



PROGRAMMING NOVICE & BELOW

Association Implementation Guide



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PROGRAMMING NOVICE & BELOW (8 & UNDER)



How a player gets that first taste of hockey is crucial

A PROGRESSIVE INTRODUCTION TO THE GAME

The FUNdamental stage of Hockey Canada’s Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) Model serves as the foundation upon which the entire minor hockey association is built. Youngsters at every level of play benefit from getting the “right start” in the game and it is crucial in building the skills of recreational and competitive players alike. Children learn through participating in practice drills and informal modified games which forms the basis of Long-Term Player Development (LTPD).

If the beginner has fun, develops some basic skills and builds confidence, there is a good chance that player will go on to enjoy hockey for many years.



HOCKEY CANADA POLICY

Hockey Canada has established national guidelines to ensure optimal development of hockey players at this crucial introductory stage:

Game play at the Novice age-group and below will be Cross/Half-ice effective 2019-20

Programming in the Ontario Hockey Federation, which Ontario Minor Hockey is a member, will be implemented as follows:

1. Effective 2017-18 - Game play for the Initiation age-group (5 & 6 year-olds) will be Cross-Ice
2. Effective 2018-19 - Game play for the Minor Novice age-group (7 year-olds) will be Half-Ice.
3. Effective 2019-20 - Game play for the Novice age-group (8 year-olds) will be Half-Ice during the first half of the season and transition to Full-Ice during the second half of the season.



OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

Developing fundamental movement skills (skating, jumping, twisting, turning) manipulation skills (shooting, puck control) and overall motor skills (agility, balance, coordination) in a fun and safe sport environment that promotes self-confidence.

- Continue to grow their impression of hockey as a positive one for players and parents.
- Practice/gameplay exist primarily in a modified form – formalized games introduced throughout the season.
- Some tiering of the players – goal is to have players working with players of like skill to develop confidence and self-esteem.

WHAT IS AGE APPROPRIATE SKILLS PROGRAMMING?

Designing practice and game play that is appropriate to the age, size and skill level of the participant.

FUNDAMENTAL **HOCKEY** SKILLS

- Age-appropriate skills programming.
- Introduced through Skills Stations/Small Spaces.

FUNDAMENTAL **GAME** SKILLS

- Age-appropriate modified games.
- Introduced through Small Area Games and Cross-Ice / Half-Ice games.

CROSS-ICE & HALF-ICE HOCKEY



At times, there can be concerns from parents about how Small Area Games may delay their child's hockey development. But parents need to think long term and not worry too much about their child being the best player on the ice at the age of 5, 6 or 7 years old. It is also important to

remind parents that putting young players in to a competitive environment too early, will compromise their development. Children need to be placed in to competitive situations that suit their age appropriate abilities. And parents need to be realistic about what children should be able to do at all age levels. This is why Hockey Canada's Long Term Player Development strategy is so important.

It is important to fully understand and appreciate the benefits of cross ice and Half-Ice hockey. The configuration of dividing the playing surface into Cross-Ice or Half-Ice are decisions that have been made at the national level with policies in place that require small area configurations for game play at the Initiation, Minor Novice and Novice levels

WHY CHANGE THE WAY WE INTRODUCE HOCKEY?

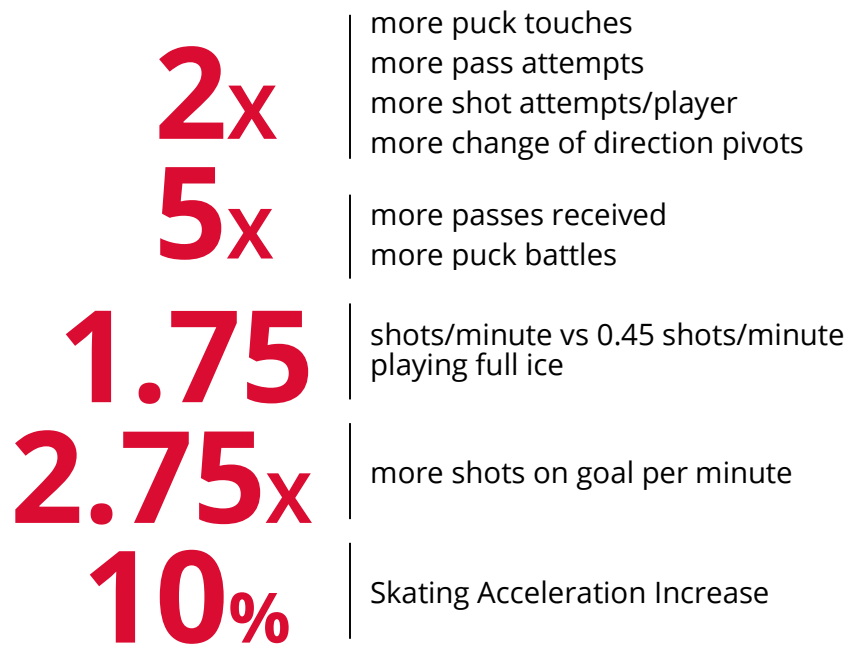


- Increased emphasis on skating skills including agility, balance, coordination and quickness.
- Number of puck battles increases significantly.
- Puck control and puck protection skills are enhanced resulting in more confidence with the puck.
- Fundamentals of skating, puck control, passing, and shooting are reinforced.
- Less time and space increases the frequency and speed of making hockey decisions.
- Offers a more challenging environment to improve ice awareness and elevate hockey sense.
- Increased intensity of competition results through the progressive skill improvement of players.
- Better environment for teaching ice awareness and boosts hockey sense.
- Over time, the intensity level of competition increases with the progressive skill improvement of players.

DRAWBACKS IN OUR CURRENT SYSTEM

- Over-competing & under training
- Adult programs imposed on children
- Preparation geared to short-term outcomes
- Competition system interferes with athlete development
- Early specialization is demanded

THE RESEARCH | WHAT THE NUMBERS TELL US



SKATING



- Advanced skaters reach top speed in 60 feet or less.
- The cross-ice playing surface is 85 feet in length, meaning players can and do reach top speed in cross-ice hockey.
- Effective skating, especially at higher levels, is a combination of turns, pivots, starts and transitions.
- Cross-ice hockey trains players to skate the game, rather than simply skating fast in straight lines. It provides more acceleration, more agility, and more engagement. It also doubles players' puck handling opportunities.

The flat-out use of maximum skating in the game of hockey, it simply doesn't happen very often. What does happen is that you have to be adjusting, changing, going forward, backward, lateral, always turning and moving toward the puck; that's agility skating. Practices in smaller areas generate more stops, starts, turns and, most importantly, more puck touches.

