

# LEVEL 1 – SKILL DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

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## Program Overview

*A Publication Of The USA Hockey Coaching Education Program*



The USA Hockey Coaching  
Education Program is Presented By





# USA Hockey Coaching Education Program

Level 1 Manual

Mark Tabrum  
Director, Coaching Education Program



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Cover: Dana Ausec

Edited: Mark Tabrum, Dan Brennan and Alison Raines

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# Table of Contents

Preface .....	v
This is USA Hockey.....	vii
USA Hockey’s Coaching Education Program .....	ix
Introduction.....	1
Lesson Format .....	2
The Advantages of Cross-Ice Practicing and Playing .....	5
The Playing Rules .....	7
Teaching Tools .....	12
Ice Diagram Legend .....	13
Lesson Manual A .....	A-1
Lesson Manual B .....	B-1
Lesson Manual C .....	C-1
Lesson Manual D .....	D-1



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# Preface

Ice hockey in the United States continues to evolve and grow in non-traditional areas. In order to meet the coaching education demands across the country, USA Hockey provides a comprehensive coaching education program. Since 1974, the Coaching Education Program has evolved in an ongoing basis, and during that time USA Hockey has concluded the following:

1. Quality coaching is the single most important factor in the development of our athletes as well as the sport itself.
2. The experience a player will gain through participation in ice hockey is directly influenced by the coaches' qualifications as well as their coaching education background.
3. The curriculum, materials, and manuals of the coaching education program must be kept simple, practical, age specific, and user friendly.

It is also the intent of USA Hockey that, through a comprehensive but practical educational system, the organization will meet the educational needs of our volunteer coaches.

This manual represents a part of the new direction which will continue to lead USA Hockey's coaching program in the 21st century. I would like to personally thank Hockey Canada, known formerly as the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association (CAHA), and Fitness Canada for the development of this program. A sincere appreciation is also extended to members of the Hockey Canada Initiation Program Committee: Bob Nicholson (Chairman), Vernon Frizzell, Dan Smith, Keith Baulk, Pat Doherty, and George Ward; and founders Colin Patterson and Jack Miller.

Also, a special thanks to USA Hockey's Coaching Section, Youth Council, Legal Council and the Curriculum Committee. Finally, I would like to thank Val Belmonte (former Director, Coaching Education Program) for his vision and hard work that he put forth in the Coaching Education Program. Through his direction, USA Hockey's Coaching Education Program became the leader in educating and training coaches in youth sports. Thanks for all of your support!

As you read through the USA Hockey coaching materials, remember, create a fun and positive environment and allow the players to be creative and enjoy our wonderful sport.

Mark Tabrum  
Director, Coaching Education Program  
USA Hockey, Inc.





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# This is USA Hockey

USA Hockey, Inc., is the National Governing Body for the sport of hockey in the United States. Its mission is to promote the growth of hockey in America and provide the best possible experience for all participants by encouraging, developing, advancing and administering the sport.

USA Hockey is the official representative to the United States Olympic Committee and the International Ice Hockey Federation. In this role, USA Hockey is responsible for organizing and training men's and women's teams for international tournaments, including the IIHF World Championships and the Olympic Winter Games. Closer to home, USA Hockey works with the National Hockey League and the National Collegiate Athletic Association on matters of mutual interest.

USA Hockey's primary emphasis is on the support and development of grassroots hockey programs. USA Hockey is divided into 12 geographical districts throughout the United States.

Each district has a registrar to register teams; a referee-in-chief to register officials and organize clinics; a coach-in-chief to administer educational programs for coaches; a risk manager to oversee liability and safety programs; and a skill development program administrator to facilitate learn-to-play programs for youth players and their parents.

For players, USA Hockey annually conducts regional and national championship tournaments in various age classifications; sponsors regional and national player identification and development camps; studies and makes recommendations for protective equipment; distributes Hat Trick, Playmaker and Zero Club Awards; and provides an insurance program that includes excess accident, general liability and catastrophic coverage.

For coaches and officials, USA Hockey conducts clinics and produces training manuals and videos through the Coaching Education Program and the Officiating Education Program. USA Hockey also promotes uniformity in playing rules and the interpretation of those rules.

USA Hockey has not forgotten parents, supplying this vital segment of the hockey family with a "Parent's Introduction To Youth Hockey" brochure, which includes tips on buying equipment, rules of the game and the role of parents in youth sports.

USA Hockey also publishes *USA Hockey Magazine*, the most widely circulated hockey publication in the world, which is sent to the household of every registered member as a benefit of membership. The organization's official website, [usahockey.com](http://usahockey.com), also provides up-to-the-minute coverage of news and events.

In December 1994, USA Hockey introduced its official inline hockey program – USA Hockey InLine – to provide structure and support for the growth of the sport across America.



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# USA Hockey's Coaching Education Program

## **Purpose Statement**

The objective of the Coaching Education Program is to improve the caliber and quality of coaching in amateur hockey. Five levels of achievement have been established to educate and train each coach, from the beginner to the highly skilled expert.

The Coaching Education Program is committed to developing coaches who will be effective instructors and role models through a comprehensive education program at all levels of play. The program emphasizes fundamental skills, conceptual development, sportsmanship and respect for your teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, parents and off-ice officials.

Thirteen District Coaches-in-Chief use coaching education personnel to conduct the first three progressive levels of instructional coaching clinics. The Coaches-in-Chief themselves organize and conduct the more advanced Level 4 clinics, while the Director of the Coaching Education Program conducts the highest Level 5 clinic. All registered Level 1-3 coaches are required to attend a clinic or recertify their status every three years, and Level 4 and 5 coaches require no additional recertification.

Coaching Education Program personnel have developed a full range of instructional materials for coaches to use on the ice, as well as in the classroom. The materials are also used by the Player Development Program and the International Ice Hockey Federation. Materials include clinic manuals, PowerPoint presentations, and training videos.

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## Coaching Registration

All ice hockey coaches as well as instructors of USA Hockey programs shall be registered for the current season (before the start of the season) in order to be eligible to coach/instruct in any regular-season activities (practices, clinics, games, tournaments, try-outs, etc.), state, district, regional playoff, national championships or in the USA Hockey Player Development Programs. There will be an annual fee to register the coaches (head and assistants) and instructors. Coaches may register as participants online at usahockey.com or through a local association/member program (refer to Section I Participant Registration). Junior coaches shall register with and through their teams with the junior registrar.

