



LEVEL 1 – SKILL DEVELOPMENT MANUAL



Instructor's Manual

A Publication Of The USA Hockey Coaching Education Program



The USA Hockey Coaching Education Program is Presented By





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INTRODUCTION

How a player gets that first taste of hockey is crucial.

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

But if a beginner has an unhappy, unrewarding experience, the chances are that he or she will quit at an early age and never discover the real joy of our great game.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Leadership

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

On completion of this chapter, the instructor will be better prepared to:

- *understand the different leadership styles and how they affect the way in which an instructor is received by the players;*
- *understand and be aware of effective leadership qualities and techniques;*
- *understand what motivates instructors and players to participate in hockey; and*
- *handle problem situations that may arise in your program.*

LEADERSHIP

Your primary role in the Skill Development Program is instructing the basic skills of hockey to beginners. This means that you will be a leader, not only of the children but of the other adults or parents who volunteer to help out. It is therefore important for you to have a basic idea of what is expected of you in the leadership role.

LEADERSHIP STYLES

There are three main leadership styles

1. Autocratic
2. Democratic
3. Laissez-faire

Autocratic — the autocratic leader is one who:

- is the “only authority”
- is a strong disciplinarian
- leads by force
- is usually inflexible
- usually communicates one way

Democratic — the democratic leader is one who:

- seeks input from participants
- usually flexible in approach
- leads using accepted methods

- discipline is enforced once rules have been decided
- listens to reason

Laissez-faire — the laissez-faire leader is one who:

- keeps a very loose rein on participants
- does not normally follow a set pattern
- is very “laid back”
- has little interest in discipline
- seeks leadership help from others

Is there one “best” method or leadership style to be used by an instructor? Probably not. Leadership style is largely situational in nature. Sometimes you must be the authority figure; the democratic approach is appropriate at others and when dealing with a mature group, the laissez-faire style may be okay. Each of you most likely has parts of each style that go to make up your own unique leadership style. The important thing is to recognize that there are different styles and which one is effective in what situation.

Your leadership role with the players in the Skill Development Program will be primarily autocratic in nature. This should not be seen as a negative factor. You have superior knowledge, you are the authority figure and you must be in control of the group at all



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times. In order to maximize learning, minimize opportunities for injuries and accidents to occur and to provide the necessary structure required in the program, this is the leadership style most suited to the head instructor position. Of necessity, your approach to assistants and parents will be more democratic in nature, but you must always be in control of the program and its participants.

What leadership style would you say would be appropriate in the following instances:

1. The first ice session of the year?
2. Discussion among fellow instructors about the progressions to be followed in teaching a new skill?
3. A “fun” game at the end of an ice session?
4. Talking to a player who has been a nuisance all period?
5. Talking to parents about your plans for the year?

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP QUALITIES & TECHNIQUES

Some recommended leadership qualities and techniques associated with being a good instructor:

a. Qualities

- has patience
- communicates well
- allows for individual differences
- provides a good example
- is willing to listen to suggestions
- motivates players

b. Techniques

- using your influence as a role model effectively
- knowing and being yourself—being aware of your strengths and weaknesses
- attending to individual differences and needs
- encouraging independence, responsibility, exploration and growth
- mastering the art of communication (more fully discussed in Chapter 3)

PARTICIPATION MOTIVES

Instructor's Motives

People become involved in hockey instruction for many reasons. These reasons determine how they interact with their players and the type and amount of impact they have on their players.

To have a positive and lasting impact on the players you instruct, it is necessary that your primary reasons for instructing be consistent with meeting the needs of your players. Your reasons for being involved should reflect the optimal physical, psychological and social development of players. To achieve these goals you need to be an effective leader, teacher and organizer; encourage and support players; instruct enthusiastically and express genuine concern for the players' total development and well-being.

As pointed out in the “opening word” above, you significantly affect your players' motivation toward the achievement of their personal goals and the benefits and enjoyment they receive from participating in hockey. Your players' decisions about long-term participation in hockey and sports in general are largely determined by the impact you have on them.

Your reasons for instructing become very important when you consider that the tremendous impact you may have on your players extends well beyond the contact you have with them in hockey.

What are the reasons that you are involved in instructing basic hockey skills?

The three main approaches to coaching/instructing are:

1. self
2. task
3. social

Self Approach — Sam is a self-oriented instructor. Sam is mainly interested in getting recognition for himself and he is more concerned with fulfilling his own needs than those of whom he instructs. He instructs for personal praise and glory, and to be looked up

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to, rather than for the satisfaction of coaching, instructing and helping others grow.

Task Approach — Fred is a task-oriented instructor. He is mainly concerned with achieving the goals of the group, whatever they may be. He strives to be effective in teaching skills and to be knowledgeable about the game. Fred focuses on ensuring that each lesson is covered in its entirety.

Social Approach — Arnold is an affiliation oriented or social instructor. He is concerned with forming friendships, sharing things with others, providing the security of belonging, and helping develop strong interpersonal relationships. In instructing, Arnold emphasizes having fun and working co-operatively. He's easy to talk to, always friendly and loves to be with the kids.