George Kingston - Former Canadian Men's National Team, NHL, International Coach



INITIATION IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



5 & 6 YEARS OLD
EFFECTIVE 2017-18 SEASON

INITIATION (5&6 YEARS OLD) | SEASONAL STRUCTURE

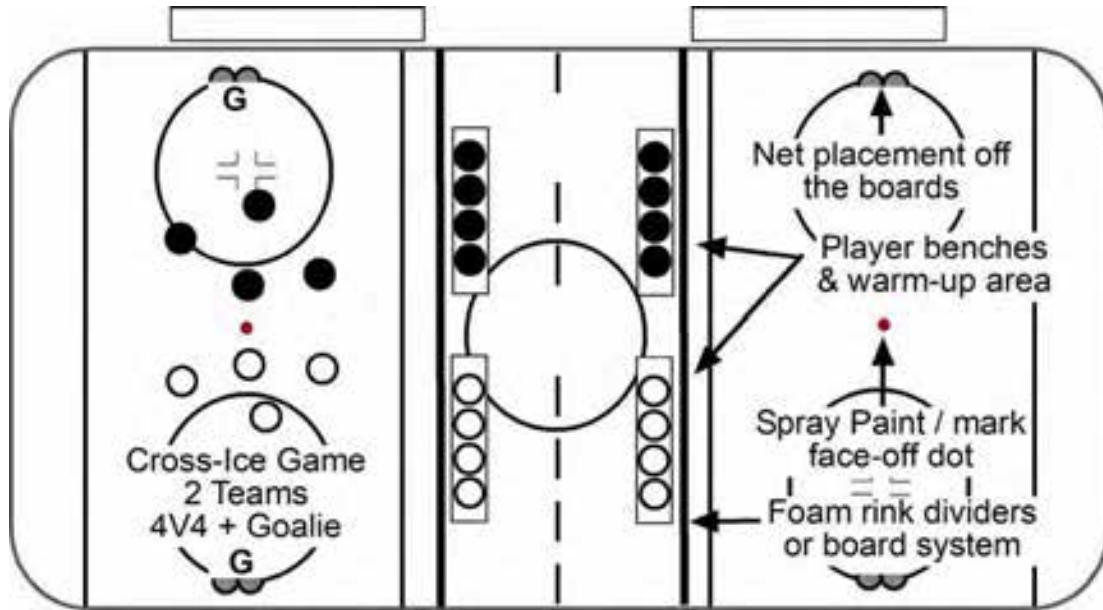
Effective 2017-18



MONTHS	September - October	November - March
PHASE 26 weeks	Development Season 8 Weeks	Regular Season 20 Weeks
VOLUME 42 practices 22-30 games 3 jamborees	12 Practices Hockey Canada Curriculum Station-based 85% technical skills	30 Practices Hockey Canada Curriculum Station-based 75% technical skills
	4 Games Cross-Ice	18-26 Games Cross-Ice
	None	3 Jamborees after December 1 st
FACTORS	3:1 Practice to Game 5:1 Player to Coach	2:1 Practice to Game 5:1 Player to Coach
TIERING	Tier players of similar skill. All tiers allocated the same number of practices and games. All tiers work on same skills.	
POSITIONAL PLAY	Rotate all players through all positions. No Full-Time goalies – every player takes a turn in goal.	

INITIATION (5&6 YEARS OLD) | GAME FORMAT • CROSS-ICE

Effective 2017-18



TEAM FORMAT:	Two Team Model	GAME FORMAT:	4 V 4 plus Goaltenders
GAME LENGTH:	Two 22 Minute halves (44 minutes)	OFFICIALS:	N/A
WARM UP:	3 minutes	SCORE KEPT:	None
PUCKS:	Blue (4 oz.)	BENCHES:	Teams share benches
RINK DIVIDERS:	Optimal: Foam rink dividers or board system		
FACE-OFF DOT:	Spray paint or draw face-off dot in the middle of each Cross-Ice Rink		
NETS:	Small (3' x 4') or Regulation (4' x 6') – both are acceptable Place nets on edge of centre circle using the line of the circle as the goal line.		

INITIATION (5&6 YEARS OLD) | GAME PLAY GUIDELINES • CROSS-ICE

Effective 2017-18

FACE-OFFS:	Start of Game & Second Half	OFF-SIDE & ICING:	None
SHIFT LENGTH:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buzzer is set to 1:00 minute shift length intervals. • On buzzer, players leave puck where it is and go to bench. • Coach or On-Ice Volunteer will direct players to “leave puck”. • Players on bench come on the ice and continue to play. • If there are fewer than 4 players on the bench, the active player designated to stay out for the following shift must tag up at the bench prior to racing to play the loose puck. • Both games synchronized through officials. 		
PUCK OUT OF PLAY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New puck to non-offending team. 		
GOALTENDER FREEZES PUCK:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistle to indicate shooting team to back off and call out possession of team that now gets the puck. • Goaltender gives puck to a teammate to begin play the other way. 		
WHEN GOAL IS SCORED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistle to signal goal. • Scoring team backs off to let the team that was scored on retrieve the puck out of the net. • Play resumes with team that was scored on going on offense. 		
PENALTIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If offending team has the puck it is a change of possession and puck goes to the other team. 		



MINOR NOVICE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



7 YEARS OLD
EFFECTIVE 2018-19 SEASON

MINOR NOVICE (7 YEARS OLD) | SEASONAL STRUCTURE

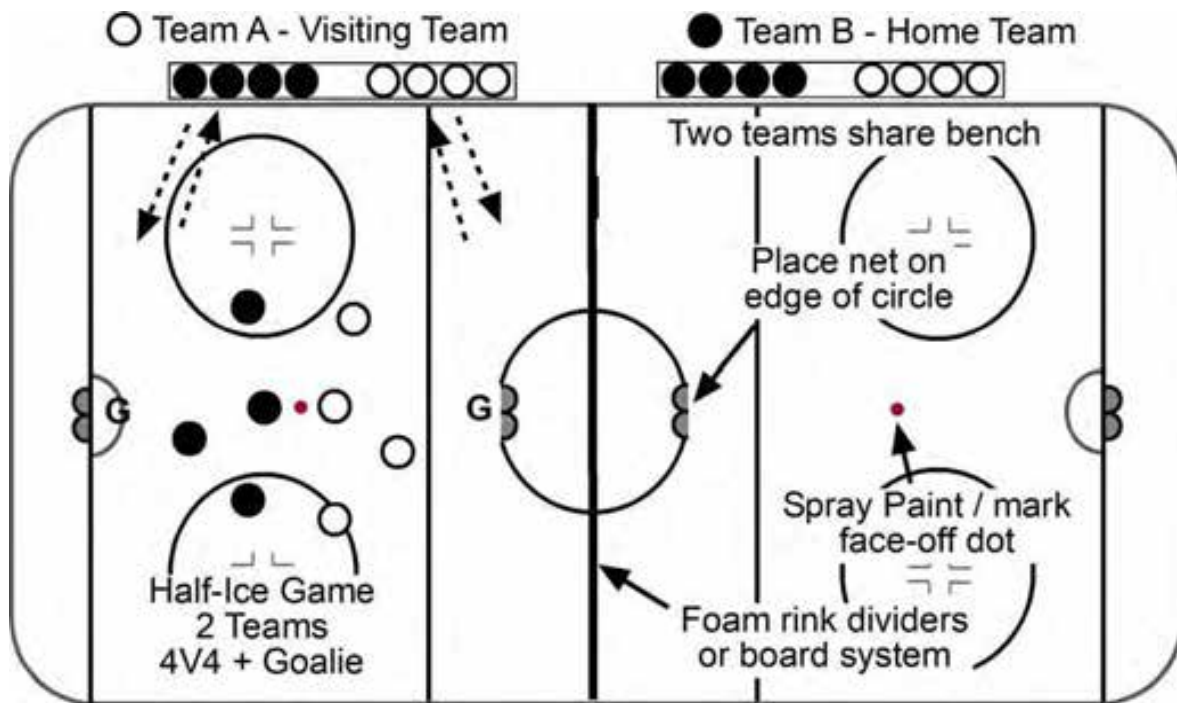
Effective 2018-19



MONTHS	September - October	November - March
PHASE 26 weeks	Development Season 6 Weeks	Regular Season 20 Weeks
VOLUME 42 practices 22-30 games 3 jamborees	12 Practices Hockey Canada Curriculum Station-based 75% technical skills	30 Practices Hockey Canada Curriculum Station-based 75% technical skills
	4 Games Half-Ice	18-26 Games Half-Ice
	None	3 Jamborees after December 1 st
FACTORS	3:1 Practice to Game 5:1 Player to Coach	2:1 Practice to Game 5:1 Player to Coach
TIERING	Tier players of similar skill. All tiers allocated the same number of practices and games. All tiers work on same skills.	
POSITIONAL PLAY	Rotate all players through all positions. No Full-Time goalies – every player takes a turn in goal.	

