIONING / CHALLENGING THE SHOOTER

The **further out** of the net the goaltender comes to play the shooter, the less net the shooter has to score a goal. If you have cut the angle correctly and stay up on your feet, you won't have to move, the puck will hit you 99 times out of 100. If you go down too early, you will leave the top of the net wide open. But, if the shot is low, go down in the butterfly position, if it's high stay standing.

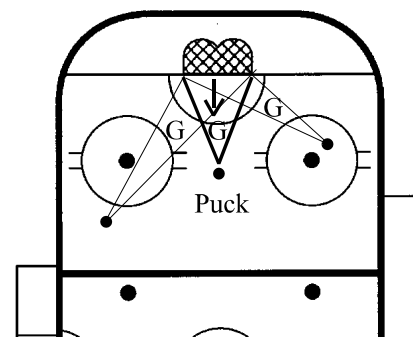
You must always set yourself square to the puck, **starting from the centre of the goal line**. This ensures you play the angles evenly, not over covering one side over the other. This starting point is key to stopping shots from all over the ice. If it's a low shot, move out and use the butterfly. Use your goal posts and the crease L markings to serve as reference points for your positioning. If you get too far outside your crease you will have difficulty stopping rebounds from the far side. After the initial save, and providing there is no rebound, retreat back to the crease to get your bearings and the correct square positioning by using the centre of the goal line for the next shot.

If the shooter looks down at the puck, he is tipping you off that he is going to shoot. Come out 1 to 2 feet further, straight toward the puck and it will reduce his area to score even more. If he didn't shoot and decides to deke you are still in a position to retreat back to the top of the crease.



**GOALIE DEEP IN NET
CORNERS WIDE OPEN**

**PLAYING THE ANGLES
Starting from centre
of Goal Line**



**GOALIE CUTTING ANGLE
OUTSIDE OF CREASE
LESS OPEN CORNERS**

STAY ON YOUR FEET

Staying up on your feet allows you to move quickly in and out to cut the angle and go laterally left or right from post to post to cover a rebound or move across the net to stay with the shooter. More of the net will be covered by staying up on your feet, especially the top corners.

Also, word of you going down early will spread throughout the League. And good goal scorers will wait for you to go down, then use the opportunity to put the puck high into the top corners.

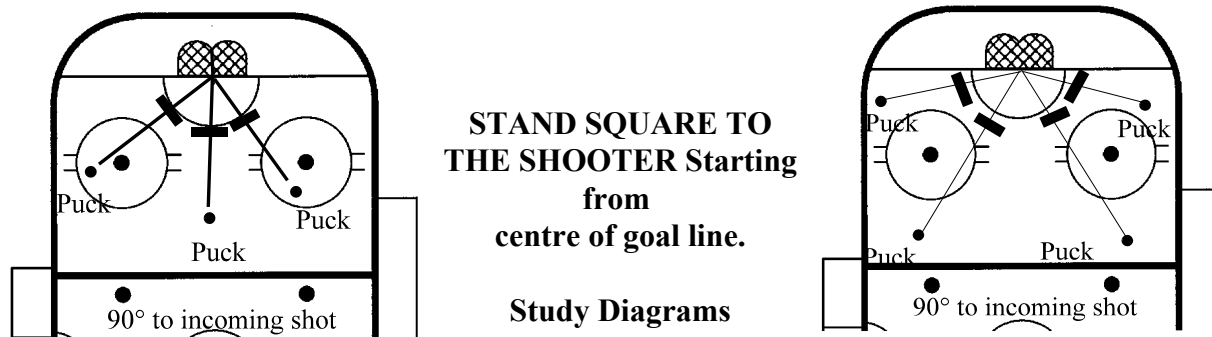
If you go down it should only be for low shots, not every shot, because it is very hard to recover from this downed butterfly position and get back up on your feet to block a high shot or rebound. **Note:** Watch the puck to see if it's coming high or low, then react, don't be guessing.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PUCK

Goaltending is such a vital position, the goaltender must always **keep his eyes on the puck** even when it's in the opposite end of the rink or in your corners. Watch for players hanging out by the Red Line hoping for a breakaway then try to alert your defencemen of any such player.

SETTING YOURSELF SQUARE TO SHOOTER / PUCK CARRIER

The goalie must set himself **square to the shooter**, the man with the puck, otherwise he is giving the shooter the advantage. Form the letter “T” with your pads to where the **puck** is situated. Setting yourself square simply means being in a straight line with your body and pads 90 degrees from where the puck is shot. Use the **centre** of the goal line as a **starting point** for both cutting angles and setting your self square to shooter. This positioning will stop 99 percent of the shots.



Use your goal posts, goal crease and L crease markings as additional reference points for cutting angles and setting yourself square. **Tip:** Tie a long cord to both posts to make a V then you can see the shooters/puck angle to the net. Move cord left to right and you can see what space is open.

Your goalie pads, where the 2 come together, and body must be square, at 90 degrees, or in a straight line to the direction of the oncoming puck in order for rebounds to fall in front of you.

CONTROLLING REBOUNDS

Setting yourself square to the shooter and cutting the angle guarantees any shot that hits you straight on should cause the puck to rebound/bounce out in front of you and not off to the side. When it **rebounds in front**, you must be quick to **control it** by falling on, or clearing it into the corner. Don't shoot or bat the puck over the glass or you will get a delay of game penalty.

If you are out of position or not in a straight line to the puck and still make a great save, the rebound will likely go off to the side of you. Use the long reach of your goalie stick and blade to surround the puck and pull it back to you, then cover with your catching or stick hand glove. Be aware of where shots are coming from and where rebounds are likely to go if they bounce off you. React quickly to re-position your body, squarely, to the direction that the puck rebounded.

FREEZING THE PUCK

If your players are tired and the opposition has them running around all over the ice in your end zone, try to **freeze the puck to get a face-off**. This stoppage will give your coach a chance to change the line. To freeze the puck, place your catching glove on the puck. To protect your hand from a potential slash or skate blade, place your goalie stick's blade in front of it, then elevate the paddle shaft to a 45 degree angle over top of your catching glove to provide an extra protective barrier. **Note:** Goalies can only freeze the puck if **under attack** and one of your skates must be in the goal crease, otherwise it's a 2 minute delay of game penalty. You cannot freeze the puck if there are no opposing players around you. Clear the puck into the corner, or give it to your defenceman who can get it to the neutral zone. The Referee must keep the play moving and eliminate unnecessary stoppages by the goaltender freezing the puck while outside his crease.

PLAYING BREAKAWAYS / SHOOT OUTS / PENALTY SHOTS

To be successful at **stopping a breakaway** or **penalty shot**, the goalie must challenge the shooter by coming out 3 to 6 feet beyond the crease to cut the angle and meet the puckcarrier head on.

As the shooter gets closer to you, **slowly** retreat back to the top of the crease area but **not** back too far. Do not commit yourself in either direction. Be patient and stay square to the shooter.

Watch the shooter and the puck as you may be able to **poke check** him if he gets too close to you.

Stay up on your feet as long as you can. This will allow you to move across the net with the shooter if he tries to deke you. If you go down early you may never recover your positioning.

Try to get the shooter to make the first move. He has only 2 options, to shoot or to deke. He is hoping you will make the first move and go down. If you stay up, square and stand your ground long enough, he will run out of ice and shoot the puck at you or miss the net 9 out of 10 times.

Watch his actions as he will tip you off what he is intending to do. If his head is down and he slides his hand down the shaft, with the puck to one side, stay out for a shot. If the puck is carried out front, he usually dekes. He is as nervous as you are and hoping you will move/go down first.

Don't make the first move and go down or the shooter will either go around you or shoot to the top of the net. When the shooter makes his move, deke or shoot, react, but stay square to puck.

Note: Shooters will usually shoot to the side of the net that the puck is on. Left hand shots normally shoot to the goalie's right side, right hand shots generally shoot to the goalie's left side.

**SHOOTERS COMING OUT OF THE CORNER**

To prevent a goal from a **bad angle**: such as **out of the corner**, or **near or behind the goal line**

Stand square 90 degrees to the shooter and hug the goal post with your pads, body and stick allowing no space for the puck to enter the short side of the net. The far side is also covered.

Watch for a pass out of the corner to a man out front. If you can deflect or stop these passes do so. If it's to a man in the slot, move out & across the crease, stay square to the puck & cut the angle.

If he skates out of the corner and cuts across the front of the net, stay up on your feet and move **out and across** the net with him. If he gets close enough, **poke check puck**. Try not to drop to your knees incase there's a rebound as you could be out of position to stop it or any high shot.

PLAYING SCREEN SHOTS, DEFLECTIONS and TIP INS

Good hockey players will go to the front of the net on shots from the point or deep slot to **screen**, and block the goalie's view, or try to **deflect** and **tip** the shot to change it's direction, thereby increasing their team's scoring opportunities. All of these actions are legal if outside the crease.

To stop a screen shot, the goalie must keep low and get his pads spread across the ice from goal post to goal post in a butterfly style. High shots don't usually get through all the traffic in front.

Move your upper body from side to side, looking around players legs for the in coming puck.

Move out, close to the screener to cut the angle and keep your stick's **paddle shaft** in an upright position on the ice in front of your knees as many goals are scored 5 hole or on the ice. If you stay very close to the screener any deflection or tipped puck may hit you because there is less room for the puck to change significant direction and get by you. Pounce on any rebound right away.

STOPPING THE PUCK BEHIND THE NET / PUCKHANDLING

The goalie must leave his net, quickly going behind it to **stop/control** the puck with the blade of his stick, either on his forehand or backhand, on any puck dumped or shot in around the boards.

This will prevent the puck from sailing around the boards, behind your net to their wide winger. It also gives your team and defenceman a chance to get the puck back and start a clearing play.

Your job is to place your stick at a slightly more than right angle to the bottom kick/base board and trap the puck if on the ice. Control any rebound off your stick. Use your upper body and pads to stop high shots dumped in. (If necessary, handle the puck then pass it to your open player.)

Otherwise, leave the puck about 1 foot from the boards which allows your defenceman to easily pick it up. Once you have stopped the shoot in or passed the puck, quickly get back into your net.

BLOCKING PASS OUTS FROM BEHIND YOUR NET

Some creative forwards like Sidney Crosby will stop **behind your net and pass the puck** out to his open team-mate in the slot area, a player off to the side of the net, or to an open defenceman on the point. If there is no one open he might even come out one side and try a wrap around shot.

To see the puck, turn your head and look through the netting but don't turn your body around.

The goalie can help prevent a pass out by hugging the post and placing his stick close to a right angle to the puck's direction on the side of the net the pass is coming from. He can try to block or deflect the pass back into the corner or fall on it to get a face-off.

If the pass is completed out front, be in a position to turn quickly and move out **square** toward the shooter & cut the angle. Don't get caught deep in the net and stay on your feet as long as you can.

PENALTY SHOTS / SHOOT OUTS

The goaltender must remain in his crease until the designated player touches the puck at centre ice. When he does, come out 3 - 6 feet beyond the crease to cut the angle, then slowly retreat to the top of the crease, remaining square to the puck and in a standing position as long as you can. He may tip you off what he is going to do, shoot or deke. Review breakaways on previous page.

PRACTICE DRILLS FOR GOALTENDERS

Goaltenders need to practice **specific goaltending drills** administered away from the main practice area at the opposite end or side of the rink with the goalie coach or an assistant coach.

A 10 to 15 minute review or teaching and practice session is recommended at every practice.

SPECIFIC DRILLS

DRILL	DESCRIPTION	REASON
SKATING	Moving out and back into net staying square to shooter.	To cut angles from various shooting locations.
SKATING	Moving side to side, lateral movement post to post.	To stop wrap around shots and player coming out from corner attempting to score.
SKATING	Moving out and in, side to side. Goalie shuffle	To follow & stay square to moving puck all over the ice.
SKATING	Stopping dumped in puck behind the net and quickly returning to net.	To prevent dump in pass behind net to wide winger.
SLIDES	To stick side and glove side.	To stop across ice/crease shots to the far post.
UP AND DOWN	Standing to knees, knees to standing.	To develop speed to control rebounds. To see screen shots
SAVES	Both Skate saves L & R.	Shots on ice.
SAVES	Stick save.	Shots on ice.
SAVES	Catching glove.	High shots.
SAVES	Stick glove.	High shots - stick side.
SAVES	Half splits.	Low shots.
SAVES	Full splits.	Low shots to corner.
SAVES	Leg saves.	Low shots.
SAVES	Butterfly.	Low Screen & Wrap around
SAVES	Rebounds.	Control/Deflect/Clear

Young goaltenders should receive as much or more instruction as the forwards and defencemen.

Coaches - “Do not neglect your goaltenders.”

PRE GAME WARM-UP

Prior to the start of a game or practice, the goaltenders must stretch their groin area, quads, hamstring, calf muscles and torso to improve their flexibility. Then warm-up by taking a few practice shots from their own players who are positioned in a semi-circle, each with a puck.

The captain will shoot wrist shots or medium slap shots that the goaltender can handle, to build his confidence. Shoot stick side, then glove side, low then high, from all angles.

The **thoughtless players** fire slap shots at his head or try to see how many goals they can score, thus breaking the goalie's confidence or possibly injuring him. **This is a no, no!**

A good coach will instruct his players how to warm up the goalie and watch if necessary. You do not want your goalie injured in a pre-game warmup or him thinking he can't stop a beach ball.

If the goalie played a bad game, it could be because of the poor or injuring warm-up he was given by his own players. Self Confidence is a goaltenders secret weapon, don't destroy it.

BASIC GOALTENDING PRINCIPLES

- C Stretch before any game or practice and have a good warm up prior to the game starting.
- C Play the shooter/puck carrier in **all** situations, starting from the centre of your goal line.
- C The defenceman should play the other man and intercept any attempted pass on a 2 on 1.
- C Anticipate passes to the open man but don't guess/cheat/react/or move too soon.
- C Keep your eyes on the puck at **all** times, even when it's in the other end of the ice.
- C Stay up on your feet as long as possible but ready to go into other stances as required.
- C Quickly get yourself into a set position, square to the shooter/puck and cut the angle.
- C Don't touch shots going high or wide of the net but watch for them coming off backboard.
- C Catch every puck shot on net to prevent any rebounds or to get a face-off if required.
- C Quickly smother all rebounds or direct/clear them into the corner or to your defencemen.
- C Get low for screen shots with your stick & pads on the ice in the butterfly position and use the paddle shaft of your stick to block shots on the ice 5 hole or any wrap around attempts.
- C Talk to your defencemen and let them know when you are screened or when a man is open in front of the net. Give your defencemen some compliments for a good hit or a well played situation 1 on 1, 2 on 1, covering open man & they will work even harder for you.
- C Develop your poke check for puck carriers cutting to close or crossing in front of the net.
- C Keep your cool and maintain your concentration. Never get too high or too low.