Player's Motives

In the Skill Development Program, the majority of the players are there because their parents want them there. However, as they begin to develop skills and knowledge of hockey, they will begin to have their own reasons for participating. These reasons can usually be expressed in the following main categories:

1. excellence
2. affiliation
3. sensation
4. success

Excellence — Players for whom excellence is important want to be very good at playing hockey. They want to master the skills of hockey and be competent in the sport. These players want to:

- improve their hockey skills
- learn new hockey skills
- excel at hockey

Affiliation — Players for whom affiliation is important want to develop and maintain close interpersonal relationships with other players and instructors. They want to be accepted as a member of the group, appreciated by other players and to have fun with other players. These players enjoy:

- making friends
- participating with their friends
- social gatherings

Sensation — Players for whom sensation is important want hockey to provide them with exciting sensory experiences. They want to experience novelty and variety, competition and uncertainties as to what will happen next in ice sessions. They like:

- the excitement of close competition in relays and fun games
- doing new drills
- the feelings of skating smoothly and fast

Success — Players for whom success is important want to receive recognition for the attainment of skills. They want to receive external or extrinsic rewards and be well known. These players like:

- recognition from coaches
- recognition from parents and spectators
- to receive awards or badges for participation

Excellence and affiliation are the two most important reasons for participation by players in hockey although sensation and success are also relatively important. Although external rewards are an important reason for participation, caution must be exercised by instructors in overemphasizing the use of extrinsic rewards as they may decrease the



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intrinsic (excellence, sensation) interest of the players for participation. External rewards should be provided as a meaningful reward for the attainment of specific, important goals and not as a continuous natural part of participation. Thus, extrinsic rewards should not be given out too frequently or for unimportant reasons.

It is important for the instructor to understand the reasons why players are participating in hockey and provide opportunities for the players to satisfy their reasons for participating. If players are provided with the experiences they are seeking from their hockey participation, then the players will attain improved personal satisfaction from participation and will remain enthusiastic about participating in sport for a long period of time.

For the instructor:

The reason why I think my players participate is:

What do I do to satisfy my players' reasons for participating? _____

GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING COMMON SITUATIONS ENCOUNTERED BY INSTRUCTORS

Research conducted with athletes shows that if they have instructors who follow the guidelines listed below, the athletes generally:

- Enjoy playing more
- Like their teammates more
- Rate their instructors as more knowledgeable
- Have a greater desire to continue playing in the future.

Look at the guidelines carefully and put a (✓) next to the ones you currently use as a part of your instructional style. Put an (x) next to the ones that you need to emphasize more.

1. How to be more positive:

- () give a lot of positive feedback
- () have realistic expectations
- () give positive feedback for desirable behavior as soon as it occurs
- () praise effort as much as you do results

2. How to react to mistakes:

- () give encouragement immediately after a mistake
- () if the player knows how to correct the mistake, encouragement alone is sufficient
- () when appropriate, give corrective instruction after a mistake, but always do so in an encouraging and positive way
- () avoid punishment
- () avoid giving corrective instruction in a hostile or punitive way

3. How to maintain in order and discipline:

- () maintain order by establishing clearly what is expected
- () strive to achieve a balance between allowing freedom and maintaining enough structure

4. How to get positive things to happen:

- () set a good example of desired behavior
- () encourage effort, don't demand results all the time
- () in giving encouragement, be selective so that it is meaningful
- () avoid giving encouragement in a sarcastic or degrading manner
- () encourage players to be supportive of each other and reward them when they do so.

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5. How to create a good learning atmosphere:

- () set realistic goals
- () always give instructions positively
- () when giving instructions, be clear and concise
- () show the correct techniques when demonstrating
- () be patient and don't expect or demand more than maximum effort
- () acknowledge and reward effort and progress

6. How to communicate effectively:

- () ask yourself what your actions have communicated
- () encourage two-way communication between instructors and players
- () be sensitive to individual needs
- () communicate at the time when the player is most receptive

7. How to deal with individuals who are disruptive:

- () give them additional responsibilities
- () appeal to their sense of courtesy
- () be positive, not punitive
- () discuss their behavior with their parent(s)

8. How to gain respect:

- () establish your role as a competent and willing instructor
- () be a fair and considerate leader
- () set a good example
- () earn the respect of your players ... don't demand it

AN INSTRUCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY

An instructional philosophy is built on experience, knowledge and abilities you have acquired over the years. This is based on the development of a personal philosophy of leadership style and of the game of hockey itself. To be able to demonstrate and express a sound instructional philosophy, you must be able to:

- be an effective teacher
- be an effective leader for your players
- be a model of cooperation and fair play
- share responsibilities with players, e.g. picking up pucks and putting pylons away
- develop in your players a respect for other participants
- develop self-respect and self-discipline in your players

To have a significant, positive effect on the players you instruct, it is necessary to establish both in your mind and in your behavior, a sound, personal instructional philosophy.

LEADERSHIP SUMMARY

1. Three common leadership styles are autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire.
2. The main approaches to coaching/instructing are self, task and social.
3. The desire for excellence, affiliation, sensation and success are the main reasons why players participate.
4. One of the keys to becoming a good leader/instructor is developing an effective personal philosophy.



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Communication

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

On completion of this chapter, the instructor will be better prepared to:

- *understand the principles appropriate to effectively communicate with players;*
- *understand that effective communication is both verbal and non-verbal;*
- *identify and practice listening techniques as one component of effective communication; and*
- *understand the way in which the use of feedback contributes to effective communication with players.*

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Good instruction is a result of clear, concise and meaningful communication. When you influence players, whether it be teaching skills, correcting errors, solving problems, or explaining a new drill, it is done through communication. That's why it is important for instructors to have good communication skills.