MINOR NOVICE (7 YEARS OLD) | GAME FORMAT • HALF-ICE

Effective 2018-19



TEAM FORMAT:	Two Team Model	GAME FORMAT:	4 V 4 plus Goaltenders
GAME LENGTH:	Two 22 Minute halves (44 minutes)	OFFICIALS:	1 or 2 per game – both are acceptable
WARM UP:	3 minutes	SCORE KEPT:	None
PUCKS:	Blue (4 oz.)	BENCHES:	Teams share benches
RINK DIVIDERS:	Optimal: Foam rink dividers or board system		
FACE-OFF DOT:	Spray paint or draw face-off dot in the middle of each Half-Ice Rink		
NETS:	Small (3' x 4') or Regulation (4' x 6') – both are acceptable Place nets on edge of centre circle using the line of the circle as the goal line		

MINOR NOVICE (7 YEARS OLD) | GAME PLAY GUIDELINES • HALF-ICE

Effective 2018-19

FACE-OFFS:	Start of Game & Second Half	OFF-SIDE & ICING:	None
SHIFT LENGTH:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buzzer is set to 1:00 minute shift length intervals. • On buzzer, players leave puck where it is and go to bench. • Referee will direct players to “leave puck”. • Players on bench come on the ice and continue to play. • If there are fewer than 4 players on the bench, the active player designated to stay out for the following shift must tag up at the bench prior to racing to play the loose puck. • Both games synchronized through officials. 		
PUCK OUT OF PLAY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referee drops new puck to non-offending team. 		
GOALTENDER FREEZES PUCK:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team that shot the puck backs off. • Referee blows whistle to indicate shooting team to back off and call out possession of team that now gets the puck. • Goaltender gives puck to a teammate to begin play the other way. 		
WHEN GOAL IS SCORED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referee blows whistle to signal goal. • Scoring team backs off to let the team that was scored on retrieve the puck out of the net. • Play resumes with team that was scored on going on offense. 		
PENALTIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referee puts arm up to signal penalty call. • If offending team has the puck it is a change of possession as indicated by the Referee and puck goes to the other team. • At the buzzer at the end of the shift the referee tells the coach what the penalty was and who got it. • Offending player misses next shift, team still plays full strength. 		



NOVICE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



8 YEARS OLD
EFFECTIVE 2019-20 SEASON

NOVICE (8 YEARS OLD) | SEASONAL STRUCTURE

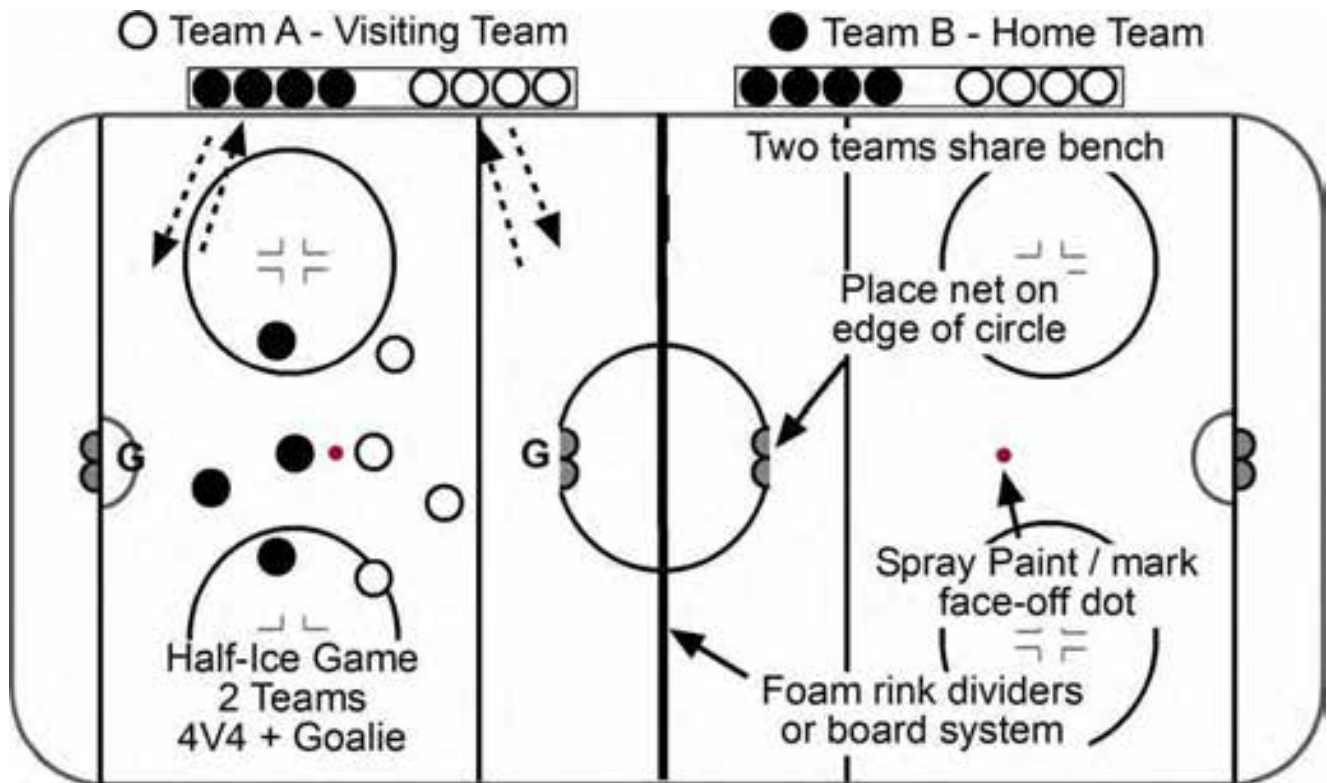
Effective 2019-20



MONTHS	September - October	November - January	January - March
PHASE 28 weeks	Development Season 8 Weeks	Regular Season 12 Weeks	Transition Season 8 Weeks
VOLUME 52 practices 24-30 games 3 jamborees/ tournaments	16 Practices Hockey Canada Curriculum Station-based 75% technical skills	22 Practices Hockey Canada Curriculum Station-based 75% technical skills	14 Practices Hockey Canada Curriculum Station-based 75% technical skills
	4 Games Half-Ice	12-18 Games Half-Ice	8 Games Full Ice after January 15 th
	Jamborees (before Jan. 15 th) or Tournaments (after Jan. 15 th) in any combination up to a maximum of 3 total. Maximum 12 games. This does not include playoffs.		
PLAYOFFS	No elimination series. End of season is March 31 st .		
FACTORS	4:1 Practice to Game 5:1 Player to Coach	2:1 Practice to Game 5:1 Player to Coach	2:1 Practice to Game 5:1 Player to Coach
TIERING	Tier players of similar skill. All tiers allocated the same number of practices and games. All tiers work on same skills.		
POSITIONAL PLAY	Rotate all players through all positions. No Full-Time goalies - every player takes a turn in goal.		