All ice hockey coaches (except for Juniors) shall be listed on the team roster as approved by the appropriate registrar. Junior coaches shall register with and through their teams with the junior registrar. All registered coaches as well as instructors shall receive a USA Hockey membership card and a subscription to USA Hockey Magazine (See Registration, Individual Players/Coaches/Instructors).

**Note 1:** *All USA Hockey Coaching Education Program Instructors and National Player Development Camp coaches will be exempt from the annual participant registration fee, but must complete the participant registration process.*

**Note 2:** *The head coach and all assistant coaches of each disabled hockey team must complete the required CEP registration and proper level of certification. Those volunteers or employees who assist with helping disabled hockey teams (i.e. interpreters, pushers, on-ice mentors, etc.) must be properly registered but are not required to attend a CEP clinic and otherwise comply with these rules and regulations.*

All ice hockey coaches and instructors of registered USA Hockey youth/high school, disabled, girls/women's 19 & under and below programs must properly wear an approved ice hockey helmet during all on-ice sessions, including practices, controlled scrimmages and coach and referee clinics (seminars).

Registration, education and other requirements for inline coaches are as provided in the USA Hockey InLine Rules and Regulations.

## Coaching Education Program Requirements

### Required Coaching Education Program Levels For Ice Hockey

USA Hockey requires that the following set of coaching education levels must be the minimum criteria for districts and/or affiliates.

All coaches must have the USA Hockey Coaching Education Program card by January 1 of the current season.

### Evidence of Level

All USA Hockey coaches will possess a USA Hockey Coaching Education Program card with a valid verification sticker. Coaches must have the CEP card in their possession for all USA Hockey games.

It is the responsibility of the local association to identify those coaches who do not meet the certification requirements. All coaches have until December 31 of the current season to attend a USA Hockey coaching clinic(s) to become properly certified at the level of play that they are coaching. During this time, and prior to the start of each game, coaches shall indicate their current coaching certification status on the scoresheet, regardless of their certification level.

Beginning January 1 of the current season, prior to the start of each game, all coaches present, from each team, are required to sign the designated area of the scoresheet in order to verify the accuracy of the playing roster, as it appears on the scoresheet, for that game. In addition, all coaches must include their USA Hockey Coaching Education Program (CEP) card number, their CEP level (levels 1-5) and the

year their CEP level was attained. The CEP card number, level and year attained shall be printed legibly next to the coach's signature (except for Juniors).

If a coach cannot produce his/her current USA Hockey Coaching Education Program Card prior to the start of the game, it must be noted on the official game scoresheet.

### Continuing Education Requirement

All coaches below Level 4 shall progress through the Coaching Education Program, attending a coaching clinic at least once every three years through Level 3. After a coach has completed Level 3, the coach shall do one of the following within three years to maintain certification: attend another Level 3 clinic, take a USA Hockey Continuing Education Course (i.e. attend a High Performance Workshop, complete the online Level 3 Recertification program) or attend a Level 4 clinic as per the Coaching

<b>Level Of Play</b>	<b>Coaching Education Program Level</b>
8 & Under (Mite)	Level 1
10 & Under (Squirt)	Level 2 <i>(Prerequisite Level 1)</i>
12 & Under (Pee Wee)	Level 3 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1 and 2)</i>
14 & Under (Bantam)	Level 3 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1 and 2)</i>
16 & Under; 18 & Under (Midget)	Level 3 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1 and 2)</i>
Midgets (Tier I & Tier II National Tournament Bound)	Level 4 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1, 2 and 3)</i>

<b>Level Of Play</b>	<b>Coaching Education Program Level</b>
High School	Level 3 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1 and 2)</i>

<b>Level Of Play</b>	<b>Coaching Education Program Level</b>
Junior Tier I and II	Level 4
Junior Tier III (All Levels)	Level 4 <i>(Prerequisite Level 3 required)</i>

<b>Level Of Play</b>	<b>Coaching Education Program Level</b>
Girls/Women 8 & Under	Level 1
Girls/Women 10 & Under	Level 2 <i>(Prerequisite Level 1)</i>
Girls/Women 12 & Under	Level 3 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1 and 2)</i>
Girls/Women 14 & Under	Level 3 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1 and 2)</i>
Girls/Women 16 & Under	Level 3 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1 and 2)</i>
Girls/Women 19 & Under	Level 3 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1 and 2)</i>
Girls/Women 16/19 & Under (National Tournament Bound)	Level 4 <i>(Prerequisite Levels 1, 2 and 3)</i>

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Education Program Requirement chart. Once Level 4 is achieved, there is no further requirement for recertification.

If a coach's certification below Level 4 was received more than 3 years from the current season, the card is rendered invalid/expired. Level 1 or 2 coaches must attend a clinic at the next level and Level 3 coaches must choose one of the certification options in order to reactivate their status.

### **Penalty and Enforcement**

All coaches must be certified at the proper CEP level for the level of play in which he/she is coaching beginning January 1 of the current season. It is the responsibility of the District/Affiliate to have a documented policy in place regarding non-compliance. The District/Affiliate will determine what the penalty shall be to the individual coach who fails to produce a current coaching education card with appropriate verification of level. It will be the responsibility of the local association registering the team to enforce the District/Affiliate policy. Non-compliance penalties for Junior coaches will be determined by the Junior Council.

## **Under-Age Coaches**

### **Student Coach**

A player age 13 through 17 who is currently properly registered with USA Hockey.

