

# LEVEL 2 – ASSOCIATE MANUAL



## Handbook 2: Individual Skill Techniques

*A Publication Of The USA Hockey Coaching Education Program*



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# USA Hockey Coaching Education Program

Level 2 — Associate Manual

HANDBOOK II  
Individual Skill Techniques

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# 1

## Skill Performance

### Observing, Analyzing and Demonstrating

#### OBJECTIVES

- To instruct coaches on how to observe players and analyze their skill performance
- To help coaches develop an observation plan to offer practical feedback to athletes
- To assist coaches in developing skill progressions

#### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, you will be introduced to a procedure for observing performance, and interpreting those observations. You will be taught how to give practical feedback to the players and will be given a process of progressively teaching skills.

#### OBSERVATION

One of the most important roles of a coach is that of an observer. The ability to plan and coordinate practices alone is only one element of a good coach. A coach must be able to observe performances, evaluate them, and give practical feedback so the player's skills can develop and improve.

Observations occur in many different settings and in many different ways. It may occur during competition, at practice, during off-ice activities, during team-related activities or during individual-related activities. Whichever the setting of observation, it is very important the coach understands the process.

In trying to improve skill technique, coaches

must not observe performances like a spectator, giving feedback such as: "bad shot," "bad pass," or "great save." This kind of feedback is negative and does not give the player sufficient information to analyze and act upon.

Another error youth ice hockey coaches make in analyzing skill techniques is that they only make a symptomatic analysis. That is merely pointing out a fault without discussing the reason for it.

Coaches should have a well thought out plan to help them analyze the skills of their players and the knowledge to understand what causes poor performance, and be able to act upon this information.

There are three main stages to observing performance. They are:

1. The planning stage.
2. The observation stage.
3. The analysis stage.

#### Planning

In this stage, the coach must break down the skill being observed into parts. It will be

easier to focus on particular phases of a skill to be analyzed.

Once a skill has been broken into parts, the coach can identify the key components of each phase that affects the final outcome. The parts must be observable and the coach must be able to think of them in terms of the skills' mechanical movements.

At this stage, the coach must know what to look for and where to look. The good coach will develop a plan for observing skill execution which will assist in making a sound observation.

This plan must include the coach deciding what phase of the skills to focus in on, the key elements to be observed, and the best possible position from which to view the skill to get the best information.

## Observation

The following are some tips which should aid you in observing:

- View the athlete performing the skill from various angles so you see different things.
- It is useful to get a general idea of the entire skill by making a few broad observations before breaking down the skill.
- Be patient with your observation as well as your player. Do not correct just on the first observation. Watch a number of executions to be sure a problem really exists.
- A useful technique is to describe to yourself what you see.
- Video is a useful tool in helping the coach break down a skill.

## Analysis

Once the coach has observed the athlete's performance(s), the information that is gathered through correlating observable movements with the outcome of the performance must be analyzed. From this, a coach will be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the player's performance and give simple as well as practical feedback to the player.

## DEMONSTRATION AND PRACTICE

To improve in the area of skill development, as well as the conceptual aspect of

hockey, athletes need to know what to do and how to do it. The aim of proper demonstration and practice is to produce a model for the required element to be perfected. Athletes need to form the proper mental image of what is to be performed which will guide them through the subsequent actions.

Before practice, it is not only important to plan what is to be taught, but also to plan the demonstration to be given and the main points to be made.

It is important to demonstrate all components of practice, skills, and concepts to insure the proper results.

The following is a breakdown on how to teach a skill, drill, or concept in a progressive manner.

1. When teaching a complicated skill, show the player the skill in its entirety.
2. Break the skill down into teaching and learning components.
3. Allow the player to move slowly through each component which will enable him/her to learn, comprehend and master each movement.
4. Once all of the components of the task are taught, have the player execute the skill in its entirety. Allow them to move slowly at first, to gain confidence, and to ensure proper technique. Then you can gradually accelerate the rate of execution.
5. Once the skill is mastered, encourage execution at top speed.
6. Create fun game-like drills which will allow the player to practice and use the skill they have just been taught.
7. The final phase is to create game situations with resistance where the player needs to execute the new skill under pressure.

## SUMMARY

Feedback to the athletes is very important so they may develop their skills. In teaching it is an interaction between the coach and the athlete, and the following elements are important to remember:

1. You as a coach must understand the process of learning.
2. To be an effective coach you must be an effective observer.



3. It is important to know all of the components of a skill and be able to analyze them when an athlete is performing.
4. Being able to demonstrate or teach an athlete how to perform a particular skill or movement.
5. Be able to analyze and evaluate performance and provide simple and practical feedback to the athlete.

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# 2

## Skating

### OBJECTIVES

- Identify the important characteristics of executing each of the skating skills used in ice hockey
- Introduce skating skills in correct sequence
- Identify key elements of each skating skill
- Identify common errors young ice hockey players make when executing each of the skills of skating
- Learn to effectively use unique drills and activities in teaching specific skating skills

### INTRODUCTION

Ice hockey is a fast moving, physically demanding sport. The success or failure of a player is dependent on the ability to properly execute the skating skills included in this chapter.

Skating is the primary skill of ice hockey. The better a person can skate, the better that person will play the game.

In this chapter, we will build onto and refine the basic skating movements that were taught in the Skill Development Program. Greater skating efficiency and more confidence will be gained by the players as they enter into competitive levels.

The Skill Development Program exposes your players to skating through on-ice skill development and fun games. The following is a list of skills which the players are exposed to in the Skill Development Program:

1. Proper fit of skates
2. Edges
3. Ready position
4. Balance
5. Agility
6. The T-push
7. Gliding on 2 skates
8. Gliding on 1 skate

9. Edge control
10. Scooting
11. Glide turns
12. One o'clock stop
13. Eleven o'clock stop
14. Striding forward
15. Moving sideways
16. Backward stance
17. Backward walking
18. Backward C-cuts
19. Backward V-stop
20. Backwards striding
21. Agility and balance
22. 2-foot inside edges stop
23. Forward crossover pump
24. Front 1 foot inside edge stop
25. Reversing direction
26. Backward 1 foot stop/T-push
27. Backward push and glide
28. Backward gliding on 1 foot
29. Pivot backward to forwards
30. Pivot forward to backwards
31. Tight turns
32. 1 foot back outside edge stop

In this chapter, we will refine the existing skills from the Skill Development Level.

Good skating begins with good instruction. A good instructor should know technique and be able to break down each skill into parts.

### TEACHING SKATING

1. The right way of skating is always the right way, no matter whether the skater grows from 5 feet to 6 feet or gains from 75 pounds to 175 pounds. Kids like to take short-cuts in their growing years.

2. Practice does not make perfect, only perfect practice does. You play the way you practice. If you practice poorly, the skill will not be learned properly.
3. Many skaters do not fulfill their destiny to become good skaters because of complacency.
4. *“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”* Aristotle
5. *“The best teacher is repetition, day after day, throughout the season. It must be recognition and instant reaction.”* John Wooden, *They Call Me Coach*
6. After developing a skill competency, you must do the skill with quality execution—fast, faster, then the fastest you can do it.
7. Speed is the test of great competency. Speed will disintegrate an inefficient skill.
8. If the skill is being done inefficiently, re-teach, re-demonstrate, use a different learning drill, or have a different instructor teach until the skill is executed properly.

## SKATING SKILLS

### READY POSITION

Good skating starts from the READY position. Go to any practice or skating session and take a quick look around. In a glance, you will be able to pick out the good skaters. Skaters look like skaters, hockey players look like hockey players. They all have one thing in common—good posture.

#### Key Elements

- Skates are shoulder width apart
- Weight is on the inside edges of the skates
- Knees are pushed out as far as possible over the toes
- Back is straight; and the head, eyes, and chest are up
- Shoulders are level and aligned over the knees
- The hands are close together on the stick about 8 inches apart
- *“Let the ice carry the stick.”* The stick is on the ice in front of the body
- The stick moves to the bent, balancing knee when moving, so the stick moves in *“Ready Position”* with the body

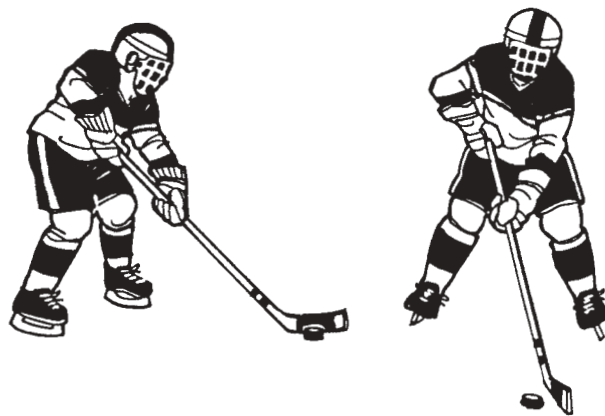


Figure 2-1. The ready position.

#### Common Errors

- Positioning the skates more than shoulder width apart (this limits the ability to move quickly)
- Too much bend at the waist (this straightens the knees and reduces stability)
- Positioning the skates less than shoulder width apart (this reduces stability and limits the ability to move quickly)

*The “Ready Position” is the first ingredient of a great skater.*

The closer a skater is to the ice the more power, balance, and agility the skater will have. **The deeply bent knees are key factors.**

To move out of the *“Stationary Ready Position”* into a *“Moving Ready Position,”* the player must shift all his or her weight onto an edge, balance, pushdown/pushout to a full extension with the other leg, and then recover. Most inefficiencies are caused by a poor *“Ready Position”* or improper weight shift.

If an inefficient skating style is practiced and not corrected, it will become engraved in that player’s individual skating style. It will take a willing student many hours, many repetitions, and a patient coach to change.

## Suggestions for Teaching

Refer to the USA Hockey Beginning Skating video for a description of the inefficient skating styles. The inefficient skating styles are:

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. Short Stroker | 4. Rail Roder |
| 2. Bobber        | 5. Walker     |
| 3. High Kicker   | 6. 1½ Stroker |

## Suggestions for Coaching

You should be able to press down on the outstretched hands of your players in a ready position, and they should be able to hold much of your weight. A good position will allow them to hold your weight and be able to skate and push you backwards. In a poor position, players will fall forward.

## EDGE CONTROL

As illustrated in Figure 2-2, each side of the blade has an edge. The edges on the outside of the blade closest to the little toe are called outside edges, and those on the inside of the blade closest to the big toe are called inside edges. All of the skills of skating are controlled by using these edges in a precise way that results from familiarity and practice. **The ankles control the edges, therefore, every player must develop skill in using ankle positioning in both stationary and moving situations.**

### Key Elements

- The ankles control the edges
- Knee of glide leg is bent
- Weight is on the correct edge (inside or outside)
- Distribution of weight from the ball of the foot back to just in front of the heel

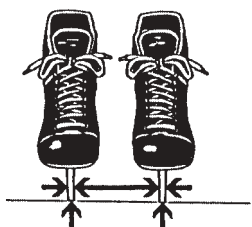


Figure 2-2. Inside and outside edges.

## Common Errors

- Failure to roll the ankle
- Transfer the weight and glide on the edge
- Insufficient knee bend

## Suggestions for Coaching

Drills are an excellent tool for becoming familiar with both the inside and outside edges. Generally players should progress from stationary to moving and from inside to outside edges as they practice their edge control.

## FORWARD STRIDE

The forward stride begins with a thrust off the inside edge of the skate. **A full leg extension is necessary to obtain full power.** The length of the stride is determined by the amount of knee bend in the gliding leg.

At full extension, there should be an outward snap of the ankle which brings the blade off the ice to begin the recover phase. The head and eyes should be directed forward and the shoulders should be level. At full extension, the back is in a straight line with the extended leg.

**To help speed recovery, the skates must be kept low** (next to the ice). As one skate returns to the gliding position with the knee bent, the opposite leg is initiating the thrust off the inside edge.

### Key Elements

- For power, push down on inside edge and out to the side to full extension
- To help speed recovery, the skate must be kept low and recover back under the hip with emphasis on full recovery
- The knee is kept bent and weight over the glide foot
- Keep a straight alignment of the trunk and thrust leg



Figure 2-3. The forward stride.



Figure 2-4. The forward stride sequence (thrust, glide, recovery).

### Common Errors

- Failing to place weight onto the glide leg
- Not bending the knees sufficiently (this results in a short skating stride, i.e., Short Stroker)
- Thrusting backward off the toe instead of outward to the side (Walker)
- A high kick on the recovery phase of the stride (High Kicker)
- Straightening the glide leg after each stride (the skater must replace one bent gliding knee with another, i.e., The Bobber)

### Suggestions for Coaching

You should begin the teaching process with stationary exercises that will enhance technique and then progress to drills that may be done at 1/2 to 3/4 speed. Remember, it is the quality of the technique that is most important to the ultimate success of your players.

### FORWARD START

The forward start begins from the ready position. It is most commonly used when already facing straight ahead. Turn the toes of the skate out at approximately a 45-degree angle and the heels in. Thrust off the inside edge of one skate and strive to attain maximum extension with the leg. The knee of the thrusting leg must be bent with the body weight on that leg. This enables you to have more power available for thrust.



Figure 2-5. The forward start.

As you thrust forward, your upper body or trunk will be in a straight line with your extended leg. The knee of the glide leg is bent out over the toe. **There should be no bending at the waist.**



Figure 2-6. The thrusting leg extension.

The thrusting leg should be extended fully and returned quickly to its original position; then continue by thrusting off the inside edge of the opposite skate, once again striving for full extension.



Figure 2-7. Rapid leg recovery.

Rapid leg recovery is vital to fast starts. Remember that each rapid, running stride should take you further than the preceding one. Spring forward; be careful not to move in an upward direction; your height off the ice should be minimal. The first several strides tend to appear short because there is minimal glide. Long gliding strides minimize power and thrust. **Quick starts result from strong thrust, full extension, and rapid leg recovery.**

### Key Elements

- Start on one skate with inside edge
- Rotate chest and hips in intended direction of travel
- Place skates in a heel-to-heel position
- Thrust off the inside edge of the back skate while stepping forward with the front skate

- Full extension of the thrusting leg
- Rapid, low leg recovery is essential

### Common Errors

- Failing to turn the toes out at a 45-degree angle
- Failing to bend the knee of the thrusting leg
- Failing to transfer weight to the glide leg

### FORWARD START

#### Right/Left

In order to properly execute the forward start to the right, the skater must rotate the chest and hips to the right placing the skates in a heel-to-heel position and then thrusting off the inside edge of the left skate while pointing the right skate in your intended direction. The thrusting leg should be extended fully.

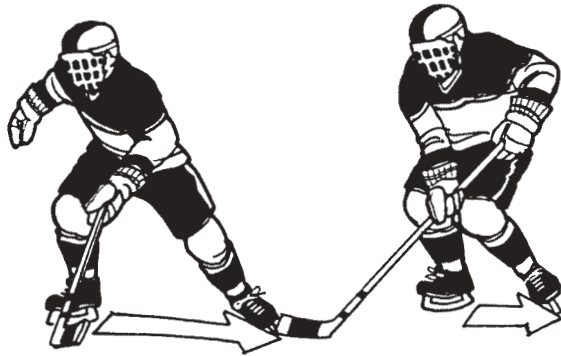


Figure 2-8. The forward start right.



Figure 2-9. Execute the forward start to the right.

As in the forward start, the ankles are turned in with the weight on the inside edges.

For a forward start to the left, reverse the process. Rotate the chest and hips to the left bringing the skates to a heel-to-heel position pointing the left skate in your intended direc-

tion and thrusting off the inside edge of the right skate, extending the leg fully.

Once again, the key to proper execution is full extension and rapid leg recovery.

### Key Elements

- Rotate chest and hips in your intended direction
- Place your skates in a heel-to-heel position
- Thrust off the inside edge of the back skate while pointing the front skate in your intended direction
- The thrusting leg should be fully extended

### Common Errors

- Failure to rotate chest and hips properly
- Failing to point the front skate in your intended direction
- Not extending the thrusting leg fully

### THE CONTROL STOP

#### Stop in Ready Position

The primary objective of the control stop is to come to a complete stop in the ready position. This allows free and easy movement in any direction without a transfer of weight or change in the basic body position.

When stopping, both skates are on the inside edges-the front or lead skate pushing against the inside edge and the back or trailing skate pulling with the inside edge. Set the edges of both skates at the same time.



Figure 2-10. The control stop.



An effective way to teach this technique is to break it into three phases.

### Phase 1

In two separate movements, pushing against the inside edge of the lead skate and pulling with the inside edge of the trailing skate.

### Phase 2

In a single movement, both legs are shuffled simultaneously using the inside edges of both skates in the same manner as in Phase 1.

### Phase 3

Practice this technique by taking one stride in either direction and stopping on both inside edges.

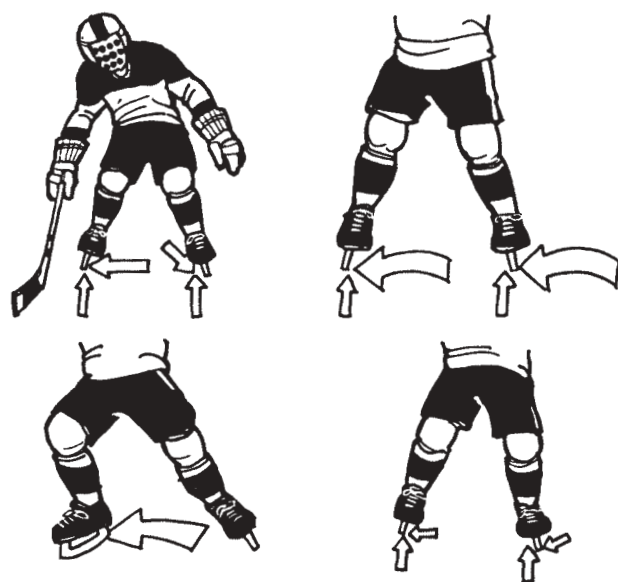


Figure 2-11. Breakdown of the control stop.

### Key Elements

- Stop on inside edge, both skates  
FRONT (Lead) Skate, pushing down on inside edge  
BACK (Trailing) Skate, pulling with inside edge
- Bend the knees
- Skates shoulder width for stability
- The majority of weight on front foot

### Common Errors

- Stopping with skates too far apart, allows for stability but very little mobility
- Stopping with skates too close together, allows for mobility but little stability

### TWO-SKATE "POWER" STOP Change Direction Stop

Hockey is a game which often demands quick stops and sudden changes in direction. The two-skate power stop is often used to accomplish this.

In order to properly execute this maneuver, the player must turn his body 90 degrees to his line of travel by rotating his shoulders and hips.



Figure 2-12. Front view.

The knees must be flexed with a slight body lean backwards, with weight on the inside edge of the lead skate and the outside edge of the trailing skate. Your skates should be shoulder width apart.