NOVICE (8 YEARS OLD) | GAME FORMAT • HALF-ICE

Effective 2019-20



TEAM FORMAT:	Two Team Model	GAME FORMAT:	4 V 4 plus Goaltenders
GAME LENGTH:	Two 22 Minute halves (44 minutes)	OFFICIALS:	1 or 2 per game Both are acceptable
WARM UP:	3 minutes	SCORE KEPT:	Before January 15 th : None After January 15 th : Regulation
PUCKS:	Black (6 oz.)	BENCHES:	Teams share benches until January 15 th
RINK DIVIDERS:	Optimal: Foam rink dividers or board system		
FACE-OFF DOT:	Spray paint or draw face-off dot in the middle of each Half-Ice Rink		
NETS:	Small (3' x 4') or Regulation (4' x 6') – both are acceptable Place nets on edge of centre circle using the line of the circle as the goal line.		

NOVICE (8 YEARS OLD) | GAME PLAY GUIDELINES • HALF-ICE

Effective 2019-20

FACE-OFFS:	Start of Game & Second Half	OFF-SIDE & ICING:	None
SHIFT LENGTH:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buzzer is set to 1:00 minute shift length intervals. • On buzzer, players leave puck where it is and go to bench • Referee will direct players to “leave puck” • Players on bench come on the ice and continue to play • If there are fewer than 4 players on the bench, the active player designated to stay out for the following shift must tag up at the bench prior to racing to play the loose puck • Both games synchronized through officials 		
PUCK OUT OF PLAY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referee drops new puck to non-offending team 		
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WHEN GOAL IS SCORED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referee blows whistle to signal goal • Scoring team backs off to let the team that was scored on retrieve the puck out of the net • Play resumes with team that was scored on going on offense 		
PENALTIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referee puts arm up to signal penalty call • If offending team has the puck it is a change of possession as indicated by the Referee and puck goes to the other team • At the buzzer at the end of the shift the referee tells the coach what the penalty was and who go it • Offending player misses next shift, team still plays full strength 		



OFFICIATING GUIDELINES



PROGRAMMING NOVICE & BELOW
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

OFFICIATING GUIDELINES



Hockey Canada recommends the inclusion of Officials at the Minor Novice and Novice levels (ages 7 – 8 years old). At this level a one (1) Official system will be employed. While this guideline is not an official Hockey Canada Officiating Program (HCOP) system, this section provides an outline to assist local officiating programs with integrating Officials into this developmental stage of the game. The one (1) Official system provides officials with an opportunity to experience several aspects of officiating, while keeping the operating costs at a manageable level for the teams and minor hockey associations.

BENEFITS OF INVOLVING OFFICIALS IN HALF-ICE HOCKEY

There are numerous benefits for officials when considering the aspects of building foundational officiating skills. This is a valuable opportunity for newer officials to put on their uniform, get on the ice in live action and learn some basic aspects of being an official in a less formal and positive atmosphere. Basic skills include: dropping pucks, skating skills, foundational positioning, spatial awareness, establishing good sightlines, and making decisions such as goals and minor infractions.

This allows officials to apply newly acquired information they received in their clinic in a game environment. This format also provides an excellent opportunity for senior officials to mentor new comers by shadowing them on the ice or evaluating them from the stands. The ability to mentor officials at ice level in this structure provides instantaneous feedback and assists in preparing these officials for full ice games in a two (2) or three (3) official system.

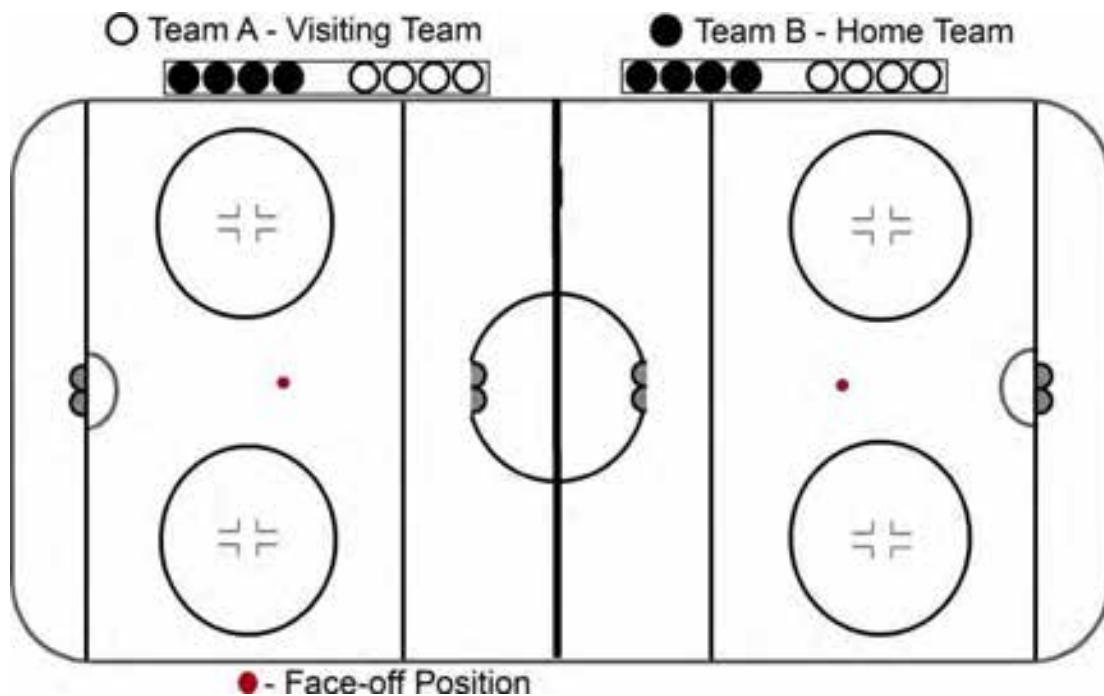
Having an official on the ice for the Half-Ice games provides players with more structure than cross ice games at the Initiation (5 – 6 year-old) level. It also presents a more realistic game environment,

while allowing the coaches to focus more on the players rather than focusing on making sure the game flows from an operational standpoint.

OFFICIATING PROCEDURES

Flexibility is an important component to operating in a one (1) Official system within the Novice game structure. There is no absolute way to handle every possible scenario. However, game flow and establishing a basic structure to the game is the primary focus. Officials will NOT be required to call infractions for icing or off-side as the appropriate rink dimensions and markings are not available. Should a Novice game be played on a mini-rink with full rink markings, it will be up to the Minor Hockey Association's (MHA) discretion as to whether off-side or icing will be called.

FACE-OFFS



There will be one (1) face-off location. This will be located approximately half way between the goals. Coaches and arena staff may mark the centre face-off location with a temporary marking for game play purposes.

FROZEN PUCKS, STOPPAGES & GAME FLOW

The line change procedure is not required on stoppages of play. Associations will have the choice of employing a stop time, run time or one/two (1/2) – minute buzzer game clock. When play needs to be stopped for:

- a goalkeeper freezing the puck
- for a player falling on the puck
- the puck is frozen along the boards
- the puck leaves the playing area

The Official should stop play with their whistle and conduct the face-off at the centre face-off location.

GOALS

When the puck enters the goal, the Official can simply signal a goal, retrieve the puck from the net and allow the team that was scored on to take possession of the puck. The team that scores the goal is require to back off 3 meters and give the player with the puck room to start the play.