As a hockey instructor, it will be necessary to communicate with your players as a large group, as a smaller sub-group (e.g. a small group practicing a particular skill) and as individuals. Regardless of the number of players you are communicating with at one time, the same principles apply to communicating effectively.

Be Enthusiastic — your enthusiasm as an instructor will be contagious. Be the enthusiastic leader of your group. Your enthusiasm will affect your players' enjoyment of the game of hockey.

Be Positive — interact with your players in a positive manner. Set a good example of desired behavior. Give constructive criticism frequently and keep your voice at a reasonable and understandable level.

Be Demanding but Considerate — clearly establish what is expected of the players. Your expectations of the players should be based on their abilities and experiences. Don't expect more than is reasonable and realistic.

Be Consistent in Communicating with Your Players — communicate in a consistent manner from one situation (explanation of a drill or teaching a new skill) to another and with all of your players (try to avoid playing favorites). Try to keep your temperament on an even keel; this will enable you to communicate more effectively and will enable the players to know what to expect from you.

Treat All Players as Individuals — it is important to be sensitive to individual needs and allow for individual differences, to show all players that you care for them as individuals. Make an effort to talk to all players individually at each session and get to know their first names as soon as possible.

Communicate in the Same Manner with Your Child As with Other Players — parents who instruct their own children often put unrealistic expectations on them. If you instruct your children, remember to treat them as you do the other players and don't demand more of them than you do of the others.

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Be Patient — particularly with the beginning players, the instructor's best virtue will be patience. Remember that coordination is not yet fully developed and that the activities must be practiced over and over again to effect even the most minor of improvements. Give recognition and praise at every opportunity and your patience will pay off.

NON-VERBAL AND VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Communication can be both verbal and non-verbal. "The instructor is in a good mood today" or "The instructor is angry because we didn't do the drill correctly." How did you communicate that? Instructors communicate many messages to players by their actions, facial expressions, use of arms and hands, body position, posture, touching behaviors as well as voice characteristics. Effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, with your players is affected by how well you use your voice and body.

NON VERBAL

Your players often learn their most memorable lessons by watching what you do. The instructor's non-verbal behavior should reflect what is verbally communicated to the players. Act in a way which shows that you are consistent with what you say. For example, if you ask that your players be punctual for sessions, then your behavior should reflect this request.

What you communicate non-verbally to your players can be as important as what you verbally communicate. A positive example of non-verbal communication is illustrated by an instructor who acknowledges the successful completion of a skill drill with a smile and a pat on the back. It is important to be aware of the message you are sending to your players.

The following are suggestions for using your body effectively:

1. Make an effort to gain eye contact at an eye-to-eye level with all players you are addressing. This will add to the sincerity of your instructions and will

2. Move about your players when they are practicing a skill so that they feel you are spending time with each of them.
3. Use variations in facial expressions (smile often!), positions of the arms, legs and body to change the mood you are trying to convey. Be aware of what these movements and positions convey to your players.

VERBAL

Effective verbal communication, which should compliment and support your non-verbal communication, involves good use of your voice. The following are suggestions for your using your voice effectively:

1. Avoid lengthy and complicated explanations when demonstrating and explaining a skill or drill.
2. Use language that is easily understood by the age and skill level of the players you are instructing. Watch for reactions from the players that indicate whether or not they understand your explanations.
3. Use a voice that is only slightly louder than a normal speaking voice except for the few times it is necessary to project your voice a long distance, (e.g. in an arena). Speaking unnecessarily loud encourages players to make noise themselves and is hard on the nerves of all concerned. Many instructors are able to settle players down by lowering their voices so that close attention is required to hear. Try it!
4. Speak clearly and move your eyes about the group of players as you speak. Periodically, look carefully at those who are farthest away from you. Can you see clear indications that they can hear? If there is any doubt, ask them.
5. Use inflections or changes in the tone of your voice to communicate varying moods (e.g. energetic, patient, serious, concern).



COMMUNICATION

It should now be obvious to you that the correct combination of verbal and non-verbal communication is the most effective method of getting your point across. There are all kinds of lessons being learned by your behavior, by your actions, by your gestures, by your facial expressions and by the way in which you use your voice—all the ways you communicate to your players. It is therefore very important to try to ensure that your words and actions are as consistent as possible. You can use your voice and body to gain the attention of your players by doing the following:

Gaining Attention:

- Have a regular spot or place where you usually begin;
- Use a signal (e.g. a raised hand, point to yourself, etc.) to indicate attention is needed;
- The whistle should normally be used only to signal for all players to stop what they are doing and look to you for instructions. In the team teaching situation, only the head instructor should use the whistle;
- Ask firmly but politely, “May I have your attention, please? We are ready to begin”;
- If all but one or two are paying attention, politely ask them for their attention by using their name(s);
- Once you have their attention without showing a lot of impatience or annoyance, say something like “thank you,” “that’s better” or “it is necessary to have your attention so that we can learn this”;
- In the extreme case where a player insists on being disruptive, try saying, “this is important Bill, you’ll have to pay attention ... (without sarcasm).” In some cases, you may have to add “if you do not pay attention, you will have to leave” or “I will not continue until everyone is paying attention.” In rare cases where this fails to work, have the individuals remove themselves from the group and talk to them later, privately;

- Be careful not to punish those who have been paying attention after dealing with those who have not been attentive. Continue in a pleasant and positive manner.
- Make sure you reward people when they do become attentive rather than just singling them out when they are inattentive.