SUMMARY

Goaltending is the hardest and most responsible position to play in all of hockey. Goalies must cover as much of the net as possible **all of the time** by using their equipment to the best defensive advantage. Use your arms, legs, chest, hands, feet and stick to **“make yourself big.”**

A good goaltender is an intelligent player who understands geometry and the cutting of angles. He uses this knowledge to position himself squarely to stop the puck and numerous rebounds.

A “Goals Against Average” of 3.00 or under is considered good in Minor/Youth Hockey, but it doesn’t really indicate how many shots on goal or saves you made. A save percentage of 92% or higher is considered a better indicator because it measures how many saves you made out of 100 shots. Example 23 saves out of 25 shots = 92% save percentage, a very, very good number.

Goalies cannot make a serious error without the team feeling it. Soft goals hurt the team, but great saves inspire them. Concentrate on **every shot** to keep your team close and within 2 goals.

Good to Great Goaltending can steal a game, a playoff series and even a Championship.

Each team should try to have a full time Goalie Coach to work exclusively with their goaltenders at every practice and study their moves during the game then give feedback after the period or game. If this is not possible, perhaps a former goalie you know, or a **guest** Goalie Instructor could come now and then to your practice and work with your Goalie(s).

To help you eliminate any bad habits as a goaltender, I suggest someone, (parents, friend, etc.) phone video you during the game. This will enable you to identify the good saves you made as well as analyse those goals that got by you and help you make any necessary corrections.

When you are able to observe yourself in action, it becomes much easier to understand which actions were correct and effective and which actions were not and need to be changed/altered.

Phone Videos also allow you to view your squared positioning, see if you cut the angle, or were in the net too deep, went down too early, or didn’t get re-positioned squarely on rebounds on any goals scored against you. It will also show who was backchecking and defencemen’s positioning.

“A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words.”

TEST AND REVIEW TIME

Because the goalie is the most important player on the team it is imperative that the goalie coach, head coach or parent test him/her to ensure they understand the basic components of goaltending.

Skills such as:

- c **Setting Yourself Square or 90 degrees to the Shooter**
- C **Playing the Angles and When to use different Stances**
- C **Where Most Goals are Scored**
- C **Controlling Rebounds and Stopping dumped in Shots**
- C **Playing Breakaways, Shootouts, using the Johnny Bower Poke Check etc.**

must be understood by the goalie.

UNIT VIII

SPECIAL TEAMS

The term “**Special Team**” is used to describe a group of players used in a special situation.

Players used on the “**Power Play**” or to “**Kill Penalties**” are 2 examples of special teams that generally require talented offensively or defensively skilled players for it to be successful.

In Beginners and age groups, (5-8) special teams would have a very low priority.

However, as players reach the 9-10 to 11-12 age groups especially in the "A", "AA" and "AAA" Representative Team Divisions, it would have a much higher priority and the different strategies for Power Plays and Penalty Killing should be explained to your players.

POWER PLAY

The phrase “**Power Play**” or “**PP**” is a hockey term used to describe a situation where one team has either a 1 or 2 player advantage because the opposition received a penalty and is playing “**Short-handed**” either 5 on 4, 4 on 3, or 5 on 3. You cannot play with less than 3 skaters. If a third penalty is called against a team, it will not start until **one** of the first two penalties is over.

OBJECTIVE OF THE POWER PLAY

The **objective of the power play** is to move the puck under control from your defensive zone up the ice through the neutral zone into the offensive zone. Then set up a 2 on 1 situation or a high percentage goal scoring situation, execute the play, shoot & score before the penalty has expired.

HOW THIS IS ACHIEVED - In the Offensive Zone

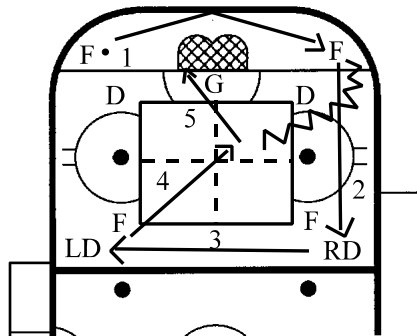
Have players, F or D, rotate along the 1/2 wall as the safety area to control puck & have passing options. Set up a high percentage scoring play then execute it, getting a quality shot on goal. If you don't score on the initial shot, (and you rarely do) there could be a big fat rebound. You have a man advantage, which means someone, F or D, is always open for a pass. Find the open man.

Power Play Strategy: Exit defensive zone quickly, speed through the neutral zone, enter offensive zone with puck control, setup a scoring play inside zone. Look for scoring opportunities in the slot area, the point, the side or backdoor of net, or crease area. Screen & go to net for rebounds. Penalty killers use flexible box or diamond shape in defensive zone. They will attempt to keep your players and puck carrier to the outside of this box/diamond shape.

The power play unit's job is to pass puck quickly, get a player **open** on the back door, in the slot, or on the point, receive a pass and get a clear shot on goal. Players should go to the net to screen, tip, deflect or shoot any **rebound**. It's usually 2nd or 3rd shot from a rebound that goes in. Taking **one timers** is a very good strategy for shooters on their off wing as they have an excellent scoring angle to the net. Offensive players can cycle the puck & rotate their positions to get into a better scoring position. **Puck control** is the preferred entry into the offensive zone not dump and chase.

POWER PLAY STRATEGIES

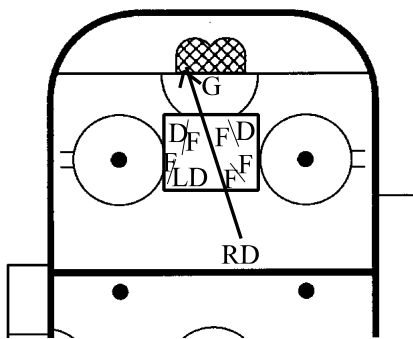
One **power play strategy** is to get the penalty killers to **move out of position** by expanding the box, making it very large by passing the puck **quickly** around the four corners of their defensive zone. Your uncovered player then slips into the open area in the **slot** for a pass and shot on goal.



EXPAND BOX

1. Bank pass behind net to For. in corner
2. Forward. quickly passes to RD
3. RD passes quickly to LD
4. LD passes to breaking Forward in Slot
5. Forward gets a good shot on goal

Another strategy is to **shrink** or collapse the box, making it very **small** by having 2 or 3 of your forwards swarm the front of their net to screen the goalie. Get the puck back to your open man on the point, he is now free to take a pass, move in and get a low or high, hard, screen shot on goal.



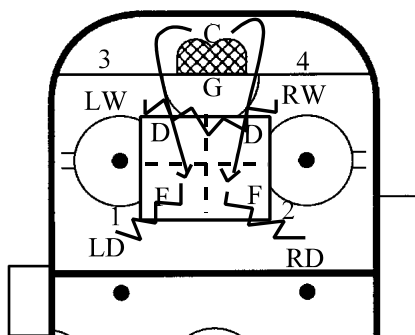
COLLAPSE BOX

1. 3 Offensive + 3 Defensive Players are now in the slot area to collapse the box and screen the goalie.
2. A Defenceman is wide open on the point for a pass and low screen shot on goal. Forwards, look for rebounds.

A third power play strategy is to have your centre set up with the puck **behind** the oppositions goal like Wayne Gretzky did. Penalty killers don't normally go behind the net to check players.

Some, or all of the penalty killers may turn to watch and see what the centre is doing with the puck behind the net. Is he going to carry it out, pass it out, or is he going to try to bank it in off somebody? A Defender has to turn and watch him other wise he can come right out with the puck

If one penalty killer turns to watch him, an offensive player, a winger or a defenceman could move into a prime shooting lane for a pass out from behind the net and get a quality shot on goal.



CENTRE BEHIND NET

Options:

1. Centre passes to LD for shot
2. Centre passes to RD for shot
3. Centre passes to LW for shot
4. Centre passes to RW for shot
5. Centre can carry puck out himself and shoot

OBJECTIVE of POWER PLAY INSIDE OFFENSIVE ZONE

The **objective inside the offensive zone** is to get a penalty killer to leave their set position and to run around in their defensive zone, **getting out of** the box/diamond formation to **chase** after the puck carrier. If this happens, a smart offensive power play player can get open in the slot area, at the side of the net, or on the point to **receive a pass** and take a quality shot on goal. Prior & during the shot, the other forwards should go to the net to screen the goalie or look for any rebounds.

POSITIONING ON THE POWER PLAY

On some power plays, the Coach will assign 1 winger and 1 defenceman to play their **opposite side** allowing a left hand shot to play the right side or a right hand shot to play the left side. This gives them a much **better shooting angle** on goal with more net to shoot at. (See page 54) It also allows for **one time slap shots** in the older age divisions of under 15 and 18 and Junior.

Patrick Laine, Alex Ovechkin and Steven Stamkos all with right handed shots, will always set up on the left wing side, inside the face-off circle for this very reason on their power play. They are very, very successful at scoring power play goals on **one timers** from this prime location.

Feeding the points, especially the defenceman, with the low hard shot is also a good power play strategy. The forwards then go to the net to screen, deflect, tip or shoot in any rebound.

Your Coach may even assign your **biggest player** to go to the front of their net to deliberately screen the goalie's view of the puck. This is a very good play if the player holds his ground and can't be pushed away or intimidated by their defencemen, but he must stay outside of the crease.

POWER PLAY MAKE UP

The Head Coach will decide which 5 players he wants out on the power play.

Some Coaches use the 5 best offensive players on the team, while others go with the next line scheduled to be out on the ice. It's the coaches decision and the score might dictate who is used.

The power play unit usually has a **goal scoring forward** and a **hard shooting defenceman** as minimum components. Some coaches will put their top shooting/scoring forward on the point.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- 1) Try to get one or more penalty killers to run around in their defensive zone **to chase** after the puck and get drawn out of the box/diamond formation thus opening up more space in the slot.
- 2) Move/pass the puck **quickly** to get the box to break down, force them into mistakes, then if possible, feed the points, slot or open player at the far side of net for a quality shot on goal.
- 3) Forwards, go to the net to screen the goalie, tip, deflect the shot or go after any rebound.
- 4) The Defencemen with the puck on the point, can shoot or look for the open forward stationed diagonally off the **far post** for a clear **backdoor** shot. Example: RD. to LW. or LD. to RW.
- 5) Forecheck hard in the offensive zone with 2 men, cause a turnover, recover the puck then set up & take high quality shots, getting them through to the net for a goal or to create a rebound.

2 - MAN ADVANTAGE

During the course of the game, you may get a **2 -man Power Play advantage**.

With this 5 on 3 opportunity, spread out and take full advantage of the extra room to pass puck by the 3 penalty killers. Try to create a 2 on 1 situation in the slot area or at the side of the net.

There should always be 2 players open and in the clear to receive a pass, go to the net to double screen the goalie or to pick up a rebound. If the points are open, try to feed your **hardest shooter**.

The penalty killing team will be defending against you with a rotating **triangle** formation.

As with a 1-man advantage, take your time, look, think and pass the puck quickly trying to get a defender running around and out of the triangle position, then one of your players moves into the vacated slot area for a shot on goal. You can also try a Pick Play to isolate/block a penalty killer.

With 2 extra men, getting to the rebound or loose puck is very important to maintain puck control and keep a **PP** alive. With a little luck, you might score 2 goals during these 2 penalties.

SUMMARY

Power Plays rarely occur in the 7-8 or 9-10 aged programs. They are more likely to occur in the 11-12, and under 15 to under 18 in **all** Recreational and Travel “A” to “AAA” games. Scoring on the Power Play can change the momentum and the outcome of the game.

Having the ability to score regularly on the Power Play cautions some opposing teams from playing aggressively and taking penalties against you because of the success of your Power Play.

Teams must practice the Power Play to be successful. You must recover pucks in offensive zone.

Try to carry the puck across the opposition’s Blue Line rather than dumping it in, this way you maintain puck control. Then feed the open person in the **slot** or **point** for a quality shot on goal.

When the puck is passed to the point, one player should be situated at the far side of the net for a diagonal pass from the defenceman, while the other 2 go to the front of the net to screen or to pick up a rebound. The point man should look to the net then decide whether to shoot or pass.

A power play shift usually lasts between 60 to 75 seconds depending on players’ age and League.

A good Power Play scoring ratio would be 1 goal scored on every 5 opportunities, a 20% success rate. An excellent scoring ratio would be 1 goal scored every 4 chances or a 25% success rate.

Rarely do teams score on the first shot, be positioned to get the 2nd and 3rd rebound shot on goal.

Don’t be afraid to “**get your nose dirty**” going for a rebound or a loose puck in front of the net.

Controlling the corners is also very important to maintain puck control. You must be first in, and flood the corners with 2 or 3 men to win the battles for the loose puck to keep your PP alive.

Try not to give up a short handed goal on the PP as it could change the entire momentum of the game. Power Play defencemen must be aware of any defender hanging out by the Red Line looking for a breakaway and be aware of when the player is coming out of the penalty box.

PENALTY KILLING

Penalty Killing or **PK** is a hockey term used to describe a **system** which tries to prevent a goal being scored against your team when you have a penalty and are playing with 1 or 2 less skaters.

OBJECTIVE OF PENALTY KILLING

The **objective of penalty killing** is to "**kill**" 2 or 5 minutes off the clock without being scored on. This will require very good defensive skills, blocking shots and on ice positional discipline.

HOW THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED

There are several methods used to kill a penalty. It depends upon who has possession of the puck and where the puck is actually located on the ice as to which method you use.

If the **Penalty Killers** have possession of the puck they can:

1. Legally ice the puck (shoot it down the length of the ice or loft it high into the air off the toe of your stick and down the ice) without it being called for icing.
2. Try to keep the puck away from the opposition by passing it back and forth to your open players, (forwards and defencemen) thus killing valuable seconds off the penalty time.
3. Carry the puck yourself, stick-handling all over the ice to kill some penalty time.

This is called ragging the puck, but you must be a very skilled skater and stickhandler to accomplish this, otherwise don't use this method, just ice the puck or loft it high in the air.
4. Also, be alert while penalty killing, a teammate could get into the clear, receive a pass, get a breakaway and score a short handed goal. Forwards should always be on the lookout to get in behind their defence if you have the puck, this puts pressure on their powerplay unit to stay back and play more defensively by watching the open forwards. With no Red Line you can legally pass the puck up to the far Blue Line over 2 lines.

If the **Opposition** have possession of the puck in your defensive zone, you must form a flexible defensive **box** formation and try to keep the puck carrier and the other offensive players to the outside of it. You play a combination "**man to man**" defense on the puck carrier and "**zone**" defense on the non puck carriers. Whoever receives the puck on a pass, switch to "Man to Man."

PENALTY KILLING SYSTEM

There are 2 types of defensive zone **Penalty Killing systems**.

One is called **Passive Penalty Killing** and the other is called **Aggressive Penalty Killing**.

Both rely on positional play and disciplined zone coverage to successfully kill penalties. A defensive **box/diamond** is formed and divided into 4 equal quadrants. Each player, usually 2 defencemen and 2 forwards, are responsible to defend the area inside their quadrant and along its perimeter. It's "**man to man**" on the puck carrier and **zone defence** on the 4 other open players.