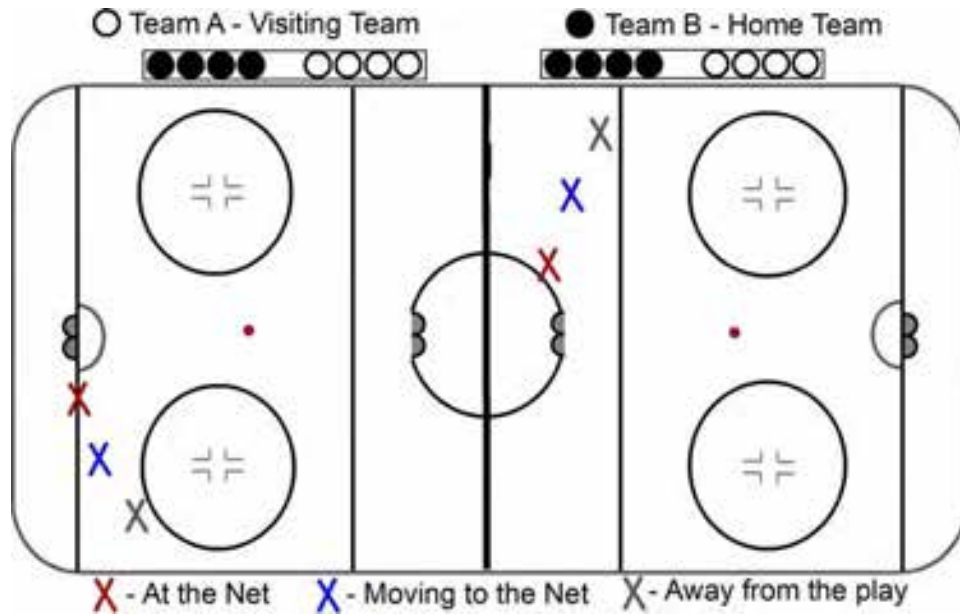
PENALTIES

Penalties shall be called in accordance with the instructed Hockey Canada Officiating Program (HCOP) standard of play. It should be understood that officials at this level will be new to officiating. Therefore, this environment will be where they are learning the application of the rules. The delayed penalty procedure will be used for all infractions of the rules. Officials will stop play and complete the penalty calling procedure (e.g. stop, plant, point etc.) as instructed. However, no penalty or penalty time will be recorded, and the player will not be sent to the penalty box. Rather, the coach will be notified of the infraction and the player will sit out the next shift they are expecting to play.

The teams will never play short-handed.

Should an infraction occur that would normally require a player to be ejected from the game (e.g. Game Misconduct, Match penalty or Gross Misconduct), then the player will be removed from the remainder of that game. Even under these circumstances teams will not play short-handed and no game incident report will be required.

POSITIONING



Foundational positioning principles will be used. The concept of the “cone” should be reserved for when full ice play begins. Under the Half-Ice structure, approximate “home base, half piston and at the net” positions should be used to get official comfortable with their proximity to the goal. Officials should follow the play approximately 2 – 3 meters behind the puck carrier. They should remain about 2 – 3 meters from the boards or playing area perimeters. The examples on the diagram below show guidelines for establishing recommended end-zone positions.



RESOURCES



PROGRAMMING NOVICE & BELOW
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

TWO TEAM MODEL



The recommended Game Play format for Cross-Ice & Half-Ice hockey games is referred to as the Two Team Game Play Model. This model puts the least amount of stress on the facility for dressing rooms and for the scheduling of games.

- In this model, two teams would be scheduled to play against each other.
- Each team will could consist of up to 18 players divided in to two units of 9 players.
- Each team unit of 9 players will have 1 goaltender and 8 skaters. Smaller numbers will allow for players to double shift to ensure the game is always 4v4. Coaches must make sure all players take turns double shifting.
- In some minor hockey communities, team composition may be much smaller. If this is the case, the ice is still divided in two halves, but only one half will be used for game play.
- The other half of the ice can be used as a practice surface for a third
- During the Transition Phase to Full-ice, at Novice, the two teams play a regulation game on full-ice.

FOUR TEAM MODEL

The Four Team Game Play model provides an alternative option to the Two Team model and would include smaller roster of 8-12 players.

This model can be used for both Cross-Ice and Half-Ice hockey games.

COACH EDUCATION | Coach 1-Intro to Coach



The NCCP Coach 1 - Intro to Coach clinic is tailored for the coach who will be coaching at the Initiation, Minor Novice or Novice age groups.

Designed with focus on communication, teaching skills, leadership, skill analysis, lesson organization and safety and risk management, coaches will step onto the ice confident in their ability to encourage participation amongst athletes while helping them have fun!

The NCCP Coach 1 - Intro to Coach Clinic focuses on getting players moving in the right way and enjoying themselves while introducing them to the sport of hockey. Coaches will also learn the fundamentals of fitness and how to be a positive role model to their athletes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The program is based with the players' development in mind, starting with basic, technical skills. Upon completing this clinic, you will be trained to:

- Use HOCKEY CANADA resources to plan on/off-ice activities;
- Communicate effectively with players, parents, officials and league administrators;
- Encourage participants and work within fair play guidelines;
- Conduct safe, effective and age appropriate on-ice practice drills;
- Apply an ethical decision making process.

SETTING UP THE RINK

CROSS-ICE RINK CONFIGURATION OPTIONS

1-Scrimmage / 4-Skills Stations

The Cross-Ice scrimmage in this set-up is part of the overall practice plan. Effectively becomes the fifth skills station. Keeps all players active, on the ice and engaged.

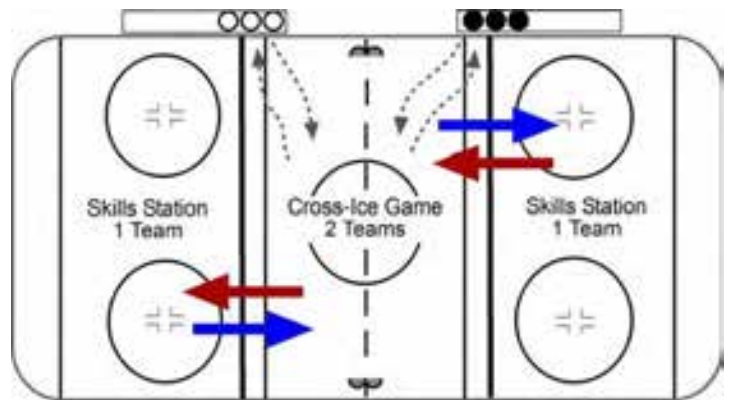


1-Scrimmage / 2-Skills Stations

In this set-up, there are four (4) teams on the ice together.

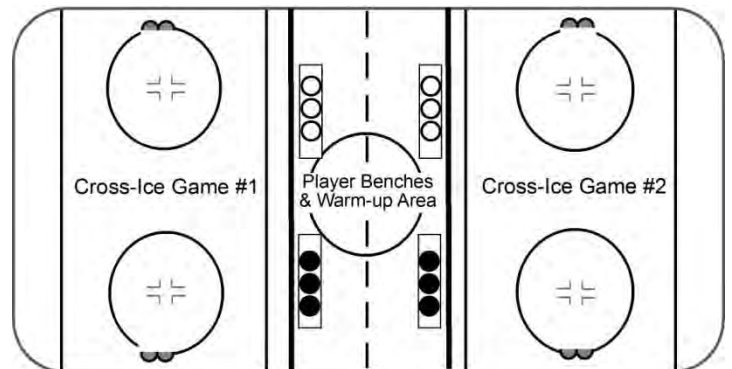
For the first half of the session, two teams play Cross-Ice in the middle rink section. The two other teams 'practice' in the two 'end' zones.

Half-way through the session, the teams switch - the two teams in the Skills Stations move into the middle to play against each other and the two teams that were playing move into the two Skills Stations.