Re-gaining Attention

If at first players are attentive and then their attention begins to wander, first ask yourself:

- Am I talking too much?
- Have the players been in one position for too long?
- Am I communicating in a clear and direct manner?
- Can all players see and hear well?

If the Problem Does Not Lie in the Above

- Stop talking, look directly at the inattentive person(s), and move closer to them if possible;
- If this doesn’t work, politely but firmly ask for attention using the inattentive person(s) name;
- If several are causing a disruption, consider breaking up the group so they are not together;
- In the final analysis, the best way to keep players’ attention is to keep them active.

EFFECTIVE LISTENING

One important component of effective communication is listening. How good a listener are you? How much of what your players say to you do you actually hear? Listening to players tells them that you are genuinely interested in their feelings, thoughts and suggestions.

Good listening is a difficult communication skill to learn well. Like all skills, it takes practice to be a good listener. The following techniques can be used to improve your listening skills:

Attentive Listening — listening starts by the instructor being attentive to the player. This is demonstrated by your facial expressions and

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FOR THE INSTRUCTOR

Using the following chart, assess how effectively you communicate with your players. For each statement, circle the letter which best describes you.

As an instructor I:	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
1. Show enthusiasm	A	O	S	N
2. Act in a positive manner	A	O	S	N
3. Am not too demanding	A	O	S	N
4. Communicate in a consistent manner	A	O	S	N
5. Listen well to my players	A	O	S	N
6. Provide effective feedback	A	O	S	N
7. Recognize the contribution of each player	A	O	S	N
8. Treat all players as individuals	A	O	S	N
9. Instruct my child the same as the other players	A	O	S	N
10. Know what messages my non-verbal behavior communicates	A	O	S	N
11. Ensure my body language and words communicate the same messages	A	O	S	N
12. Use my voice and body effectively	A	O	S	N

gestures and by being quiet. Eye contact with the players, and at the same level, is important. These actions all indicate to players that you are ready to listen to what they have to say.

Paraphrasing — you repeat in your own words what it is you think the player said in order to determine if that is what the player meant. Paraphrasing allows you to see if you have a complete understanding of what the player said to you and provides the player with feedback as to whether the instructor interpreted the meaning correctly. Any areas of misunderstanding can then be explained by the player.

Active Listening — You verbally indicate that you are following and understanding what the

player is saying by the use of bridging words such as, “I see,” “Yes” and “Okay.”

Restating — the instructor repeats the last phrase or few words of what the player said without changing anything.

Inviting Clarification — the instructor requests that the player clarifies or expands on something that the player has said. In seeking clarification, the instructor words the question to ask about a specific comment made by the player that was not understood. Inviting clarification shows interest in the player by the instructor.

After a session on the ice is a good time to spend a few minutes listening to your players. Get some feedback on areas that went well



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and areas that the players and/or instructor need to work on.

Questions That Could Be Asked:

- What did you do today that you really enjoyed?
- What was one good thing that happened today?
- What is one thing you learned today?
- What did you think you did well?
- What is one thing you would like to do at the next session?
- What are you going to tell your parents you did today?



For the Instructor:

What happens to a player when the instructor demonstrates ineffective listening skills as compared to demonstrating effective listening skills? _____

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Verbal feedback (talking to the players about how and what they are doing) gives information which can help them learn and develop in a positive and effective way.

Effective feedback is essential for your players' motivation, learning and self image. It is an

important key to successful instruction, as your feedback can turn a player off or on.

SIX ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

1. Specific
2. Constructive
3. Sooner not Later
4. Checked for Clarity
5. Positive and Informative
6. Directed at behavior which is changeable

Specific

Specific feedback contains precise information about what they player should try to do in order to solve or correct a problem.

Example:

Specific (and effective):

- "When you turn to your left, you seem to be out of control. Try to lean more toward the center of the turn and bend your inside leg more."

General (and ineffective):

- "You are not turning correctly."

Constructive

Constructive feedback recognizes aspects of your players' behavior and suggests positive steps for improvement. It should deal with observable behaviors. It should not deal with inferences about the player's personal characteristic.

Example:

Constructive (and effective):

- "When you pass the puck, you are doing everything correctly, however, when you receive a pass, you are letting the puck hit your stick. As the puck arrives, try to draw your stick back a bit to cushion it."

Destructive (and ineffective):

- "You pass the puck okay, but you can't receive a pass worth a darn!"

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Sooner not Later

Effective feedback is given sooner not later. It is given as soon as possible after the player does something. Your player then has a clearer memory or "feeling" of what has taken place and is in a better position to learn from your feedback.

Example:

If you want to encourage shooting the puck in a certain way, you should say something positive immediately after the individual performs the skill. And if your players can "try out" your constructive, corrective feedback immediately after you have given it, they are much more likely to be able to perform the skill correctly the next time they try.

Checked for Clarity

To make sure that your feedback has been clearly understand, check it out with the player.

Example:

Ask your players to tell you what they think you said or what they think you want them to do. If they have it right you can reinforce the message ("Yes, that's right"). If they have it wrong, you can clarify the message ("That's not what I meant. What I meant was ...").