Penalty Killers are usually skilled skaters, aggressive checkers, good shot blockers and aren't afraid to fight for a loose puck, get it and ice it. Being big, strong and speedy would be an asset.

PASSIVE PENALTY KILLING “Man to Man” on the Puck Carrier, “Zone” on the others

Passive Penalty Killing is generally used on a **wide** ice surface. It consists of 2 defencemen, 1 covering the front of the net, the 2nd in the puck side corner, and 2 forwards, 1 covering the puck side point and 1 in the slot area. The far point is left semi-open until the puck is passed to it.

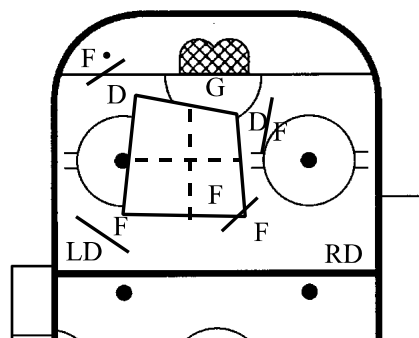
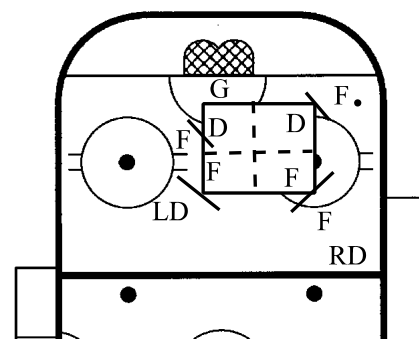
Each player has a specific quadrant/zone to cover while preventing an offensive player from setting up uncovered inside the box. **Penalty killers do not charge after the puck carrier** into the corner, but maintain their position in the box formation, leaving the puck carrier outside it.

The box/diamond can expand or contract depending upon where the puck is positioned and where the opposing players are located. The closest man tries to **sweep/poke check the puck carrier**, creating a loose puck. He does not body check on a **passive penalty killing** system.

Each defensive player has the responsibility to keep the **puck carrier** and **receivers** outside their specific zone. Defencemen must keep the front of the net clear so the goalie can see the puck. It's a rotating “man to man” defence on the puckcarriers and “zone” defence on the 4 others.

Let the opposition pass the puck around the outside of the box as this is a very low percentage shooting and scoring area. They will kill off valuable penalty seconds themselves. However, do not allow anyone to enter the box to receive a pass, get a quality shot on goal from point/slot or get to a rebound. If they try, you must check them or knock them down when the puck arrives.

If you can block a pass out, or a shot, do so, especially from the points. If someone is screening your goalie move him out of the goalie's view. When you regain possession of the puck, ice it.

**EXPANDED BOX****COLLAPSED BOX****PASSIVE PENALTY KILLING**

1. 2 Defencemen cover the area closest to the net and the corner in which the puck is.
2. Forwards cover the puck side point and slot area. Slot man then covers other point if puck is passed back to that open point.
3. Try to keep puck carrier to outside of box.
4. Don't let anyone set up inside the box.
5. Maintain box formation, don't run around.
6. The box moves side to side, or in and out, depending on where the puck is located.
7. Don't chase after the puck carrier into the corner or out to the points but always be within a **stick's length** of the puck carrier to sweep, deflect his pass or block his shot.
8. If you regain possession of the puck, ice it.

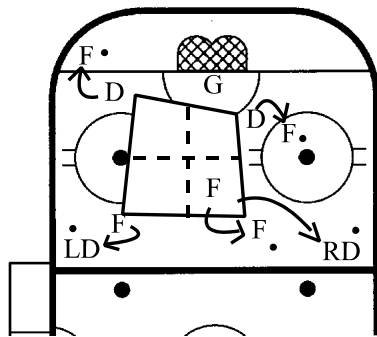
AGGRESSIVE PENALTY KILLING “Man to Man” on the Puck Carrier, “Zone” on others

Aggressive penalty killing is generally used on a **small/narrow** ice surface by fast skating and good checking teams because there is little open ice for the puck carrier to pass or carry the puck to. You play “Man to Man” defence on the puckcarrier and “Zone” defence on the 4 others.

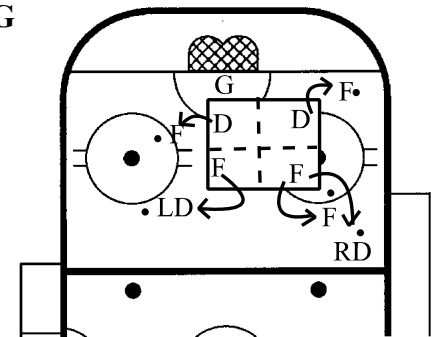
It uses the same box/diamond formation as the passive penalty killing system. The difference is **the closest player rushes the puckcarrier** either trying to bodycheck and take him off the puck, or force him to pass the puck before he wants to. This could result in a panic pass where the receiver is not ready, or in a position to receive the puck and a turn over or loose puck occurs. Whoever they pass the puck to, **the closest penalty killer must force the new puck carrier** to get rid of the puck or be checked. Speed and **aggressive** checking is the key to this system.

As always, don't allow anyone to enter the box or set up in front of the net. If they do, check them. Push them out of your goalie's view of the puck and clear any rebounds by icing the puck.

With the **aggressive penalty killing** system, **you force the play** rather than sit back and wait as in the passive system. Pressure is put on the puck carrier in all 3 zones to create a turn over.

**EXPANDED BOX****AGGRESSIVE PENALTY KILLING**

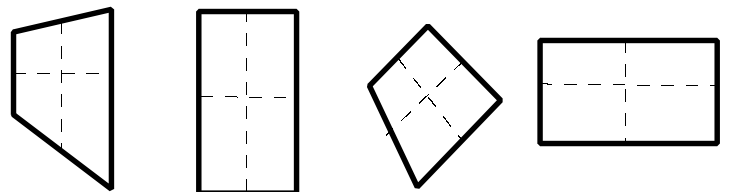
1. Defenceman checks puck carrier in corner. (Bodycheck if allowed)
2. Forward checks puck carrier at point.
3. Keep puck carrier outside of box.
4. Don't let anyone set up inside of box.
5. Maintain box/diamond formation.
6. The box moves to where the puck is.
7. Force the puck carrier to get rid of the puck before he wants to or be checked/hit.
8. If you recover the loose puck, ice it.

**COLLAPSED BOX****DEFENSIVE BOX / DIAMOND FORMATION - RESPONSIBILITIES AND MOVEMENT**

The **Defensive Box** is divided into 4 quadrants/zones and each penalty killer is responsible for the total area **inside** and around the **perimeter** of his zone. Play a combination “Zone” defense first, then a closer “Man to Man” on who ever the puck is passed to. Sweep check, poke check or body check depending on the system you are playing and the size of the ice surface. Stay within a stick length of the player you are covering trying to deflect or intercept any pass to him.

Different Shapes of a Penalty Killing Box

A box/diamond is any 4 sided figure and it is rarely a square. The box moves side to side, forward and backward and expands and contracts depending upon the location of the puck and the positioning of the 5 Power Play players.

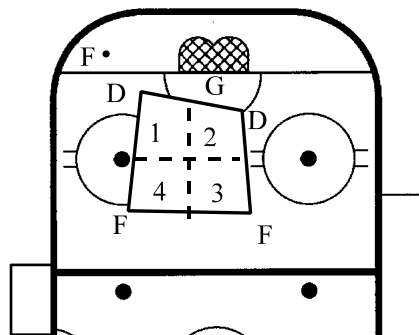


By keeping the puck to the outside of the box reduces good scoring angles, and blocking shots then recovering and icing any loose pucks, you will kill the majority of your penalties.

Protect the square area **boxing out players in** front of your net, in the slot and to the puck side point then quickly move out to cover the other point if the puck is passed back there.

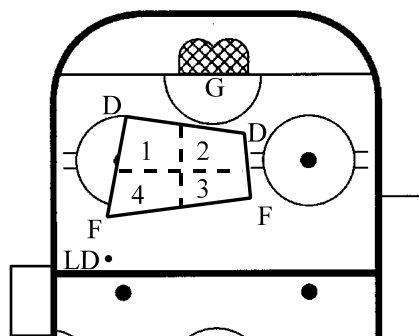
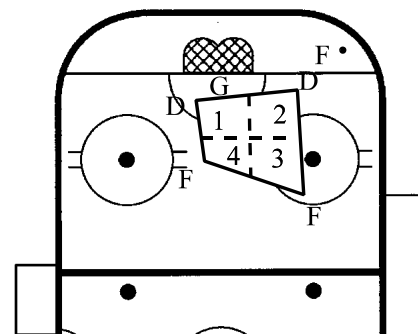
Penalty killers will have to move quickly to different locations inside and along their quadrant sides during various situations and positioning of the opposing players and the puck. Sometimes defencemen may have to go to the points and the forwards may have to cover the front of the net for a defenceman if anyone gets caught out of position or starts rotating or running around.

It is best to hold your box position, but sometimes you can't and are forced to cover up for your partner. Block pass outs from the corner to the slot and block any shots coming from the point.

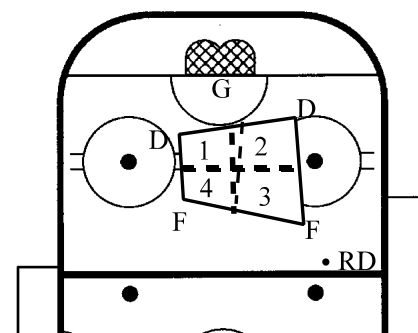


DEFENSIVE BOXES

The defensive box is divided into 4 zones/quadrants and it shifts in and out, and side to side, with different positioning of the puck by the 5 offensive players.



PLAY A COMBINATION MAN TO MAN on the current PUCKCARRIER and ZONE DEFENCE in the other 3 QUADRANTS



PLAYING 2-MEN SHORT “Man to Man” on Puck carrier and “Zone” on the others.

Sometimes you may be forced to play **2 men short**. This is a very big challenge, but by using a **passive defensive triangle** system you can still prevent a power play goal against your team.

Two methods used to kill these penalties are the **sliding** (side to side) and the **rotating** (circling) triangle formations. These triangles typically consist of 2 defencemen and 1 forward.

Depending upon where the puck is located, 2 players are usually at the base of the triangle if the puck is in a corner and only 1 player at the top of the triangle covering the points or slot. You do not go charging into the corner unless you are 100 % sure you can retrieve a loose puck, and do not try to body check anyone, as you are 2 men short and could get caught out of position.

As the puck moves around the outside of the triangle, players move to defend against a shot, going from the slot to the point, back to the slot, etc. based on the pucks movement and location.

The objective is to keep the puck carrier to the outside of the **triangle** at a bad shooting angle without allowing anyone to penetrate inside. Defencemen, don't allow anyone to screen your goalie, push them out of the way so he can see the puck. Ice all rebounds and loose pucks.

DEFENSIVE TRIANGLE - RESPONSIBILITIES AND MOVEMENT

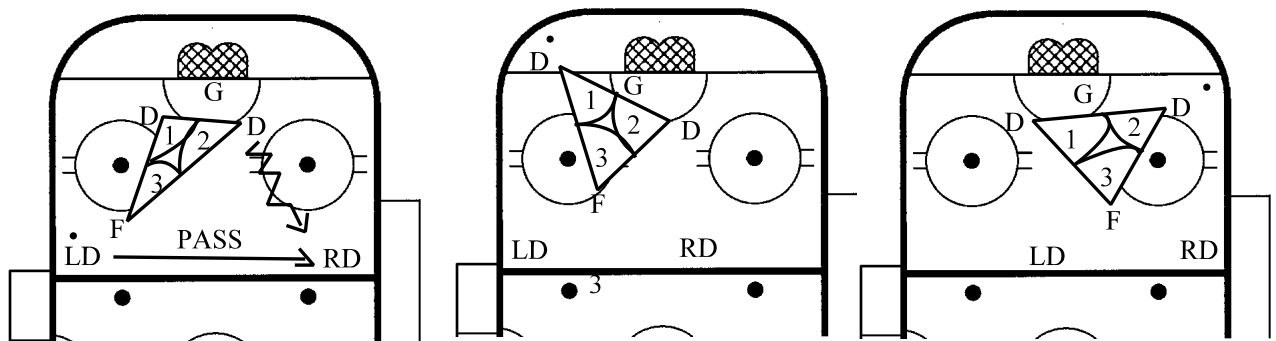
The **Sliding Defensive Triangle** consists of 2 defencemen, 1 covering the front of net, 1 the puck side corner and 1 forward to cover both points or slot area. Each penalty killer is responsible for that area along the sides of the triangle, halfway to his left and right to the 2 other penalty killers. The forward moves quickly to whichever point man or slot man the puck is passed to.

The triangle **slides** side to side, forward and backward and expands and contracts depending upon the location of the puck and the positioning of the power play players. **It does not rotate.**

Penalty killers will have to move to different locations along the **perimeter/sides** of the triangle depending upon the various locations of the puck. Block shots and when you get the puck, ice it.

Keep the puck carrier to the outside of the **triangle** at a poor shooting angle without allowing any power play player to get into the centre of the triangle or get to any rebounds. Don't allow anyone to screen your goalie. The closest penalty killer should try to poke or sweep check the puck off the carrier's stick. Don't bodycheck as it will only take you out of the play and position.

In the **Rotating Triangle**, a defenceman may have to **rotate** out to the point or slot and a forward may have to rotate back to cover the front of the net. The triangle rotates clockwise or counter-clockwise as the puck is moved around the defensive zone and back to the points. When this happens, a defenceman should move to the top of the triangle covering that point with only one remaining defenceman and forward at the bottom of the triangle covering the front of the net area. If the puck goes into a corner, 2 players are still back at the base of the triangle.



PASSIVE DEFENSIVE TRIANGLES

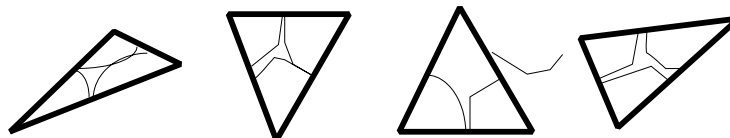
ROTATING TRIANGLE

A Defenceman rotates to point

SLIDING TRIANGLE

2- Defence hold their position at base of triangle

SLIDING TRIANGLE



A triangle is any 3 sided figure, large or small depending on the puck's location and positioning of the PP players. The defensive triangle is divided into 3 smaller triangles and it shifts with the different locations the puck is passed to the new puck carrier.

The **Sliding Triangle** would be used in younger Minor/Youth Hockey Leagues, 7-12 years of age while the **Rotating Triangle** could be used in most "AAA" 11-12 Leagues. It's a coaching decision as you may have very skilled players who can understand and play the rotating system.