### **Qualifications**

- Must attend a training session conducted by the local hockey association.
- Must always be under the supervision of a carded, screened adult coach during all practices, clinics, try-outs and in the locker room.
- May help out at practices, clinics, try-outs only. (May not participate as a player in scrimmages or games when acting as a STUDENT COACH).
- May not act as a head coach or an assistant coach during practices or games.
- May be on the bench during games with an adult. The STUDENT COACH will count as one of the maximum of four Team Officials allowed on the bench.
- Must wear a helmet with full face shield, gloves and skates while on the ice. Must wear helmet during games while on the bench.
- May only work with players at least one full playing age level down (e.g., a Pee Wee age player may act as a STUDENT COACH at the Squirt or Mite level).
- The organization that is using the STUDENT COACH must provide a form indicating on what team he/she is participating as a STUDENT COACH, and, if applicable, what team he/she is properly registered/rostered as a player. A model form is available on the [usahockey.com](http://usahockey.com) website.
- Upon reaching the age of 18, the STUDENT COACH must comply with the USA Hockey Screening Program and meet the USA Hockey Coaching Education Program requirements which will qualify him/her to act as an assistant or head coach.

## **Coaching Ethics Code**

All USA Hockey ice hockey coaches (head, assistant and instructors) must abide by the USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code, and understand that violations may result in full or partial forfeiture of coaching privileges in programs, at sites or events under USA Hockey's governance. The ethics code agreement states that the coach and/or instructor has read and will abide by USA Hockey's Coaching Ethics Code.

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Ice hockey coaches and instructors need only have to sign this commitment each hockey season. All coaches have an obligation to be familiar with USA Hockey's Coaching Ethics Code, or as it may be amended from time to time. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not itself a defense to a charge of unethical conduct (See USA Hockey Coaching Ethics Code Booklet).

All registered USA Hockey ice hockey coaches and instructors of USA Hockey programs must sign the coaching ethics code agreement in order to be eligible to coach or instruct in any regular-season activities (practices, clinics, games, tournaments, tryouts, etc.), state, district, regional playoff, national championships or in the USA Hockey Player Development Program.

## **Coaches' Code of Conduct**

1. Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the child than winning the game. Remember players are involved in hockey for fun and enjoyment.
2. Be a positive role model to your players, display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of players.
3. Be generous with your praise when it is deserved, be consistent, honest, be fair and just, do not criticize players publicly, and study to learn to be a more effective communicator and coach, and don't yell at players.
4. Adjust to personal needs and problems of players, be a good listener, never verbally or physically abuse a player or official, give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and develop self-esteem, teach the basics.
5. Organize practices that are fun and challenging for your players. Familiarize yourself with the rules, techniques and strategies of hockey, encourage all your players to be team players.
6. Maintain an open line of communication with your players' parents. Explain the goals and objectives of your association.
7. Be concerned with the overall development of your players. Stress good health habits and clean living.

***To win the game is great; to play the game is greater; to love the game is the greatest of all.***

## **Parents' Code of Conduct**

1. Do not force your children to participate in sports, but support their desires to play their chosen sport.
2. Children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun.
3. Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember children learn best by example, so applaud the good plays of both teams.
4. Do not embarrass your child by yelling at players, coaches, or officials. By showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants, your child will benefit.
5. Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. Deemphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
6. Know and study the rules of the game, and support the officials on and off the ice. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game.

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7. Applaud a good effort in victory and in defeat, and reinforce the positive points of the game. Never yell or physically abuse your child after a game or practice, it is destructive. Work toward removing the physical and verbal abuse in youth sport.
  8. Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are very important to the development of your child and the sport. Communicate with them and support them.
  9. If you enjoy the game, learn all you can about the game, and volunteer!

## **Players' Code of Conduct**

1. Play for FUN!
2. Work to improve your skills.
3. Be a team player—get along with your teammates.
4. Learn teamwork, sportsmanship, and discipline.
5. Be on time for practices and games.
6. Learn the rules, and play by them. Always be a good sport.
7. Respect your coach, your teammates, your parents, opponents, and officials.
8. Never argue with officials' decisions.

## **Sexual Abuse Policy**

It is the policy of USA Hockey that there shall be no sexual abuse of any minor participant involved in any of its Sanctioned Programs, its Training Camps, Hockey Clinics, Coaches Clinics, Referee Clinics, Regional and National Tournaments or other USA Hockey events by an employee, volunteer, or independent contractor. Sexual abuse of a minor participant occurs when an employee, volunteer or independent contractor touches a minor participant for the purpose of causing the sexual arousal or gratification of either the minor participant or the employee, volunteer or independent contractor. Sexual abuse of a minor participant also occurs when a minor player touches an employee, volunteer or independent contractor for the sexual arousal or sexual gratification of either the minor participant or the employee, volunteer or independent contractor, if the touching occurs at the request or with the consent of the employee, volunteer or independent contractor. Neither consent of the player to the sexual contact, mistake as to the participant's age, nor the fact that the sexual contact did not take place at a hockey function are defenses to a complaint of sexual abuse. Upon proof of violation of this policy, the violator will be permanently banned or suspended from USA Hockey sanctioned programs and/or the programs of its Affiliate Associations.

## **Screening Policy**

It is the policy of USA Hockey that it will not authorize or sanction in its programs that it directly controls any volunteer or employee who has routine access to children (anyone under the age of majority) who refuses to consent to be screened by USA Hockey before he/she is allowed to have routine access to children in USA Hockey's programs. Further, it is the policy of USA Hockey that it will require its affiliates to adopt this policy as a condition of its affiliation with USA Hockey. A person may be disqualified and prohibited from serving as an employee or volunteer of USA Hockey if the person has:

1. Been convicted (including crimes, the record of which has been expunged and pleas of "no contest") of a crime of child abuse, sexual abuse of a minor, physical abuse, causing a child's death, neglect of a child, murder, manslaughter, felony assault, any assault against a minor,



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kidnapping, arson, criminal sexual conduct, prostitution related crimes or controlled substance crimes;

2. Being adjudged liable for civil penalties or damages involving sexual or physical abuse of children;
3. Being subject to any court order involving any sexual abuse or physical abuse of a minor, including but not limited to domestic order or protection;
4. Had their parental rights terminated;
5. A history with another organization (volunteer, employment, etc.) of complaints of sexual or physical abuse of minors;
6. Resigned, been terminated or been asked to resign from a position, whether paid or unpaid, due to complaint(s) of sexual or physical abuse of minors; or
7. Has a history of other behavior that indicates they may be a danger to children in USA Hockey.