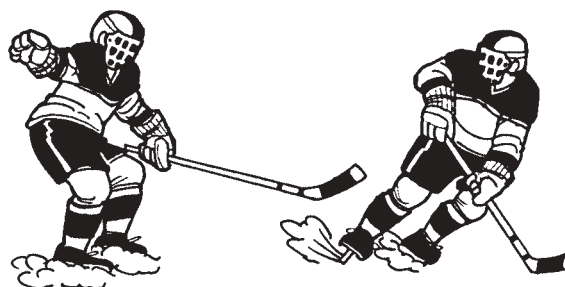


Figure 2-13. Side view.

From the stop you should be prepared to move quickly in the opposite direction by utilizing the crossover start.

Players should practice this stop to both the right and left.



Figure 2-14. Forward one-foot stop.

### Key Elements

- Stop on right skate
- Rotate hips to left
- Knee of right leg bent
- Plant inside edge of right skate firmly in ice
- Pick up left skate and go “heel-to-heel” at right angle, to right skate.

### Common Errors

- Insufficient knee bend
- Skates either too close together or too far apart

## CONTROL TURNS

The primary objective of this maneuver is to change direction quickly by executing a tight turn.

Learning this turn may require assistance from the coach by supporting the ankles of a tentative skater. This will help him gain confidence in his edges.

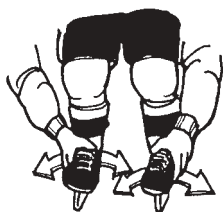


Figure 2-15. Angle movement.

The control turn requires the skater to use the outside edge of one skate and the inside edge of the other at the same time. The skater must learn to transfer weight to the outside edge of the lead skate and thrust off the inside edge of the trailing skate. Thrust with the entire length of the blade.

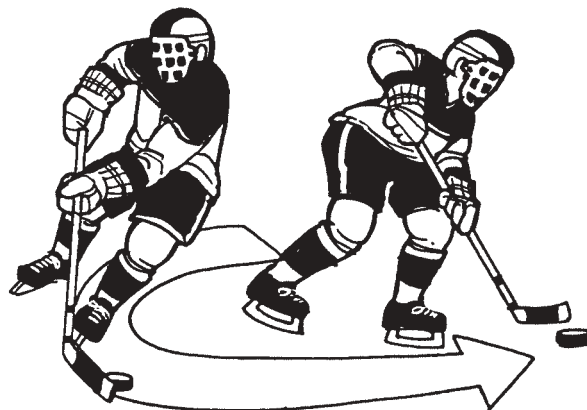


Figure 2-16. Control turn thrust.

The skates are shoulder-width apart and the knee of the lead skate is bent out over the toe with the weight transferred to the outside edge. Thrust out with the inside edge of the opposite (trailing) skate and extend the leg fully. The stronger both edges cut into the ice the tighter and quicker the turn will be. The hips should rotate in the direction of the turn with the shoulders level and the back straight.



Figure 2-17. The control turn.

### Key Elements

- Change direction quickly, by doing a tight turn



- Skates at least shoulder width apart side
- Lead skate, transfer weight to the out edge
- Knee of lead skate bent over skate
- Trailing skate, thrust out with inside edge
- Rotate hips in direction of turn
- Upper body is erect, no leaning in direction of turn
- Do crossunder push of lead skate behind trail skate, coming out of turn to accelerate

### Common Errors

- Weight back on the heels of the skates
- Bending forward at the waist
- Failure to keep the shoulders level

### FORWARD CROSSOVER

The forward crossover is a two-step maneuver. First a crossover with the front leg is done with the inside edge. The second step is the back leg pushes under with the outside edge.



Figure 2-18. Forward crossover.

This thrust should be out to the side rather than back and to full extension. Cross the left

leg under and behind the right leg rolling the ankle under and pushing to full extension.

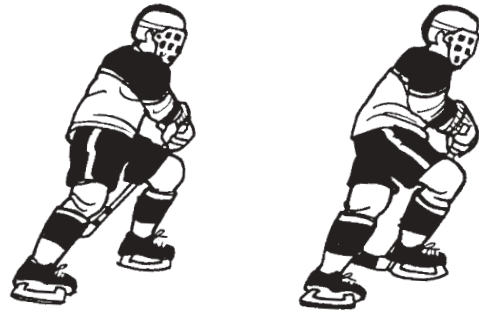


Figure 2-19. Crossover extension.

Once again the thrust should be against the entire length of the outside edge of the blade. Be careful to push the blade through rather than back.

Immediately after thrusting to full extension with the left leg, return the left skate back to its original position parallel to the right skate. Keep the left skate close to the ice as it returns.

Less skilled players may need to walk through the crossing steps to build confidence and feel in both inside and outside edges.

### Key Elements

- Stress the importance of the skate driving underneath (crossunder)
- Outside skate, push off inside edge, then pick up skate and cross knee-over-knee with inside skate
- Inside skate, push under with outside edge as outside skate crosses over
- Knee of gliding leg is bent

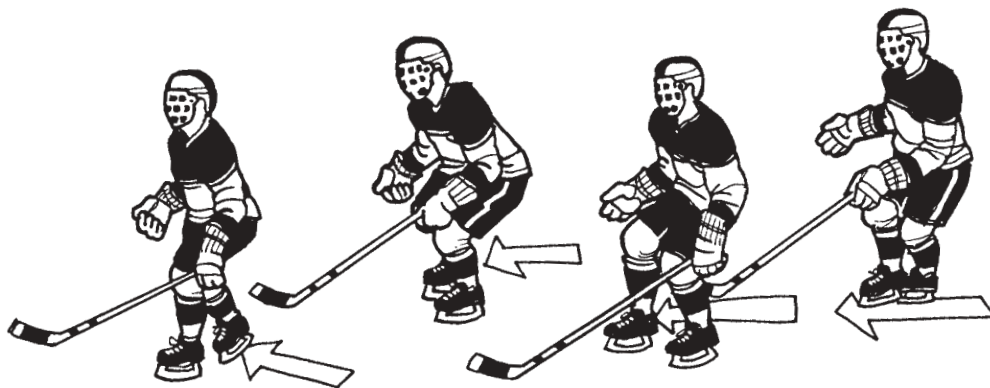


Figure 2-20. Forward crossover sequence.

### Common Errors

- Failure to roll the ankle and thrust off the entire length of the outside edge
- Insufficient bend in the knee of the glide leg
- Leaning into the turn by dipping the inside shoulder

### CROSSOVER START

The crossover start is one of the most commonly used hockey starts. It is often used following a two-foot hockey stop in order to change directions quickly. As an example let us begin by examining a crossover start to the left.

Upon completion of the two-foot power stop, the player is turned sideways. Therefore, turning forward to use a forward start is unnecessary.

The player begins by shifting his weight to the outside edge of his front skate, thus leaning forward in his intended direction. Thrust off the inside edge of the back skate, crossing it in front of the front skate. Roll the ankle of the front skate under and drive off the outside edge extending the leg to full extension.



Figure 2-21. Crossover start.

The body weight must be projected low to the ice and forward. As is the case in the forward start, the object is to use powerful, rapid strides to build speed quickly.



Figure 2-22. Crossover start sequence from a two-foot "power" stop.

1. You are positioned so that your front foot (left) is perpendicular to your intended line of travel.
2. Weight is transferred to the outside edge of the front skate. The front leg must thrust sideways under your body from its outside edge to full extension. This is done as the back leg (right) drives over the front foot.
3. Drive your body weight and back (right) knee as far forward as possible for maximum lateral movement. Always strive for distance, not height.
4. One crossover step is sufficient. Then, before pushing off with your right leg, pivot your hips to face forward and use the powerful sprinting steps of the forward stride, thrusting off the inside edges.
5. Simply reverse the procedure to go the opposite direction.

### Key Elements

- Lean and transfer your weight forward
- Drive the front leg underneath and thrust off the back leg
- Keep the body low and extend the thrusting leg fully
- Keep head up and shoulders level for balance and stability
- Practice to both the left and right

### Common Errors

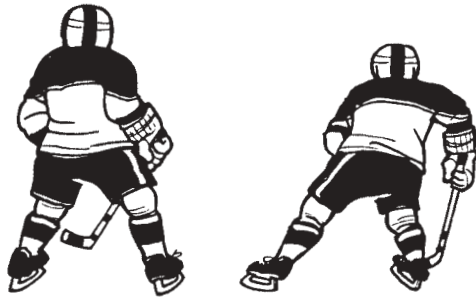
- Failure to transfer your weight forward
- Not driving the back leg over the front foot
- Not rolling the ankle of the front skate underneath and thrusting to full extension

### BACKWARD STRIDE

The ability to skate backwards with speed and mobility is an attribute which is important

for all players to possess, not just defensemen. As in the forward stride, it is important to emphasize power which is achieved by effectively using your edges, legs, and body weight.

From a stationary (ready) position, push and extend one leg while bending the knee of the opposite leg. The thrusting skate must be centered under your body. The weight is transferred to the leg of the bent knee (glide leg).



**Figure 2-23.** (a) Backward ready position. (b) Weight transfer.

Point the heel of the thrusting skate out and the toe in, push off the inside edge of that skate. Try to make a half-circle (“C”) as you dig in and push with the inside edge of the extending leg. Cut the “C” with the front half of the blade of the thrusting skate. The final thrust should come from the toe of the blade.

Extend the push leg to its maximum, then return it to its original position, by pivoting the heel inward. When the return is complete, your skates should be side-by-side and parallel to one another. The opposite leg, which has been gliding straight backward, now becomes the pushing leg and thrusts out in a semi-circular maneuver (“C”). Keep skates on the ice, head

up and stationary, hip square and facing straight ahead, and arm movement to a minimum.

### Key Elements

- **Ready position:**
  - Take bottom hand off stick
  - Skates shoulder width apart
  - Lower buttocks, head and shoulders erect
- Thrust off the inside edge with the one skate in a heel out, toe in arc
- A full extension of the thrust leg
- Bent knee of the glide foot
- Recover thrust skate to under hip

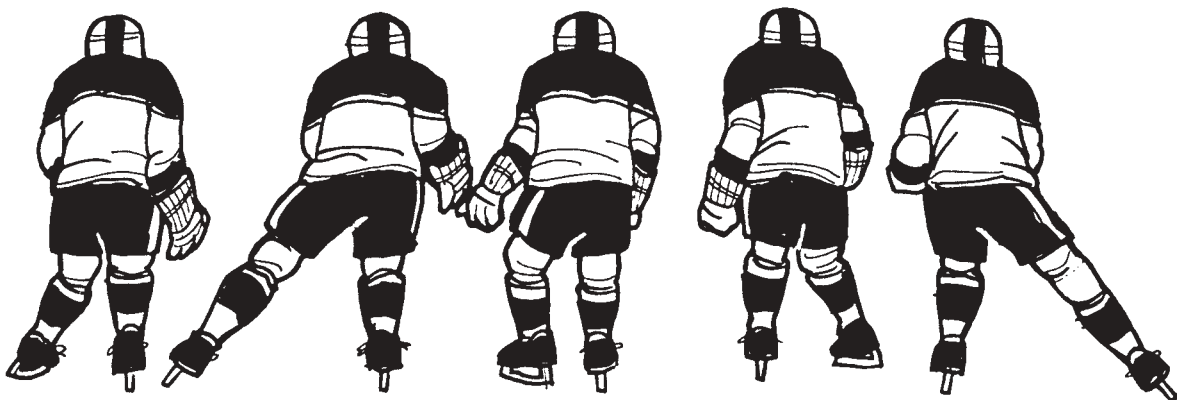
### Common Errors

- Wiggling too much from the hips (this limits the thrust power of your legs)
- Bending forward too much at the waist throws the weight forward (body off-balance), reduces the knee bend and limits thrust
- Skates too close together limits stability
- Skates too far apart causes a loss in maneuverability and power

### BACKWARD STOP

This stop is used to stop quickly and efficiently when skating backward. It leaves the player in a position to move easily in any direction.

From the ready position, fan the toes of both feet outward. This turns the heels to the inside. Dig in with the inside edges of both skates by exerting pressure on the balls of your feet, and lean forward slightly.



**Figure 2-24.** Backward skating sequence.

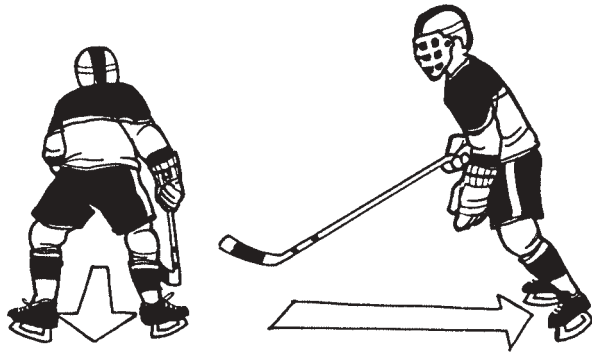


Figure 2-25. Backward stop.

### Key Elements

- Both knees bent
- Toes out, heels in
- Weight on inside edges
- Slight forward body lean
- Hips, chest, shoulders facing straight ahead

### Common Errors

- Inadequate knee bend
- Not turning the toes out and the heels in
- Placing insufficient weight on the inside edges
- Leaning the body too far forward
- Rotation of the hips, chest or shoulders

## BACKWARD CROSSOVER

For illustrative purposes, we will begin by traveling backwards in a clockwise direction.

The initial thrust must come from the inside edge of the outside (right) skate. This is accomplished by pivoting your right heel outward and the toe inward and pushing off the inside edge to full extension. This thrust is identical to the “C” movement used in the backward skating stride.

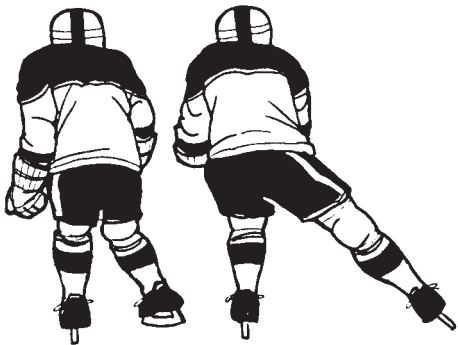


Figure 2-26. Backward crossover.

As you thrust with the right skate, weight must be transferred onto the left leg. **The knee of the left leg is bent out over the toe and the skate is gliding backward.**



Figure 2-27. Backward crossover sequence.

Bring the heel of the right skate across in front of the toe of the left skate and roll the ankle of the left skate underneath thrusting off the outside edge to full extension. You must be careful to utilize the entire length of the outside edge.

To complete the crossover, reach back to the inside with the left skate.

To crossover in a counter-clockwise direction, simply mirror the procedure.

### Key Elements

- Good knee bend
- Shoulders level
- Strong thrust from both the inside and outside edges

### Common Errors

- Excessive leaning which places your weight forward on your toes and puts you out of balance
- Too much bend at the waist reduces your knee bend
- Excessive swinging of arms from side to side

## BACKWARD POWER START

The fastest way to go backwards is to execute a series of backward crossovers.

Backward crossovers are very practical to a defenseman when he begins backing out of the offensive zone. He must accelerate quickly yet avoid turning his back on the play.

Rotate your hips and lower body 90 de-

grees or one-quarter turn to the right. Thrust off the inside edge of your right skate to full extension.

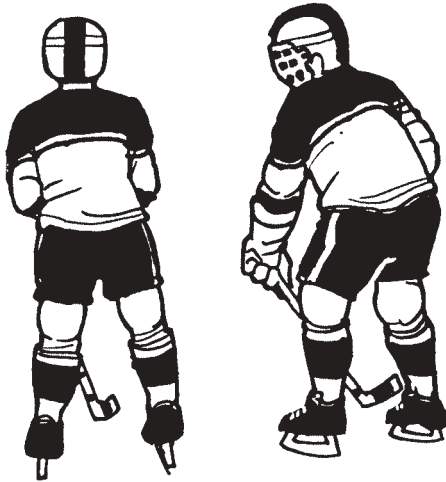


Figure 2-28. Backward beginning thrust.

Cross your left skate under and behind your right skate, thrusting off the outside edge to full extension.



Figure 2-29. Thrusting off outside edge.

Return the left skate to its original position.



Figure 2-30. Return to original position.

Players should practice their backward power start to both the left and the right. Many players will find that they get more power from this start than the straight backward start. However, in a game you may find one to be more advantageous than the other, depending upon the situation.

For example, a backward power start immediately commits you to moving to one side or the other, thus opening a hole for the opponent to break through. Also, backward starts do not build up speed as quickly as the forward or lateral (side) start which may mean that in certain situations, when the opposing forward is approaching the defender rapidly, that it might be more useful to utilize a front start and then turn around backward.

### Key Elements

- Rotate hips and lower body 90 degrees
- Thrust off inside edge to full extension
- Properly executed crossover

### Common Errors

- Improper body rotation
- Not thrusting off the inside edge to full extension

### BACKWARD ONE-FOOT STOP

The backward one-foot stop is similar to the backward stop discussed previously except that only one foot is utilized to execute the stop.

For illustrative purposes, we will discuss this stop to the left. While gliding straight backwards, rotate the hips about one-quarter turn to the left which turns your left toe outward and the heel inward.

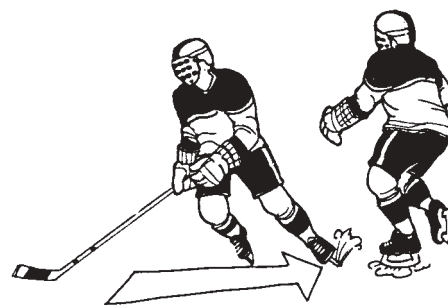


Figure 2-31. Backward one-foot stop.



The knee of the stopping leg (left) must be bent out over the toe with the inside edge of the left skate firmly planted against the ice. Utilize the ball of the foot to exert pressure into the ice.

This maneuver is most frequently used in non-contact situations where you have a pre-determined knowledge of your next move. This stop leaves you in an excellent position for a quick forward start because the stopping foot is already in the lateral start position, with weight on the stopping leg and your skates in a heel-to-heel position. All that must be done is to thrust off the inside edge of the back (or stopping) leg, pointing the toe of the front skate in your intended direction.



Figure 2-32. Backward right one-foot stop (back view).

#### Key Elements

- Hip rotation one-quarter turn
- Knee bent on the stopping leg
- Inside edge of the stopping leg firmly planted

#### Common Errors

- Hip rotation more than one-quarter turn
- Knee of the stopping leg straightens
- Skates too far apart

#### FORWARD-TO-BACKWARD TURN

The forward-to-backward turn is most commonly used by defensemen, but a necessary skill for all players to master.

Begin by gliding forward on your left skate. Your right skate has just completed its thrust and is off the ice behind your body. Rotate the hips and chest to the right (or in the direction of your turn) placing the weight directly over the left skate.

Continue the turn by turning the right skate 180 degrees, so the toe is facing opposite the intended line of travel. Your skates are thus in heel-to-heel position.

Complete the turn by continuing to rotate your hips and chest a complete 180 degrees to face your back fully backward. Now place your right skate on the ice and continue skating backwards. You have completed the turn. It also can be done the other way.