SUMMARY

Penalties are rarely called in Leagues/Divisions with ages 5 to 10 but are called in all 11-12 and under 15 and 18 hockey games. **NHL penalties differ from Minor/Youth Hockey penalties** so what you see NHL players getting away with on TV, is not what you would get away with in a Minor/Youth hockey game. Minor/Youth Hockey Leagues have **zero-tolerance** for violence

Killing penalties by icing the puck is an extremely important skill to learn if your team hopes to remain competitive and it is essential for the success of all Representative/Travel hockey teams.

Successfully killing penalties allows your team to continue to play aggressively which could change the outcome of a game. Teams must practice their penalty killing to be successful.

Defencemen, whenever possible, force the puck carrier to shoot/dump the puck into your defensive zone by challenging them outside your Blue Line rather than letting them carry it over the Blue Line. This gives your team-mates a better chance to retrieve the puck and ice it.

When penalty killing, cover the slot area & point, front & off to the side of your net at all times.

Always play “**man to man**” on the puck carrier and angle him to the outside, forcing the player toward the boards to a poor shooting angle and a low percentage scoring area. Talk to your penalty killing partners to ensure they know what you are doing and who you are covering. The remaining penalty killers play a loose but flexible “**zone**” defence on the non puck carriers.

Penalty killing shifts vary in length from 40 to 80 seconds depending on your age and League. A good penalty killing average would be successfully killing 4 out of 5 penalties or 80%. An excellent penalty killing ratio would be killing 9 out of 10 penalties for a 90% success rate.

Teams don't usually score on the first shot, it's the rebounds that hurt you. If you can block the initial shot, or control and ice the rebounds, your chances of killing the penalty are increased.

Your Coach will decide who will kill the penalty and which penalty killing system your team will use. i.e. Passive or Aggressive based on your defensive skills and the size of the ice surface.

New obstruction penalties will be called for interference, hooking, slashing of the hands and holding. Penalty Killers must be aware of this and act accordingly or they will take a penalty.

REVIEW AND TEST TIME

Now would be an excellent time to review the content of **UNIT VIII** with your players, especially the penalty killers.

A few written or oral questions concerning:

- C **Power Play Strategies**
- C **Penalty Killing Box/Diamond Formations**
- C **Penalty Killing Triangle Formations**
- C **Passive Penalty Killing System**
- C **Aggressive Penalty Killing System**

will inform you if they understand their role or if it should be explained again.

UNIT IX

WHAT PARENTS, COACHES and PLAYERS NEED to KNOW about MINOR/YOUTH HOCKEY

This final unit will provide parents, coaches, and players with some valuable information and suggestions regarding the work required to plan and run a successful season long Minor or Youth Hockey - House League/Recreational or Representative/Competitive "AAA" Program.

New MINOR / YOUTH HOCKEY DIVISIONS AND AGES on Dec 31 st.

New Names	Former Names	Ages
Under 6 or 5 & Under US	Beginners or Initiation Level A,	5
Under 7, 6 & under USA	Beginners or Initiation Level B, C,	6
Under 9, 8 & under USA	Novice - Can, Mite USA	Some 7 & All 8
Under 11,10 & under USA	Minor Atom -Can, Minor Squirt USA	9
Under 11, 10 & under USA	Major Atom- Can, Major Squirt USA	10
Under 13, 12 & under USA	Minor Pee Wee Can and USA	11
Under 13, 12 & under USA	Major Pee Wee Can and USA	12
Under 14,13 & under USA	Minor Bantam Can and USA	13
Under 15, 14 & under USA	Major Bantam Can and USA	14
Under 16,15 & under US	Minor Midget Can and USA	15
	Major Midget Can and USA	16 & 17
Under 19,18 & under US	Midget Girls USA	18
19 & under US	Girls USA	19
Under 21, 20 & under US	Junior Can and USA	16 - 20

Players with the size, skill and desire could be asked to play at the Major level of a Division even though they are eligible age wise for the Minor age group. It's up to their parents whether they go up or not. Categories run from House League to Rep/Travel "C", "B", "A" "AA" "AAA".

Some Youth/ Minor Hockey Associations, with smaller registration numbers, **do not** use the Major and Minor Divisions, but allow players to participate for 2 years in the age specific Divisions of 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12 etc. When players register, the Association will need to see your Birth Certificate as proof of age and for your placement into an age specific Division.

FYI: The cost to play on a Rep Team varies between \$1500 to \$7000 per season depending on travel, tournaments attending, hotel and meals, Team jackets, team equipment bags, sweaters etc.

HOCKEY AGE - the determination date for a player's Divisional placement

A player's hockey age in Canada or the USA is determined by how old the individual is on **December 31st** of the **current playing season**. This is their Division's determination date. Example: If your child is 11 on January 1st, they are still considered to be a 10 year old hockey player in the 9-10 age Division, as their age on Dec. 31 of the current season was 10.

HOCKEY DEVELOPMENT TIMETABLE for playing Rep Hockey

All Minor/Youth Hockey players are on a **hockey development timetable** if they want to play on the Rep./Competitive /Travel Team, whether they or their parents realize it or not.

Players have only 3 or 4 years in Beginners 5, 6, 7, & 8 aged Programs to develop their basic hockey skills, like: skating, stickhandling, scoring and a positive attitude in order to make a lasting impression on the Rep/Travel Team's coaching staff if trying out for the 9-10 or 11-12 aged Rep/Travel Team next season. There's some full time travel teams below age 9 in Canada.

There is a proven theory that if you make the 9-10 aged Rep. Team, you will get a **longer look** at tryout camps and have the inside track on making the aged 11-12, then 13-14 Rep. Teams in the future, providing your skills improve, grow, and you're a team player with a positive attitude.

If you do not make the 9-10 year old Rep. Team, you could get **unfairly labeled** as a House League player and it will be more difficult, but not impossible to make a Rep. Team in the future.

Statistics prove that players born in January, February and March have a distinct advantage of making the young Rep. Teams because of their size, strength, development and their half year or more of age difference over late year births in October, November and December.

Sometimes hockey politics, not skill will help certain players get on the Rep Team. This is not fair, but it is a fact of life that not all of the best players make the Rep. Team but over 90% do.

If young hockey players or their parents have a long term goal for their sons or daughters to play Major Junior "A" or receive a University Scholarship, boys must play Tier II Junior "A" by age 16 or 17. Junior Hockey scouts start looking at players 13 to 15 year olds to draft the following year. Girls should strive to make the Women's Provincial, State or National Team as their goal.

STIFF COMPETITION and PRACTICE IS ESSENTIAL FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Youth/Minor players require **stiff competition and practice to develop** to their full potential.

The higher the caliber League you play in, be it "A", "AA" or "AAA" against the bigger, faster and better players will speed up your skill development and hockey knowledge in the long run because of the competition and extra practice time. Always play at the highest level of hockey you possibly can **if your goal** is to play Junior "A" or receive a University/College Scholarship.

But don't play for a higher level team if you are going to sit on the bench and only get one shift per period. You would be better off dropping down one level and getting more game ice time with a lower category or Affiliate Team. You could still practice with the higher team if they are grooming/developing you for next season. However, if you just want to **have fun** and do not want the stress to make hockey a career, play at any level you wish including Rec. House League. **Fun** is what Minor/Youth Hockey is suppose to be all about not developing players for the NHL.

PREPARING FOR A REP / TRAVEL TEAM TRAINING / TRYOUT CAMP

If you really want to play on the Representative/Competitive/Travel Team instead of a House League Team, you must **physically prepare** for it well in advance of the tryout/training camp.

You will need to be in the best physical shape you can possibly be in to impress the Head Coach or the selection committee members. To achieve this, you must work very hard on your overall physical conditioning, speed, strength and stamina well before the tryout camp even starts.

Most tryout camps for Youth/Minor Hockey Representative Travel Teams start in late August to early September in Canada (some in April or May in larger cities). And if you are serious about making the **Team**, you must start your aerobic and anaerobic training program by early July.

Bicycling, jogging, running up hills or stairs, skipping rope and lifting weights are all excellent exercises for developing your legs, upper body strength, endurance and wind. All are necessary components of hockey, especially for Rep/Travel “A”, “AA” and “AAA” Hockey programs.

Attending a hockey school, power skating clinic or conditioning program during the summer would be advantageous for your hockey skills development and conditioning. Attending it in late August would be better for you than in June or July because it would have a greater carry over effect for the early September tryout camp for many “AAA”, “AA”, or “A” Rep/Travel Teams.

Any extra ice time you can rent with friends for skating and scrimmaging in early August would also be an excellent investment and could make **you** the final selection over your competition.

TRYOUT CAMP IMPRESSIONS

First impressions mean a lot to a Head Coach and the selection committee at all tryout camps. You must make a **positive first impression** to catch their eyes. **Be effective** in every drill and on every shift. And if scrimmaging, don't be afraid to get your nose dirty and **fight for the puck** in the corner and on rebounds in front of the net. This will be seen by the coaches and committee. Skating speed, stickhandling, shooting, scoring, playmaking, checking, overall hard work and hockey intelligence are also required to avoid being in the first group of players released.

You have a limited amount of ice time to make a positive impression so use your opportunity wisely by giving a **110 %** effort every time you are on the ice. Forecheck and backcheck at every opportunity during the scrimmage portion of the tryout. Better hockey teams use unbiased and knowledgeable hockey people in the stands to evaluate your every move, then give the coach feedback. They put a + or - beside you name & number, + mini comments to help the selections.

Basic Hockey Skills plus Desire, Drive and Determination must be evident every shift.

OTHER QUALITIES COACHES ARE LOOKING FOR:

Competent: Player demonstrates superior hockey knowledge and the execution of basic skills.

Confident: Player is very confident in his ability and skills to play at this level.

Contribute: Player can make the correct offensive or defensive play under pressure.

Competitive: Player shows a burning desire to win and to be successful.

Co-operative: Player values the team concept, putting team goals before individual goals.

Consistent: Player makes the correct play the majority of the time.

Competes: Player will compete and win the 1 on 1 battles for the loose puck.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

In Minor Hockey, whether it be for the Representative Team or the House League Team, every Coach or General Manager is looking for quality skaters to select at the start of the season.

Early **selections** are easy because they will be the dominant players who stood out during the tryout camp drills and scrimmages. **They made a positive impression with their hockey skills.**

The final selections are more difficult, but are usually players who show promise demonstrating specific skills or hockey knowledge that the Coach thinks he can improve upon. **Attitude and team work** will have a high priority for the later selections. If possible, coaches should interview players before signing them to a card to ensure they have the time, dedication and desire to play at this particular level. The higher the level "AAA" the more time commitment & money \$\$ is required. The "AAA", "AA" or "A" Rep. Team make the first selections followed by the "B", "C" Team, then House League Teams. Most Rep/Travel Teams select between 12 and 16 players.

SIGNING A PLAYER CARD or TEAM REGISTRATION FORM

If you are selected to play on a Rep./Travel Team be it "AAA", "AA", "A", "B" or "C", you are usually asked to **sign a players card-certificate** or team registration form. Each Rep. team gets **only 19** cards so they are very selective on who they sign. They don't want to make any mistakes.

Players must complete the card/form with their name, address, date of birth, etc., and sign it along with one of their parents or guardians if they are under 18 years of age. The card must be registered and approved by the District Registrar, then your Governing Area Hockey Association to be valid. The local Youth/Minor Hockey Association or Team General Manager sees to this.

When a player and their parent sign a players card at the beginning of the season, it is considered a legal document signifying you will play for that team for the current season and the following one, unless you're over age or you make a higher caliber or district Rep. Team the next season.

If your Minor Hockey Association is set up as a Club system (as most are), you must move up to the next team in the Club system when you become over age for your current age division and team. Example: Under 7 - 9 - 11- 13 -15 etc. If you move to a new town/city, get a release or a one year transfer from the local Minor/Youth Hockey Association, so you can join another team.

PLAYER AFFILIATION

In Canada, all local Minor Hockey Associations with carded teams have a built in system where players can be called up to play for **one** higher carded team in their organization. This is called either a **Club System**, a **Team Affiliation** or **19 Special Affiliates**. It acts like an insurance policy to ensure players are available to play for a higher team in the Association if their players are sick, injured, or suspended, to ensure they have a full compliment of players for their game.

Players signed on a current season players card are eligible to be called up to the **next team** in the system. For example, a player signed on an "B" card, s/he could be called up to play for the "A" team. However, the reverse is not true, an "A" carded player could not go down and play for the "B" team unless s/he is first released from the "A" team. Some House League teams are carded so their players can play up with the "B" or "C" team as affiliates.

NUMBER OF AFFILIATED GAMES - you are allowed to play

Affiliated players are allowed to play up with **only one** higher club team, up to **10 games** total providing they have their Coach's and parents permission.

But you can only affiliate, (play as an affiliate player) with **one** higher team, not 2 or 3.

If an affiliate player **plays an 11th game** with a higher division team, he will **not** be allowed to return and play for his carded team. He must remain with the higher team but does not sign a new card. Coaches and parents must keep track of the number of games you play to ensure you don't play an 11th game. However, if your carded team is **finished playing** for the season, lost the playoffs etc. you can go up and play as an affiliate as long as they require you.

Goaltenders must actually get into the game in order to count as a game played. This would be recorded on the official game sheet. Sitting on the bench as a backup does not count as a game. However, **all other** affiliate players who's name appeared on the official game report, will count as a game played whether they got onto the ice or not. The letters (**AP**) should follow their name.

It is quite an honor for a young player, his Coach and his parents to be called up as an Affiliate.

OBTAINING A PLAYERS RELEASE - during or after the season

If for some reason a player wishes to transfer from one team to another during or after the season, it is not easy, but it is possible under certain circumstances. A team **does not** have to release a player if he has signed a current season player's card. But if the team agrees to release him, the **Official Release Form** is located on the reverse/back side of the signed player's card.

To become a valid release, it must be signed by the two signing officers of the Minor/Youth Hockey Association, usually the President and Secretary, then it's submitted to the new team when the player signs a new card. If you wish to return to your Association's House League Team that is not on signed cards, permission is required but a release may not be necessary.

However, players cannot just quit their team in the middle or at the end of the season and go to **another/rival** Minor Hockey Association or team without first obtaining a release. If you change your place of residence and move to another Minor Hockey district and continue to reside with your parent(s), a release should be automatic or may not be required at all.(See Residence Rule.)

You also have the right to appeal to the governing body of your local Minor Hockey Association if they deny a release. You can **appeal** it higher to the District, Provincial or State Association. In order to get a release, a player and his parents must have sound valid reasons for seeking it.

Note: Players released from carded teams after January 10th shall be ineligible to play with another carded team in the current playing season. Releases must be obtained prior to Jan.10.

ONE YEAR TRANSFERS

If you get **cut** at your local Rep. Team's tryout camp and wish to try out and sign a card with another (**rival**) Association's Rep. Team, you can ask for a **1-year transfer** from your local Association's President. If granted, you must **return** to your local Minor Hockey Association at the end of the season. Associations cannot stop players from signing a card with a higher team.

PRACTICES - All coaches must wear hockey helmets during on ice practices

There's a saying "**Practice Makes Perfect**" and this certainly applies to ice hockey. Ball, road, pond, and roller hockey are great ways to practice and develop your basic ice hockey skills. All great players practiced hockey this way at one time as there wasn't enough ice time available.