## **Physical Abuse Policy**

It is the policy of USA Hockey that there shall be no physical abuse of any participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs, its training camps, hockey clinics, coaches clinics, referee clinics, regional and national tournaments or other USA Hockey events by any employee, volunteer or independent contractor. Physical abuse means physical contact with a participant that intentionally causes the participant to sustain bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse also includes physical contact with a participant that intentionally creates a threat of immediate bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse does not include physical contact that is reasonably designed to coach, teach or demonstrate a hockey skill. Permitted physical conduct may include, but is not necessarily limited to, shooting pucks at a goaltender, demonstrating checking and other hockey skills, and communicating with or directing participants, during the course of a game or practice, by touching them in a non-threatening, non-sexual manner.

## **Hazing**

It is the policy of USA Hockey that there shall be no hazing of any participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs, its training camps, hockey clinics, coaches clinics, referee clinics, regional and national tournaments or other USA Hockey events by any employee, volunteer, participant or independent contractor.

**Definition:** Conduct which is insulting, intimidating, humiliating, offensive, or physically harmful. Any player, team official, executive member of a team, club or association having been party to or having had knowledge of any degrading hazing, or initiation rite, without reporting it or taking action, shall be subject to suspension from playing or holding office with any team, club or association affiliated with USA Hockey.

## **Consumption/Use/Abuse of Mood Altering Substances**

It is the considered judgment of the Board of Directors of USA Hockey that consumption/use/abuse of mood altering substances is detrimental to a healthy state of mind, body, and spirit in an athletic participant. This is especially true for those participants aspiring to develop their talents in the furtherance of their playing, or coaching, or officiating careers in the sport of ice hockey. Therefore, with the best interests of its participants in mind, USA Hockey prohibits use by any participant of mood

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altering substances during active participation in its programs, and, upon discovery of any violation, shall take action to remove the participant from participation in its programs for a reasonable period of time. Further, USA Hockey hereby recommends that each and all of its teams, associations, programs and affiliates adopt reasonable regulations concerning the prohibition of consumption/use/abuse of mood altering substances, and a reasonable enforcement procedure thereafter, in order to maintain the health of our athlete participants, the integrity of our programs, and the eligibility of all of our competitors for national, international, and collegiate competition.

For purposes of this policy, the words “mood altering substances” shall include the following:

1. Intoxicating beverages, including, but not limited to, alcohol.
2. Non-prescription or prescribed controlled substances.
3. Prescription or prescribed controlled substances when used to an excess in violation of doctors orders, or to produce the state of intoxication in the participant.

Further, a participant shall include players, coaches, referees, and all persons involved in the conduct of an ice hockey contest.

## Core Values

The following core values of USA Hockey are adopted to guide the Association’s members in its planning, programming and play, both now and in the future.

**SPORTSMANSHIP:** Foremost of all values is to learn a sense of fair play. Become humble in victory, gracious in defeat. We will foster friendship with teammates and opponents alike.

**RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL:** Treat all others as you expect to be treated.

**INTEGRITY:** We work to foster honesty and fair play beyond mere strict interpretation of the rules and regulations of the game.

**PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AT THE INDIVIDUAL, TEAM, AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS:**

Each member of the organization, whether player, volunteer or staff, should seek to perform each aspect of the game to the highest level of his or her ability.

**ENJOYMENT:** It is important for the hockey experience to be fun, satisfying, and rewarding for the participant.

**LOYALTY:** We aspire to teach loyalty to the ideals and fellow members of the sport of hockey.

**TEAMWORK:** We value the strength of learning to work together. The use of teamwork is reinforced and rewarded by success in the hockey experience.

## **Introduction**

The main objective of the USA Hockey Skill Development Program is to give 6 to 10-year-old boys and girls the ultimate hockey experience. Hockey at this level should be based on having fun, participation by all, and being taught basic hockey skills. This program is based on these ideals.

The program is comprised of four lesson manuals; A, B, C and D. These manuals are for coaches who have completed the USA Hockey Coaching Education Program (CEP) Level 1 Coaching Clinic where they receive instruction in Leadership, Communication, Teaching Skills, Skill Analysis, Lesson Organization and Principles of Safety. The Coaches receive an Instructor's Manual at this training session which they can then use as a reference to help implement the lesson manuals.

Each of the four lesson manuals contain 20 suggested lesson plans to teach beginning hockey players the basic skills in an organized and tested progression. The first 15 lessons in each manual are very detailed and the five remaining lessons are in outline form so that the Coach can further develop his or her practice planning technique and organizational skills. (See Lesson Format on page 2.)

The USA Hockey Skill Development Program is based on a model of practicing and playing cross-ice. "Why cross-ice," you may ask, "I want my child playing on the big ice surface like the adults do." That is the point, children are not adults, they learn differently than adults, and they see the world differently than adults do. This cross-ice practicing and playing model has been used in many of the leading hockey nations in the world for a number of years and has stood the test of time. It has shown that children who begin their hockey training in this environment have an outstanding hockey experience. (See the Advantages of Cross-Ice Practicing and Playing on page 5.)

Playing Rules for Boys and Girls Under 10 Years Old, which have also been tested and developed over time in many countries around the world, are included on page 7. These rules enable the children to develop hockey skills in an environment that fosters fun, learning, participation by all, and mental and physical development.

Coaches, have fun and lead the children of the world into the future.

## Lesson Format

The four lesson manuals, A, B, C, and D, are formatted in a similar style. The components are laid out in a progressive order to help the Coach prepare for and operate an efficient practice. The four components of a lesson are:

1. Specific Objectives
2. Key Instructional Points
3. Teaching Tools Needed
4. Lesson Plan

The Lesson Plans are intended as worksheets for the Coach to write on while preparing the practice. Once the practice is prepared the Coach should put the Lesson Plan in a plastic cover, take it onto the ice and hang it on the boards for quick reference during the practice.

Descriptions of the components of a typical lesson plan are illustrated below.

**Lesson Plan Identification**  
 A = Lesson Manual A  
 1 = Lesson 1

**Specific Objectives**

- New skills that are to be taught in this lesson are **introduced** here!
- Skills that are being repeated will be **reviewed** in the objectives.
- In some lessons, the objective will be to **refine** certain skills.

**Key Instructional Points**

- Provide the Coach with Key Points for giving clear teaching instructions.
- Take your Key Points from here and write them onto your lesson plan.
- If needed, take this page onto the ice for support.