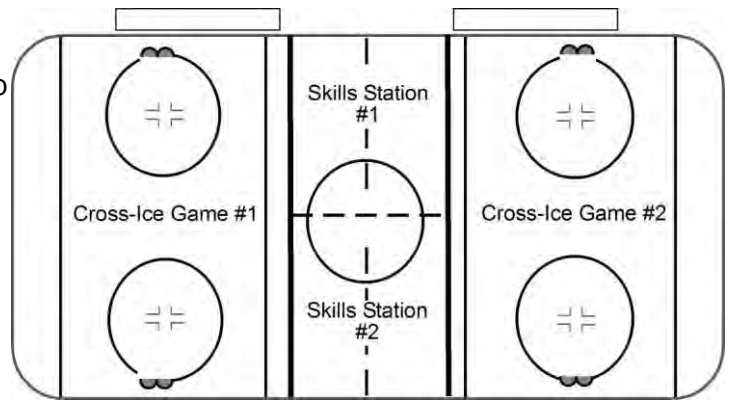
2-Games

Two Cross-Ice game run simultaneously. Neutral zone is set-up for the player benches. This could be used during a jamboree.



2-Games / 2-Skills Stations

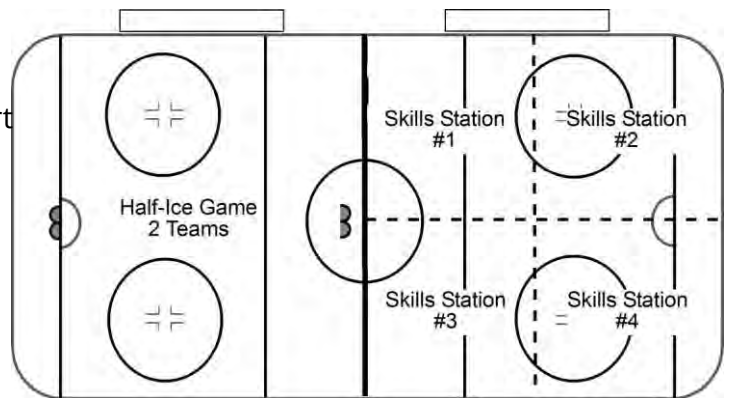
A variation on the previous set-up where two (2) skills stations are set-up in the neutral zone and all players are active and engaged.



HALF-ICE RINK CONFIGURATION OPTIONS

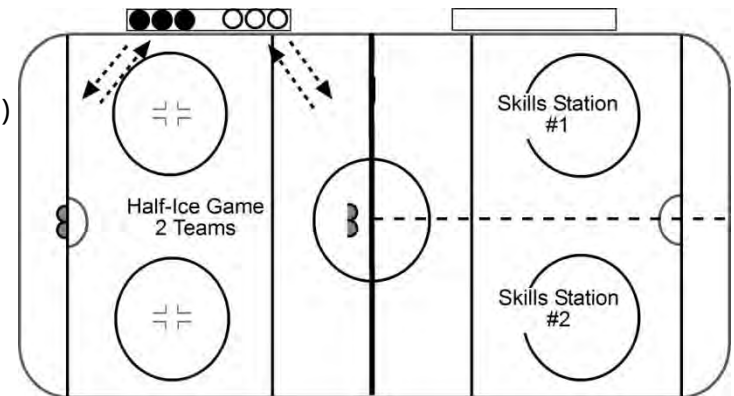
1-Scrimmage / 4-Skills Stations

The Cross-Ice scrimmage in this set-up is part of the overall practice plan. Effectively becomes the fifth skills station. Keeps all players active, on the ice and engaged.



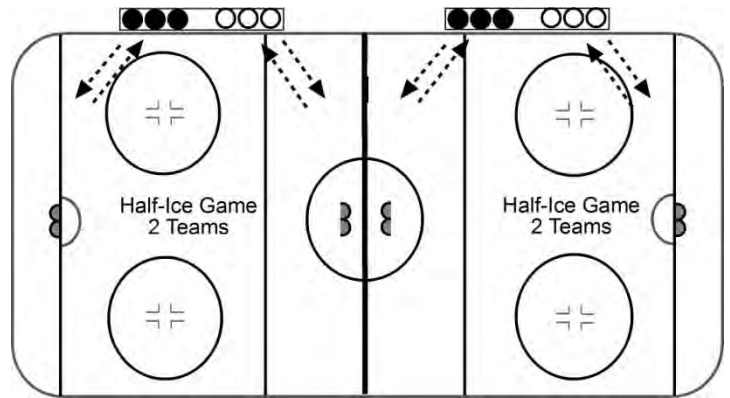
1-Game / 2-Skills Stations

Variation of the previous set-up. Could have four (4) teams on the ice – two (2) playing Half-Ice game and two (2) in skills stations, or; Have two (2) teams playing and instead of players sitting on the bench, have them active between game-shifts in the skills stations.



2-Games

Two Half-Ice games run simultaneously. Teams would share player benches and use one door each. This could be used during a Jamboree. Note: recommend boards to divide the rink in this set-up to keep pucks in their respective playing areas and reduce the chance of errant shots.



RINK DIMENSIONS

Every arena in the OMHA has its own unique feel. Some ice surfaces are standard Olympic size, while other were made to fit the building in which they are housed. Regardless of the set-up, following modified-ice programming is achievable by keeping in mind the maximum game size area and being creative in the approach of setting up the ice.

RINK SIZE	Olympic Ice Surface	NHL Ice Surface	Smaller Ice Surface
FULL - ICE	200' x 100'	200' x 85'	165' x 65'
HALF - ICE	100' x 100' (10,000 SQFT)	85' x 100' (8,500 SQFT)	65' x 100' (6,500 SQFT)
CROSS - ICE	100' x 60' (6,000 SQFT)	85' x 65' (5,525 SQFT)	65' x 82' (5,330 SQFT)

CURRICULUM



For optimal skill acquisition, the basic hockey skills of skating and puck control are introduced, learning all fundamental movement skills and building overall motor skills. Skill development in the FUNdamentals stage should be well-structured, positive, and FUN!



INITIATION



MINOR NOVICE & NOVICE

HOCKEY CANADA RESOURCES

The future of hockey lies with today's youth. Because of this, Hockey Canada has developed age appropriate programming as a way to encourage the growth of foundational skills for young players in hockey. Minor hockey associations and coaches lead the implementation of the Initiation and Novice programs with the assistance of volunteers, parents and others associated with hockey. The programming must provide opportunities for a wide range of people to get involved in order to improve the quality of the hockey experience through sound instruction and enjoyable play.



HOCKEY CANADA ADMINISTRATORS GUIDE



HOCKEY CANADA IMPLIMENTATION MANUAL

HOCKEY CANADA DRILL HUB

The Hockey Canada Network is an iOS and Android App that contains a wealth of information for coaches and instructors. The entire series of Hockey Canada Skills Manuals and the Skills of Gold series is available on the Hockey Canada Network. This includes the entire series of lesson plans designed specifically for Programming Novice & Below. All lesson plans for Programming Novice & Below are available to coaches and instructors at no cost.



HOCKEY CANADA'S DRILL HUB

HOCKEY CANADA NETWORK APP

The Hockey Canada Drill Hub is a resource tool that provides coaches with ice session plans. This tool has been refreshed with new features and allows coaches to create practice plans with a set of drills or use suggested practices.



HOCKEY CANADA'S NETWORK APP

PRACTICE PLANS

The Hockey Canada Skills Manuals were designed to give coaches the necessary information needed to teach hockey skills to beginners. The Lesson Manuals consist of four phases, each with eight on-ice sessions. These lessons map out easy-to-follow lesson plans. Beginners progress throughout these ice sessions to the point where they can start playing hockey and enjoying it.



INITIATION



MINOR NOVICE



NOVICE

CORE SKILLS

The Hockey Canada Core Skills checklist can be viewed as a curriculum of what age-appropriate lessons players should be learning at their stage of development. Parents and coaches can keep track of what skills are being taught during this hockey season and ensure they line up with the program. It is the basis for creating lesson plans.