Players and teams will not develop or improve without **on** or **off ice** practices and team meetings. Game errors and results indicate to Coaches what they should practice or teach their players.

The ideal ratio of practice to games should be 1 to 1, one on ice practice for each game. This may be unrealistic because of limited ice time, but at least one practice every week or for every two games should be attempted. If this is not possible, a weekly team meeting with **off ice practice** and chalk talk is advised to teach your players the basic skills, rules and systems of hockey. Practices do not necessarily need to be on ice, they could be run in a school gym and classroom.

The purpose of a practice is to teach new skills and systems or to improve a specific area of the game that failed you in your previous games. i.e. scoring, backchecking or penalty killing etc.

Coaches have the responsibility to run an organized practice using a variety of **game like drills** that will improve your team and eliminate errors. Be organized and plan for the full practice time. Provide your assistants with a written copy of your practice plan with a specific timetable.

Part of the practice should be used for teaching, while the end must be set aside for scrimmage to allow your players to have **some fun** and to try the new skills or systems you just taught them.

“Repetition is the key to learning.” Coaches must explain, demonstrate, practice and give positive feedback. **Tip:** Use the **kiss** method for teaching: **“Keep it Short and Simple”**.

During practices, everyone is on the ice or gym floor with a puck learning something. That's 50 minutes or more of ice/floor time for each player, doing a variety of game situation drills. Players should leave the practice with a feeling of increased hockey knowledge and skill development.

Practices will be more effective if you use assistant coaches to help with the teaching of skills & drills. This way the team can be broken into smaller groups and players would rotate from station to station. i.e. passing at one station, shooting at another and 1 on 1's at a third station.

Players should use any free time to practice their **weakest skills**, not their best skills.

Well run practices keep the players moving by using challenging but non complicated game like drills. In a 50 minute game you're on the ice about 15 minutes, in a practice its about 45 minutes.

20 practices run over 20 weeks will do wonders for a players hockey development & confidence. Teams will also progress and be ready to challenge for the playoff championship in the spring.

Coaches, if your team does not get enough practice time, I suggest the **“Hockey Made Easy” Instruction Manual** be **purchased by your players or their parents** then studied at home. This will prove invaluable to your player's basic skill development and hockey knowledge over the course of the season. Every player will have the same manual, the same information and **the coach** could assign the reading of specific pages prior to coming to a team meeting or practice. During/after practice he could discuss or answer questions about the assigned reading material. You will be amazed how quickly young players can learn by reading and studying this manual.

REGULAR SEASON GAMES - the difference between House League and Rep. Games

Regular season games in the **House /Recreation League** are a time to **have fun**, to use the basic hockey skills you possess and to develop or experiment with new ones learned during the season.

Winning or losing is not that important during the regular season, as everyone qualifies for the playoffs and every player should get approximately the same amount of ice time. The regular season can be compared to going to school. A time to learn, to develop, to improve and to prepare for the playoffs. There is very little stress or pressure to win regular season games.

Forechecking & Backchecking is usually at a minimum. In many games, the top players are not bodychecked and are left uncovered. They have lots of time and space to skate with the puck or to get a good shot off. This is usually wide open hockey with little hitting and less backchecking. There could be a total of 9 goals scored in a 50 minute, regular season House League game.

However, in **Representative /Competitive Hockey**, the desire to win is evident on every shift, in every game because teams must earn enough points to qualify for the playoffs and a higher seeding for home rink advantage. **Every** game is played as if it's a playoff game. Rep. Hockey is serious, challenging, demanding and stressful. Ideally the coach would like to give equal ice time to every player on the team. But, in the closing minutes of a close game, the coach wants to use the players he believes will score or prevent a goal. Most Rep. players also want him to do this. In most Rep. Hockey Programs, the players must earn equal or extra ice time and they know it.

PLAYOFF HOCKEY - for both House League & Rep. Teams compete level is the #1 priority.

Playoff hockey is a whole new ball game. What you learned during the regular season at your practices, games and team meeting must be executed now. These are your "**Final Exams.**" How well you execute what you have learned during the regular season will determine how far your team progresses toward the League championship in the House League or the Rep. League.

Playoff hockey is exciting, stressful and emotional with added pressure to win. If you lose too many games your team is eliminated and out of the running for the Playoff Championship.

There is aggressive forechecking & backchecking and more bodychecking during the playoffs. Nobody wants to make a mistake which could result in a goal against and a playoff loss. The top players are now shadowed or body/stick checked by an opponent at every turn so they can't get into the clear to take a pass, or score goals as often or as easily as they did in the regular season.

Coaches must mentally prepare their players for the playoffs. He should have a solid game plan based on the strength and weaknesses of the opposition. Tension, intensity, and emotions will run high for the entire game. On ice discipline and team defense will be the key elements for success.

There could be as few as 3 goals **in total** scored in a 50 minute playoff game. Good teams and good players do all the little things right. The team with the most depth and experienced goalie is favored to win the playoff championship but it doesn't always work out that way. If you work hard and play disciplined hockey, a team with less talent, but more desire and heart can upset a more talented or higher seeded team. Also, good coaching and by following the coach's game plan can take an average team to the next round of playoffs. In the playoffs there's no stop signs and no speed limit. Just Go, Go, Go and give a 110% effort every 35-45 second shift if you want to be successful. If you win a **Playoff Championship**, you have earned it. **Congratulations!**

HOUSE LEAGUE PLAYOFFS - if possible pre scout the opposition to find strength/weakness

Most **House League Playoffs** consist of a round robin tournament format where each team plays one game against every team in their Division. The points earned here will **seed** teams in the “A” “B”, or “C” championship games. “A” = 1 vs 2; “B” = 3 vs 4; “C” = 5 vs 6 in a **one** game final.

This system is fair to all teams as it allows every team to play a specific number of **playoff games**. Every game is important and meaningful and counts towards playoff points and seeding. The team that wins their single Championship game is declared “A”, “B”, or “C” Champion.

REPRESENTATIVE/TRAVEL TEAM PLAYOFFS - if possible pre scout your opposition

Representative /Competitive /Travel Team Playoffs are usually a 4 or 5 point series, but some Leagues use a best 2 of 3, the best 3 of 5, or the best 4 of 7 series if time permits.

The team that wins, advances to the next round of League or Regional Playoffs. The team that loses is eliminated from further playoffs.

League Champions are usually invited to a “**Tournament of Champions**” competition held in April to declare a District, State/Provincial or National Champion for that Category and Division.

ROLE OF A MINOR HOCKEY COACH all coaches must be certified and attend **Speakout**

A **Youth/Minor Hockey Coach** is a very important role model for young players and can have a very positive or negative effect depending upon his/her attitude, personality and actions.

The primary role of all Minor/Youth Hockey Coaches in the Beginners ages 5- 6, 7- 8, 9- 10, and 11-12 age groups and divisions is to provide **Fun** and **Teach** basic hockey skills and systems, not win every regular season game. Reading the player assessment form and practice plans on pages 176-179 will help you identify what should be taught to specific age groups.

Coaches secondary role is to systematically prepare players for the year end playoffs by learning from and correcting mistakes, then providing encouragement, support and positive feedback to improve their players skills, confidence and self-esteem. Avoid negativity, be positive, **have fun**.

The regular season should be used to teach basic hockey skills at practices and then experiment with younger players playing different positions in games to identify their strengths and weaknesses and for them to understand the skills and responsibilities of that position prior to playoffs. Players 5-10 really don't know if they are better forwards, defencemen or goaltenders.

Assistant Coaches or guest instructors should be recruited with a specific skill/knowledge base to help either the forwards, defencemen or goaltenders at practice or during a game. One Coach cannot do it all. Usually players parents fill this role in House League and on some Rep. Teams.

If you're not given sufficient ice time to practice, I suggest you rent a school gym once a week to teach basic skills & systems. It's much cheaper than ice and parents help pay for the rental. You will be amazed how fast kids of this age group 5-12 will learn over the course of the season using this teaching method and how much they will improve by playoff time. But it must be fun!

A Hockey Season is like a marathon, it's not a sprint. Don't rush your players too fast, you've got all season (20+ weeks) to teach specific skills and systems prior to the playoffs.

PLAYER ASSESSMENT / EVALUATION

The coaching staff should visually identify the strengths and weaknesses of every player on their team at the start of the season, then use this information as a guide to develop a yearly practice plan to improve both their **individual** skills and **team** skills by the end of the regular season.

A **player assessment** could be completed in 2 stages: one in late September or early October at the start of the season as a start or baseline evaluation/assessment, then a second one at the end of the season. This will show players their improvement over the duration of the entire season.

The coaching staff of highly competitive “AAA” or “AA” Under 13, 15 and 18 Teams might if they have a number of Assistant Coaches or support staff:

- C Interview each player individually to determine their hockey knowledge and background.
- C Observe each player during a **number of games**, or scrimmages & practices to rate/rank their individual skills and team skills for effectiveness in September and October.

After this information has been gathered the coaching staff should discuss the results with one another and the player, then develop a yearly practice plan outlined with specific time frames.

This long range plan can be broken down into a series of weekly/monthly practice plans to meet the player’s and the team’s assessed needs. In the long run both players & Team will improve.

Player assessments can either be general or very specific. They can also be divided into 3 groups:

C Forwards C Defencemen C Goaltenders

The Coach should discuss their finding/results with the player and his parents in September or October so they are aware of and can work on the identified weaker skills during their free time.

Give a copy of the initial assessment to the player and parents. It would be like a report card from school. The parent could help with the homework to improve specific skills. i.e. passing, wrist shot velocity, conditioning, etc. The coach should also keep a copy for a year end comparison.

The more progressive coaching staff may choose to re-evaluate the progress, status quo or regression of each player with a written evaluation **after** Christmas and at the end of the season. Highly competitive “AAA” and “AA” teams are more likely to do this, not House League teams.

One copy of the year end evaluation should be given to the player and a second copy could be submitted to the Minor Hockey Association’s Divisional Convener to be available as a reference for new coaches at next seasons tryouts or draft.

SAMPLE ASSESSMENTS

The following are 2 examples of **Assessments** for players 5 to 12 years of age. The first assessment is **General** while the second is more **Specific**. These can be amended by the Coach for specific positions and for a particular age group and category in House League to “AAA”.

Coaches are encouraged to design their own confidential assessment forms (if they have the time and desire) to meet their team’s needs based on their own hockey philosophy, coaching methods, evaluation criteria, and skill scoring system. **The following is simply an example of a form.**

ASSESSMENT FORM

Date _____

Team Name _____ Category _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Date of Birth _____

Position _____ Height _____ Weight _____

Doctor's name _____ Phone _____

Medical Conditions/Allergies _____

GENERAL ASSESSMENT**Interview Phase** - Scoring System: Yes (*) No (X) Non-Applicable (N/A)Knowledge - Does the player understand the following? Can he/she explain them?

Off-side / Delayed Off-side		Icing / Non Icing		Transition Time	
Penalties		Rules of Passing		Scoring Methods	
Forechecking Systems		Backchecking Systems		How to Play 1 on 1	
How to Play 2 on 1		Net Coverage		Corner Work	
6- Clearing Play Options		Offensive & Defensive X Theory		Special Teams	

Observation Phase - Scoring System: N/A, Fair -1, Average -5, Excellent -10Skills - Can the player perform these skills at this level?

INDIVIDUAL SKILLS	SCORE		INTANGIBLES	SCORE
Skating (Forward/Backward)			Attitude	
Puckhandling/Stickhandling			Desire / Heart / Work Ethic	
Shooting/Scoring			Dedication	
Passing/Receiving			Discipline	
Checking (Stick/Body)			Retention of Ideas	
Systems (Forecheck/Backcheck)			Team Player	

SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT

The **specific assessment** uses the same **Interview Phase** but goes into greater detail when doing the **Observation Phase** by breaking the skills down into more specific components. See yearly practice plan on the next page for examples of specific individual and team skills that should be assessed and measured early in the season then at the end of the season. Under 13 “AAA” and older teams might use something like this for their evaluation and/or seasonal practice purposes .

SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT / YEARLY PRACTICE PLAN / EVALUATION FORM

The following list of **individual and team** skills can be used as a guideline or checklist to develop a specific assessment, a yearly practice plan, or evaluation form for your team. Coaches should revise as required based on age of your players and the division and category you play in.

SKATING - consider speed, balance, agility and stride

Forward		Power "V" Starts		Crossovers (Left and Right)	
Backward		Turns (Left & Right)		180° Pivots (Forward/Backward)	
Stops (Both Sides L and R)		Speed		Change of Pace/Acceleration	

PUCKHANDLING - consider puck control without losing puck and keeping head up

Stickhandling		Deking		Carrying the puck	
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PASSING & RECEIVING - consider passing accuracy and puck control on receiving a pass

Flat/Sweep Pass		Back Pass		Give and Go Pass	
Flip /Saucer Pass		Bank/Board Pass		Receiving - On Forehand	
Drop Pass		Touch/Tap Pass		Receiving - On Backhand	

SHOOTING SKILLS - consider velocity and accuracy, release and follow through

Wrist Shot		Backhand Shot		Snap Shot	
Flip Shot		Shovel Shot		Slap Shot	

SHOOTING TO SCORE IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS - consider accuracy if opportunity is there

High Stick Side		High Glove Side		5 Hole (between the legs)	
Low Stick Side		Low Glove Side		Just Inside Goal Posts (Accuracy)	

SCORING GOALS USING THESE METHODS- can they execute these at the appropriate time

Shoot		Deke		Tip		Screen	
Pass Off		Wrap Around		Deflect		Rebound	

CHECKING: STICKCHECKING AND BODYCHECKING - can they execute the following at the right time

Stick Lift		Poke Check		Diving Poke Check/Sweep Check	
Sweep Check		Hook Check		Stick Press	
Hip Check		Shoulder Check		Checking along the Boards	
Protecting Self while Safely Taking a Body Check		Corner Work & In front of net		Never, Never Check anyone from behind	

POSITIONAL PLAY OF FORWARDS - do they understand offensive and defensive on ice positioning

Offensively - gets into clear to receive a pass or take a quality shot		Defensively - covers open man, prevents odd man rush, backchecks/back pressure, plays well without the puck	
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FORECHECKING BACKCHECKING BACK PRESSURE - do they understand the following components

Speed to get to puckcarrier		Angling toward Boards		Positioning on the Ice of 2 nd , 3 rd man	
Finishing Check=Loose Puck		Covering Wide Winger		Transition Time: O to D, and D to O	

PLAYING SPECIFIC SITUATIONS FOR DEFENCEMEN - can they execute the following correctly

1 on 1- Play Man		2 on 1- Play Puck		3 on 1- Play Puck		Pinching	
3 on 2 -Play Puck		2 on 2- Play Man		1 on 2- Play Man		Leading a Rush	
Net Coverage		Corner Work		X Changing Positions		Meeting a Rush	

GOALTENDING SKILLS - does goalie understand the following skills, can he perform them

Stays up on feet & butterfly		His Square to Shooter		Cuts the Angle from centre of net	
Keeps eyes on puck		Catch pucks on goal		Controls Rebounds	
Stops puck behind net		Playing screen shots		Playing Breakaways and Poke Checks	

TEAM SKILLS AND SYSTEMS - do all players understand their responsibilities for the following

Clearing/Breakout Plays		Power Play		Offensive Face-offs -Won or Lost	
Forechecking Systems		Penalty Killing		Defensive Face-offs - Won or Lost	
Backchecking Systems		Protecting a Lead		Team Play & Conditioning	

WEEKLY PRACTICE PLANS

1. Weekly practice plans should be developed by the Head Coach based on the majority of your players assessed needs and team needs. When completed, check off yearly practice plan list.
2. At the start of the season, basic skills must be reviewed and if necessary taught.
3. As the season progresses, team skills and systems should be reviewed or taught.
4. A good Coach comes to practice organized and has written copies for the assistants as to what he would like them to do in specific time slots for the entire duration of the practice.
5. Assistant or Guest Coaches should be utilized to teach different skills to forwards, defencemen or goaltenders during specific parts of the practice.
6. All practices **must** have a teaching component. These vary with Age, Division and Category. For ages 7-8 & 9-10. Teach 2- 3 individual skills and 1 team skill at every practice. The ice can be divided into 2 or 3 different sections. This will allow for a better player to coach teaching ratio of 5-1: 5 players to 1 coach. Older Teams 11-12 and 13- 14 & 15+ do more team skills.
7. The Head Coach and Assistant Coaches must explain, then demonstrate the skill to be learned by breaking it down into its simplest components. Progression teaching is the key. The players should practice the skill then be given immediate positive feedback from the coaches plus any suggestions or corrections on how to improve it even further.
8. Players can rotate from station-to-station about every 8 to 10 minutes to achieve the most instruction during limited practice time using full or half ice if sharing with another team. You can also divide the full ice surface into 3 large sections using the Blue Lines as dividers.