Positive and Informative

Effective feedback has two main components. It is generally positive and informative. It reassures the player. It also gives the information needed to correct a problem or error. Negative feedback in itself provides little, if any, precise information on how to correct a problem.

Directed at Changeable Behavior

Feedback based on this principle helps the player focus on a change which is within reach. It does the player absolutely no good at all to be told by the instructor that he or she is "too small" or not strong enough since this is something the player cannot usually change. Rather, the feedback must focus on some aspect of the skill being performed that can be improved.

TO SUM UP

Effective feedback has three main messages. It tells the individual:

1. "You're OK as a player."
2. "Here's what you are doing well."
3. "Here's what you need to do to correct your error or improve your performance."

Effective feedback usually provides more information than does negative feedback and if used over time it also leads to better instructor-player relations.

ACTIVITY – THE "PROBLEM" PLAYER

Think of a poorly skilled or "problem" player that you either instructed or knew and determine what you can do (or could have done) in order to make the person feel better and perhaps improve his or her skill.

- What is (was) the problem as you see it?
- What is the cause of the problem?
- What new approach could you use to solve it? Using feedback?
- How would you know you were successful?



COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION SUMMARY

1. An effective instructor:
 - is enthusiastic
 - is positive
 - is demanding but considerate
 - is consistent
 - treats all players as individuals
 - communicates in the same manner with his/her own child as with others
 - is patient
2. Non-verbal communication means **how** you say something and often means more than **what** you say.
3. Effective use of your voice contributes to clear and effective instruction.
4. Communication involves listening.
5. Listening techniques include: attentive listening, paraphrasing, bridging, restating and inviting clarification.
6. Feedback helps players when it is:
 - specific not general
 - constructive not destructive
 - sooner not later
 - checked for clarity not left misunderstood
 - positive and informative not negative and useless
 - directed at behavior which is changeable

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Teaching Skills

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

On completion of this chapter, you should have a better understanding of:

- *the basic principles of human growth and development as they relate to the teaching of basic skills;*
- *the factors affecting learning and some techniques to improve the learning environment;*
- *the basic teaching progressions to follow and how to plan explanations and demonstrations of skills; and*
- *the whole – part – whole method of skill instruction.*

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

You will be dealing with very young players so it is important to realize that the teaching of basic hockey skills must be tempered by the age of the players, their early stage of physical development and the amount of work they are equipped to handle.

What this means is that instructional sessions on the ice should contain the following three things to ensure your players' bodies work properly:

1. a good warm-up
2. a positive, non-threatening atmosphere that avoids high tension and anxiety
3. work appropriate to the strength and muscular development of the players

There are two different types of changes that are happening in the body of the younger player:

1. changes due to normal physical growth
2. changes due to the demands made from physical activity

Here are a few assumptions and sport specific implications related to growth and development in childhood years:

ASSUMPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
PHYSICAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT	
Basic movement patterns are already learned yet in most children are not very refined. Development at this stage is instrumental for all other levels.	Use simple activities that continue to develop basic fundamental skills with a minimum of pressure on performance. Provide instruction to refine skills.
Aerobic capacity is adequate for most activities.	Provide lots of opportunity to participate.
Right/left handedness is determined at this stage.	Encourage the use of the non-dominant side.
MENTAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT	
Reasoning skills in concrete situations are improving.	Play simple games with simple rules and strategies – avoid complicated rules.
Attention span is increasing but is still short.	Give short, clear and simple instructions. Use demonstrations. Drills and activities should be changed frequently within one practice but repeated over consecutive practices until players experience success.



TEACHING SKILLS

ASSUMPTIONS	IMPLICATIONS
SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT	
Players are easily hurt by criticism.	Be positive in comments and provide realistic, practical opportunities to develop skills.
Sex differences are not of great consequence at this age.	Organize groups so that boys and girls can play together; encourage cooperation.
In the desire to succeed, the player is often impatient with learning fundamentals.	Help the player to recognize the importance of learning small steps toward larger goals.
Acceptance by peers is often related to motor ability.	Ensure that the worth of the individual is not linked entirely to skill level. Look for positive feedback for each participant.
Role models and heroes are emulated by the players.	Be sure to act responsibly if you are a role model for the players.

The player in the Skill Development Program needs to:

- have fun and enjoy hockey and physical development
- refine basic motor patterns
- experience activities that are challenging and ongoing
- receive reinforcement and experience success to build positive self-concept
- try, experiment, play and pretend in unstructured activities and adapted game situations
- be introduced to the concepts of cooperation and sportsmanship

NOTE: Although later in the growth cycle male/female differences become obvious, there are no physiological limiting factors that should prevent boys and girls from learning hockey skills at the same rate all through the Skill Development Program. The only limiting

factors will be social in nature.

As an instructor in the Skill Development Program, you should be prepared to provide instruction and guidance to boys and girls in essentially the same manner.

FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNING

The factors which affect the way in which an individual learns skills can be viewed from a variety of different perspectives. The main ones are:

1. the learning environment
2. instructor traits
3. other factors which influence learning

The Learning Environment

- should be completely under the control of the instructor
- should have rewards for success given at every opportunity
- encouragement must be provided to assist in the improvement of skills
- focus on the players' ability not their personality
- focus on the correction of errors not criticism of the individual; correct major errors at once
- provide free time to experiment with new skills in self-teaching mode
- factors which often inhibit learning include excessive enthusiasm, negative attitude, poor equipment and poor teaching aids

Instructor Traits

Some of these may seem familiar to you after having completed the section on leadership. Many good leadership qualities also are good instructor traits. They are important enough to repeat.