INITIATION



MINOR NOVICE



NOVICE



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



PROGRAMMING NOVICE & BELOW
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How will player development be affected if there are no off-sides or icings called during game play?

Learning off-sides and icings will come in time, but the primary focus on age-appropriate training and programming needs to be on skill development in the areas of skating, puck control, pass, receiving and shooting. Concepts like offside, icing, positional play and face-offs can be introduced at a later date when players move to the full ice game play model in the transition to Atom hockey.

Are teams permitted to identify a full-time goaltender?

For players Minor Novice and below there should be no full time goalies. Teams must rotate players through all positions. This is also recommended at the Novice level. The Hockey Canada Long Term Player Development philosophy encourages a wide range of skill development at a young age and focusing on a single position may limit a child's opportunity to practice skills in all areas.

Are games required to be two 22-minute halves?

This is only a recommended timeframe for the game. The game time established for the Cross-Ice or Half-Ice game model is based on a 50-minute ice session. Ice sessions can be either shorter or longer than a 60-minute allocation. If this is the case, adjust accordingly ensuring there is time for a short warm-up, two halves of play, and a short break between the two halves to make any adjustments that need to take place.

Is the length of a shift limited to 60 seconds?

The shift length is only a recommendation. Shifts may be 90 seconds or 2 minutes in length. This is at the discretion of the Minor Hockey Association. However, it is important to reference the core requirements of the game to ensure the spirit of the game is maintained.

Are Novice teams permitted to play full ice games?

For 2018-19 all Novice programming will be Full-Ice.

Effective 2019-20 Minor Hockey Association may choose to play the entire season of Novice hockey with the half-ice game play model. The Hockey Canada policy permits the transition to full ice game play after January 15th for second year Novice hockey players. Please reference the Novice Seasonal Structure for information on the number of games permitted after January 15th.

What is the difference between a Jamboree and a Tournament?

A jamboree is designed to engage players in a fun environment and is the coming together of several players who are then placed into teams. Games may or may not be competitive and the emphasis is on fun and fair play.

A tournament is defined as a schedule of games played among three (3) or more teams, which follows an inter-locking schedule and leads to an eventual winner.

Are smaller nets required for the Cross-Ice/Half-Ice Game format?

There is no requirement to use smaller nets, both are acceptable in Cross-Ice/Half-Ice.

Is there a need to draw the crease in for the net Cross-Ice/Half-Ice?

For Half-Ice there is no need to draw a crease for the neutral zone net(s). Each net should be placed just inside the centre circle which will provide a small marking to aid the goaltending in positioning themselves in front of the net.

For Cross-Ice, it is not required but can be marked if desired.

What are the advantages of practicing in small areas and playing half-ice games?

Small spaces equate to more engaged in the play and activity for young players. Through the small area station-based practices and cross ice games, players are closer to the play at all times and have much more opportunity for puck touches. Regardless of the skill level or the ability of each player, their opportunities to be engaged in the play increase by double when the playing areas is smaller. The NHL Analytics research illustrated that all skill areas of the game increased substantially when players played in small spaces more suited to their age and skill level.

What are the dimensions of a half-ice hockey game?

The average dimensions of a regular ice surface in Canada is 200 feet by 85 feet. The half-ice playing surface can be a maximum of 100' by 85' if the divides are placed at the centre red line. In a study conducted by Hockey Alberta, the half-ice playing surface illustrated the same stride distance for a child as relative to the full sheet of ice for an adult.

Is it a requirement to use a Blue Puck?

Blue Pucks are mandatory for Initiation and Minor Novice. Scaling down all aspects of practice and game play for players 8 and under is very beneficial. The blue puck is an appropriate weight in relation to the height and weight of these young players. Use of the Blue puck can promote proper mechanics in shooting, passing, and carrying the puck.

Should players and/or teams be tiered?

Grouping of players of like ability can be a very important principle for setting young players up for success and enjoyment. The focus of the programming model for Novice and below is player development. It is important in both station-based practices and in half-ice game play that players to be grouped by similar ability levels when possible or necessary. It is recommended that prior to the start of the half-ice game(s) coaches of opposing teams may wish to discuss possible line combinations to ensure that the skill level of the players on the ice is similar which will allow more puck touches & fun for all the players participating.

What guidelines should be followed when storing and setting up equipment at community arenas?

Each facility in Canada is unique and will have its own Standard Operating Procedures when it comes to the storage, the set-up, and the take down of the portable board system or the foam divider system. In many cases, municipalities have developed these procedures to apply to all arenas within their jurisdiction.

It will be important to work with the facilities management to ensure that proper protocols are being followed. This will maximize efficiency, ensure safe practices for all, and promote a harmonious relationship between the arena staff and members of the local minor hockey association.

Where can a portable solution such as portable boards or foam barriers be purchased?

There are a number of suppliers for portable boards, foam barriers, and small nets. It is advisable to check local sources to insure best pricing on the shipping of product. On a national level, two suppliers handle large volume orders for these products.

OmniSport Inc.
14 Boulder Blvd.
Stony Plain, AB
T7Z 1V7
Telephone: (780) 968-2344

<http://www.omnisport.ca>

Athletica Sport Systems Inc.
54 Parkside Drive
Waterloo, ON
N2L 5Z4
Tel: (519) 747-1856
Toll-free: (877) 778-5911

<http://athletica.com>



IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE SUMMARY



PROGRAMMING NOVICE & BELOW
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

SEASONAL STRUCTURE

DIVISION	INITIATION Effective 2017-18	MINOR NOVICE Effective 2018-19	NOVICE Effective 2019-20	MINOR ATOM Current	
Age	5 & 6 years old	7 years old	8 years old	9 years old	
Category	HL; LL	HL; LL; Select	HL; LL; Rep	Recreational: HL; LL; RS; MD;	Competitive: Rep
Coach Qualification	NCCP Coach 1 – Intro to Coach	NCCP Coach 1 – Intro to Coach	NCCP Coach 1 – Intro to Coach	NCCP Coach 2 – Coach Level	
Practice Format	Station-based Hockey Canada Initiation Program curriculum	Station-based Hockey Canada Initiation Program curriculum	Station-based Hockey Canada Novice curriculum	Hockey Canada Atom Curriculum	
Evaluation/Selection	After Labour Day 2 weeks	After OHF Championships 2 weeks	After OHF Championships 2 weeks	2 Weeks	Per OHF Regulations
Development Season	6 weeks	6 weeks	6 weeks	6 Weeks	
Regular Season	20 weeks	20 weeks	12 weeks	22 Weeks	
Transition Season	N/A	N/A	8 weeks	N/A	
Jamborees/ Tournaments	Jamboree After Dec. 1 st	Jamboree After Dec. 1 st	Jamborees (before Jan. 15 th) Tournaments (after Jan. 15 th)	Tournament	

GAME STRUCTURE

DIVISION	INITIATION Effective 2017-18	MINOR NOVICE Effective 2018-19	NOVICE Effective 2019-20	MINOR ATOM Current
Age	5 & 6 years old	7 years old	8 years old	9 years old
Team Format	Two Team model 18 Players	Two Team model 18 Players	Two Team model 18 Players	Regulation
Coaches On-Ice	Yes	Optional	Optional	No
Goaltenders	Not required/ Rotational	Rotational	Rotational	Rotational/Full-Time
Game Format	Cross-Ice 4v4	Half-Ice 4v4	Half-Ice - 4v4	Full-Ice 5v5
			Transition Season: Full-Ice - 5v5	
Boards / Dividers	Optimal: Foam rink dividers or board system	Optimal: Foam rink dividers or board system	Optimal: Foam rink dividers or board system	N/A
Puck	Blue (4 oz.)	Blue (4 oz.)	Black (6 oz.)	Black (6 oz.)
Nets	Small or Regulation	Small or Regulation	Small or Regulation	Regulation
			Transition Season: Regulation	