9. Finish the practice with a controlled or instructional scrimmage where players can have some **fun**. You can give positive feedback, or point out any suggestions to help improve the skill.

“Players must be taught before they will improve.”

PRACTICE MODEL FOR 5 -12 YEAR OLD AGE GROUPS -will vary between House and AAA

Components	Ages 5 & 6	Ages 7 & 8	Ages 9 &10	Ages 11 &12
Individual Skills	95%	75%	50%	10%
Individual Tactics	5%	15%	20%	5%
Team Skills	X	5%	15%	40%
Team Systems	X	5%	10%	35%
Strategy/Special Teams	X	X	5%	10%

Sample 50 MINUTE ROTATING Station-to-Station PRACTICE PLAN

SKILLS TO BE PRACTICED	GROUP	DURATION	TIME
Stretching and warm-up	All	3 minutes	5:00 - 5:03
Skating skills and conditioning drills.	All	5 minutes	5:03 - 5:08
Specific puck-handling, stick-handling, deking, or puck carrying skills Station ‘A’	Group “A”, then “C” & “B”	8 minutes then rotate	A - 5:08 - 5:16 C - 5:16 - 5:24 B - 5:24 - 5:32
Specific passing and receiving skills Station ‘B’	Group “B”, then “A” & “C”	8 minutes then rotate	B - 5:08 - 5:16 A - 5:16 - 5:24 C - 5:24 - 5:32
Specific shooting and scoring skills. Station ‘C’	Group “C” then, “B” & “A”	8 minutes then rotate	C - 5:08 - 5:16 B - 5:16 - 5:24 A - 5:24 - 5:32
Specific checking skills, stick-checking or body checking. 1 on 1; 2 on 1; 3 on 2.	All	8 minutes	5:32 - 5:40
Controlled/Instructional scrimmage. Line vs Line	A vs B, B vs C C vs A	10 minutes	5:40 - 5:50
TOTAL PRACTICE TIME	50 MINUTES		

Coaches, after you have taught or reviewed the basic individual skills, you must teach the team skills and systems for your particular team based on the players Age, Skill level, Division and Category.

- C Clearing/Breakout Plays C Forechecking Systems C Offensive Face-offs
- Backchecking Systems C Power Play/Penalty killing C Defensive Face-offs

and finally, start mentally preparing your players as to what to expect in the upcoming Playoffs.

SUMMARY

Coaching is not an easy task: you are part teacher, part motivator, part tactician. And two of the most difficult jobs Rep. Coaches will have to do is: 1. cut a number of players during tryout camp and 2. dealing with difficult parents and/or players during the season. The more clinics you attend, the more books you read, the more hockey videos you review, the more prepared you will be for any problems encountered during the season and you will have some, Coaches always do.

Practice drills should **not** be complicated but similar to actual game conditions. Periodic team meetings and parties are important to build team spirit and unity. Wins and losses are not that important during the regular season as long as you make the playoffs. Try to give **equal** ice, this is important to players and their parents because each is paying the same amount of \$\$\$ to play.

I also recommend that coaches question their players periodically during the season to ensure they understand what you have taught them. If they do not understand, you must review/teach it again.

Regular season games should be used to identify team mistakes, then make necessary corrections before the next game. Coaches should explain, then correct, any individual's mistakes at **the end of the shift** when the player comes off the ice. Don't wait until the end of the period or game.

The playoffs will be the final test to how well you taught your players during the regular season. This will be reflected in how competitive your team is during the playoffs, compared to the regular season. Whether you win or lose is really irrelevant if your kids improved, **had fun**, made new friends, developed social skills and learned good sportsmanship. The life skills they learn through Minor/Youth hockey will carry over into their adult life.

COACHING IN A GAME

There is a big difference between running a hockey practice and **coaching in a game**. Both skills are extremely important, but coaching in a game you must have a game plan, then make **split second decisions** as to who goes on the ice, when, where, for how long, any strategy changes and correcting of errors right away. There is not this pressure during a practice where you have more time to think clearly & make good decisions. Making a bad decision during a game could cost you a goal or even a playoff championship. Keep a small note pad handy to write notes to yourself.

It is also very important for players to feel comfortable and safe around you and not be frightened/intimidated by you. If the players like you, are having **fun** and improving, and you treat **all** them fairly and with respect, they will respect you and work very hard for you.

If you give them a pat on the back for a good play, and some positive feedback after every shift, they will work even harder for you. If you are negative, or are always finding fault with their play, they will play tentative, being afraid of making a mistake. You will be restricting their creativity and turning them into robots. You may win the game but it won't be fun for your players and they may quit the team or hockey altogether at the end of the season and choose another winter sport. The hockey experience must be **fun and positive**. Your job as a coach is to motivate your players, encourage them to be creative and hard working on offence and disciplined on defense, not yelling or screaming at them all the time. **Note:** In the last 2 minutes of **any** game the coach should have the right to use any player he desires based on the score of game. Parents must be aware of this situation and Give him that right.

Fun and Skill Development is the goal of all Youth/Minor Hockey Programs.

When coaching a regular season House League game, **everybody** should receive approximately the same amount of ice time. **Rep. Teams** may do it differently (**earned ice time**) in order to win enough games to make the playoffs but this should be explained at the start of the season.

During the playoffs, the players who are producing and playing extremely well **may** get longer shifts, play the power play, kill penalties or do a double shift depending upon **the time and score**.

Coaching a Representative Team's game is more difficult than a House League game because the pressure to win is evident every game. It's like coaching a playoff game every outing. If you lose too many games, you could miss the playoffs and some parents may want you removed as Coach.

ROLE OF ASSISTANT COACHES - **Note:** all Head and Assistant Coaches must be **certified**

The Head Coach should try to recruit the most experienced and knowledgeable hockey people who are team players and willing to serve as **Assistant Coaches**, especially in Rep Hockey. In House League it's less strenuous and it's usually a player's parent who agrees to help out. Both should discuss their role, duties and any responsibilities with the Head Coach before agreeing.

Assistant Coaches should bring skills to the team that compliment the skills of the Head Coach and a personality that is compatible with the entire coaching staff and players. Team unity is very important for a successful program. Everyone must get along and be on the same hockey page.

The Head Coach may want Assistants to teach at practices and assist him on the bench during games. The Head and Assistant Coaches will have different game responsibilities and these must be understood and communicated prior to a game.

Questions such as:

1. Who is going to change the lines,? the forwards,? or the defense?
2. Who is going to give the players feedback or point out errors and make corrections?
3. Who is going to make positional changes? i.e. Forward to Defense? Centre to RW? etc.
4. Is someone going to keep track of the goals for and goals against,? shots on goal,? hits? etc.

It is very important that the Head Coach address these questions and his/her assistants work together as a coaching team on the bench and have specific non-conflicting responsibilities.

PRE-GAME DUTIES OF THE HEAD COACH

When everyone has arrived, the Head Coach must decide on the make up of the lines, defense pairings, and the starting goaltender. Also, he must determine the order that the lines will enter the game. 1st, 2nd, 3rd. Don't number your lines- 1st, 2nd, 3rd use the center's name or line colors.

The visiting team completes their line-up form first, the home team signs last. This allows the home team coach to match lines if desired. Print your line up on the official game report with your players name and sweater number. Sign the form and give it back to the official scorer.

In the dressing room, have the players sit with their line-mates and defence partners. This will make it easier for the coaches to talk to them in units about pre-game strategy. The Head Coach should explain the game plan to his players before leaving the dressing room. Remind them that the first 2 minutes and the last 2 minutes of every period is important to get the puck in deep.

POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 1) Who plays with whom at what position and the lines order onto the ice?
- 2) Are you going to match lines, or defence pairings, or cover their star player?
- 3) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the opposition, who are their top scorers?
- 4) What forechecking and backchecking system will you use?
- 5) Who will you use on the Power Play or to Kill Penalties?
- 6) What is the game plan and what are you going to say in your pre-game pep talk?

REMEMBER

The Head Coach and the Assistants must set an example and remain relaxed, positive and in control at all times. Don't yell at your players or the Referee/Linesmen if they make a mistake.

The Head coach must also maintain "bench management," he cannot get caught up as to what is happening on the ice, but must manage the bench as to who he wants on in specific situations.

It is your job to motivate the players and to keep them focused on the game and keep them free of stress and tension. Players will play better in a relaxed but disciplined state of mind.

Before leaving the dressing room, announce your starting line-up, ask for a 100 percent effort from everyone and tell them to go out and have some **fun because it's only a game**.

DURING THE GAME

Have your defense sit in pairs at one end of the players bench closest to the **defensive zone** door. If the teams change ends at the end of the period, their position on the bench should also change.

Have your forwards sit in lines, in the order they will enter the game, at the other end of the bench closest to the **offensive zone** door. Also change position at the end of period if required.

The Head Coach is in charge of the team and will make final decisions, however, he/she may delegate responsibilities to the Assistant Coaches to change the lines/defence during the game. Keep the shifts relatively short, 60 seconds or less. Use the score clock as your shift guide.

Have your players set the tempo of the game. During the first 2 minutes of every period get the puck in deep and **"make something happen"**, don't be standing around waiting for the game to come to you. The closest forward should always be after their puck carrier in the Offensive Zone trying to recover the loose puck or to create a turnover. During the last 2 minutes of every period also get puck in deep but only forecheck with 1 forechecker, have 4 defenders back.

Coaches must give positive feedback to every player during the game, but also diplomatically point out errors to specific players then explain how to correct them at the end of every shift.

Have a small rink white/wipe off board on the bench to help explain positioning and any errors. It is much easier to explain a situation and correct it when players can see it on a rink diagram.

Don't be afraid to become emotional, this is always used as a motivational strategy.

Do not allow any negative, racial, sexual, or discriminatory comments from your players or coaching staff toward **any** players, coaches, the Referee, Linesmen, or fans.

Keep mental track of who is playing well so you can use them on a delayed penalty situation, or for the extra attacker if you are behind and want to pull your goalie late in the game. Decide who will play late in the period or game if you're **ahead** and who will play if you are **behind**.

Tired Players coming off the ice while play is still under way should call out their position (Right Wing, Centre etc.) to alert the bench who should go on and where. The players coming off must be within 8 feet of the bench before rested players can go on. The players and the assistant coach or trainer manning the bench doors must be ready at all times for any player coming off.

Ideally player changes should be made during a stoppage of play but if **changing on the fly** is necessary, it should be completed when your team have just shot the puck deep into the offensive zone corner. Never change on the fly if the puck is in your defensive zone, wait for a whistle and a stoppage of play otherwise you are giving the opposition a possible odd man scoring chance.

If your team is being outplayed badly, a good idea would be to slow the game down. To do this use a slow line change after the whistle, both going on and coming off the ice. More frequent line changes will also kill the clock or disrupt a teams momentum. If time outs are allowed, this may be a good time to call one in order to settle your team down.

If there are no between period breaks, make personnel line or defense adjustments from the bench. Also, any strategy or game plan changes should be made before you fall behind too far.

Prepare or alert the next line or set of defense going on the ice. Best Defence vs their Best Line.

Think positive, talk positive, act positive. If you think you can win, you will generally win. If you think you will lose, you usually do. **Winning Teams Never Get Outworked.**

BETWEEN PERIOD BREAKS

If you have **between period breaks**, use the time wisely to let your players relax and get their breath while you discuss strategy and any line changes with your Assistant Coaches.

You may want to review statistics, goals for and against, shots on goal, giveaways, hits, etc. Communicate any player/line changes and any strategy or game plan changes with your players.

Give positive feedback, and a brief pep talk if the team is playing well. If they are playing poorly, you may have to get emotional, change the lines or game plan and explain the errors.

POST GAME FEEDBACK BY COACHES

Following the game, congratulate your players if they played well or gave a 100% effort whether they won or lost. If they lost, explain what went wrong, and what needs to be done to correct it. Remind them of when the next practice, game or team meeting is. Finally, ask if anyone can't be at the next event and write it down in case you need to call up Affiliate Players to fill your roster.

Remember, this is not the NHL or Major Jr. "A" Hockey. It's Minor/Youth Hockey where **Fun** is the top priority.

"Try to keep everything in proper perspective."

TEAM GOALS, OBJECTIVES, RULES, DISCIPLINE, AND COACHING EVALUATION

Coaches should seek input from their players then discuss and circulate **team goals, objectives, rules and discipline** with the players and their parents at a **Team meeting** at the start of the season. This is to make everyone aware of what you are trying to accomplish this playing season. **Players need goals to strive for and rules to follow.**

A **goal** is a realistic general statement of what you want to achieve during the entire season.

Example:

1. To have **fun** playing hockey and to make new friends.
2. To **improve** each players' hockey skills and knowledge.
3. To **finish** in at least 3rd place during the regular season.
4. To **reach** the playoff championship final.

Objectives are the steps required to reach your goals. They should be specific, attainable, time limited and **measurable** so you can determine whether you achieved them or not.

Example.