#### Key Elements

- Rotate the hips and chest 180 degrees
- Turn the thrusting skate 180 degrees so the toe is facing the opposite direction of the intended line of travel

#### Common Errors

- Over or under rotating the hips and chest
- Having your skates too far apart

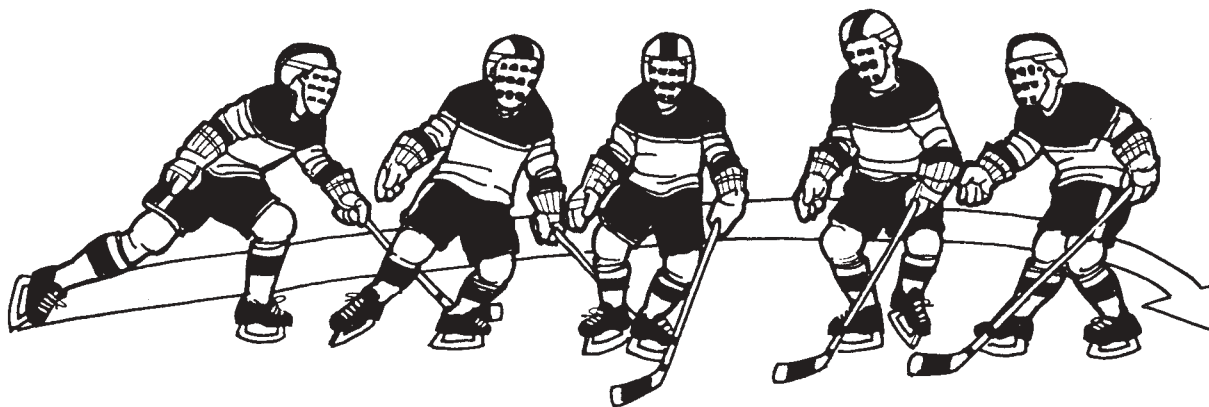


Figure 2-33. Forward-to-backward turn sequence.

## BACKWARD-TO-FORWARD STEP OUT TURN

During a game, players frequently turn from backward-to-forward. This is particularly true when defensemen turn from backward-to-forward to cut off an opponent along the boards.

The player is gliding backward in the ready position and wants to turn to his right.

The player begins by rotating his/her hips, shoulders, and chest in the direction of his turn with knees bent. This places the weight on the inside edge of the glide leg.

The free skate is turned 180 degrees so the toe is facing forward in the intended line of travel parallel to the glide skate.

As you step onto your right skate, thrust off the inside edge of your left skate and extend the leg fully to accelerate out of the backward-to-forward turn.

### Key Elements

- Rotate the hips, shoulders, and chest 180 degrees
- Turn the thrusting skate 180 degrees so the toe is facing forward in the intended line of travel
- Bend knees

### Common Errors

- Over or under rotating the hips, shoulders, and chest

- Having your skates too far apart
- Knees not bent

## BACKWARD-TO-FORWARD TURN

This maneuver is very similar to the backward-to-forward step out turn, but this turn also incorporates a backward crossunder.

Begin the turn with the player gliding backward in the ready position. Start rotating the hips and chest and do a backward crossunder thrusting your left skate behind and under the right, thrusting off the outside edge.

Return the left skate close to its original position, except turn it to point forward with the toe facing the intended line of travel. Your skates are now in a heel-to-heel position with weight on the glide leg.

Continue rotating the hips and chest 180 degrees to face fully forward. Thrust off the inside edge of the right skate to full extension and step out with the left skate in the direction of the turn.

### Key Elements

- Rotate the hips and chest 180 degrees
- Crossunder
- Thrust off the glide leg

### Common Errors

- Lack of knee bend on the glide leg
- Having skates too close or too far apart
- Poor weight distribution

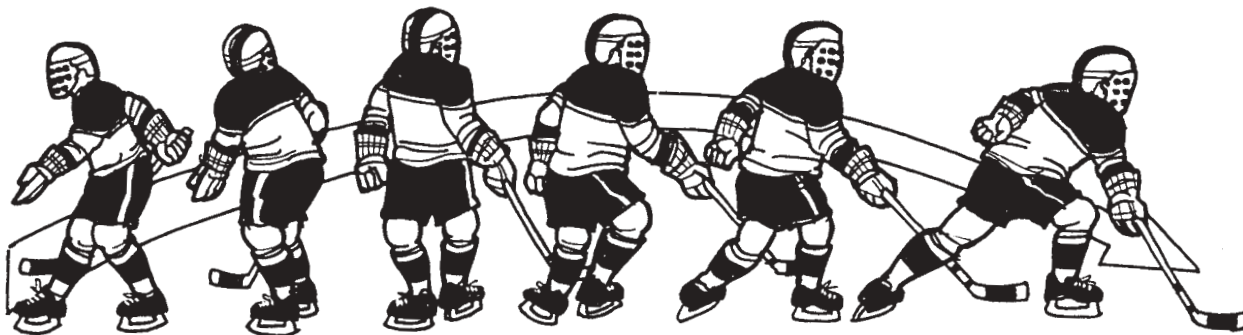


Figure 2-34. Backward-to-forward step out turn sequence.



Figure 2-35. Backward-to-forward turn sequence.





# 3

## Puck Control

### OBJECTIVES

- To help coaches understand the various puck control skills used in ice hockey
- To introduce the skills and teach them in sequence
- To explain the key elements in all of the skills

### INTRODUCTION

Until players learn to control the puck, their abilities to shoot and pass and receive the puck are severely limited.

There are different stages of developing the skills of puck control. These skills are built gradually at the Skill Development Program Level where the foundation is established. Youth ice hockey coaches must continue to pay special attention to the development of this and other fundamental skills during the early years of a player's growth and development.

### FUNDAMENTALS OF PUCK CONTROL

To be a good puckhandler, it is essential that the player understands the importance of stick selection, stick length, grip, and basic stance.

#### Length of Stick

When standing on skates, the stick should be no longer than just under the chin and no shorter than the top of the shoulders. This is illustrated in Figure 3-1.



Figure 3-1. Proper length of stick.

#### Size of Shaft

It is very important that the fingers can grip around the shaft of the stick. Too many players start using an adult stick too early and have a difficult time controlling the stick. Pee

Wee and younger players should use a junior shaft stick or have the shaft shaved down for a comfortable fit to their hand. This is illustrated in Figure 3-2.

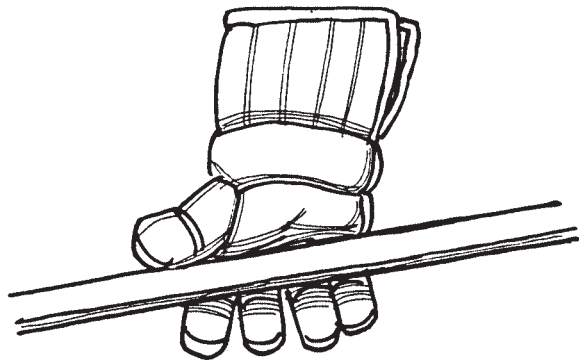


Figure 3-2. Determining the size of the shaft.

### Blade of Stick

The length of the blade must be small enough for the youth player to control the puck without having to fight the length and weight of the stick blade. This is illustrated in Figure 3-3.

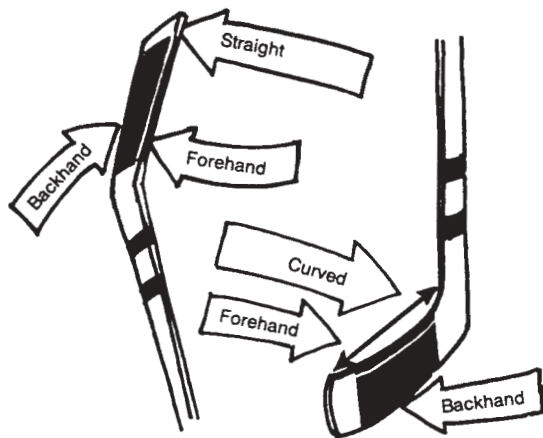


Figure 3-3. Blade of the stick.

### Lie of Stick

Skating style of a youth ice hockey player determines the lie of the stick. If a youth player is erect from the waist up, it requires a higher number lie. If the youth player is more bent over at the waist, it requires a lower number lie. This is illustrated in Figure 3-4.

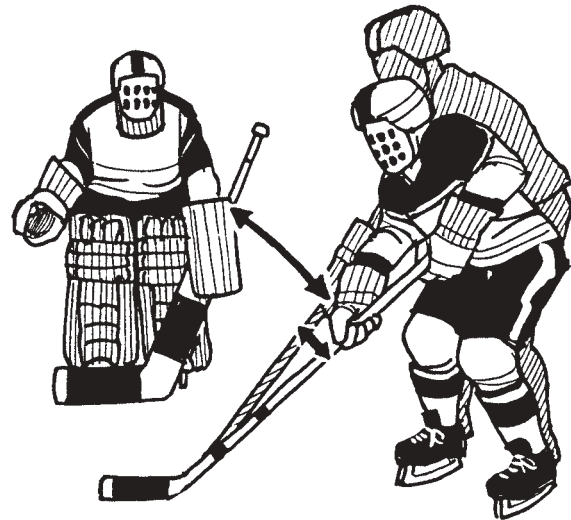


Figure 3-4. Lie of the stick.

### Grip of Stick

One of the most important components of puck control is the positioning of the hands on the stick. The hands should be a “glove length” apart on the stick (6-12 inches). The grip is correct if the player can look down at the stick and see a “V” formed by the thumb and forefinger of each hand on the top side of the shaft. This is illustrated in Figure 3-5.

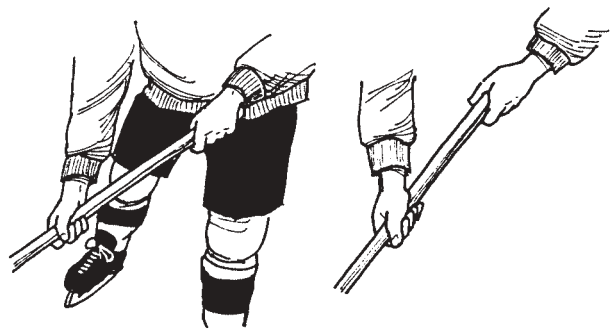


Figure 3-5. Proper grip.

### Basic Stance

Players must hold the stick in front of the body. The elbows and arms should move freely as the puck is moved back and forth in front of the body. Knees are bent, with head, chest, and eyes up (ready position). This is illustrated in Figure 3-6.



Figure 3-6. Basic puck control stance (ready position).

## FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS FOR STICKHANDLING

### Wrist Roll and Cupping The Puck

Every time the player moves the puck from side to side, it is essential to roll the wrist. It is this rolling of the wrists that will enable the blade of the stick to cup the puck which results in increased puck control. This is illustrated in Figure 3-7.

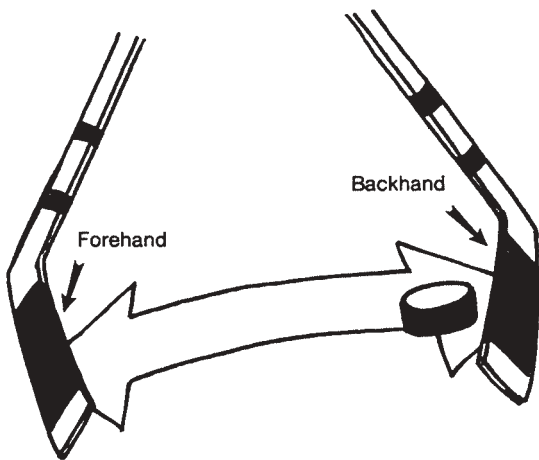


Figure 3-7. Cupping the puck.

### Split Vision

Split or peripheral vision refers to the ability to see the puck on the stick without looking directly at it. The player's eyes are up "reading"

the play and what options are available. Indirectly the player sees the puck out of the bottom of the eyes. This is illustrated in Figure 3-8.

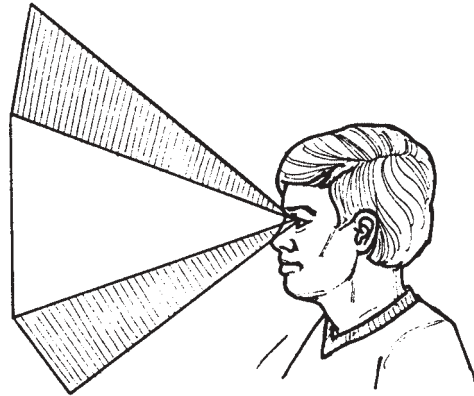


Figure 3-8. Split vision.

### Basic Stickhandling

Basic stickhandling is passing and receiving to oneself. Have the player concentrate on sliding the puck (don't slap the puck); rolling the wrist and cupping the blade over the puck will result in the ability to control the puck better. The position of the puck on the stick is in the middle part of the blade. Have the players develop a "feel" for the puck by stickhandling 12 to 18 inches. This is illustrated in Figure 3-9.

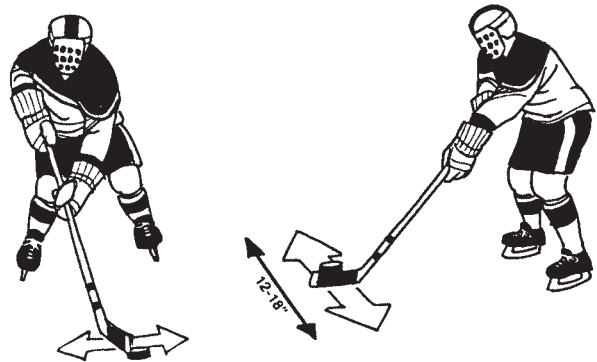


Figure 3-9. Basic stickhandling.

### Drills For The Basic Skills Of Stickhandling

#### Grip, wrist roll, cupping puck, dribbling.

- Players spread out in front of coach with gloves off.

- Players will demonstrate the proper grip.
- Players will move hands side to side while rolling the wrists.
- Players will move the puck side to side (12 to 18").

#### **Split vision — Count the coach's fingers.**

- Players spread out in front of coach.
- Players do basic dribble movement with head and eyes up.
- Players call out the number of fingers the coach is holding up.

### **BASIC STICKHANDLING MOVEMENTS**

#### **LATERAL STICKHANDLING**

This is the most important stickhandling movement a player will develop. Begin work on the lateral movement (side to side) in a stationary position. Work on moving the puck as far to each side as possible. The following key elements must be mastered.

#### **Key Elements**

- Grip - 6 to 12 inches apart
- Grip the stick with the fingers, not the palms
- Cup the puck with the blade by rolling the wrists
- Keep the arms out in front of body to get a full range of extension



Figure 3-10. (a) Lateral stickhandling. (b) Lateral stickhandling to full extension.

#### **Common Errors**

- Slapping the puck, rather than sweeping the puck
- Not having the "V" on top of the stick between the thumb and first finger
- Arms held close to body
- Hands too far apart on stick
- Not rolling wrists when trying to cup the puck
- Top hand on the hip, not in front of your body

### **FORWARD-TO-BACKWARD STICKHANDLING**

The forward-to-backward stickhandling move is particularly useful while skating toward a defensive player who is moving toward you. It can be used when setting up a fake shot and when pulling the puck to the side to take a sweep/wrist shot. The forward-to-backward move is difficult to learn while moving. Start your players in a stationary position and then gradually refine the skill at increasing speed. Stress that the puck must be moved forward on the skating line and brought backwards on the skating line.

#### **Key Elements**

- Puck motion is at the side of the body
- Puck motion stays parallel to the skate line
- Roll the wrists, cupping the puck with the blade of the stick



Figure 3-11. Forward-to-backward stickhandling.

#### Common Errors

- Puck motion in front rather than side of the body
- Puck drawn back into skates (kick the back to the stick)

### DIAGONAL STICKHANDLING

The diagonal stickhandling move is especially effective when combined with the lateral or forward-to-backward moves. Have your players place the puck to side of their body (as if about to shoot a forehand shot) and then bring the puck diagonally across to the opposite side of the body and as far forward as the player can reach. This move is very useful when

in too close to an opponent's stick, and you must pull the puck back diagonally across the front of the stick.

#### Key Elements

- Move the puck as far forward and then backward as possible on a diagonal
- Keep hands close together
- Roll the wrists to cup the puck with the blade

#### Common Errors

- Failing to cup the puck with the blade
- Head down, looking at puck
- Slapping the puck
- Not moving puck fast enough on the diagonal

### BEGINNING MANEUVERS ONE VS. ONE SITUATIONS

The concept of "one versus" situations (especially 1 vs. 1) is the most important ability for young players to master. Considerable opportunity should be given for players to practice one versus one situations.

Players should know when to stickhandle to beat an opponent and when to pass to beat an opponent. Generally a player should attempt to stickhandle around a player when there is no teammate in position for a pass.

Always observe the defender's speed, direction, whether or not the defender is sweeping the stick, looking down at the puck, off balance, or lunging with stick at the puck. Teach players after making a stickhandling move to quickly accelerate around the defender.

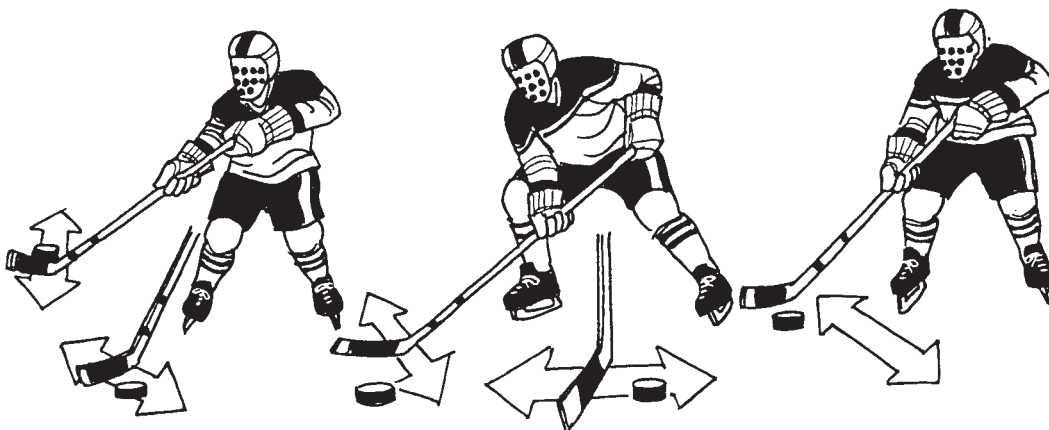


Figure 3-12. Diagonal stickhandling.



## BACKHAND FAKE — “PULL” TO FOREHAND

The forehand “pull” is one of the most important moves to teach your players when trying a stickhandle move around a defender. It is very important that players learn the key words of “fake-pull-accelerate.” The forehand pull allows the player to move around the defender on their forehand side which gives them the opportunity to pass or shoot immediately.