**Teaching Tools Needed**

- These are the teaching tools that the Coach will need to prepare for this lesson.
- Remember, the children appreciate when the Coach is prepared.
- Add your own teaching tools to the list.

# SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



### Key Points

- Add your own Key Instructional Points or notes here:
  - bend knees
  - head up
  - keep it fun
  - good communication

### Teaching Tools

- Use the teaching tools which are listed and enhance with your own ideas.

### Organizational Information

- Add your specific information here.

### Skill

- The skill or activity that will be used will be illustrated here.

### Filled-In Illustration

- This illustration, which is filled-in, indicates that this skill or technique has been used earlier in the manual.

### Description

- A detailed description of the skill or activity that will be used is given here to help the Coach in giving instructions to the children.

**LESSON PLAN A-1**

LEADER: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TEAM: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

KEY POINTS

TEACHING TOOLS

SKILL	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Free Skate and Warm-up	1. Clockwise and counterclockwise directions. 2. Varied speeds. Warm-up: Perform agility drills (p. A-2) a. Knees high b. Sit low c. Sit high d. Reach high e. Touch toes	10 minutes 
Basic Stance (introduce)  p. A-4	1. Leader to demonstrate and go over key points. 2. Have players go into basic stance. 3. Check for balance: a. Have players stand on left skate only. b. Have players stand on right foot only. c. Have players jump up 2-10 cm off ice. Keep knees bent when landing. d. Rock forward onto the toes and backwards onto the heels and try to feel where the best balance point is. NOTE: Repeat each several times.	10 minutes 
Agility (introduce)  p. A-4	1. Leader to demonstrate the proper technique of getting up. 2. Have players fall to knees and get up into basic stance. 3. Have players lie on stomachs. Two hands on the stick, elbows on ice, holding stick level. Pull to kneeling position by using elbows, and then stand up in basic stance.	5 minutes 
Balance (introduce)  p. A-2	1. Walk across ice. Lift knees to touch stick held waist-high. Repeat several times.	5 minutes 
Fun Time  p. A-2	1. Give every player a tennis ball. 2. Individual players bounce the ball and catch it. 3. Partners (2-4 metres apart) roll ball to your partner. Player bends over, picks it up and returns to basic stance. 4. Partners kick ball with side of skate (inside of blade) to partner.	10 minutes 

A-5


### Illustration





- This illustration, with no fill-in, indicates that this is the first time that this skill or technique is used in the manual.

### Time

- Recommended times for each activity are given here.
- Adjust the time according to your situational needs.

## LESSON PLAN A-1




SKILL	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Balance and Agility (introduce)	1. The players must follow the leader who moves slowly around the area. Leader must move slowly and change directions frequently.	5 minutes 
Balance and Agility (introduce) 	1. Starting from sideboards, the players cross link trying to walk on the toes of their skates. Players must stand straight.	5 minutes 
Game Time	1. British Bulldog Players stand in line along boards. One player stands in the middle of the rink. At leader's signal, players must cross to the other side. The player in the middle must try to tag them. Players who are touched remain in the center to help. Winner is the last player touched.	10 minutes 

**LESSON SUMMARY**

Successes: \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Improvement: \_\_\_\_\_



Great first practice!

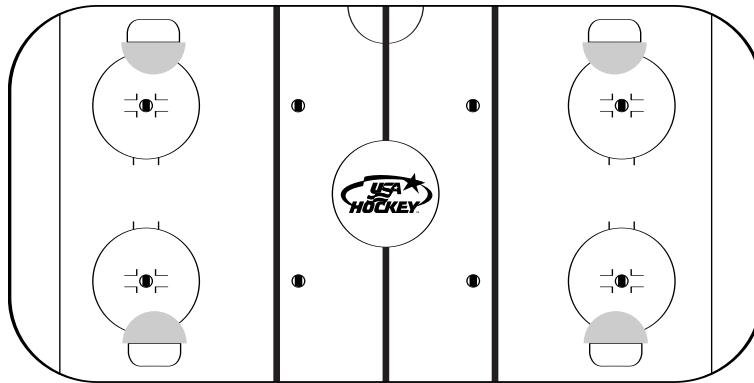
A lot of fun!

A-8

### Lesson Summary

- After practice, this section is to be completed by the Coach.
- What successes did we have today?
- In which areas do we need more improvement?
- What needs to be reviewed or refined?

## The Advantages of Cross-Ice Practicing and Playing



The USA Hockey Skill Development Program, which is for children, is based on a model of practicing and playing hockey across the 85 feet width of the ice surface as compared to practicing and playing lengthways along the full 200 foot length of the ice surface. This cross-ice practicing and playing model has been used in many of the leading hockey nations in the world for a number of years and has stood the test of time. It has been shown that children who begin their hockey training in this environment have an outstanding hockey experience.

Parents may ask the question why should my child play cross-ice, what will this bring? I want my child playing like the professionals do, full-ice, because I want my child to experience “real hockey”.

To help address these questions, let’s think about a child trying to skate with a puck while performing a drill the entire 200 feet from one end of the rink to the other, how long will this take? How much energy will this require? Will the player’s decision-making skills be enhanced more in the close action of the smaller cross-ice surface or in the wide-open area of the full-ice surface? In which situation will the child be more involved in the action?

A study of hockey games played on the full-ice surface by George Kingston in 1976 found the following:

- In a sixty minute running time hockey game between 6-8 year old children, the average player had possession of the puck for 20.7 seconds.
- Top National Hockey League and international professional players were also timed and no player exceeded 85 seconds of puck possession time.
- In a sixty-minute children’s game the actual playing time of the game was 20 minutes and 38 seconds. Taking this into consideration, the individual player is only on the ice every third or fourth shift depending on how many players are on the team, resulting in even less ice time.
- An average of less than 0.5 shots per game for youth players and only 1.5 shots per game for junior and professional players.

The study concluded that:

- For young players in the “full-ice game model” of development, the youngest players would require 180 games and the older youth players would require 80 games to enjoy 60 minutes of actual puck possession time to execute their stickhandling, passing, pass receiving and shooting skills.
- Professional and international players would require 60 games to ensure 60 minutes of puck control skill development.