DIVISION	INITIATION Effective 2017-18	MINOR NOVICE Effective 2018-19	NOVICE Effective 2019-20	MINOR ATOM Current
Shift Length	Set Time/Buzzer	Set Time/Buzzer	Set Time/Buzzer	Regulation
			Transition Season: Regulation	
Officials	N/A	1 or 2 Officials	1 or 2 Officials	2 Officials
			Transition Season: 2 Officials	
Face offs	Start Game/2 nd Half	Start Game/2 nd Half	Start game/2 nd Half	Regulation
			Transition Season: Regulation	
Offside/Icing	No	No	No	Regulation
			Transition Season: Regulation	
Penalties	No	Yes - Modified	Yes - Modified	Regulation
			Transition Season: Regulation	
Score	No	No	No	Yes
			Transition Season: Regulation	
Standings	No	No	No	Yes
			Transition Season: Regulation	

PLAYING IN A HIGHER DIVISION & AFFILIATION

AGE BY DEC. 31	DIVISION	CATEGORY	PLAY IN A HIGHER DIVISION?	MAY AFFILIATE?
4 & Under	Pre-school 2018-19	HL	NO	NO
5 & 6	Initiation 2018-19	HL; LL	If deemed able by ability using parameters identified by the Association or where registration numbers require*	NO
7	Minor Novice 2018-19	HL; LL; Select	If deemed able by ability using parameters identified by the Association or where registration numbers require*	NO
8	Novice 2018-19	HL; LL; MD; Rep	If deemed able by ability using parameters identified by the Association or where registration numbers require*	YES
8	Novice Effective 2019-20	HL; LL; Rep	If deemed able by ability using parameters identified by the Association or where registration numbers require*	YES **

* Centres must establish criteria that players would be required to meet in order to play on a higher division team.

** Yes – to Minor Atom/Atom only during the Transition Season - once the Novice program has transitioned to Full-Ice.



REQUIREMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

PROGRAMMING NOVICE AND BELOW
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

INITIATION (EFFECTIVE 2017–2018 SEASON)

PROGRAMMING FEATURE/AREA	REQUIREMENTS	CONSIDERATIONS
Start Date: After Labour Day	✓	
Jamboree Participation: After Dec. 1 st	✓	
Modified Ice: Cross-Ice	✓	
Blue Puck (4 oz.)	✓	
Positional Play: Rotational (Including Goaltender)	✓	
Game Format: 4v4	✓	
No Scores/Standings	✓	
No Penalties	✓	
No Off-Side/Icing	✓	
Coaching Qualification: Coach 1 – Intro to Coach	✓	
Coaches on Ice	✓	
No Officials	✓	
No Affiliation	✓	
Seasonal Structure	✓	
Practice to Game Ratio	✓	
Station-Based Practices	✓	
Tiering		✓
Rink Divider System		✓
Net Size		✓
Shift Length		✓
Team Composition/Size		✓
Players Playing up a Category (Per OMHA/Local MHA Guidelines)		✓

MINOR NOVICE (EFFECTIVE 2018–2019 SEASON)

PROGRAMMING FEATURE/AREA	REQUIREMENTS	CONSIDERATIONS
Start Date: After OHF Championships	✓	
Jamboree Participation: After Dec. 1 st	✓	
Modified Ice: Half-Ice	✓	
Blue Puck (4 oz.)	✓	
Positional Play: Rotational	✓	
Game Format: 4v4	✓	
No Scores/Standings	✓	
Penalties (Modified)	✓	
No Off-Side/Icing	✓	
Coaching Qualification: Coach 1 – Intro to Coach	✓	
1 or 2 Officials	✓	
No Affiliation	✓	
Seasonal Structure	✓	
Practice to Game Ratio	✓	
Station-Based Practices	✓	
Tiering		✓
Rink Divider System		✓
Net Size		✓
Shift Length		✓
Coaches on Ice		✓
Team Composition/Size		✓
Players Playing up a Category (Per OMHA/Local MHA Guidelines)		✓

MINOR NOVICE (EFFECTIVE 2020-2021 SEASON)

PROGRAMMING FEATURE/AREA	REQUIREMENTS	CONSIDERATIONS
Start Date: After Labour Day	✓	
Jamboree Participation: After Dec. 1 st	✓	
Modified Ice: Half-Ice	✓	
Blue Puck (4 oz.)	✓	
Positional Play: Rotational	✓	
Game Format: 4v4	✓	
No Scores/Standings	✓	
Penalties (Modified)	✓	
No Off-Side/Icing	✓	
Coaching Qualification: Coach 1 – Intro to Coach	✓	
1 or 2 Officials	✓	
No Affiliation	✓	
Seasonal Structure	✓	
Practice to Game Ratio	✓	
Station-Based Practices	✓	
Tiering		✓
Rink Divider System		✓
Net Size		✓
Shift Length		✓
Coaches on Ice		✓
Team Composition/Size		✓
Players Playing up a Category (Per OMHA/Local MHA Guidelines)		✓

NOVICE (EFFECTIVE 2019–2020 Season)

PROGRAMMING FEATURE/AREA	REQUIREMENTS	CONSIDERATIONS
Start Date: After OHF Championships	✓	
Modified Ice: Half-Ice	✓	
Transition Season Start: Jan. 15 th	✓	
Regulation Black Puck (6 oz.)	✓	
Game Format – 4v4 (Transition Season: 5v5)	✓	
Transition Season Net Size: Regulation	✓	
Penalties: Modified Transition Season: Regulation	✓	
No Off-Side/Icing Transition Season: Regulation	✓	
Coaching Qualification: Coach 1 – Intro to Coach	✓	
Transition Season: 2 Officials	✓	
Seasonal Structure	✓	
Practice to Game Ratio	✓	
No Scores/Standings before Jan. 15 th	✓	
Scores/Standings after Jan. 15 th		✓
Positional Play: Rotational		✓
Rink Divider System		✓
Net Size		✓
Shift Length		✓
Coaches On-Ice		✓
1 or 2 Officials before Jan. 15 th		✓
Team Composition/Size		✓
Affiliation (To Minor Atom only during Transition Season)		✓
Players Playing up a Category (Per OMHA/Local MHA Guidelines)		✓

NOVICE (EFFECTIVE 2020–2021 Season)

PROGRAMMING FEATURE/AREA	REQUIREMENTS	CONSIDERATIONS
Start Date: After Labour Day	✓	
Modified Ice: Half-Ice	✓	
Transition Season Start: Jan. 15 th	✓	
Regulation Black Puck (6 oz.)	✓	
Game Format – 4v4 (Transition Season: 5v5)	✓	
Transition Season Net Size: Regulation	✓	
Penalties: Modified Transition Season: Regulation	✓	
No Off-Side/Icing Transition Season: Regulation	✓	
Coaching Qualification: Coach 1 – Intro to Coach	✓	
Transition Season: 2 Officials	✓	
Seasonal Structure	✓	
Practice to Game Ratio	✓	
No Scores/Standings before Jan. 15 th	✓	
Scores/Standings after Jan. 15 th		✓
Positional Play: Rotational		✓
Rink Divider System		✓
Net Size		✓
Shift Length		✓
Coaches On-Ice		✓
1 or 2 Officials before Jan. 15 th		✓
Team Composition/Size		✓
Affiliation (To Minor Atom only during Transition Season)		✓
Players Playing up a Category (Per OMHA/Local MHA Guidelines)		✓