**“Fake”** — Teach the players to set up the move with a slight move to the backhand side (and/or head and shoulders fake to the backhand side). This move should be strong enough to get the defender to react.

**“Pull”** — As the defender reacts to the fake, move the puck quickly across the body (if in close to stick, “pull” puck slightly back diagonally to clear stick) to full extension on forehand side and thrust off of the “backhand side” leg. At the same time, slide laterally with body (this puts player’s body between defender and puck).

**“Accelerate”** — Upon completion of pull, accelerate with three quick forward crossovers to get around and behind defender.



Figure 3-13. Backhand fake — pull to forehand.

### Key Elements

- Fake — move puck out front, on backhand side diagonal, also use head and shoulder fake
- Puck must be “pulled” quickly across front of body to “full” forehand extension
- Use the body as much as possible to protect puck
- Use speed upon completion of “pull” to get around and behind defender
- Keep head up
- Key Words: “Fake-lateral Slide and Pull-Accelerate”

### Common Errors

- Slowing down when approaching the defender
- Not using the body to shield the puck from the defender
- Not “pulling” the puck across the front of body quickly enough
- Not “pulling” to full forehand extension
- Not accelerating after the lateral slide and pull

## FOREHAND FAKE — BACKHAND “PULL”

The backhand “pull” must be developed to compliment the skill development in the forehand “pull.” The disadvantage of the backhand pull is that the player is going around the defender with the puck on their backhand. When going around an opponent, the majority of the time the player will go to their backhand side.

The same key phrase is used as in the forehand “pull.” The only difference is that the “fake” is made to the backhand side.

### Key Elements

- Fake — move puck out front on forehand side diagonal. Also use a head/shoulder fake
- Puck must be “pulled” quickly across front of body to “full” backhand extension
- Use the body as much as possible to protect body
- Use speed upon completion of “pull” to get around and behind defender
- Keep head up

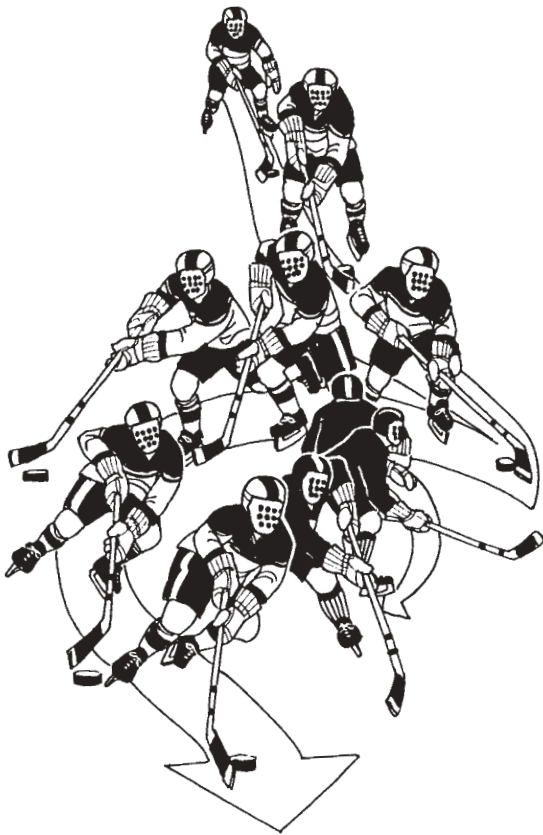


Figure 3-14. Forehand fake — backhand pull.

- **Key Words: “Fake-Lateral Slide and Pull-Accelerate”**

#### Common Errors

- Slowing down when approaching the defender
- Not using the body to shield the puck from the defender
- Not “pulling” the puck across the front of body quick enough
- Not “pulling” the puck to full backhand extension
- Not accelerating after the lateral slide and pull

## SPECIAL SKILLS IN PUCK CONTROL

### ACCELERATING IN OPEN ICE

Controlling the puck while accelerating in open ice is another skill that needs to be developed. By dropping the lower hand off the stick and using only one hand (the top hand), players will skate with more speed and freedom.

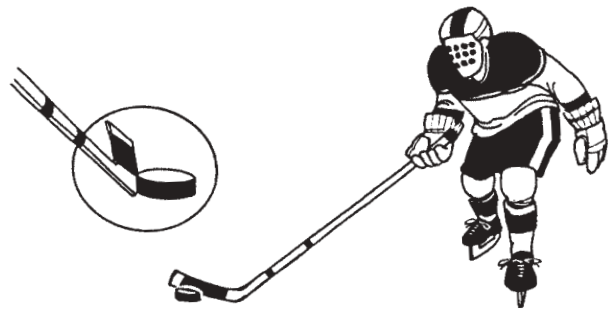


Figure 3-15. Accelerating in open ice.

#### Key Elements

- Drop lower hand off stick
- By using only the top hand, players can skate with more speed
- Bent at knees
- Extend arm and tilt blade back pushing puck well out in front of body
- When puck starts to roll off blade of stick, rotate wrist so blade turns over the other way

#### Common Errors

- Keeping puck too close to body
- Not holding the very end of stick with one hand
- Keeping the blade of stick too upright

### “SHIELDING” THE PUCK

The technique of shielding the puck teaches the player to keep the puck away from the defender and place his body between the puck and the opposing player.

In order to accomplish this, a player must utilize the skill of “expansion of reach” with the skill of control turn. This should be taught both to forehand and backhand sides.

One arm may also be utilized to help ward off the defender. On the forehand side the top hand would be used, while on the backhand side the bottom hand would be used.

#### Key Elements

- Pull puck to side of body away from defender (full expansion reach)
- Place body between defender and puck, use “control turn” technique to protect puck
- The blade of stick is cupped over puck



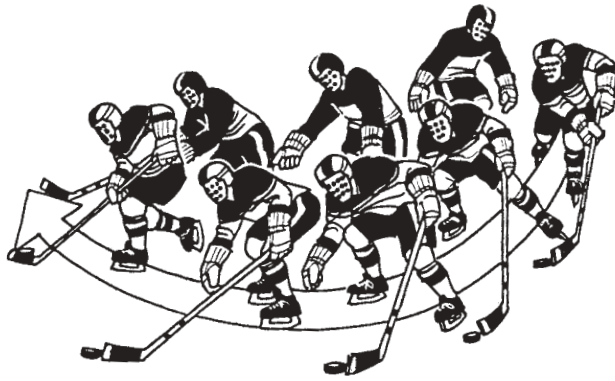


Figure 3-16. Shielding the puck.

- Take one hand off stick if needed to ward off defender's stick

#### Common Errors

- Puck between carrier and defender
- Stick blade not cupped over puck
- Player standing too erect

### OVERCOMING RESISTANCE

The puck carrier must learn to overcome resistance by accelerating in front of defender. By doing this, you take the "angle" away from the checker. This puts the defender behind you and prevents the defender from playing your body.



Figure 3-17. Overcoming resistance.

#### Key Elements

- Accelerate when checker has the "angle" by doing forward crossovers to get in front — prevents stick/body checks
- Continue to skate once in front of checker

#### Common Errors

- Puck carrier glides once in front of checker
- Puck carrier doesn't get right in front of checker

### SKATE CONTROL

Skate control is an important part of puck control. A player must develop a great deal of balance and agility to use their skates for puck control. Some skills with skates that should be developed are:

1. Skate forward and pass up a loose puck with a skate and kick up to stick
2. Drop the puck back into skates and kick back up to stick
3. Foot drag — control the puck by kicking it out from behind the other blade
4. Controlling the puck along the boards with the skates when being pressured

#### Key Elements

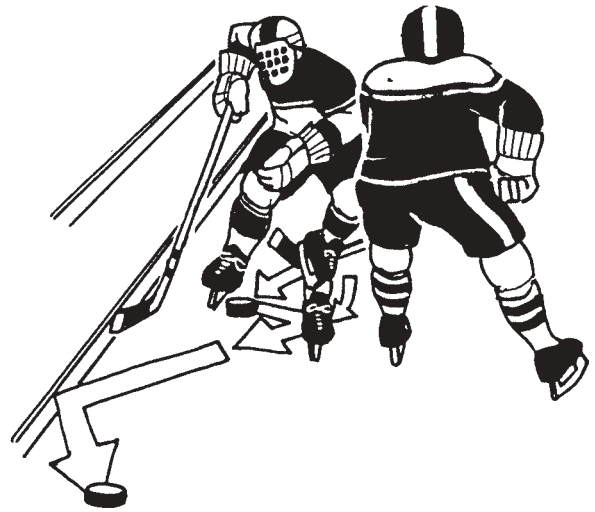
- Must balance and shift weight to one skate
- The skate contacting puck is turned with toe out and heel in
- Has "cushioned" the puck with skate blade in stickhandling. Key Word — "Control"

#### Common Errors

- Not shifting weight and balance to one skate
- "Kicking" puck instead of controlling puck



a



b

Figure 3-18a & b. Skate control skills.



# 4

## Passing and Receiving

### OBJECTIVES

- To educate coaches to the passing and receiving skills necessary for players ten years old and under
- To outline teaching progression for coaches
- Identify the key elements of each skill
- Identify common mistakes young players make while learning these skills

### INTRODUCTION

Although skating and puck control rank higher than passing and receiving on the hockey skills “emphasis scale,” it is important to devote considerable time to instruction in the fundamentals of passing and receiving.

*The skill of passing and receiving extends puck control from an individual to a team skill.*

Two important sets of skills are necessary — the delivery of the puck and the reception of it. Both are equally important.

The material covered in this chapter describes the skills that must be mastered to pass and receive effectively. The skills are presented in the suggested teaching progression for young players.

### FOREHAND PASSING

The forehand pass begins with the player in a solid, ready position. His eyes must be up and looking at his intended target. The blade of the stick must cup or “cradle” the puck. Start

the passing action for the forehand pass from behind the back foot (Figure 4-1). The blade should be kept on the ice. **Encourage the player to sweep rather than slap the puck.** The desired result is a sweep and follow-through toward the intended target with the blade of the stick kept low to the ice.



Figure 4-1. Forehand passing action.

The puck should begin near the heel of the stick and roll down the blade as the stick is swept forward. The resultant spin on the puck is necessary to keep it flat on the ice.

The accuracy of the pass is controlled by the follow-through. The player should end the

pass with the toe of his stick pointing at the intended target.

## Look-Slide-Guide Point

### Key Elements

- The head is up with the eyes focused on the target
- The blade of the stick should “cup” the puck
- A sweeping (not slapping) action
- Puck moves from the heel to the toe of the blade
- Follow-through low and pointing toward the intended target

### Common Errors

- Passer is looking at the puck, not the target
- The puck starts at the toe of the stick, not the heel
- The passer slaps the puck
- Shortened or no follow-through

## BACKHAND PASSING

The backhand pass is similar to the forehand pass and the key elements listed above are the same. It is, however, a bit more difficult. The backhand pass involves looking at the target, using a sweeping action of the stick across the body to propel the puck, and a deliberate follow-through towards the target. If the intended target is in front of the passer, he must follow-through by turning the wrists out, pointing the heel of the stick at the target. Figure 4-2 illustrates the beginning, middle, and ending phases of this pass. The puck begins on the backhand side. The hands are away from the body and the blade is cupped over the puck. Note that the shoulders are rotated toward the puck. The shoulders returning to a normal position, plus a pulling action of the lower hand provide the sweeping action of the stick.



Figure 4-2. Backhand passing action.

## Suggestions for Coaching

Generally your coaching on passing should progress from stationary to moving targets and from slow to faster speeds. Emphasize that the pass must lead moving targets. Passing the puck softly to a target zone ahead of the receiver is a good passing technique.

## FLIP PASSING

The last pass that should be taught is the flip pass. This pass will prove to be most useful in a situation where some part of an opponent (stick, leg, etc.) is between the puck carrier and the target (see Figure 4-3).

The pass begins the same way as a forehand or backhand pass adding a quick forward and upward motion of the wrists that causes the stick blade to raise quickly off the ice. This motion in turn also raises the puck quickly from the ice. It is important that the player attempts to spin the puck off the blade so that it will remain flat in the air and as it lands on the ice. Pucks that wobble through the air and do not land flat will prove to be very difficult for teammates to receive.

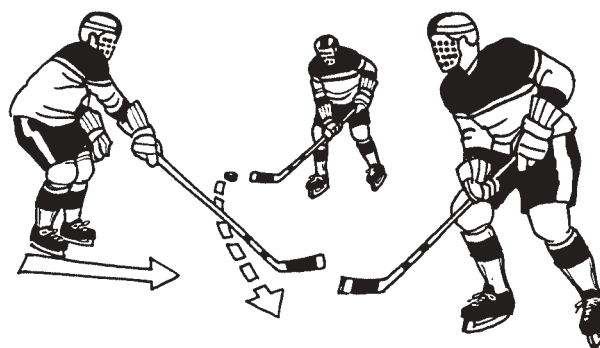


Figure 4-3. The flip pass.

### Key Elements

- A quick, forceful, forward and upward motion of the blade
- Puck motion from the heel of the blade to the toe at release

## Common Errors

- Inability to move the bottom of the stick blade in a quick forward and upward motion
- Failure to impart spin on the puck to keep it flat

### Suggestions for Coaching

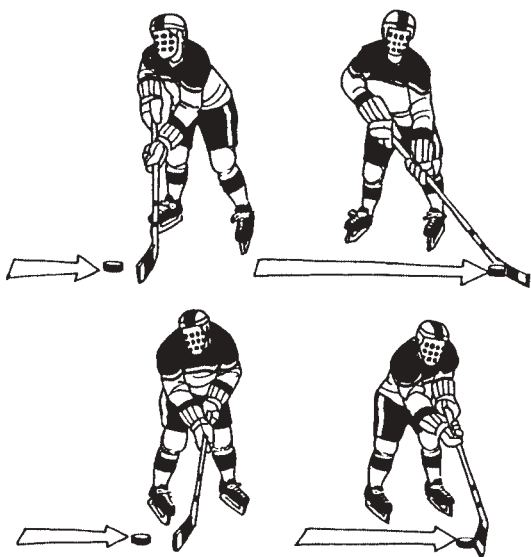
Coaches and players need to be especially patient in developing good passing techniques. **Coordinating the speed of the passer, the receiver, and the puck (in addition to the opposing players) is a difficult skill and often requires many hours of practice to master.**

## PASS RECEIVING

Being able to receive a pass is equally as important as being able to make one. There are 3 keys to successfully receiving a pass:

- Right Angle
- Give
- Cup

**The receiver must learn to move the blade of the stick out toward the puck in preparation for receiving the pass.** Just prior to (or at the



**Figure 4-4.** Forehand and backhand puck reception techniques.

point) of contact, move the blade in the same direction as the pass to allow the puck to gently come in contact with the stick blade.

When a pass comes to either the backhand or forehand side, the reception techniques are basically the same (see Figure 4-4). The player should keep his head up, watch the puck, and keep the stick on the ice. As the puck reaches the stick blade, the blade should be at a right angle to the line of the pass, cupped, and allowed to give by relaxing the wrists. This “giving with the puck” promotes control by allowing the momentum of the puck to be gradually absorbed.

### Key Elements

- **The angle between the blade and the line of the pass should be 90 degrees**
- **The blade must “give” to maintain puck control**
- **The blade should be cupped over the puck as it glides along the ice**

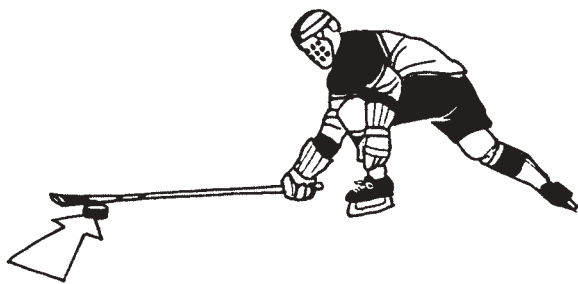
### Common Errors

- The stick blade is not held perpendicular to the direction of the incoming puck
- The blade of the stick is left open (top of blade angled away from the puck’s direction), allowing the puck to bounce over the stick blade
- Wrists are held stiff, causing the puck to rebound off the blade
- Failure to cup the puck

### Suggestions for Coaching

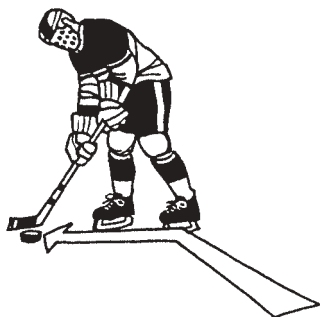
In many instances, passes are ahead, or behind, the intended player. This takes a special effort to gain control of the puck. Here are some suggestions for how to solve this common problem.

**When the pass is too far ahead, the player should extend the stick by dropping the lower hand and reaching out to the puck (see Figure 4-5).**



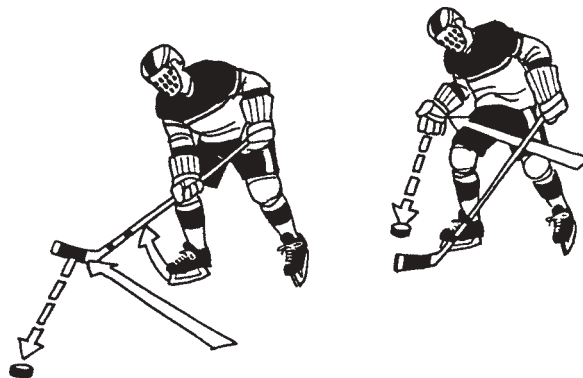
**Figure 4-5.** Stopping a puck passed ahead of the intended target area.

When a pass comes behind the player (see Figure 4-6), the skate must be used to gain control. The skate closest to the oncoming pass should be placed flat on the ice and angled so that the puck will deflect from the skate blade to the stick blade. An individual who has become skilled at receiving a pass with his skate will prove to be a tremendous asset in keeping many plays alive.



**Figure 4-6.** Controlling a puck passed behind a player.

Receiving passes in the air involves knocking the pass to the ice with the stick or the hand (see Figure 4-7). In general, encourage using the stick to try and knock down passes below the knee and the bottom hand on passes above the knee. Be sure that the players do not close their hand and catch the pass.



**Figure 4-7.** Controlling passes in the air.



# 5

## Shooting

### OBJECTIVES

- To identify the shooting skills used by young players in ice hockey
- To outline for the coaches the progression for introducing shooting skills
- To identify the key elements of all the components of shooting
- To identify common mistakes young players make while learning these skills

### INTRODUCTION

Shooting is the most practiced of all fundamentals. The ability to shoot has become very important in the game of ice hockey. The purpose of shooting the puck is to score a goal. This leads to the single most important factor to stress: **Be sure that the shot is on the net!** There are several components associated with becoming an effective shooter:

- **FORM:** Players must execute the shots using the key elements of correct technique if they are to develop the speed, consistency, and accuracy necessary to be an effective shooter.
- **ACCURACY:** If the shot is not on the net, there is virtually no chance of scoring. Developing accuracy takes a great deal of concentration and practice by the player.
- **QUICKNESS:** Time spent handling the puck provides the opposing players with the time needed to position themselves for strong defense. When the situation dictates, players must be able to shoot the puck quickly.
- **VARIETY:** Shooting situations within the game vary greatly. The skillful player must, therefore, have a variety of shots that match the

opportunities that develop. The amount of time a player has, the location, and defensive player positioning require that different shots (or variations of the same shot) be used.