- knowledge of the game, the components of the basic skills and how and when to introduce them
- ability to express the knowledge that you have at the players' level of understanding and in a manner which will motivate and challenge them
- relating to the players in a friendly,

TEACHING SKILLS



- courteous and respectful manner
- ability to identify learning limits, the skill level and level of interest of the players
- ability to capture and hold the players' attention and to emphasize the "do" of learning
- knowledge of the level of tolerance of the players so that the learning demand is not more than they can handle
- be prepared, creative and enthusiastic

Other Factors

- guide and monitor the learning process; be aware of progressions in learning – work from the simple to the difficult
- new skills should be introduced on a solid basis, for example at the beginning of a lesson, they should be built on previous lessons and should be emphasized until mastered
- ice sessions should be planned around the level of competence and interest of the players, their ability to understand instructions and their attention span and capability to learn new skills as well as master old ones
- repeat drills for short periods of time over a large number of ice sessions and wherever possible, praise good performance

TEACHING PROGRESSIONS

There are four lesson plan manuals, each with 20 lessons, for the four levels of the Skill Development Program. These lessons have been developed to assist you in the conduct of the program and have been designed within the context of the teaching progressions described in this chapter.

Teaching physical skills and technique involves a chain of events. There are four main links in this chain:

1. **Select the Skill** – select a basic skill to be learned and identify what you want them to learn.

2. **Plan the Demonstration** – plan the explanation and demonstration; determine what to say and how to say it.
3. **Plan the Practice** – plan how the players will practice the skill.
4. **Provide feedback** – Provide feedback during practice; make constructive corrections and help the players maintain realistic goals.

SELECT THE BASIC SKILL TO BE LEARNED

Basic skills are not always simple to learn. In hockey, the basic skill is skating but it is a complex and difficult skill. Passing or shooting the puck is actually easier, but skating is the more basic skill.

The instructor has been provided with a set of lesson plans that progresses gradually and systematically through the skills to be learned in the Skill Development Program, beginning with the most basic and progressing from the simplest to the more complicated skills.

EXERCISE: Basic skills

What skills do you feel should be emphasized in the Skill Development Program? In the columns below,

1. Choose the four or five most important basic skills;
2. Identify the order in which you think they should be taught;
3. Identify how they could be learned – alone or in combination with others

Most Important Skills	Order 1st, 2nd, etc.	Can Be Learned Alone	Pairs	Three+



TEACHING SKILLS

Now, compare your list with another instructor and then with the suggested progressions in the lesson plan manuals. When you are instructing, you will have the freedom to teach things in the order that you want, however, it is important that your list is at least similar to the sequence recommended in the manuals.

PLAN THE EXPLANATION AND DEMONSTRATION

This is the planning you do to organize what you want to teach. Although most of this has been done for you in the lesson plans, it is important you understand the sequence of events to follow in conducting a lesson.

STEP 1 – Select a skill and write down why it is important.

Name the skill and if possible, explain briefly and in simple words what the name means—how the skill is used in the sport, and where and when it is used. Keep the explanation simple and brief. Total time for the demonstration should be of 30-45 seconds duration.

STEP 2 – Select four or five main teaching points to emphasize.

Each may be made up of two or three closely related ideas. If your participants are young, inexperienced, or have special learning problems, then select only one or two teaching points and keep the points as simple as possible. Select short, descriptive key words or phrases to highlight the teaching points during the demonstration. Rehearse the demonstration and use the key words until you know them well. Don't overload the learner by giving too many key words at the same time.

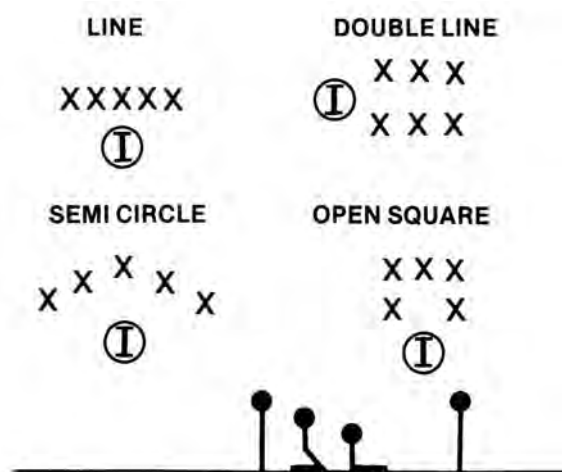
STEP 3 – Decide if an aid would help.

An aid is a chart, diagram, model of some kind, picture, film, or videotape. Do not use an aid unless you feel it will add something important to the demonstration. Good aids are most useful if they are posted on a wall or bulletin board so players can refer to them after the skill has been taught. They will help them recall details of the

demonstration. If an aid is to be used, rehearse with it until you feel comfortable.

STEP 4 – Select an effective formation.

Consider the number of learners present and decide what formation to put them in where all will be able to see and hear clearly.



These basic formations may be expanded to larger groups by having one row sit or kneel and a second row of players stand behind them. The players should be placed with their backs toward any distractions such as glare from windows or the sun, parents, other groups, etc. For this age group, the most effective formation is probably a semi-circle or open square with all players kneeling down. This eliminates most extra movement and focuses attention on the instructor.