**Many players never touched the puck in the game, especially in youth hockey.**

USA Hockey firmly believes that by giving children the opportunity to participate in the Skill Development Program, which supports cross-ice practicing and playing, that their enjoyment of hockey as well as their hockey skills will be greatly enhanced.



# SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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To help you further understand the benefits of the cross-ice practicing and playing model, some of the advantages are listed below.

## Practicing

- The children have more energy with which they can improve their skills when they are skating 85 feet across the ice surface as opposed to the 200 foot length of the ice surface.
- Group sizes become smaller which means learning and teaching will become more effective.
- The close feeling of belonging to a team will motivate a child to participate with even greater enthusiasm.
- Drills designed according to the varying skill levels of players within the group are easier to organize.
- More puck contact resulting in improved puck control skills.
- More repetition/frequency in drills in one ice session.
- Decision-making skills are enhanced as more decisions must be made more frequently at a higher tempo.

## Actual Game

- Playing on a smaller rink results in increased puck possession time for each player.
- Individual technical skills develop more quickly.
- More frequent line changes in the game means more ice time for each player.
- Children remain active between their shifts with various activities in the neutral zone.
- Line changes are made quickly since the players are directly beside the playing surface.
- Each player's activity increases greatly.
- Scoring skills are enhanced since the players have more shooting opportunities and the child sized goal nets force the players to shoot more accurate.
- The goalkeeper's reading of the game and reaction to changing game situations becomes more effective.
- More repetition for goalkeepers.
- The game is full of continuously changing situations.
- The speed in playing situations increases, which will require quicker mental and physical reactions by the players.
- Due to increased tempo, all of the team members take part in solving the playing situations which leads to a sharing of responsibilities between the players.
- The feeling of being an important part of the action increases because of the small size of the rink.
- Hockey sense, or understanding the principles of the game, is being developed at a young age.
- There are no unnecessary breaks in the game.

## General Organization

- More efficient use of ice time and space.
- The size of the rink is in proportion with the size of the players.
- The child sized goal nets are in proportion with the size of players.
- The middle zone is available for other purposes (player's bench, warm-up area, skill competition) while games are played in the end zones.
- USA Hockey recommends that teams play with two or three units of four or five players and one goalkeeper which results in each player having more ice time.
- More ice time for practicing and playing is made available to more teams within a single Association.
- Many teams can practice together by sharing the ice surface.

## General Spirit of Participation and Fun

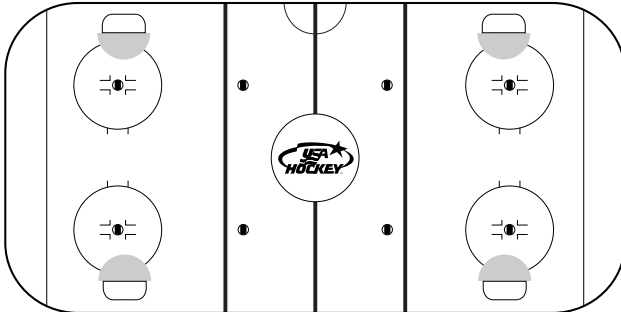
- More children get a chance to play ice hockey.
- More children will experience a feeling of success when playing hockey.
- The same exciting and fun environment as in a "real" game is created.
- Both more and less gifted children will benefit from close/tight action on the ice.
- Children are excited and motivated to continue playing hockey.
- Hockey will be more appealing and rewarding to a wider range of children and their parents.



## The Playing Rules for Boys and Girls Under 10 Years Old

### 1. Cross-Ice Playing Surface, Cross-Ice Rink Boards and Child-Sized Goal Nets

#### 1.1 Cross-Ice Playing Surface



All games will be played on one-third of the normal size rink, across the ice in the end zones.

#### 1.2 Cross-Ice Rink Boards

USA Hockey recommends that every arena construct a light board barrier which:

- is easy and quick to move on and off of the ice surface,
- is approximately 4 inches high and 2 inches wide,
- has no support legs to hinder the puck from sliding along the boards,
- forms a continuous barrier from one side of the rink boards to the boards on the opposite side,
- uses some form of mechanism to easily hook the boards together,
- is constructed of, for example, wood, aluminum, fiberglass, or an old fire hose.

To keep the puck in play it is recommended that a “corner board” be constructed. The “corner board” constructions should be the same height and width as the boards which runs along the blue line. An example of the light board barrier construction is shown in diagrams 1 and 2.

Diagram 1

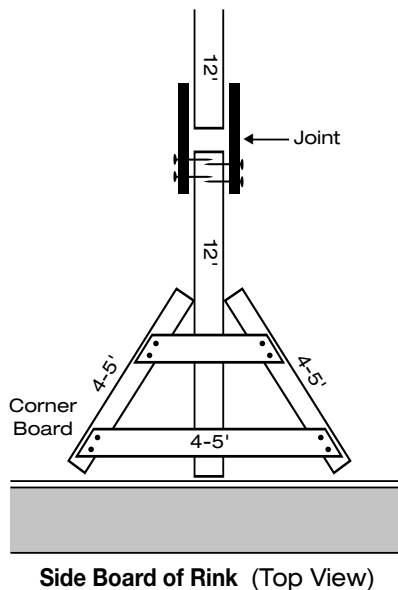
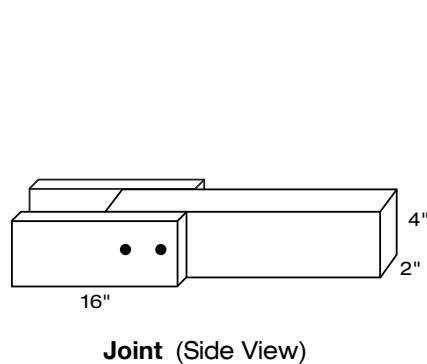


Diagram 2





# SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## 1.3 Child Sized Goal Nets

It is recommended that Child Sized Goal Nets be used to give the goalkeeper a greater chance of success, which will in turn build confidence. Further, every shot on net will not result in a goal and therefore there will be fewer stoppages in play which will result in more playing time.

The goals should be located one meter from the sideboards of the rink and half way between the end boards of the rink and the cross-ice rink boards set up on the blue line.