There are 3 types of shots that will be discussed in this chapter. They are:

1. Wrist Shot
2. Backhand Shot
3. Flip Shot

Shooting, more than the other fundamentals, depends upon strength which is related to a player's physical maturity. Therefore, coaches of younger players are likely to find that because of their age they are unable to generate the speed and power desired to perform some shots such as the snap or slap shots. As players grow, develop and train for strength and power, their shooting will become more forceful.

*For younger players, however, emphasis should be placed on the development of correct technique, particularly of the forehand and backhand wrist shots.*

Without this attribute even the shooting ability of the strong, powerful player will be limited.



## FOREHAND WRIST (SWEEP) SHOT

The wrist shot is often referred to as the “sweep” shot. Its attributes include speed and accuracy. Be sure that your players have mastered this shot before moving on to other types of shots.

As the name implies, this shot involves sweeping the puck toward the target. Power is supplied by the arms, wrists, and through proper weight transfer, the legs. The hands are held approximately 12 to 15 inches apart. The puck should be positioned at the side of the body, behind the back foot, with the weight evenly distributed on both skates. The shot is initiated by a transfer of the body weight to the skate closest to the target (front skate). The proper sequence is illustrated in Figure 5-1.

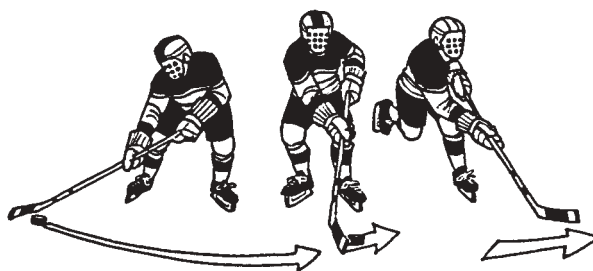


Figure 5-1. Execution of the wrist shot.

As weight is transferred, the arms and hands complete the forward motion of the stick toward the target while dragging or sweeping the puck on the blade of the stick. The puck should be positioned at about the middle of the blade and travel to the toe as the shot is completed. The correct arm action includes the top arm/hand pulling back toward the body while the lower arm/wrist sweeps forward.

To accomplish this push-pull (wrist-sweeping) action, the player must exert maximal effort with the hands and arms. Weight may be best utilized in the shooting action by driving off the rear foot and following through to the front foot. The follow-through of the stick usually will dictate the height and accuracy of the shot (low follow-through, low shot; high follow-through, high shot). The toe of the stick blade should be pointing at the target at the conclusion of the follow-through. See Figure 5-2.

Review of Figure 5-1 shows that the top portion of the stick moves very little, while the blade has moved a great deal. It is the speed of the blade that creates the puck speed.



Figure 5-2. Follow-through of the wrist shot.

Weight transfer is important for another reason besides initiating the movement. As the weight moves toward the target, the force application to the stick through the lower hand causes a bending of the shaft. The release of this bend adds further speed to the stick blade, which results in greater puck speed.

### Key Elements

- Hands held approximately 12 to 15 inches apart
- Shot begins with the puck at the side of the body and behind the back foot
- Blade of the stick cupped over the puck
- Weight transfer to the front skate
- The follow-through will dictate the height and accuracy of the shot
- Puck movement from the middle to the toe of the blade

### Common Errors

- Insufficient weight transfer results in weaker shots and causes players to fall away from instead of moving toward the target
- Poor wrist action results in slow movement of the stick blade, thus little force is transferred to the puck
- Top arm and hand are held too close to the body thus limiting movement
- Poor follow-through results in shots missing intended target

### Suggestions for Coaching

1. Have your players practice the sweeping movement, in a stationary position ensuring that the weight is transferred and the stick blade is moved quickly through the range of motion.
2. Use drills that allow the player to take at least 5 to 10 consecutive shots. Figure 5-3 shows two arrangements that work well for player practice.
3. The wrist shot involves a considerable amount of arm/wrist strength. Older players should be encouraged to improve their strength both off and on the ice. Younger players should concentrate on perfecting the technique for the shot. Shooting is easily practiced off-ice as well.
4. For young players, the technique of the shot may be better developed by using lighter pucks which are properly suited to their strength. The success this generates may go a long way to develop confidence through the satisfaction gained by shooting a crisp and accurate wrist shot.
5. Coaches should introduce shooting drills progressively, starting with stationary shooting, to shooting while moving, to situational drills simulating game conditions.

### BACKHAND SHOT

The backhand shot is one of the most difficult shots to perform. **Like the wrist shot, an important objective is to generate speed of the stick blade.** As illustrated in Figure 5-4, the backhand shot is initiated with the puck on the backhand side of the stick and the blade cupped over the puck. The puck should begin between the heel and the middle of the blade. The wrist of the bottom hand is flexed while the upper arm is close to, instead of away from, the body. The shot begins with a weight transfer toward the target. The bottom hand pulls the stick and the puck (simultaneously) forward toward the target, in a sweeping movement. The bottom wrist snaps from a flexed to an extended position. The top hand follows the bottom hand (rather than opposing as in the wrist shot) and the top wrist snaps from extended to flexed position. This causes the top arm and elbow to move away from the body. Once again, the height of the follow-through will determine the height and accuracy of the shot. At the conclusion of the shot, the toe of the blade should be pointing at the target. **Like the wrist shot, you should stress form and accuracy with your players before working on speed.**

#### Key Elements

- **Hands.** held approximately 12 to 15 inches apart
- **Shot begins with the puck at the side of the body and behind the back foot**

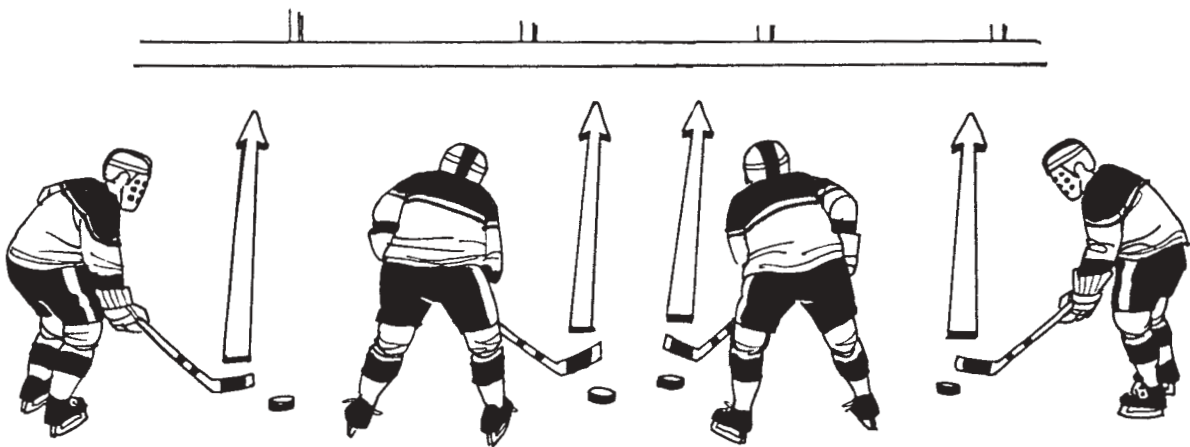


Figure 5-3. Practice arrangements for working on shooting.

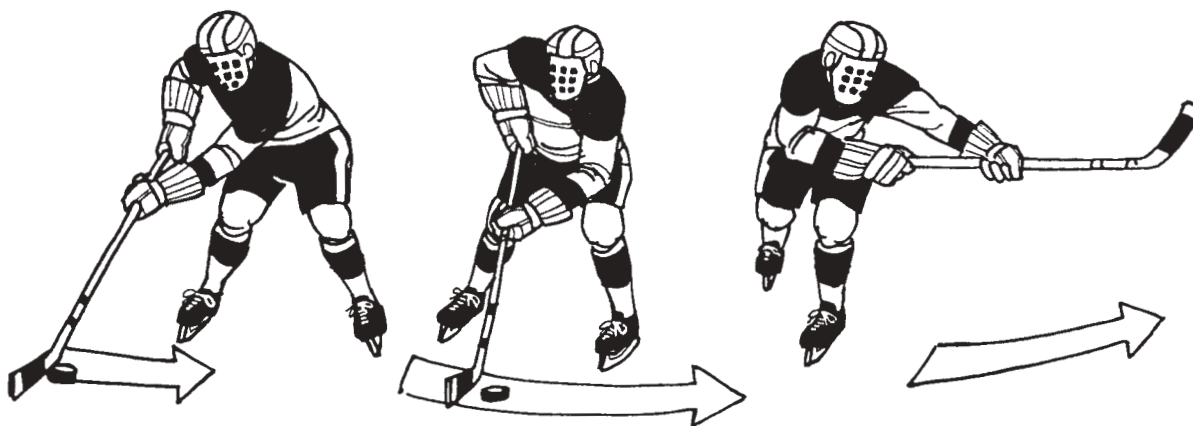


Figure 5-4. Sequence for completing the backhand shot.

- Blade of the stick cupped over the puck
- Weight transfer to the front skate
- Puck movement from the middle to the toe of the blade
- The follow-through will dictate the height and accuracy of the shot

#### Common Errors

- Poor sweeping action
- Improper wrist action
- Follow-through goes toward ceiling instead of toward target

#### Suggestions for Coaching

1. Have the players practice the sweeping movement, weight transfer, and quick movement of the stick blade in a stationary position.
2. The suggestions for coaching the forehand wrist shot are also useful for teaching your players the backhand.

## THE FLIP SHOT

The flip shot is most commonly used when a player is attempting to relieve pressure by clearing the puck from a zone. It is also useful when there is a scramble around the net and the puck must be lifted quickly over an obstacle.

The flip shot is a much neglected, but very effective shot. At all levels, but particularly with young players, the ability to flip the puck

can make the difference between a goal or a shot into the goalkeeper.

When shooting a flip shot, the primary objective is to raise the puck high up off the ice. Very little emphasis should be placed on the velocity of the shot. To execute the flip shot on the forehand, the hands should be in the same position as the wrist shot — approximately 12 to 15 inches apart. The task is to get under the puck and propel it upward. This shot, unlike others, is usually made from in front of the body with the puck on the toe of the stick blade (see Figure 5-5). The shot begins with the wrist of the bottom hand extended and the wrist of the top hand is flexed. A good flip shot requires a sharp, quick wrist snap, and a sharp, exaggerated upward movement of the stick blade. As illustrated in Figure 5-6, the blade of the stick should be opened rather than cupped at the end of the shot.

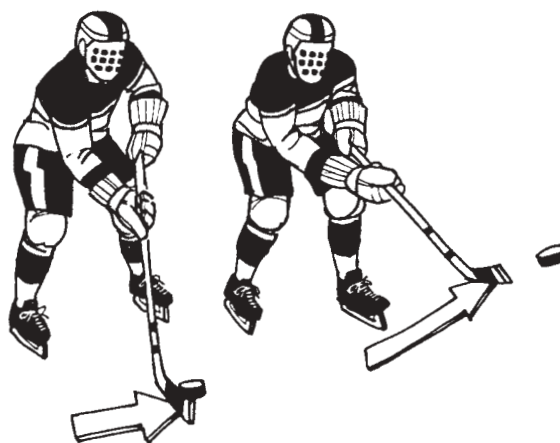


Figure 5-5. Puck position and shooting motion for the flip shot.



**Figure 5-6.** Cupped, straight, and open stick blade positions.

The backhand flip shot is most often used in scramble situations in an attempt to shoot over a prone goaltender. With the backhand flip shot, it is helpful to draw the puck back slightly. The fundamentals of this shot are the same as those for the backhand sweep shot. The difference occurs at the follow-through. The wrists and blades should extend quickly towards the top of the net.

### Key Elements

- Hands held 12 to 15 inches apart
- Initial puck position in front of the body on the forehand flip shot
- Quick wrist snap that results in blade rotation from cupped to straight to open position
- An exaggerated upward movement of the blade

### Common Errors

- Too much forward movement of the stick blade
- Not enough upward motion of the blade

- Starting the puck near the toe when executing backhand flip shot

### Suggestions for Coaching

1. Teach and practice the shooting motion without pucks.
2. Place obstacles in front of the shooter forcing the puck to be lifted into the air, gradually increase the height.
3. Select or develop drills that will force the players to utilize the flip shot.
4. Progress from stationary to movement drills which will simulate game conditions.

### SUMMARY

Since putting the puck into the net is the object of the game, shooting skill is very important to your players. Be sure to work with them to improve these skills. **Remember, however, that the end-over-ender that barely gets over the red line counts the same as the shot that rips the back of the net and more importantly, it counts one more than the shot that just misses the corner and punches a hole in the boards!**



# 6

## Goalkeeping

### OBJECTIVES

- Identify key elements for goalies at ten years old and under
- Show new technology in teaching goalies
- Identify unique drills or activities that are effective in developing young goalies

### INTRODUCTION

At ten years of age, many players look at the equipment and say, “This is the position I want to play.” When they try to play, they soon find the glamour of being goalies has disappeared. For this reason, we recommend giving each player a chance to play goal. You will find quickly who really would like to play this position.

*Always remember that the players are young and we should not lock them into one position, but rather give them a chance to experiment and find their favorite.*

### COORDINATION

There are three key elements for goalies at this age. First is overall body control or coordination; second is basic stance; and third is movement or skating.

We tend to want our athletes to specialize in one sport today, but the simple fact is that a goalie must be an athlete. We must encourage our young goalies to try other sports. We may also want to incorporate what may seem to be some strange methods of training at this age.

These methods would include all kinds of jumping exercises (i.e., jumping over the goalie stick and landing on one foot) using balls on the ice, and even employing tennis rackets or badminton rackets.

*At this age, body coordination is more important than any of the more advanced moves a goalie will make. If a goalie is a good athlete at ten years old, he or she will have a chance to become a good goalie over time.*

### BASIC STANCE

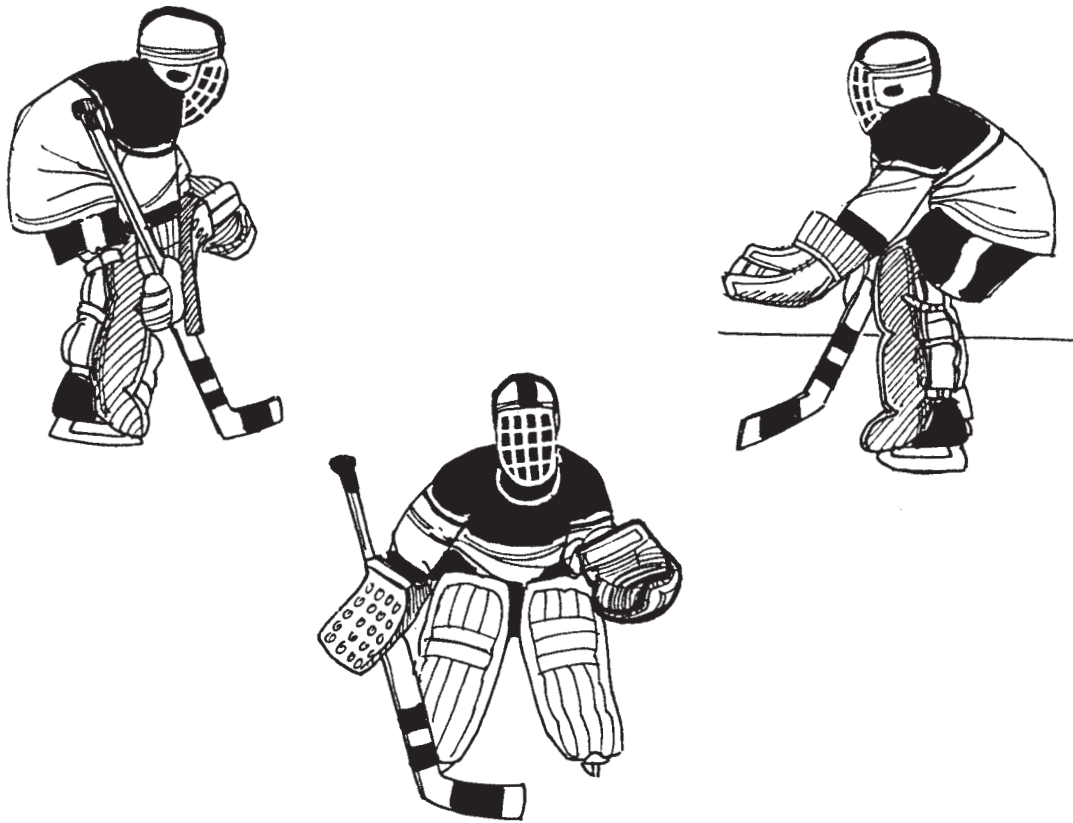
**Without a correct basic stance many of the moves required of the goalie become difficult, delayed, or impossible to execute.**

The stance is easy to teach yet many young players are missing many of its key elements and, therefore, are handicapped in their ability to move. The key elements of a good stance are illustrated in Figure 6-1 and described below.

#### Key Elements

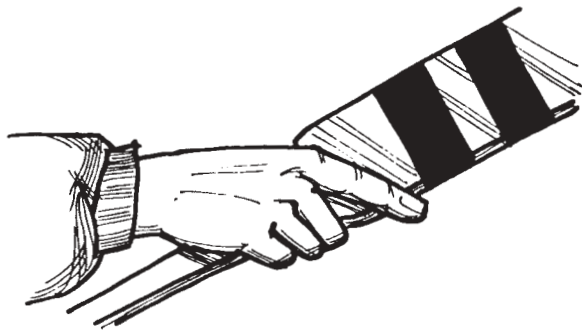
- Feet shoulder width apart, knees bent
- Skates parallel
- Weight slightly forward





**Figure 6-1.** Goalkeepers basic stance (front and side view).

- Shoulders and knees aligned over the toes
- Hands in front of the body, just outside of each knee
- Catching glove open
- Stick blade flat on ice, 4-5 inches ahead of skates
- Stick should be held firmly (usually just above the wide portion of the shaft) and under control. The grip will tighten as your goalies make their plays. Figure 6-2 illustrates this.



**Figure 6-2.** Positioning of the hand on the stick.

### Common Errors

- Skates are too far apart with knees together
- Bending from waist not knees
- Hands at sides instead of ahead of body
- Catch glove closed, held too high, low, or not filling open net
- Stick blade right up against skates

### MOVEMENT

A young goalkeeper should be taught to make two types of sideward movements: (1) short-distance move or parallel shuffle, and (2) a long-distance move or T-glide.