With large groups it is important to try to have players in a formation as close as possible to one from which the practicing of the skills will begin. Otherwise there will be unnecessary confusion and lost time re-arranging groups when the demonstration is over.

STEP 5 – Decide on what view or views players should see.

Mentally check out the best angles for viewing the demonstration. Plan to repeat the demonstration as many times as necessary rotating 90° or 180° each time to

TEACHING SKILLS



ensure that all players see it from the best angles. Remember, total time for the demonstration and explanation should be no more than 45 seconds from beginning to end. If it goes longer, it will have been repeated too often or too much detail will have been given.

STEP 6 – Decide on who demonstrates.

Having decided what is to be done, decide on who should demonstrate. Being asked to demonstrate is rewarding. Many members of the group should be called on to do it.

Instructors often demonstrate a skill several times themselves and then ask a player to step out and try it under their guidance. In the case of simple demonstrations, use an ordinary member of the group—it does not have to be a top performer. Most players identify with average performers and learn best from them. Beginners do not remember fine details to start with and they sometimes find the best performers discouraging to watch.

Some individuals do not like to get up in front of their peers to demonstrate. An instructor should respect these individuals' feelings by asking them before the practice if they would mind taking part in the demonstration.

STEP 7 – Call for questions to conclude.

To make sure that players understand, ask if they have any questions. Answer those which are related closely to the skill, but politely refer questions not to the point to a later time to avoid getting sidetracked.

All questions should be answered with respect, even if they have been covered during the demonstrations. If players are shy in the beginning, pose questions yourself and answer them yourself.

Novice athletes have difficulty doing a sport skill if they don't know exactly what it is supposed to look like. Check to see that what you describe is what they picture in their minds when they are trying to do it.

A word of encouragement:

At first, these steps will take quite a bit of time to follow. But if you use them frequently you will soon be able to go through them with only the briefest of notes. Experienced instructors recall details of a demonstration and how to stage it simply by recalling the name of the skill.

PLAN HOW THE PLAYERS WILL PRACTICE THE SKILL

The next link in the teaching chain is organizing a group to practice a skill that has been demonstrated. This is quite separate and distinct from planning and organizing the demonstration. The following steps will help you to plan effectively:

STEP 1 – Take stock of the practice environment.

Answer the following questions as a basis for your planning.

- How many players are there?
- How much area is there available to work in?
- How much fixed equipment is available?
- How much small equipment is available?
- What special dangers exist in the practice area that must be guarded against?

STEP 2 – Maximize activity.

The object is to use as much of the space and as much of the time as possible. Plan the practice activity so there is as little unnecessary waiting time as possible.

Use your best judgment to answer the following questions in planning the practice activity.

- Will it be best to start participants working alone, in pairs or in small groups?
- Do learners need to be moving or can they practice in one place? If they are moving where should they start from so there will be enough clear area to move in?



TEACHING SKILLS

- Is the skill to be practiced of a type that players should be paired off or grouped by size, experience or aggressiveness in order to minimize chances of injury and equalize competition among and between learners?
- Will players have to be grouped and take turns sharing because there is not enough area or fixed or moveable equipment?
- How can you make the groups as small as is practical and as active as possible?
- How can dangers in the area be removed, covered or otherwise decreased or avoided by careful placing of players and their patterns of movement?

Some breaks in activity can be

constructive—here are a few reasons:

- if time is needed to rest in vigorous practice
- when space available is too small for all to be active
- when the amount of equipment is limited
- when it is not safe for everyone to be active at the same time
- if time is required to correct, re-teach or give further instruction

STEP 3 – Plan to move learners into practice activity quickly.

Where possible, the formation used to observe the demonstration should be as much like the practice formation as possible. If groups or squads are to be used regularly, then players should be assigned to specific groups. Membership of the groups should be changed from time to time.

The instructor must take care to maintain the attention and control of learners during the time between the demonstration and the beginning of practice.

Require attention, give simple, clear instructions and plan a simple, efficient method of distributing equipment if that is necessary.

STEP 4 – Use clear, precise instructions.

As soon as players are in position ready to begin the practice of the demonstrated skill, explain simply what is to be done. Watch their faces for signs that they understand or are puzzled. Re-explain in the same or different words as necessary.

Use simple key words or key phrases to drive home the main points of instruction. Repeat one or two key words at appropriate times during and after demonstrations.

Carefully point out any special safety precautions and pause to see that your orders have been heard and understood.

STEP 5 – Check and correct the practice pattern first, then check technique.

When practice begins, your attention should be on the pattern of activity. That is, are groups spaced properly so they have enough room? Are they skating far enough and turning at the place you asked them to? Are safety precautions being observed? Did they understand the instructions?

If any of these things need attention, correct them as the players practice. If this is impossible, stop the group, get their attention and make corrections.

Once the practice pattern is well established, begin to check technique and details of the skill as players perform. This is an extremely important point. Get the practice pattern going smoothly first. Then and only then, begin to check the technique of players. Stand or move around so you can see or scan the whole group. If all is going well, let them proceed for a while.

PROVIDE FEEDBACK DURING PRACTICE

Feedback during learning involves feeding back information to the players about their efforts to learn. It serves three important functions in learning:

1. to guide improvement
2. to measure progress
3. to provide encouragement

TEACHING SKILLS



Give feedback to guide improvement.