Two Child Sized Goal Net construction examples are provided below.

### 1.3.1 Lightweight Goal Nets

Lightweight goals, measuring 36 inches high, 52 inches wide and 28 inches deep can be used, constructed of 1/2 - 3/4 inch tubing. The lower end of the goal posts should have small pegs to keep the goal in position. (see diagram 3 and 4)

Diagram 3

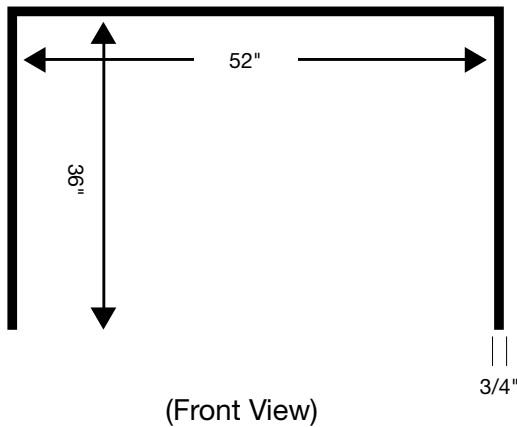
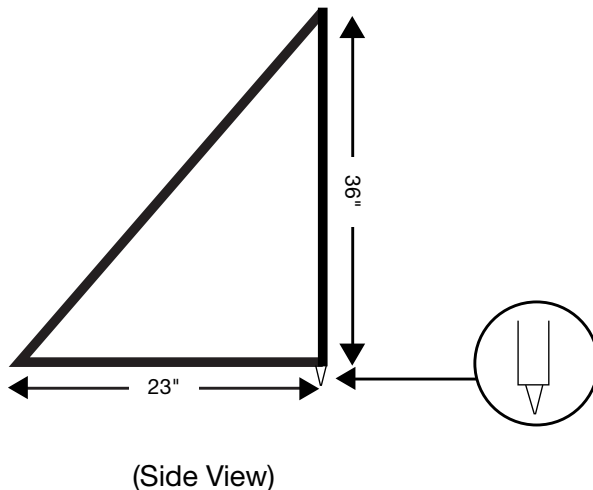


Diagram 4



## 1.3.2 Goal Insert

These lightweight goal inserts could be constructed using wood or plastic. The inserts should be made to fit inside the posts of a normal goal net. The insert should have an opening 36 inches high and 52 inches wide. The insert can be fastened to the goal posts and cross bar using straps or hooks. (see diagrams 5 and 6)

Diagram 5

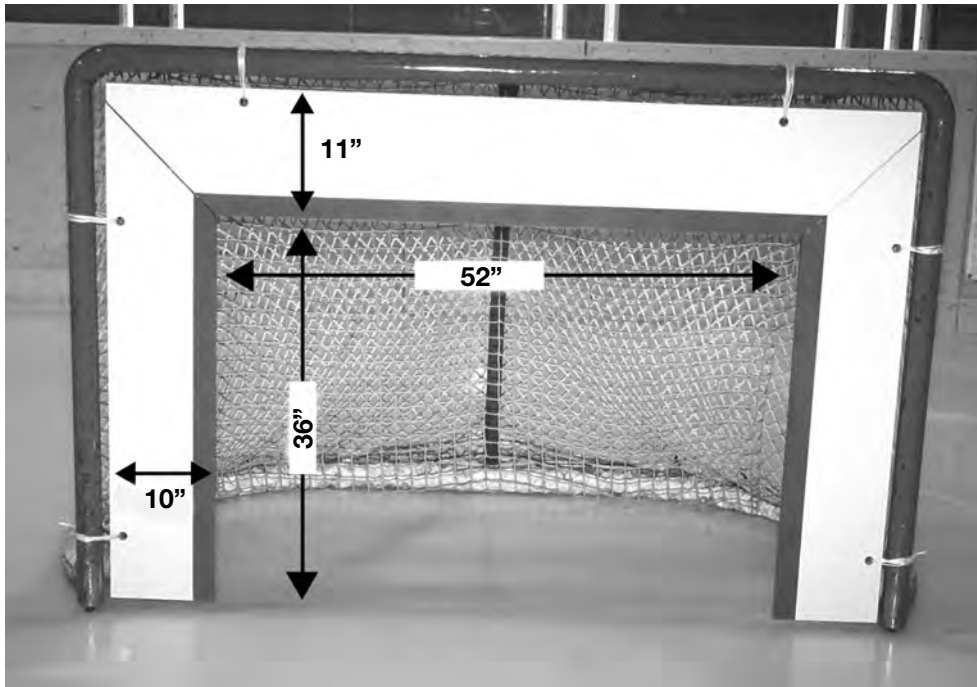


Diagram 6





# SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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## 2. Equipment

Remember that the children being taught are small and in order for them to achieve maximum enjoyment and optimize their understanding of the skills, junior sized equipment should be used.

### 2.1 Junior Size Sticks

All players are encouraged to use junior sized sticks. Some benefits of using junior size sticks are:

- they are less expensive than senior sticks ,
- they enable better puck control,
- they are lighter, and therefore improve balance.

### 2.2 Lightweight Pucks

The overall diameter, thickness and material of the puck should be the same as a normal game puck. (minimum weight is 2.8 ounces and maximum is 4.5 ounces) Options for lightweight pucks are outlined below.

#### 2.2.1 Blue Puck

- This is a normal size puck, blue in color, which is made of a lightweight material.

## 3. Game Organization

### 3.1 Statistics

No statistics or league standings are to be recorded, however, a game sheet must be filled out so that the federation has a record that the game took place. No scores are to be shown on the game time clock.

### 3.2 Game Officials

At least one person will act as “coach” or “referee” to manage the game.

### 3.3 Off-Ice Officials

The home team should arrange for a timekeeper.

### 3.4 Face-offs

Face-offs will take place in the center of the playing surface at the beginning of the game and the period, as well as after a goal, after a break in the play (when the goalkeeper freezes the puck), or when changing the players.

Tip: To ensure quick face-off alignment, a red line with a face-off dot could be painted on the ice with spray paint.