### PARALLEL SHUFFLE

The parallel shuffle is used for moving quickly to maintain a position between the net and the puck. It requires taking a series of short steps without turning the foot. This allows the goalie to always face forward. As a young goalkeeper gains experience, the step can be extended into a sideways glide. Teach your players to always control their weight on the inside



edge of the skate without turning the foot. The parallel shuffle is illustrated in Figure 6-3.



Figure 6-3. The parallel shuffle.

### Key Elements

- Maintain the basic stance position
- Short lateral steps
- Trailing pad must be brought tight to the lead pad
- Stick moves with the lead skate (blade covering opening between skates)
- Weight remains on the balls of the feet

### Common Errors

- Goalie comes up high, “bobbing” out of stance
- Goalie doesn’t bring pads together
- Goalie raises stick blade or fails to cover space between skates

### Suggestions for Coaching

Parallel shuffle moves are an extension of learning the basic stance and then maintaining it while moving laterally. Again, work without the shot. Focus on teaching your goalies to move appropriately to position themselves on cue from the location of a moving puck.

## LATERAL T-GLIDE

When goalies are required to **move sideways and cover a long distance** (to cover a

pass or free moving puck), they should turn their lead toe in the direction they need to go and push off the inside edge of the trailing skate. To stop, the lead skate is turned toward the front, placing weight on the inside edge. The trail foot is then brought quickly into the basic stance position.

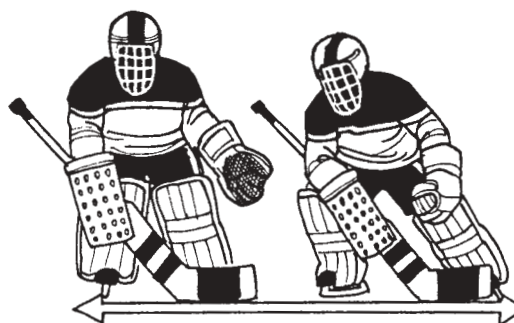


Figure 6-4. Lateral T-Glide.

### Key Elements

- Maintain basic stance at start and finish
- Stay low during glide
- Glide on lead skate only
- Stop, utilizing the inside edge of lead skate and inside edge of the trailing skate
- Lead with the stick

### Common Errors

- Raising up too high between basic stance positions
- Failing to lead with the stick

### Suggestions for Coaching

Again, practice the move without taking the final shot until the key elements are mastered. Test to see if mastery is maintained in combination with parallel, shuffle, forward and backward moves that are made on cue from puck movements simulating game conditions. **Remember, the goalie movements must be learned and mastered individually before you can expect players to use them appropriately in the various situations they must respond to in a game.**

All aspects of skating must be practiced. It can be practiced with or without the goalie pads. We should encourage our young players to attend public skating and get on the ice as much as possible.

## MOVING FORWARD AND BACKWARD

To move quickly **forward**, teach your goalies to push off the inside edge of one foot and glide in a basic stance toward the puck. To stop, they should use a “snowplow” (toes pointed in and weight on the inside edges of the skates).

To move quickly **backward** the goalies must push from the inside edge (as in skating backward) of one foot. The further back they need to go, the harder the push. Work very hard to convince your goalies to maintain a basic stance while moving backward. To stop, teach them to place their weight on the inside edges of the skates and “toe out” slightly.

For longer distance moves goalies should skate forward or backward as necessary while staying in as good a basic stance as possible.

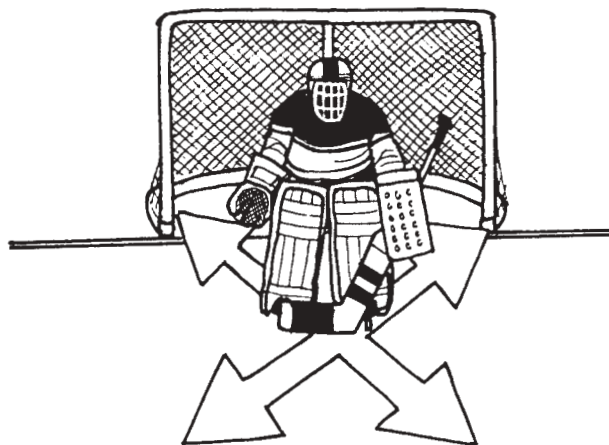


Figure 6-5. Moving forward and backward.

### Key Elements

- Maintain a basic stance
- Always face the shooter, using “snow plow” to stop

### Common Errors

- Moving the stick from side to side
- Shifting the weight forward and stopping

- Using a hockey stop and turning the side to the puck

### Suggestions for Coaching

Add the practice of forward and backward motion to the lateral moves outlined previously. **All of these skills should be practiced individually with many trials on cue from moving puck and then in combinations that simulate what happens in a game.** When your goalies demonstrate mastery under no shot conditions, move to controlled shooting and then to using all the moves in game situation practices.

Once again, all aspects of skating must be practiced. It can be practiced with or without the goalie pads. We should encourage our young players to attend public skating and get on the ice as much as possible.

## METHODS OF TRAINING

A new method of training goalies is with the use of videotape. A ten-year-old player can mimic a favorite pro player often copying very difficult moves to perfection. We should encourage this process as much as possible. With this in mind, you may want to encourage the goalie to have video taken so that he or she may compare their moves to his or her favorite goalie.

As we work with young goalies, it is a good practice to question rather than give answers. You may want to say, “Why do you think this happened,” or, “What if. . . .” This will aid in your development of a mentor relationship with your goalies. Remember that we want this to be an educational process to aid the goalie in how they think about the game.

## ATTRIBUTES OF A GOOD GOALIE

1. Must want to play goalie
2. Must have a good attitude
3. Must have good eyesight
4. Must have good agility
5. Must have good coordination
6. Must have good reflexes

7. Must have courage
8. Must have confidence

The best way to judge if your goalie has all of these is to look in the goalie's eyes. If they are beaming and the player is eager to stop the puck-you have a goalie.

#### **SUGGESTED TRAINING ACTIVITIES**

- Goalie takes one glove off and holds a tennis ball in opposite hand while skating forward and backward, throw the ball on the ice, and catch it in the hand without the glove. Alternate hands (or take both gloves off), and bounce the ball from one hand to the other. Make sure goalie maintains stance while skating.
- Coach kneels down in front of goalie and throws pucks. The goalie must kick each puck back over the coach's head. This is an excellent drill for balance because it forces the goalie to stand on one skate.
- Have goalie jump over an object or a line and shove a puck that the goalie must save. The line can be beside or in front of the goalie. Goalies may jump on one or two feet. Making the save is not as important as the jump and the landing.
- Play tennis, badminton, soccer, or just play catch with a baseball. We are trying to get the goalies to skate while using their hands and not thinking about their feet.
- Have two goalies stand about three to four feet apart with gloves off and a puck in each hand. Have both goalies throw the puck in the right hand to each other at the same time. Repeat with the left hand. Change this to throwing left to right which would cause a straightacross toss.



# 7

## Checking

### OBJECTIVES

- To identify the skills involved in the introduction of checking
- To identify key components of each phase of checking
- To identify a sequence to introduce these skills to young or inexperienced players
- To identify common mistakes young hockey players make when learning these skills

### INTRODUCTION

**Checking is as important to defensive play as stickhandling is to offensive hockey.** Implicit in this statement is the realization that the skating ability of your players must be adequate for the level of their competition. Coaches must provide a solid base of skating skills to their players before any checking skills will be useful.

Checking is a component of almost all forms of defensive play. It includes **stick checking, covering, body contact, and body checking.** Body checking will not be included in this chapter as it is currently not a legal part of hockey for players ten years old and under.

Regardless of the type of check a player intends to use, there are several things that must be done in order to be successful.

- The player must consider how many opponents are coming with the attack and where they are before deciding to check.
- The player must attempt to gain proper position in relation to his opponent, thus increasing chances for success.

The important point to stress is that the checker must be able to recognize and evaluate

the opportunities available to the opponent. These opportunities are based upon the positioning of opponents and teammates. **It is the checker's responsibility to limit the opponent's options.** This may include containing the opponent by forcing a bad angle, and/or checking in open ice or along the boards.

### ANGLING

**The combination of skating skills and checking begins with angling.** Angling simply means forcing an opponent to go in the direction that you want. In defensive hockey, this usually means forcing the player towards the boards. This limits the player's options and effectively takes space away from him.

Angling is most utilized when approaching the opponent from the front and occasionally when trying to catch him from behind. It is important not to go directly at the puck carrier in a straight line as this allows two options. Instead, the defensive player must skate parallel to or in an arc towards the opponent. When executed properly, this prevents the puck carrier from cutting back on the defender while continually forcing him/her toward the boards.



Figure 7-1. Angling.

The checker must remember to gauge his speed upon the opponent's and to keep his stick down in anticipation of making contact with the opponent and trying to take the puck away.

#### Key Elements

- Skate parallel to or in an arc towards the opponent
- Continually take away the opponent's space and options
- Adjust speed to the opponent
- Keep your stick on the ice

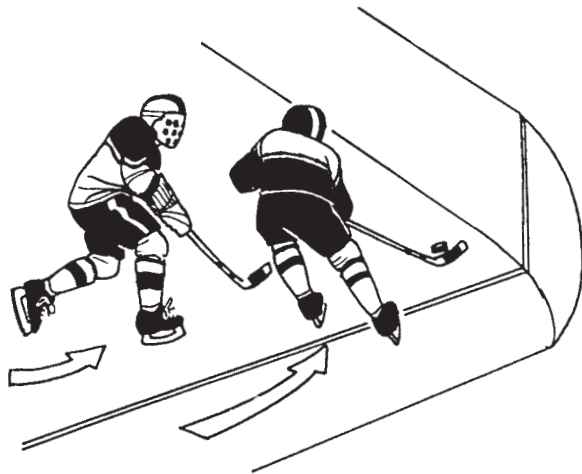


Figure 7-2. Angling and keeping the gap closed.

#### STICK CHECKING

Stick checking is accomplished by using the stick to separate the puck from an opponent. All of the stick checking tactics should be executed using proper body position and balance. In other words, **if the stick check fails,**

**the player must be in a position to continue to defend the opponent.**

#### POKE CHECK

The poke check is most often executed by a defender skating backwards against a rushing opponent. The defender should maintain proper balance while skating backwards, and have only the top hand on the stick. The defender must concentrate on the midsection of the opponent and use peripheral vision to see the puck. The stick should be kept back with the arm flexed so as not to let the opponent know the extent of the poke checker's reach. **When the opponent comes into range, the defender quickly extends the stick, knocking the puck off of the attacker's stick. This movement must solely be done with the arm, so that if the puck is missed, the defender is maintaining proper balance and body position.**

The poke check can also be used by a forward skating defender approaching the puck carrier from the front or side. Again, the extension of the arm is used to surprise the opponent, but proper body position and balance must be maintained for continued play if the check misses.

#### Key Elements

- Top hand only on stick, held close to side with arm bent
- Quick extension of arm and stick when opponent and puck is in range
- Defender must maintain proper balance and body position in relation to the opponent



## Common Errors

- The arm holding the stick is fully extended too early
- The defender lunges at the puck, then putting himself off balance, out of position, and unable to complete the skill

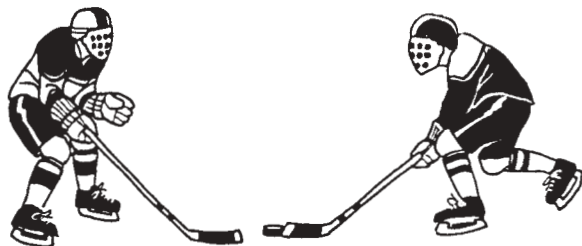


Figure 7-3. Poke check ready position.



Figure 7-4. Execution of the poke check.

## HOOK CHECK

The hook check is most often executed from behind the puck carrier. The stick should be held with the top hand only and the shaft should be extended near to the ice with one knee bent. The blade is turned towards the puck and hooks the puck off of the opponent's stick. **The hook check should only be used when there is a great chance of success because if the check misses, the defender is in poor body position to recover quickly.**

### Key Elements

- The stick shaft should be extended near or on the ice
- The blade must be turned towards the puck and be flat on the ice

### Common Errors

- Committing too early to the bent knee position



Figure 7-5. Hook check.

## LIFT THE STICK

Lifting the stick is typically executed when approaching the opponent from behind or from the side. When close enough to the puck carrier, the defender skates in front of or with him and lifts the opponent's stick near the heel, and as quickly as possible, brings his stick down and takes the puck away.

### Key Elements

- Approach puck carrier from behind or from the side
- Continue skating with the puck carrier
- Lift the stick quickly and take the puck

### Common Errors

Failure of the defensive player to continue skating makes it difficult to gain, good position on the puck carrier



Figure 7-6. Stick lift from behind.





Figure 7-7. Stick lift from an angle.

## STICK PRESS

The stick press is executed in close one-on-one battles. It may be used to prevent an opponent from receiving a pass, shooting, or retrieving a loose puck. The player places his stick on top of the lower shaft of the opponent's stick and presses down preventing the opponent's stick from moving. Leverage and relative upper body strength are keys to young players successfully executing the stick press.

### Key Elements

- Used in close one-on-one situations
- Place stick over lower part of opponent's stick and press down hard

### Common Errors

- The defender not placing the stick low on the stick shaft of the offensive player
- Not maintaining good body position on the offensive player



Figure 7-8. Stick press.

## SWEEP CHECK

The sweep check has similarities to the hook check and the poke check. It is executed from in front of the puck carrier. It can be executed from an upright position with the defender in the same position as if he/she is about to poke check. If the puck carrier is on the side away from the defender's stick, the defender sweeps the blade towards the puck, being careful not to overcommit the body. If the sweep misses, the defender must remain in sound defensive body position.

From a similar position, the defender can lower the stick close to the ice. The sweeping motion moves towards the puck with the curved area where shaft meets blade aiming for the puck. Caution must be used along with this check as the defender is committing her body much more and is susceptible to the puck carrier cutting back on her.

### Key Elements

- Top hand only on the stick
- Blade is flat on the ice
- Be selective as to when to use the sweep check
- Be careful not to overcommit the body

### Common Errors

Committing too early to the bent knee position

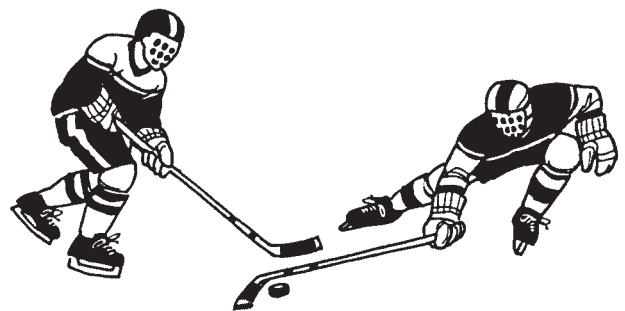


Figure 7-9. Sweep check.

## HIT THE STICK

This move is employed when you are even with the puck carrier and skating parallel to her/him. Hit the opponent's stick near the heel to force her/him to lose control of the puck.

## Key Elements

- Be parallel with the opponent
- Hit the heel of the stick

## COVERING

In general, covering an opponent means maintaining a sound defensive position between the opponent and your own net. The defensive player should try to stay within one stick length of his opponent for effective defensive play.

## Key Elements

- Skate with the opponent and stay within one stick length
- Maintain a position between the opponent and your own net

## BACKCHECKING THE OPEN MAN

When backchecking an open man, the defender should take an **inside position** and try to remain just ahead of the opponent. This position allows the defender to stay between the opponent and the goal **and** the opponent and the puck. The disadvantage is that the defender will have a difficult time watching both opponent and the puck. Therefore, it is imperative that the defender maintain the one stick length or less relationship to the opponent.

## Key Elements

- Take a position inside and slightly ahead of opponent
- Try to split vision between puck and covered player
- Stay within one stick length of opponent

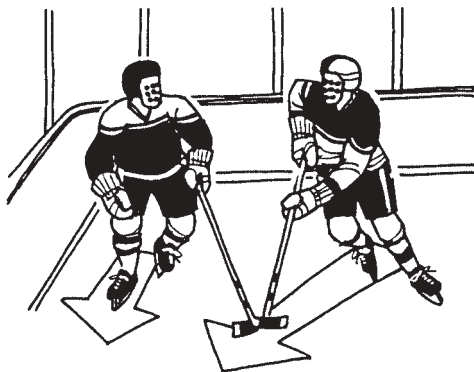


Figure 7-10. Backchecking the open man.



Figure 7-11. Maintaining an inside position.

## BACKCHECKING THE PUCK CARRIER

When backchecking against a puck carrier, the defender must concentrate on the puck carrier's body and not on the puck itself. Too much emphasis on the puck will allow the puck carrier to utilize fakes or have enough room to escape the checker. The key element is to angle the opponent towards an area of the ice that will be more advantageous to the defender (most often towards the boards). Players can also fall into the bad habit of approaching the puck carrier and trying to stop him by hooking or slashing instead of continuing to skate and overtake the opponent.

## Key Elements

- Watch opponent's body, not the puck
- Angle puck carrier towards the boards

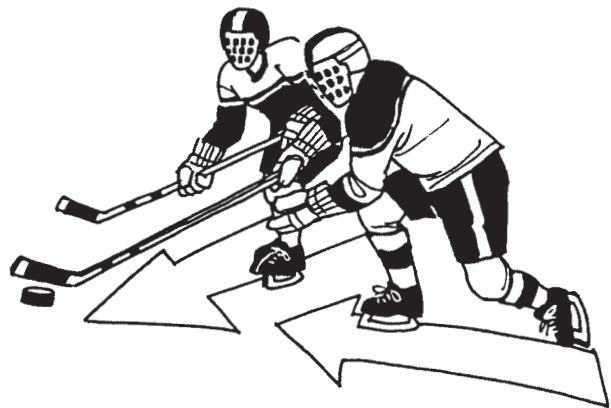


Figure 7-12. Backchecking the puck carrier.



Figure 7-13. Skating a player off the puck.

## COVERING IN FRONT OF THE NET

When covering a player in front of the net, the defender must be aware of the positioning of the puck as well as his opponent. It is, therefore, necessary to maintain contact with the opponent using either the body or the stick. As with other defensive situations, the defender should stay between the opponent and the net. Special attention must be paid to the opponent's stick, particularly when the puck is about to arrive. Lifting the stick or the stick press can be utilized to prevent the opponent from controlling or tipping the puck.

It is also important not to overcommit to one player. If a defensive teammate loses his check, the defender in front may have to cover two opponents. Therefore, they cannot get tied up with one person to the extent that they cannot release to a new position if the situation changes.

### Key Elements

- Stay between opponent and goal
- Maintain contact with stick or body
- Split vision: know where puck is
- Don't get tied up with one player in case situation changes

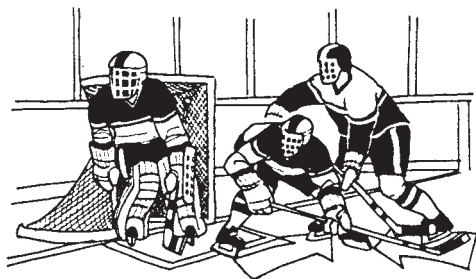


Figure 7-14. Covering in front of the net.