1. To practice for at least an hour, in either a rink or gymnasium every week during the regular season to improve everyone's hockey skills and knowledge.
2. To host at least 2 team parties, one near Christmas, and one just prior to playoffs to improve team spirit and to have some fun.
3. To score at least 3 goals and give up no more than 2 goals during the last three games of the regular season in preparation for the playoffs.

EVALUATION OF all COACHES by PLAYERS and their PARENTS

The following year end **evaluation** form should be completed by your players and their parents to give you and your Assistants some feedback as to your coaching methods and hockey program.

Example Scoring System: 1 = Not Satisfied 5 = Satisfied 10 = Very Satisfied

1. Knowledge of hockey	_____	7. Ran organized practices	_____
2. Ability to teach and correct errors	_____	8. Fairness and equal ice time	_____
3. Discipline and control	_____	9. Motivational skills	_____
4. Attitude toward players	_____	10. Individual skill development	_____
5. Conduct during games	_____	11. Team skill development	_____
6. Communication skills	_____	12. Team improvement over season	_____

Head Coach _____ Assistant Coach _____ Assistant Coach _____

Manager _____ Trainer _____ Other _____

Your child's improvement _____ Your child's fun/enjoyment level _____

Please rate the program in achieving a balance between team success and player development.

Too competitive _____ Well balanced _____ Not competitive enough _____

Suggestions to improve program _____

RELEASING or CUTTING PLAYERS

A Rep./Travel Hockey team consists of between 12 and 19 players and the head coach must make the final decision as to who is selected and who is released at tryout camp or during the season. House League coaches draft, or are assigned, between 12 and 15 players and no one is released.

Cutting/releasing young players is one of the most difficult tasks coaches have to perform. Coaches must be very sensitive to the feelings of the young hockey players they release.

Choose your words carefully and provide a sound explanation as to why they didn't make your team. Let them know the specific skills you would like them to improve upon and encourage them to try out for the Rep Team again next year if they are still of eligible age.

Finally thank them for trying out and suggest they go down to the next level in the Minor/Youth Hockey Program where they can develop and improve their skills, knowledge and confidence in a less competitive environment and League. Let them know this move will benefit them in the long run and speed up their progress because of the greater ice time to perfect their hockey skills.

10 HOCKEY TIPS FOR PARENTS

If you have a child playing or just **Beginning in ages 5-6, 7-8, 9-10 or 11-12**, in the (5-12) year old age groups or divisions, there are a number of unwritten rules you should be aware of.

1. Get your child to the rink 20 - 30 minutes prior to the game or practice so the coach knows who's present. He can talk to the players individually, assemble the lines and inform them of the game plan or what he hopes to achieve or do during this game or practice.
2. Help your child get ready to play by putting on their skates and tying them tight. Make sure they have 2 sticks (with their name printed on the upper shaft) in case one breaks. **Note:** Young players (5-10) may come from home already dressed in their hockey gear. They will want you in the dressing room helping them put on their skates and tightening them. Young goalies may need your help putting on their skates and pads. As players move to age groups 11-12 and become more experienced and confident, they may not want you in the dressing room helping them, this may embarrass them. Ask them about this!
3. Provide encouragement and positive support for their effort and to build their self-esteem.
4. Try to obtain a basic understanding of most hockey terms & expressions, the playing rules, penalties and objectives of the game, so you can discuss them intelligently with your child and fellow parents. Read "**Hockey Made Easy**" it explains everything you'll need to know.
5. Be aware of the philosophy of the **Coach** and what their long term and short term goals and objectives are before signing a Representative Team's player card: Is it "To have fun, improve players skills over the course of the season based on equal ice time" **or** "To win every hockey game at all cost with earned ice time".
There is a big difference between these 2 objectives and you should be aware of it.
6. Cheer and applaud all the good plays executed by both teams, no matter who did it. Don't boo or yell at opposing players, their parents or the Referee. In fact 99% of all hockey parents behave great, but 1% may go overboard and ruin it for other spectators.

7. Following the game, give your son or daughter some **positive feedback** on their performance whether their team won or lost or whether they had a good game or not.
8. Don't become verbally or physically aggressive towards the Referee, Linesmen, Coaches or fellow parents. This solves nothing. If you have a concern discuss it rationally with them and you may get a rational explanation for their actions.
9. Don't yell instructions at your child, this only confuses them because they should be listening to their coach. Your instructions may contradict what the coach has told them.
10. Don't berate or criticize your child following the game. Remember they are only children and “**relax, it's only a game,**” which is intended to be **fun for them**, not you.

Note: If you push your child too much, or put too much pressure on them to win, they'll mentally burn out by age 12 or 13 and quit hockey. Find the happy medium and keep fun in the game. Also, parents must not tell the coach (suggest maybe) when, or where, or with whom, to play their child. That's a coaching decision. **Let the Coach, coach!**

POST GAME FEEDBACK BY PARENTS

If following the game, you wish to give your child some **post game feedback**. The rule of thumb is to give at least 2 or 3 positive compliments for every constructive suggestion. But be careful what you say because most of them are playing to have fun, not to make the NHL

EXAMPLE

- (+) You really skated well tonight.(+) Your forechecking was excellent,
- (+) Your passing was pin point, right on the tape of the receiver.
- (-) Had you moved a little closer to the net at the end of the game, you might have been in a better shooting position to score a goal or to jump on a rebound.
- (+) Your backchecking was fantastic.(+) Your transition game was awesome,
- (+) The man you were covering didn't score a goal against you.
- (-) If you head man (pass) the puck a little quicker, you might trap the opposition deep in your end and your line might get more 2 on 1's and more scoring opportunities.

REWARDS

If parents are going to **reward** their children for a good game, it should be based on the plus + and minus - system, not strictly for goals scored because this creates “Red-liners”, “Puck Hogs” and “One Way Players”. **Teamwork, not individualism is the goal of hockey.**

By using the + and - system, or by rewarding assists, completed passes, hits, blocked shots, etc. players will learn at a very young age the importance of team work and the forechecking and backchecking responsibilities that are required for their team to be successful at this game.

A **complete** hockey player is one who gives a 100% effort every shift and contributes significantly both offensively and defensively to the success of the team at both ends of the ice.

Parents should judge their child's play by their **total contribution**, not just goals and assists. **Preventing goals** is just as important as scoring them and you should compliment them for it.

COPING THROUGH THE BAD TIMES

We all know how to celebrate the highs and victories through our lives, the difficulty comes when we have to cope with the lows and defeats.

As parents you feel the pain that your child is experiencing if s/he is cut from a Rep. Team.

People who experience loss have a greater chance for growth than those who don't.

It is important for parents to keep things in proper perspective and to recognize that this is an opportunity for growth and development in your child. Quitting hockey should not be an option.

When parents believe in their children and tell them so, children believe in themselves.

Being cut at a Rep. Team try-out camp is a very traumatic experience for a young hockey player. I was cut from the 9-10 Rep. Team many years ago and I was devastated. I remember it to this day, but I learned from it, improved my skills and went on to play Junior "A" and Pro hockey.

Parents may also have a difficult time accepting their child was cut, especially if they believe their son or daughter was better than other players selected. Parents must remember the Head Coach has the final decision as to who is selected and it is based on his/her selection criteria. Skating, skills, size, attitude and some **hockey politics** all play a part in the selection process.

The best advice I can give a parent who has a child cut at tryout camp is to be supportive and understanding as there is little recourse. Ask the coach what skills need to be improved upon and work on them. Parents must instill confidence in their child so he believes in himself and he will improve and play better hockey but on another team. He could still be called up as an Affiliate.

Encourage your child to continue playing if he enjoys the game and is having fun. If he is small, consider asking the coach to possibly change his position from wing or defence to centre.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Coaching, Refereeing and Training are three of the most responsible and challenging positions in Youth/Minor Hockey. But you must be certified in order to perform any of these duties. And like school teachers, you will need specific training before you hit the ice to Coach, Referee or be a hockey Trainer. Hockey Canada have developed and revised a number of different level **Certification Programs** to help train individuals. USA Hockey has a similar program.

District and Local Minor/Youth Hockey Associations schedule different level clinics throughout the hockey season at various locations in your area to provide Coaches, Referees and Trainers with specific information and training on how to perform your role and meet their objectives.

If you would like to become a Head or Assistant Coach, Referee, or Trainer, consult with your local Youth/Minor Hockey President or development Co-ordinator to get the dates and locations of the up coming clinics being run in your area. There is a cost to attend and this helps pay for any ice/hall rental, instruction manuals, video tapes, the Instructors time and travel expenses. Many Minor/Youth Hockey Associations will pay this fee for their volunteer coaches. For more information about any of these programs go to the following web sites.

www.hockeycanada.ca or www.usahockey.com for specific details about their programs.

NATIONAL COACHING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IN CANADA

The **National Coaching Certification Program** (NCCP) provides coaches with theoretical, technical and practical knowledge to improve their teaching and coaching skills. There are five levels: Coach 1 Intro, Coach 2 Coach Level, Development 1, High Performance 1, and High Performance 2. Coaches must attend **Speak Out** clinic Re: abuse & harassment prior to coaching.

Minor Hockey Coaches must obtain at least a Coach 1 Intro Coach, to coach in the IP program. A Coach 2 level is required to participate in a House League Rec. Program in ages 7-8 and 9-10. A Development 1 level is required to be a Rep. ages 11-12 "B" and up Head Coach or assistant Coach. "AAA" coaches must possess a Development 1 level Certification. USA Hockey has similar programs and levels. I highly recommend and encourage every Coach to attend these compulsory clinics as they are both informative & educational to help develop your program.

As coaches move up the Coaching ladder to "AAA" programs in Under 15 & Under 18 or Junior "A" you are required to attain the High Performance I Level. to remain informed, competent, and to have the most up to date hockey ideas. Good coaches want to stay current with new and innovative hockey ideas every season. Get certified at the next highest level.

HOCKEY OFFICIALS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IN CANADA

The **Hockey Canada Officiating Program** is to standardize methods and techniques of officiating in both the four-man, three-man and two-man systems for Referees and Linesmen to ensure that the rules and penalties are interpreted correctly and consistently across the Branch.

There are six levels of certification. Level 1 & 2 prepares you to Referee Minor Hockey games. Levels 3 prepares you to Referee Minor Hockey Playoff games or be a Linesman in Jr "A or B" Games. Level 4 you can Referee in Minor Regional, Jr. A, B, C, or Linesman in Jr. "A" games. These Levels involve an evaluation and a written test to ensure s/he meets the criteria.

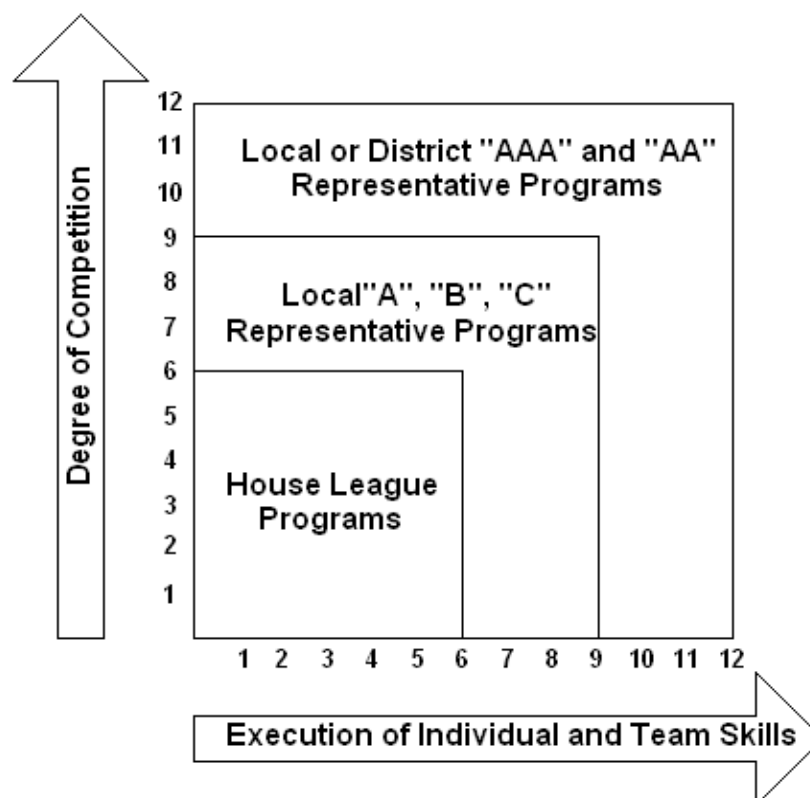
HOCKEY TRAINERS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IN CANADA

The **Hockey Trainers Certification Program** (HTCP) objectives are to standardize the methods and techniques of hockey trainers. One of the main priorities is to assist players, coaches and referees to play in a safe environment. The trainer's certification course is designed to educate people in the prevention, recognition and treatment of hockey related injuries.

There are three levels of certification. Level I is a basic introduction program designed for the beginning hockey trainer. Level II is designed for trainers wanting a hockey specific First Aid Course with CPR level C. Level III is an advanced course for the experienced trainer who is interested in upgrading their skills and knowledge for a "AAA" Under 15 and 18 or Junior Team.

All Minor Hockey teams in Canada, require a trainer to be on the bench who has either the Level I, II, or III Program, or is a qualified First Aider. In some Associations, a doctor or nurse could be on the bench with the team to act as the trainer. Many Coaches now take the Trainers course.

If you would like to make a positive contribution to your community and local Minor Hockey Program, consider volunteering to become a **Coach, Referee or Trainer**. But please, don't become one of those 1% negative hockey parents who only yell and scream, or criticize the Coach or the Referee and Linesman. **Hockey can do without those types of individuals.**

YOUTH / MINOR HOCKEY PROGRAM MODEL**SUMMARY: HOW TO PLAY YOUR POSITION**

The following is a brief summary of important points to keep in mind while playing centre, either wing, defence or goal.

- The **Centre** is primarily the **playmaker** on the line and must pass the puck ahead to his open receivers at every opportunity. His secondary role on offence is scoring goals.
- A good Centre will lead the **forechecking** in a 2-1-2 system along with one of his wingers. In a 1-2-2 system if his winger is first in, or closest to there puck carrier, he should peel off to cover that open wing position to maintain good on ice balance then quickly follow up to get the loose puck if the wing was successful in creating a turn over.
- The Centre should be a **good skater** and speed is desirable. He also has to be very good at **angling** their puckcarrier towards the boards then pinning him to create a turn over.
- His other strength is his ability to see the ice and **find his open** players with accurate on the tape passes, or lofting the puck high into an open area so his wingers can skate to it. A great move by the centre is for long stretch passes all the way up to the far Blue Line.
- The majority of young Youth/Minor Hockey Centres carry the puck too much or too long and as a result put their Wingers off-side or force them to slow down at the Blue Line.
- Centres must feed their Wingers early enough so they can receive the pass in full flight without slowing down at the offensive Blue Line or going off-side and fly into the zone.