## 3.5 Playing Time

### 3.5.1 Player Participation

All the players whose names are on the team roster must be played evenly in every game.

### 3.5.2 Shift Changes

At the signal from the timekeeper, at a maximum of 90 seconds running time, the units will change. The units will always play at even strength (5 - 5, 4 - 4).

### 3.5.3 Length of the game

The length of the game is to be determined by the club.

### 3.5.4 Length of the playing shifts

The maximum length of the shift is 90 seconds running time.

## 3.6 Off-Sides, etc.

There are no blue line off-sides, icing etc.

## 3.7 Violating the Rules, Penalties

When a player violates the rules, the game “coach” or “referee” can stop the game by blowing the whistle and clarifying the reason for the break with the player in question. No penalties are given. A new face-off will take place in the center of the playing surface. If necessary the game “coach” can remove a player from the game.

If a player continuously violates the rules, the coach from the player’s team may remove him or her for the remainder of the game and substitute a new player in his or her place.

## 3.8 Players Waiting for Their Turn to Play

The center zone should function as the players bench. Players waiting for their turn to play can rest there by standing, kneeling or sitting. For maximum ice use and player development, the players should be allowed to skate, pass the puck, etc., in the middle zone while they are awaiting their turn to play.

## 3.9 Bodychecking

No bodychecking is allowed.





# SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## Teaching Tools

Below is a Tool Box, which has a list of the teaching tools that are necessary to run a successful Skill Development Program. As the Coaches gain experience they are encouraged to add their own teaching tools to the Tool Box to enhance the learning environment during practices.



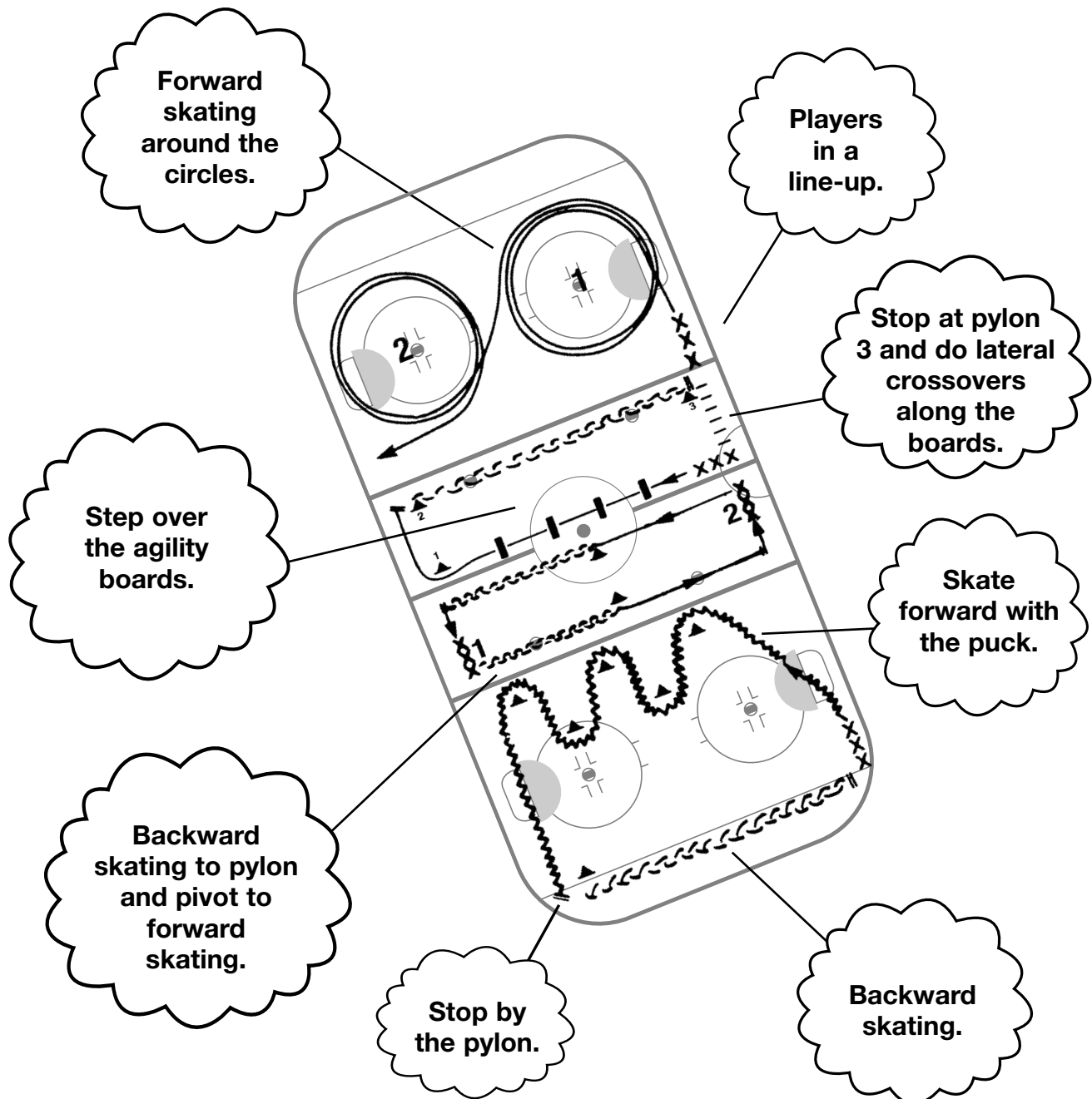
## Ice Diagram Legend

The following symbols are used in the Skill Development Program Lesson Manuals.

Chair **h**  
 Pylon **▲**  
 Hockey Stick **└─┘**  
 Player **X**  
 Coach **Ⓒ**  
 Paint Spot **\***

Puck **●**  
 Stop **—■**  
 Forward Skate **→**  
 Backward Skate **←**  
 Puck Carrying **→**  
 Lateral Movement **||||**

Passing **→**  
 Shooting **⇒**  
 Agility Board **—**  
 Jump Over **↑**  
 Step Over **↑**  
 Group of Players **(A), (1)**





# ***SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM***

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## **Notes**





## **Notes**



# ***SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM***

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## **Notes**





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**1775 Bob Johnson Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
[www.usahockey.com](http://www.usahockey.com)**