## PROTECTING ONESELF FROM BODY CONTACT ALONG THE BOARDS

The best protection against any kind of contact is to maintain a strong skating position with feet shoulder width apart, knees bent and head up. Overall awareness of where opponents are on the ice is a key ingredient as well.

Even at younger levels of hockey, where body checking is not allowed, contact with the boards can happen. Players must learn to protect themselves when playing near the boards. They must always remember to maintain a strong hockey position with knees flexed and feet about shoulder width apart.

If contact with the boards occurs with the player facing them, the player should try to distribute the contact over as large a surface as possible. The stick and forearms can absorb the contact for the upper body. The player should lean in slightly keeping the skates about a foot away from the boards. If the feet get up against the boards, the player can lose balance upon contact.

When contact is going to occur with the boards at the player's side, he should use the upper arm to cushion the blow. They should be careful to avoid absorbing the blow with the point of the shoulder.

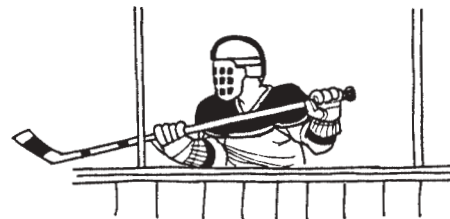


Figure 7-15. Getting the stick and gloves up to absorb the force of any body contact.

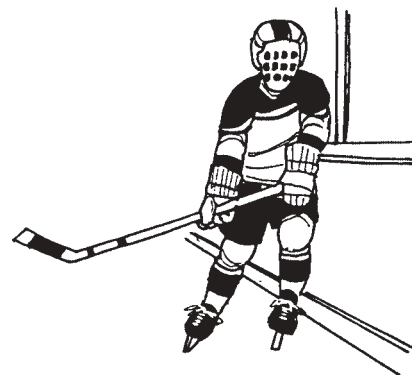


Figure 7-16. Maintain a low center of gravity along the boards.



**Figure 7-17.** Avoid hitting the boards with your shoulder and head.

## SUMMARY

- Checking is an important skill to teach properly to your players
- The main areas of checking are:
  - Skating
  - Angling
  - Stick checking
  - Ready for body contact
  - Protecting yourself
- It is necessary to strictly apply rules pertaining to checking to significantly detour body checking from behind and stick infraction, then promoting safety and enjoyment of the game.



# 8

## Basic Concepts of Play

### OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the conceptual aspect of ice hockey
- To point out that the game can teach the players
- To help coaches teach the players the game as a whole
- To show coaches how to use small games to teach the players in a progressive manner

### INTRODUCTION

The most important part of this chapter is the reason a 10-year-old plays ice hockey—something we, as coaches, sometimes fail to remember or never find out. **A 10-year-old plays hockey because it is fun.** It then becomes our job as coaches, parents, and administrators to make sure that players don't lose sight of this.

For that reason, we wish to take a different approach to the way we work with the players 10 years old and under. Let the game teach the player rather than the coach. We have to trust that we are laying the ground work for the player; trying to give the best possible base to become a good hockey player.

### OFFENSE AND DEFENSE

We often talk about practice and the game in terms of offense and defense, as though they are independent parts of the game. We need, instead, to think of offense and defense as a whole or as being the same. We need to teach players 10 years old and under that offense works like defense and vice versa.

If we look at why offense and defense are

the same, let's think about what we try to accomplish on offense or on the attack. One player has the puck. That player must decide to pass the puck or carry the puck. Player number two is looking to be available for a pass or to support player number one. The third player is looking to find space to be available for a pass or to create space for the first two players.

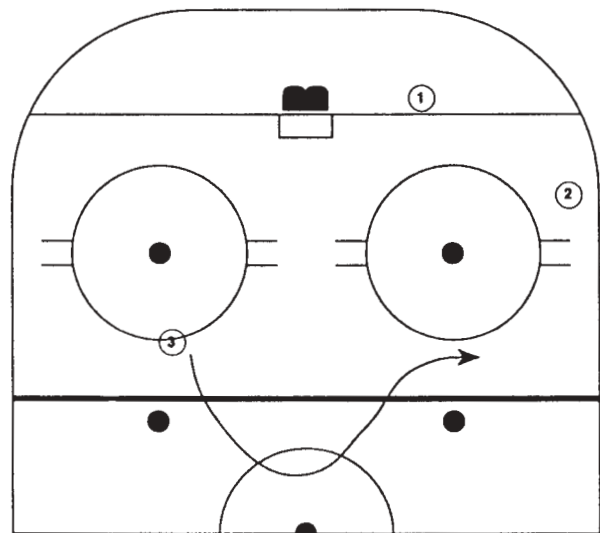


Figure 8-1. 3 on 0 in zone puck and player movement.



If we reverse roles and move to defense, player number one must be concerned with the puck. He must attack or steer the puck to one side, but the focus is the puck, as it is for player number one on offense. Player number two on defense must be concerned with the closest player to the puck who is able to receive a pass. Player number three is looking to cover dangerous areas or players in that area. (Prime scoring area—an area used to create an attack.)

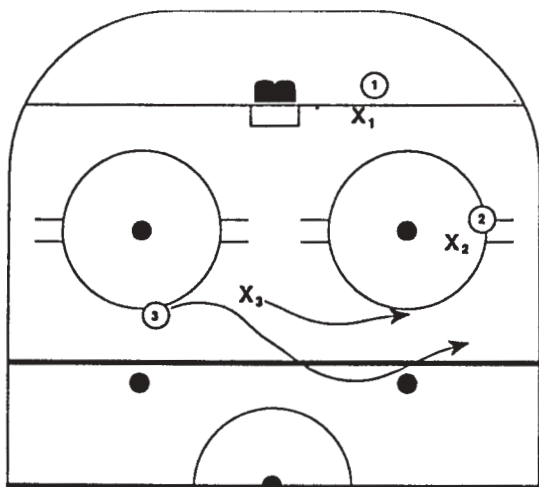


Figure 8-2. 3 on 3 in zone defensive coverage.

If the puck changes teams then the roles reverse. Our goal is to create a method of practice to enable our 10-year-olds to learn what role they must play, how best to accomplish this role, while having fun. We could call this the concept of support.

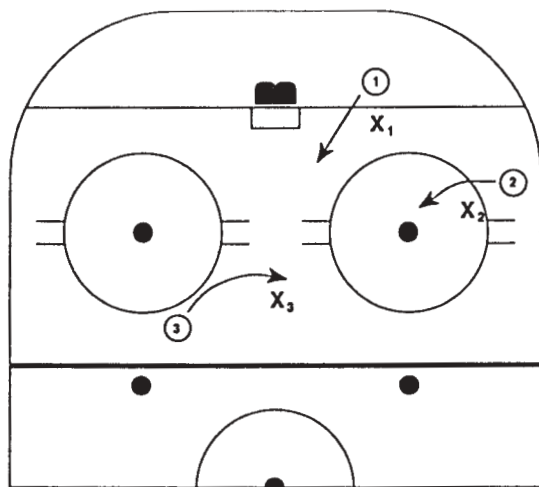


Figure 8-3. 3 on 3 in zone offensive and defensive movement.

## SUPPORT

If we try to teach 10-year-olds support using the whole ice surface, we will find some big problems. First, some players skate at a higher level and it will be easy for them. It will be difficult for the poor skater as they will not be able to get to the puck. To make this better for all players, we need to move to a small space. This gives us our method of practice. As we said earlier, we were going to let the game be the teacher.

So the game becomes small-sided games in a small space. An example might be placing the net on the side boards and playing three vs. three. What we can accomplish with these games is more players touching the puck and more changes of team for the puck which results in quicker transitions from offense to defense. This also results in the players seeing more opportunities. But even more important is the fact that more players have the opportunity to score goals. If you are the parent of a 10-year-old or have the opportunity to be around after practice, they can all tell you how many goals they have scored. You only have to look in their eyes to know how much they love to score. If we can allow the game to be fun, then we may see more success at higher levels.

## PROGRESSIONS

Let's take a look at the way we may want to build our games in a teaching progression.

If we start by playing two vs. zero within a face-off circle, with no rules, then move to three vs. zero with no rules except to stay inside the circle, we have started to move the players together in a group with no rules.

Next, by playing keep-away two vs. one inside a face-off circle with a pylon at the edge of the circle, we have introduced defense. The goal of the game is to carry the puck and touch the pylon. We can then start our teaching that two players must work together to keep the puck from one player. You may want to add a point system or play that the player who wins the puck moves over to the offensive side. We should talk to the players about the rules of each player. If we think about the roles, we would discover that the role of the first player with the puck is to get the puck to player two

or to get free. Player two is trying to find an open space to receive a pass or to draw the defensive player over to cover him and give player one a chance to be free. The defensive player is, of course, trying to gain the puck, and he will be taking space away.

We have started our 10-year-old thinking about space and support with a simple small game. We could then add or subtract players within the same game.

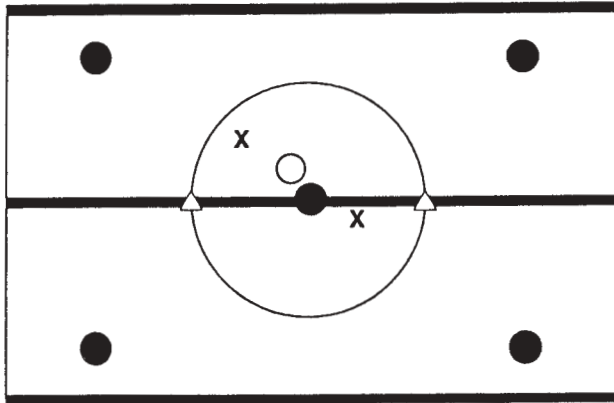


Figure 8-4. 2 on 1 in the face off circle.

We could then play five vs. five keep-away with three pucks. For scoring, the team that has two or more pucks would receive a point.

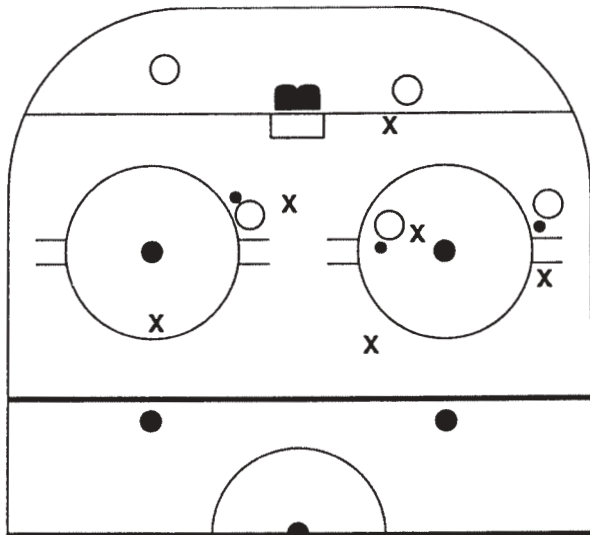


Figure 8-5. 6 vs. 5 in the zone, using three pucks.

Our next game, six against three, arranged in the end zone, places three players on one

board and three on the opposite end zone in the middle using four pylons. The object of the game would be for the three offensive players on one side to pass the puck through the pylons to the three players on the other side. The rules for the defensive players would be:

- two players must always be in the middle or in the rectangle formed by the pylons
- one player may chase the puck
- as the puck changes sides the chaser may come back in the rectangle and replace one player who then chases.

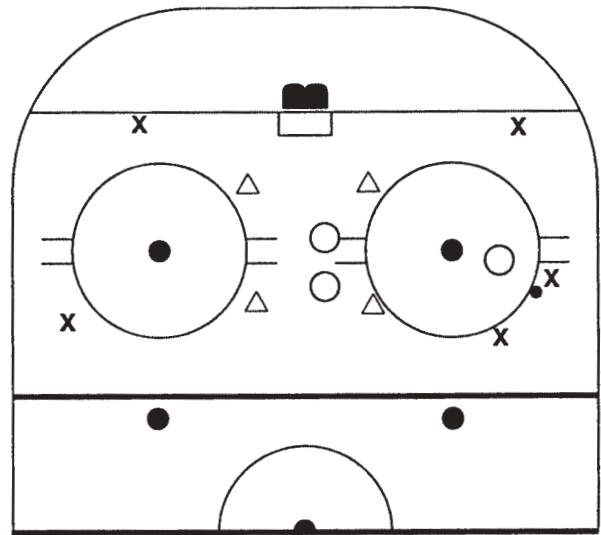


Figure 8-6. 5 vs. 3 in the zone, using one puck and four obstacles.

## GAME-LIKE CONDITIONS

We now need to allow players to play with more game-like conditions. We could move the nets to an area close to the boards, perhaps to the corner. We will now play two vs. one with a goal but the area must be small. You can control the game by keeping a puck in play at all times. When a goal is scored or a puck is out of play, put a new puck in play right away. You can add players to make three vs. two or whatever combination you wish. You may wish to make certain players stationary passers only. On the defensive side, try one vs. two and two vs. three to let the defensive players learn who to react to as a group.

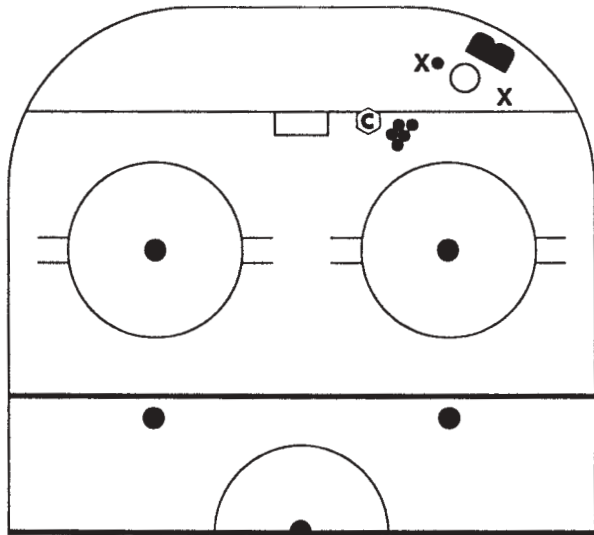


Figure 8-7. 2 on 1 confined to a restricted space (corner).

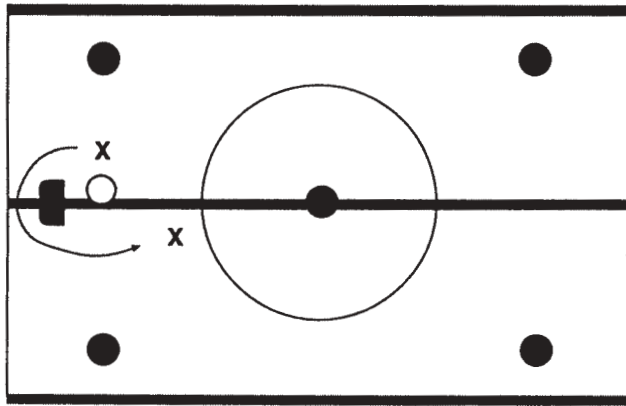


Figure 8-8. 2 on 1 confined to a restricted area (center ice).

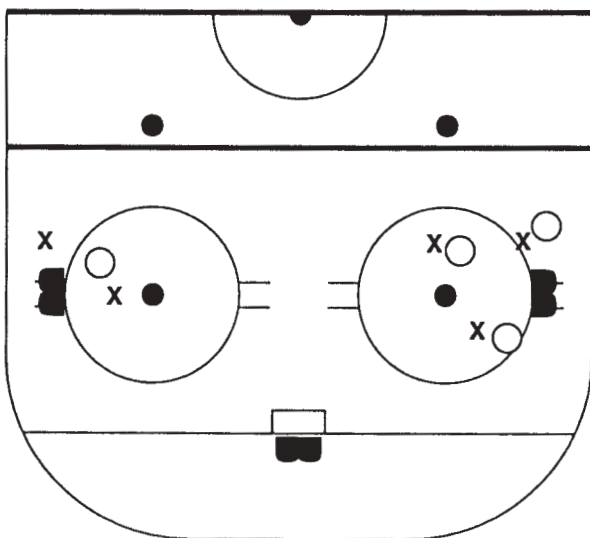


Figure 8-9. 2 on 1 & 3 on 3 in the same zone, each using half a zone.

If we now consider our play zone from the blue line in, we can start to play games with two nets. For the first game, we will place our nets on the face-off dots facing each other. We will play two vs. two and the players can score on either net. You may wish to get some old fire hoses and run them behind the net to keep the puck in play or you may place players along an imaginary line extending out from the goal to keep the puck in play. You again will be controlling by feeding new pucks in as they go out of play or are scored. Allow play to go for 30 seconds to one minute. You may wish to add players to this game. In all of these games where we use two nets, you may want to have the players touch the puck twice and then they must pass the puck.

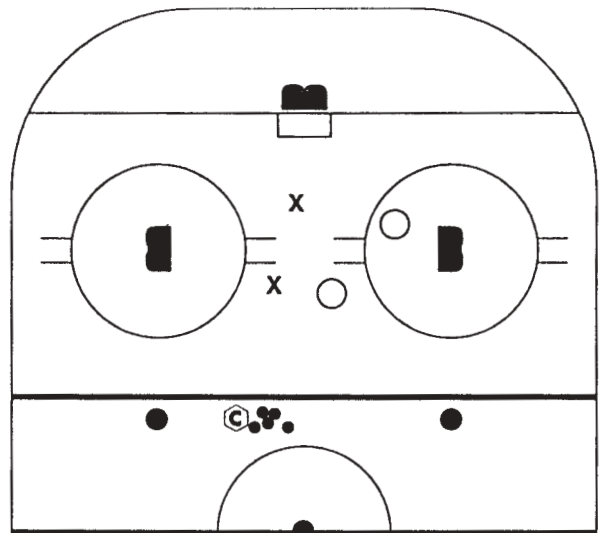


Figure 8-10. 2 on 2 in zone using three nets.

Next we could move to a game of three vs. three. In this game, you would place one team along the blue line and the other along the goal line extended. We would play a regular game, with one rule change — you may use your teammates on the side lines to pass to, and may want to institute the two-touch rule.

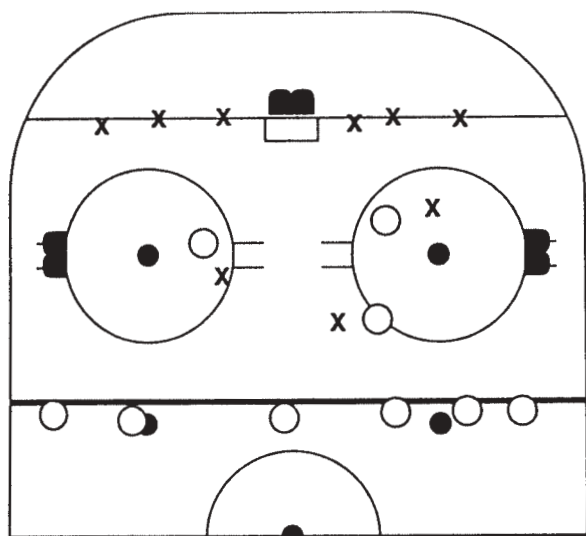


Figure 8-11. 3 on 3 in zone using three nets.