- Pass the puck ahead at every opportunity, always be skating never standing still, follow and play the puck as much as possible. **Defensively**, centres usually cover the Slot area.
- The **Wingers** should generally play their game up and down their own side of the ice unless they have a good reason to cut into the middle or criss-cross to receive a pass or get into the clear and away from a backchecker. They are usually **the scorers** of the line.
- A Winger should try to receive the pass in full flight, skating hard and facing in the direction of the offensive zone. This ability allows him to blow by many defencemen.
- Wingers must **shoot quickly** and often to score goals or produce rebounds for their team mates. Also **going hard to the net** looking for a rebound is the sign of a good winger.
- They can skate deep into the offensive zone corner leading a rush, cycling the puck, or forechecking, being the first or closest man to check the oppositions puck carrier.
- **Defensively**, Wingers should be in position to check their opposing winger by staying on the inside of the rink. Keep your check to the outside and along the boards by skating about a 1/2 stride ahead of them and within a stick's length, but don't let them cut into the middle of the ice or behind you. If your Defenceman pinches or carries the puck deep into the offensive zone, the Winger or Centre on that side of the ice should drop back and take up the Defenceman's vacated position on the point at the Blue Line.
- Keep both hands on your stick when checking, unless the man you are covering is out of reach and you're attempting to hook, poke or sweep check the puck from his stick blade.
- Wingers must **backcheck** all the way back to their goal line when covering an opponent to prevent any odd man situations, making sure not to peel off too soon to cover the point. You must stay with your check until your defence are in position, one in front of the net and his defence partner fighting for the puck in the corner. If you or your team regain possession of the puck, lead a rush out of your zone or go to your clearing play positions to receive a pass then exit the defensive zone quickly.
- On clearing plays, Wingers should not wander in their defensive zone unless covered by a checker. They should be positioned about half way in along the boards ready to take a quick outlet pass from their defenceman. Keep your feet moving, ready to exit the zone.
- At all times carry your stick near or on the ice as this is where the puck is usually found.
- In most cases, the Winger should play the puck in the offensive zone unless you're the closest forechecker then play the man, and play the man in the defensive zone. If your defenceman gets out numbered in the defensive zone, that side winger must help him.
- **Defencemen** - When in possession of the puck in their own end of the ice, they should spread out and pass the puck to their open man. Forward or back if the man is uncovered.
- They should, when possible, try to pass the puck ahead to their open forward who is furthest toward the offensive zone. Defencemen can pass from their defensive zone to anywhere in the Neutral zone including all the way to the far Blue Line.

- Too many defencemen want to stickhandle out of their own end when their forwards are wide open and breaking into the clear. They get poke checked costing their team cheap goals. Recover the puck and pass it out of your defensive zone quickly and accurately.
- The **first outlet pass** from D must be quick and accurate to be effective. Make sure your intended receiver is open, then be quick with the pass and put the puck right on the tape.
- When exiting the defensive zone, defencemen should move up with the play as much as possible, but remain slightly behind the forwards. This **closes the gap** between forwards and defencemen and allows 5 men to operate together in all areas of the ice by providing more passing options: ahead, to the side, or back to the defenceman for puck control.
- When the puck is in the opponents end of the rink, the defence must move up quickly to the other teams Blue Line to keep the puck inside the offensive zone on-side and to back up their forwards. If they are too slow in moving up, there is a large gap between the forwards and defencemen and the opposition can break out of their end very easily leaving the offensive forwards trapped up ice for an odd man rush by the opposition.
- When playing the point, a Defenceman must be ready to back up his defence partner when play is on the other side of the ice or if his partner pinches and moves in to play the puck. When this occurs, he should pull out of the opponent's end and favour his partners side of the ice between the Blue Line and the Red Line. Do not pinch unless you are at least 60% sure of getting to the puck and keeping it inside the zone. Your deep **Slot** man should come back to take your D position or your partners which ever the coach wants.
- **Good Defencemen** have the ability to pass quickly and accurately, shoot low and hard from the point, getting most shots through on the net to either score or create rebounds.
- Backward skating speed and agility plus execution of 180 degree pivots and angling of the puck carrier toward or into the boards are essential qualities of good Defencemen.
- The best way to discourage a good forechecking team is to move the puck quickly and accurately to an open man. If pressured, loft the puck high into the neutral zone.
- **Defensively**, when meeting the attack, defencemen should stay together as much as possible and play as if a 3 metre, or 9 foot bungee cord was linking/tying them together.
- When playing the puck carrier, they should hold their stick well out in front of them, this forces him to make his move earlier and gives you time to react and get into your proper defensive position then angle him towards the boards on his backhand side if possible.
- Turn correctly when meeting oncoming forwards and face the puck carrier at all times. Try to angle him toward the boards but if you are beaten to the outside, switching or "x" changing positions with your partner is necessary. Your partner should drive for the puck carrier, leaving you the beaten defenceman to cover the front of the net for him. In most cases this move will prevent the puck carrier from having a straight line to the net or getting away a good shot. As a last resort, if a player has a breakaway, try a diving poke or sweep check to knock the puck off the puckcarrier's stick blade creating a loose puck.

- Defencemen, when meeting incoming forwards on an **odd man**, 3 on 2, or 2 on 1 rush situation should **“Play the Puck”** forcing the puck carrier out of the slot area and to a bad shooting angle. Do not body check in this situation because it takes you out of the play giving the opposition an on ice positional advantage in the slot & a possible 2 on 1, or a breakaway. The goalie must **always** play the puck carrier in all situations!
- On an **even man** situation, 3 on 3, 2 on 2 or 1 on 1, **“Play the Man”** don’t even look at the puck. If given the opportunity, take the puck and start a clearing play or lead a rush.
- Defensively, if there **wingers are covered**, or you have a defensive advantage ie: 1 puck carrier against 2 Defencemen, the defence should step out over the Blue Line and force the play. **“Play the Man”**, because this move will force the opposition into an off-side situation or cause the puck carrier to lose or dump the puck in creating a loose puck.
- When the puck is in a defensive corner, one Defenceman should fight for it, blocking pass-outs to the slot and leaving his partner to cover their closest man in front of the net. Play the Man aggressively in the corner and finish the check as it’s a 1 on 1 situation.
- The Defenceman in front of the net should be able to **feel his check** with his stick or body, while at the same time keep turning his head back and forth to see the puck’s location. By doing this, he is in a position to intercept any pass coming out of the corner to the man out front, but **never** turn your back to the puck or you could get scored on.
- A good rule of thumb for all players both Forwards and Defencemen to follow is to **“Play the Puck”** in the offensive zone unless you’re the closest forechecker then finish the check taking him off the puck, and **“Play the Man”** in the defensive zone.
- The **Goaltender** is the teams last line of defence and he must watch the puck at all times, even when it’s down the ice 200 feet away in the opponent’s end of the rink.
- **Correct positioning** by cutting the angle is the key to good Goaltending and will allow him to stop 99 out of 100 first shots fired at him. Recovering from the original shot and re-positioning himself square to the puck for all rebounds is critical
- He must try to position himself **square to the puck** and be ready for any shot even from an impossible angle because a soft goal hurts the team more than a good goal.
- Goalies must stay up and on their feet as long as possible and **cut the angle** on all shots. Use the centre of the goal line as your initial starting point and you will be successful.
- Try to **catch** every shot on goal to prevent any rebounds, but if you can’t, quickly cover or clear the rebound into the corner. Watch for pucks coming off the backboard or glass.
- Talk to your defenceman if being screened by an opponent and alert him if there is any player uncovered in front of the net. If **screened** use the butterfly to see low shots and cover the net from post to post keeping the paddle shaft on the ice in front of your knees.
- **If every player follows these suggestions you will have fun, improve your hockey skills & systems, contribute to your team and remain competitive in most games.**

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Hockey can be an easy game to play, coach or watch if you understand its basic strategy & rules.

- The game consists of three, 20 minute stop time periods. However, because of time constraints most Youth/Minor Hockey Games consist of two or three 15- 20 minute straight time periods with the final 2 minutes of the last period usually being stop time.
- When your team controls the puck, anywhere on the ice, you are on **Offence** trying to move the puck forward down the ice into the offensive zone and score a goal.
- The player with the puck has only 3 options:
 - (1) **Pass** the puck to an open team mate,
 - (2) **Carry** the puck himself,
 - (3) **Shoot** the puck on net **or** into a specific corner, if over the Red Line, where your winger can recover it .This will prevent an icing of the puck and a face-off in your end zone
- Your 4 remaining offensive players must position themselves to **support/help** their puck carrier by:
 - (1) Getting into a **clear position/passing lane** to receive a pass or take a shot
 - (2) Going **hard to the net** to screen their goalie, tip/deflect the shot, or get to any rebound
 - (3) Flying into the corner to **retrieve the loose puck** or forechecking there puckcarrier by taking him off the puck & pinning him thus creating a loose puck for a team-mate.

Note: Be aware of your skates positioning in relation to off-sides at the offensive Blue Line.

- If the puck is loose in the offensive zone and neither team has control of it and you are the closest player to the loose puck you have only 1 option:
 - Fight** for the loose puck to regain control, win the 1 on 1 battles in the corner.
 - If you back off and let the opposition gain control you will be frowned upon by your Coach and Team-mates and Junior Hockey scouts will question your courage!
- If the opposition gain control of the puck, anywhere on the ice, you are on **Defence** trying to get it back. If they gain control of it in their **defensive zone** your closest player to him must **Forecheck** with his stick or bodycheck in Under 13 and higher Divisions and take him off the puck, creating a loose puck for your centre or winger to pick up.
- If the forechecker was **unsuccessful** and the puck carrier passes the puck into the neutral zone, one defencemen tries to check the new puck carrier, 1 on 1 by playing the man.
- Your 4 remaining defensive players must **Backcheck** through the neutral zone and deep into your defensive zone to prevent any odd man rush and regain possession of the puck by:(1) Two Forwards, covering the passing lanes to prevent the 2 opposing wingers from receiving a pass and shooting. The 3rd forward back covers any trailer or the points.
 - (2) One Defencemen checking their puck carrier in the corner, then your closest player regains the loose puck and starts a clearing play. The other defenceman covers their closest man in front of net ensuring no pass is received or rebound gotten to.
- Everyone doesn't just swarm/chase the puck carrier, they have a specific job to do and player to cover. Wings cover wings, then go to the points, 1st defenceman plays the puckcarrier, centre covers the slot, 2nd defenceman covers front of net. **On ice Discipline**

- Your **Goaltender** must play there puck carrier at all times trying to stop the first shot then control or direct/deflect any rebound into the corner away from the front of the net.
- A **goal** will only be scored if someone on your team made a **defensive mistake**. It could be a forward, a defenceman, the goalie, or a combination of all three. Coaches should point out and **discuss** calmly then **correct** your errors as soon as you come off the ice.
- Do not allow their puck carrier a direct line to your net or into the **slot** area for a quality shot or leave any player uncovered in front of the net for a rebound or deflection as this is the primary location where most goals are scored from. Identify the scoring threats.
- One of your defencemen must go into the corner and fight for and retrieve or create a loose puck. His defence partner covers the closest man in front of the net. If he is out numbered in the corner with forecheckers, the winger on that side must come to help him get the puck. Wingers, never let your defencemen get out numbered in the corner. Leave the point uncovered temporarily to come to the aid of your corner defenceman.
- If the defenceman is successful at creating a loose puck, **then he, or your closest** player to him, (usually the winger) regains control of the puck and the other forwards quickly get into their clearing play positions to move out of their defensive zone by using 1 of 6 clearing play options.
- Defenceman or puckcarrier passes to:
 - (1) Right Winger;
 - (2) Centre;
 - (3) Left Winger;
 - (4) Defence Partner;
 - (5) Carries puck out himself or
 - (6) Chips it off the boards or glass or flips it into the safe neutral zonethen moves down the ice through the neutral zone and into the offensive zone by passing, carrying it, or shoot the puck on net. Try to create a 2 on 1 situation by using triangles or “X”s which lead to high percentage scoring opportunities and goals.

That’s Hockey in a nut shell, it really can be that Easy to Play and Understand.

1. Trying to score goals when you or your teammates have possession of the puck.
2. Preventing goals by eliminating any odd man rushes, covering open players **or** trying to regain possession of the puck when your opponents have control of it.

How successful you are will depend on skating speed, executing basic hockey skills, how fast you go from offence to defence, and from defence to offence (your transition time) with every change of possession of the puck.

The team that aggressively creates or goes after any loose puck or controls the puck usually scores the most goals and wins the game.

Remember: Play with Passion and Initiate checking but don’t Retaliate. New rules are in effect that emphasize interference, hooking, holding and slashing. The use of the stick will be limited to only playing the puck and will not be allowed to impede a players progress.

Hockey is a Fantastic Fun Game.

Play Hard, Play Smart, Play Together and Success Will Come Your Way!

FINAL THOUGHTS

Over these past 27 years this manual has become a labour of love. I believe this **newly revised** edition presents the reader with the most up-to-date hockey information and every opportunity to learn, understand and develop your basic skills and knowledge of this great Canadian game.

It provides every parent, coach and player with a teaching tool which will prove invaluable and instrumental in the skill development of all young 5-12 year old male or female players.

I cannot promise that you will make the National Hockey League (NHL), because only a very small percentage of Youth/Minor hockey players do. But I will promise, that by following the Hockey Made Easy Instruction Manual, you will improve your skills and knowledge, and with regular reading of the manual and daily/weekly practice, you will become an excellent two-way, 200 foot hockey player or successful coach and **have fun** in every League you play in.

I suggest you **re-read** specific parts of the manual daily, as it contains over 2000 helpful tips. Repetition is the secret to learning and there is a lot of valuable information and ideas to comprehend. You may have missed some of the concepts on your first reading. Keep the book handy and in a visible spot for easy access then you can review different sections every day.

My goal when I started writing this manual was to provide young Minor, Youth and Female Hockey coaches, parents and players with enough pertinent information and tips to help them improve their game and have some **Fun** while doing so. I hope I have achieved my goal.

If you have any **comments** or **suggestions** I would enjoy hearing from you. E-mail them to **jshorey@hockeymadeeasy.com**

I have already added some suggestions and comments readers have e-mailed me and I may incorporate some of your ideas into the next revised edition of "**Hockey Made Easy**".

In the meantime best of luck in your hockey program and keep reading because: Hockey's Made Easy when the basic fundamentals and systems are understood and executed properly.

"Go to where the puck is going, not where it has been!"

Wayne Gretzky

Check out our website at www.HockeyMadeEasy.com for other helpful hockey materials.

1. Hockey Made Easy Complete Instruction Manual 200+ pages in E-book Format
2. Hockey Made Easy Coaches Practice Guide - 48 pages in E-book format
3. Hockey Made Easy Seasonal Instruction Plan - 35 pages in E-book format
4. Hockey Made Easy Teaching Guide for Parents and Coaches - 30 pages in E-book format and **Free** with every 200+ page Complete Instruction Manual purchased
5. 80 additional video and written tips and the 50 page Shoot to Score tips for Smart Phones

Reviewed and Revised July 18, 2022.

Yours in hockey,

John Shorey

Author - Hockey Made Easy - Canada's Best Instruction Manual