The last game we can look at is three vs. three with the nets back to back. If you place the nets in the middle of any zone with the goal mouth facing the boards, you can then play three vs. three, score on either net, or any other rules you may wish to use. The value of this game lies within the decisions that must be made to play offense or defense, the kinds of

passes that must be made, and the fun of scoring.

## SUMMARY

These are examples of the types of games that can be played. If we look at them closely, we find that we have not placed a lot of rules on the players but have allowed them to learn through playing. This is the real secret to developing players. Place them in situations that allow the player to make the choice to think and develop skills. While developing your games, remember it is important to set goals for your games and to stay close to those goals. In other words, don't change your mind in the middle of the game.

Remember what we suggested are the basic building blocks of team play for an ice hockey player. We have used all of the skills necessary to be a good hockey player. We have placed the player in a position of having to move from offense to defense quickly and to make decisions on how to support each other. At the intermediate level, we will build on this. Remember that these concepts are extremely important and, once mastered, any system of team play can be implemented.



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# Ice Hockey Terminology

**Altercation** Any physical interaction between two or more opposing players resulting in a penalty or penalties being assessed.

**Angling** A skating pattern in which a checker moves toward the puck carrier on an angle which forces the puck carrier to move in the direction the checker intends for carrier to go.

**Area Pass** Passing the puck to an area where no teammate is presently occupying but a teammate is in the process of skating to that area. This is typically a soft pass.

**Attack Triangle** Any offensive formation which creates a triangular formation, thus providing the puck carrier with two passing options and enabling the offensive team to create width and depth in their attack.

**Backman Pass** A pass back, in the direction of your own goal in order to maintain puck control.

**Balanced Defense** Balance implies depth and width in defensive alignments to counteract triangulation and balance. It requires that defensive players read the offensive pressure and adjust their positions to provide coverage in the area of the puck as well as other areas where the puck may be moved.

**Body Checking** A legal body check is one in which a player checks an opponent who is in possession of the puck, by using hip or shoulder from the front, diagonally from the front or straight from the side, and does not take more than two steps/strides in executing the check.

**Body Contact With the Goalkeeper** Physical contact with the goalkeeper has evolved into a tremendous problem in our game. The following points must be addressed by coaches, players, and parents and enforced by the officials:

1. A penalty for interference or roughing shall be assessed for all unnecessary body contact with the goalkeeper, regardless of his location on the ice and regardless of who is in possession of the puck.

2. Any player who is propelling the puck into the goal crease and body checks the goalkeeper before or after releasing the puck shall be assessed a penalty for charging.

3. Any player who makes intentional body contact with a goalkeeper when he is in scoring position to avoid such contact shall be assessed a penalty for charging.

The practice of “going to the net” has quickly turned into the practice of “going to the net and taking out the goalkeeper.” Players must realize that body checking a goalkeeper is much different than body checking a player. It must be emphasized that players are expected to respect the rights and privileges of the goalkeeper. Proper respect for the goalkeeper will allow him to safely perform his function to the team.

**Break-Away** A condition whereby a player is in control of the puck with no opposition between the player and the opposing goal, with a reasonable scoring opportunity.

**Bullet Passing** To fire a stick to stick pass as hard as possible. The purpose is to develop better pass receiving skills.

**Butt-Ending** The condition whereby a player uses the shaft of the stick above the upper hand to jab or attempt to jab an opposing player.

**Close Coverage** Defensive hockey term wherein the defensive player plays close or tight to an offensive player.

**Closing the Gap** A retreating defenseman adjusts speed and skating pattern so the dis-

tance between defenseman and the puck carrier is lessened in order to get the puck carrier within poke checking range.

**Coach** A coach is a person primarily responsible for directing and guiding the play of his team. Along with the manager, he is responsible for the conduct of his team's players before, during, and after a game.

**Commit** The degree of puck control by the offensive player will determine whether the defender pressures the player (commits) or stalls (contains). Commit is defined as a final action by the defender on a particular play, for example, if the offensive player is in full control the defender must approach under control and separate the attacker from the puck.

**Concentration of Attack** Any action or movement in a confined area which creates an offensive numerical advantage.

**Control Skating** Varying your speed and route to the potential pass reception area so that you arrive there with speed at the same moment as the pass.

**Creases** *Goalkeepers:* Areas marked on the ice in front of each goal designed to protect the goalkeepers from interference by attacking players. *Referees:* Area marked on the ice in front of the penalty timekeeper's seat for use of the referee.

**Creation of Time and Space** Using, technical skills such as skating, passing, puck control and applying concepts like stretching, support, overlapping, width and depth, etc.

**Cross** Two offensive players exchange positions to accomplish isolation and force a decision by a defender.

**Cross and Drop** One player crosses in front of his teammate and leaves the puck so that it lies still for his partner to retrieve.

**Cross-Checking** When a player, holding his stick with both hands, checks an opponent by using the shaft of the stick with no part of the stick on the ice.

**Cycling** A balanced rotation of players in the offensive zone to maintain puck control and create offensive options.

**Defensive Side** Establishing a position between an opponent and the net.

**Deflections** Re-directing a shot headed toward the net or wide of the net.

**Deking** Fakes. These might include single fakes, double fakes, fake passes, fake shots, etc.

**Delay and Pass** A situation where a forward with the puck in the process of attacking the opposing goal delays his thrust toward the net by turning toward the boards and looks to pass to a teammate who is coming late as part of the second wave of the attack.

**Delayed Off-Side** A situation where an attacking player has preceded the puck across the attacking blue line, but the defending team has gained possession of the puck and is in a position to bring the puck out of their defending zone without any delay or contact with an attacking player.

**Directing the Puck** The act of intentionally moving or positioning the body, skate, or stick so as to change the course of the puck in a desired direction.

**Driving to the Net** Either the player with the puck or another player without the puck skates as hard as possible toward the net during attacks. This places great pressure on the opponent's defenders.

**Drop Pass** The puck carrier leaves the puck for a crossing or trailing teammate to pick up, either for an immediate shot or to carry into a scoring position. The drop should occur directly in front of the defender.

**Face-Off** The action of an official dropping the puck between the sticks of two opposing players to start play. A face-off begins when the referee indicates its location and the officials take their appropriate positions and ends when the puck has been legally dropped.

**Fisticuffs** The actual throwing of a punch (closed fist) by a player which makes contact with an opponent.

**Force Outside** Any action by the defender to force the play to the outside away from the middle lane and prime scoring area.

**Game Suspensions(s)** When a player, coach, or manager receives a game suspension(s), he shall not be eligible to participate in the next game(s) that were already on the schedule of that team before the incident occurred.

**Gap** The space between a defenseman and an

attacking forward in a one-on-one situation. Wide gap means the defenseman is giving up space in front. Tight gap means the defenseman is giving up space behind him.

**Give and Go** An offensive tactic; pass and aggressively skate to an open area to become an option for the player just passed to.

**Goalkeeper** A goalkeeper is a person designated as such by a team who is permitted special equipment and privileges to prevent the puck from entering the goal.

**Good Receiving Angle** The optimum receiving angle occurs when the receiver is traveling parallel with the passer. Another good receiving angle occurs when the receiver is coming towards the passer. You should avoid trying to take passes looking over your shoulder. The receiver must provide a visible target.

**Head-Butting** The physical use of one's head in the course of delivering a body-check (head first) in the chest, head, neck, or back area, or the physical use of the head to strike an opponent.

**Head on a Swivel** A technique utilized to observe and to read the entire ice surface by quickly rotating the head.

**Headman Pass** Passing to a man ahead of the puck carrier and in a better offensive position.

**HECC** The Hockey Equipment Certification Council is an independent organization responsible for the development, evaluation, and testing of performance standards for protective ice hockey equipment. To date, there are standards for face masks, helmets, and skate blades.

**Heel of the Stick** The point where the shaft of the stick and the bottom of the blade meet.

**High Sticking** Although some organizations have recently enacted rules penalizing players from carrying the stick above the waist, the Playing Rules Committee favored retention of the shoulder height definition so as not to create a different rule for high sticking the puck as for high sticking an opponent. The Committee demands a higher awareness level of the "careless" use of the stick around the head of an opponent. Any player who contacts

an opponent in the shoulder, neck or head area with the stick while it is carried in a careless or accidental matter shall be assessed a minor penalty. And if injury to an opponent occurs for a stick so carried, the offending player must be assessed the minimum of a major plus misconduct penalty, even if the contact was accidental.

**Hooking** The action of applying the blade of the stick to any part of an opponent's body or stick and impeding his progress by pulling or tugging motion with the stick.

**Indirect Pass** A pass off the boards or around the boards.

**Individual Skills** The individual who develops quick feet, acceleration with the puck, drive skating, sculling, crossing over to cut in, and cutting to the net, will contribute to a team's ability to execute effective puck control.

**Injury Potential Penalties** Injury potential penalties include butt-ending, checking from behind, head-butting, spearing, board checking, charging, cross checking, elbowing/kneeing, high sticking, holding the face mask, slashing, and roughing. The linesman may report such infractions to the referee, following the next stoppage of play, that have occurred behind the play, and unobserved by the referee.

**Lane** A passing lane is an open route between the passer and receiver. Also, a specific section of the ice is identified as a lane of attack or a lane of defense.

**Last Play Face-Off** The location at which the puck was last legally played by a player or goalkeeper immediately prior to a stoppage of play.

**Lateral Feed** An offensive tactic whereby the puck carrier maintains possession after a cross to make a lateral pass.

**Locking On** Identifying a person to cover and staying with that person tightly in a one-on-one fashion.

**Man Advantage** Having a one or two player advantage (power play) because the opposing team has been assessed one or more penalties.

**Man Down** Having a one or two player disadvantage (short-handed) because your team has been assessed one or more penalties.



**Man-to-Man Coverage** Each defensive player is responsible for an identified offensive player.

**Numerical Advantage** Good support can contribute to the pressure applied on the defense by creating numerical advantage and outnumbering the defenders in a confined area.

**Off-Ice (Minor) Official** Officials appointed to assist in the conduct of the game including the official scorer, game timekeeper, penalty timekeeper, and the two goal judges. The referee has general supervision of the game and full control of all game officials, and in case of any dispute, the referee's decision shall be final.

**One Touch Pass** Shoot or pass the puck off the pass without stopping the puck. It is like swinging at a baseball pitch. A synonym would be "Bumping the Puck."

**Option More Than Once** Continually offer offensive support to the puck carrier. Thus, if you don't receive the pass in the first potential pass reception area, visualize another reception area and work to arrive on time.

**Overlapping** Having one player skate through an area, hopefully clearing out the opposing checkers, then having a second player skate into the recently vacated area. The most common example of this is cycling in the corner of the offensive zone.

**Overplay** A defensive player intentionally plays tighter on a player than normally in order to take away time and space from the offensive player. Similarly, an offensive player can also overplay a situation or an area in order to take a calculated risk to heighten the pressure on a defensive team.

**Pass and Follow** A tactical application of passing whereby the player who passes the puck skates behind the receiver of the pass.

**Penalty** A penalty is a result of an infraction of the rules by a player or team official. It usually involves the removal from the game of the offending player or team official for a specified period of time. In some cases the penalty may be the awarding of a penalty shot on goal or the actual awarding of a goal.

**Picking** To interfere with an opposing defender in an effort to create space for a teammate.

**Pinning Technique** The defensive technique utilized to pin or secure an opponent against the boards.

**Player** Member of a team physically participating in a game. The goalkeeper is considered a player except where special rules specify otherwise.

**Possession and Control of the Puck** The last player or goalkeeper to make contact with the puck and who also propels the puck in a desired direction.

**Possession of the Puck** The last player or goalkeeper to make contact with the puck. This includes a puck that is deflected off a player or any part of his equipment.

**Potential Pass Reception Area** An area on the ice which a passer and receiver visualize as a possible location for a pass completion.

**Pressure (Defense)** Defensive speed creates pressure on the offensive players. This results in reducing the time and space available to the attackers.

**Pressure (Offense)** Quick player and/or puck movement which causes the defense to react more quickly than they may be capable of doing.

**Progression Practices** When teaching a skill or concept in progression, begin by demonstrating the entire drill. Then slowly have the players execute one component of the drill (allowing them to gain confidence and use proper technique). Gradually, accelerate the players to a higher tempo, more complex component. Once the skills have been mastered, encourage execution of the complete drill at top speed. The final stage of designing a drill in progression is to create game situations (with resistance) where players need to execute the new drill.

**Protective Equipment** Equipment worn by players for the sole purpose of protection from injury. Recommended equipment should be commercially manufactured.

**Puck Control** Involves a variety of skills such as basic stickhandling, dekes or fakes, puck protection, etc.

**Puck Protection** Any action or movement that keeps the puck away from the defender



through the use of one's body. For example, driving to the net.

**Pulling the Goalie** Removing the goalie from the ice in order to gain an extra skater. This is usually done when a delayed penalty is called against the opposing team or when a team is losing late in the game.

**Quiet Zones/Dead Zones** Space in the corners and behind the net in the offensive zone which is generally uncovered. These can be used when under pressure to maintain puck control.

**Rapid Counterattack** Starting an attack immediately after the opponent turns the puck over. The opponent is in a vulnerable position for a second or two after the turnover because its team members are thinking of offense and are positioned offensively.

**Regrouping** This usually occurs in the neutral zone. It means that players who are back checking from the offensive zone suddenly find that their team has the puck. For whatever reason they are unable to counterattack rapidly. Thus, they are forced to retreat with the puck while teammates skate predetermined patterns in an effort to generate speed and get open for a pass. In general, it is better to counterattack rapidly than it is to regroup. Regrouping involves time to organize your offense. This means that the defenders have time to organize their defense.

**Removal of Time and Space** When a team is without the puck, they attempt to limit the time and space the opponent has with which to advance the puck or create a scoring chance. This is done by skating, angling, checking, and the use of concepts like defensive support and proper positioning.

**Reverse the Flow** A player carries the puck in one direction then throwing it back toward the area he has just skated from.

**Riding Your Check** The defensive player stays with an offensive player in order to prevent offensive play; for example, the defensive player rides or sustains the check on a player who passes the puck, so that this individual cannot get open for a return or give and go pass.

**Roofing the Puck** Getting the puck up into the

top part of the net particularly when the goalie is down on the ice.

**Sagging** Defenders away from the puck, adjusting their position to support defenders playing the puck carrier.

**Saucer Pass** Passing the puck through the air over an opponent's stick. The ideal saucer pass lands flat on the ice.

**Saving Ice** When a player reduces his speed, to conserve the ice between himself and the potential pass reception area. By "saving ice" the player keeps some ice in front of him to accelerate through into the pass reception area.

**Screening** Positioning yourself in the goalkeeper's line of vision, so that he/she cannot see the puck.

**Shorthanded** Shorthanded means that a team is below the numerical strength of its opponents on the ice. When a goal is scored against a shorthanded team, the minor or bench minor penalty which terminates automatically is the one which causes the team scored against to be "shorthanded." Thus, if an equal number of players from each team is each serving a penalty(s) (minor, bench minor, major, or match only), neither team is shorthanded.

**Slashing** The action of striking or attempting to strike an opponent with a stick or of swinging a stick at an opponent with no contact being made. Tapping an opponent's stick is not considered slashing.

**Slot** The area of ice in front of the net from the goal to the top of the face-off circles.

**Small Games** The playing of small, compact games at one end of the ice. This helps players develop their skills, game strategies, and creativity. These games are excellent ways to maintain high levels of enthusiasm and keep players moving rather than standing in the traditionally long practice drill lines.

**Spearing** The action of poking or attempting to poke an opponent with the tip of the blade of the stick while holding the stick with one or both hands.

**Speed** The quickness to attack that will limit the reaction time of the defender (stress the defense) and force defensive error.



**Speed Training** Working on skill development at high speeds, exceeding the comfort level of players. Players must move their feet as rapidly as possible. The work:rest ratio should be about 1-2. Players must be fully recovered before they attempt another repetition of the drill.

**Spinnerama** An evasion skill where a player skating backwards with the puck executes a reverse pivot. Player pivots from backward to forward skating and executes a quick tight turn to lose checker.

**Stall/Contain** The defensive team will attempt to force an opponent to stop or slow down the speed of an attack to provide time to set up better defensive coverage. This can be accomplished by pressuring the puck carrier or deflecting the attack to the outside lanes.

**Straddling the Line** Stretching one leg across the blue line in an attempt to stay on sides until your teammate carries the puck into the offensive zone.

**Stretching** Sending a player up ice to drive the opposing defenders back in an effort to create space for teammates to use underneath.

**Strong Side** The side of the ice where the puck is being controlled.

**Substitute Goalkeeper** A designated goalkeeper on the official score sheet who is not then participating in the game.

**Support** Players away from the puck make themselves available as a passing option in the attack. Players away from the puck are active by positioning themselves in a manner which provides options.

**Switching** Exchange of defensive responsibilities between two defensive players.

**Taking Back Ice** When a player lengthens the route to the potential pass reception area. By taking a less direct route, he delays from arriving too early and maintains skating speed.

**Team Official** A person responsible in any degree for the operation of a team, such as a team executive, coach, manager, or trainer.

**Temporary Goalkeeper** A player not designated

as a goalkeeper on the official score sheet who assumes that position when no designated goalkeeper is able to participate in the game. He is governed by goalkeeper privileges and limitations, and must return as a "player" when a designated goalkeeper becomes available to participate in the game.

**Tight Gap** When players, especially defensemen, play very close to the opposing team's attackers on rush and neutral zone situations. It means that the space between the attacking players and the defenders is as small as possible.

**Timing** The ability to arrive at the right place at the right time.

**Trail** A teammate supporting the puck carrier from behind.

**Transition** The ability of a team to quickly move from offense to defense and vice versa.

**Triangulation** Any offensive formation which creates offensive triangles, thus providing the puck carrier two passing options and enabling the offensive team to create width and depth in the attack.

**Turn Back** A puck protection tactic where the puck carrier suddenly stops, turns and skates back in the direction he came from, always keeping body between the checker and the puck.

**Weakside** The side of the ice opposite to where the puck is being controlled.

**Wideman Pass/Widewing Pass** To use width of the ice to change the point of attack.

**Zero Tolerance** As we move into our second and third years with this policy in effect, there can be no relaxation in standards by officials in dealing with verbal abuse directed to them, and in their conduct towards all team personnel. No one element (players, coaches, officials) is exempted for the policy. It is important that each group understands and respects the other two groups, and that without cooperation among all three we have a difficult, if not impossible, task to create an environment which is safe and fun.



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