Learning skills can be very confusing. There are many things to think about. First the player needs to know what is being done correctly so he or she will know what parts of the skill are under control. This is not a matter of being nice to the learner by being positive to them. This is based strictly on sound principles of skill learning.

If players are not clear on what parts of the skill are being done correctly they may change some of those things for the worse as they try to correct other parts of the skill.

Use feedback as a measure of progress.

If an athlete knows that his/her list of questions about how to do a skill is getting shorter it will be easy for him or her to recognize improvement.

Often a player will recognize increased skill as a new feeling of naturalness and smooth action that replaces stiff, unnatural action (“it feels much better now”) and this is another kind of important evidence or improved quality.

Use feedback as reward or punishment.

While knowledge of improvement rewards us, so does approval or recognition, words of encouragement from people important to us, family members, friends and instructors in particular. “Well done!”, “Yes, excellent.”; “Good work.”; “Charlie, I’m proud of you.”

Punishment is the opposite of reward.

Physical punishment is not acceptable nor is extra strenuous, physical work an advisable form of punishment.

EXERCISE: Feedback During Skill Practice

Use the skills for which you planned demonstrations and practice drills, and draw up a list of the three different kinds of feedback that you might provide learners with after they have practiced what you have planned. Discuss your examples with another instructor to check on your understanding of feedback.

Skill: _____

1. Feedback to guide improvement. What are some examples of things the player might be doing correctly which you can point out?

2. Feedback as evidence of improvement: What are some things you can ask about or point out?

3. Feedback to provide encouragement.

TWO TEACHING APPROACHES

There are two approaches commonly used in teaching simple skills: 1) imitation and 2) demonstration/explanation followed by practice and feedback.

The Imitation Method

Simple imitation is often the best way for players to learn. It requires them to focus on what is to be imitated or copied. “Watch this ... Try it.” Often the imitation is as accurate as it needs to be. You should then confirm it: “Yes. That’s it. Now remember that.” If necessary, have it practiced several times.

When minor corrections are required point them out in a clear, matter-of-fact way. If players have trouble picking up the correct action or movement then you should realize that, for some reason, it is not as simple as expected.



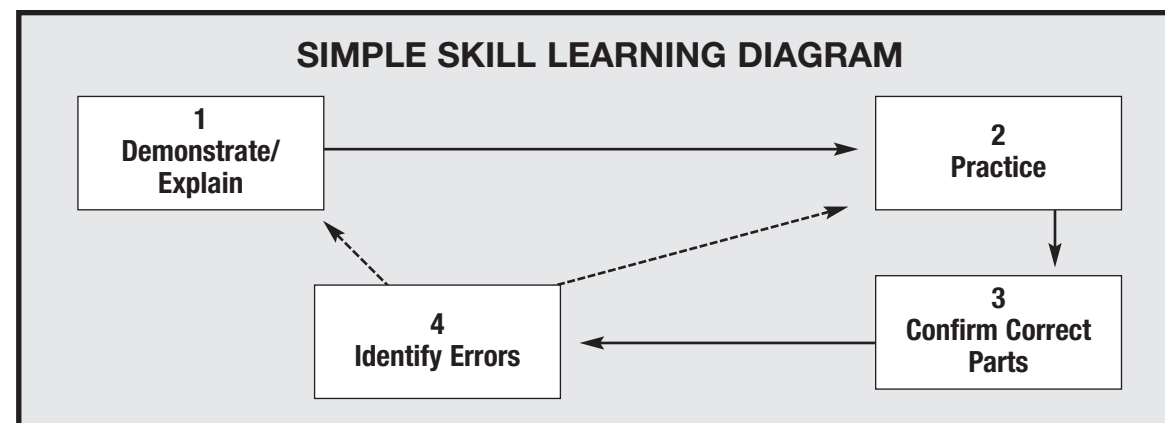
TEACHING SKILLS

The Demonstration/Explanation /Practice/Correction Method

This method is used extensively. It involves these steps:

- demonstration first with minimal explanation: “Watch this. Be careful to stand like this, and then shoot the puck. Try it.”
- Allow for practice. Observe carefully, looking for correct features and common errors.
- Provide feedback while practice continues if possible. If you must, stop practice and confirm correct actions and if necessary make suggestions to correct errors.
- Allow further practice and correct in more detail, if necessary.

This may be illustrated with the following diagram:



QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. Recall three teachers who had a great influence on you. What did you learn from the way these people taught that you could apply to instructing in the Skill Development Program?
2. Can you make up a catchy three or four word sequence to use an aid in explaining and demonstrating a skill?
3. If you were given \$1,000 what could you do to improve your practice environment?
4. What do you feel is your greatest strength as a teacher?

TEACHING SKILLS SUMMARY

There are four links in teaching skills:

1. Select a basic skill to be learned
2. Plan the explanation and demonstration
 - a. Select a skill and write down why it is important.
 - b. Select four or five main teaching points and key words.
 - c. Decide if an aid would help.
 - d. Decide on what views a player should see.
 - e. Decide on who demonstrates.
 - f. Call for questions to conclude.
3. Plan how the players will practice the skill
 - a. Take stock of the practice environment.
 - b. Maximize activity.
 - c. Move the learners into practice quickly.
 - d. Use clear, precise instructions.
 - e. Check and correct practice pattern first, then check technique.
4. Provide feedback during practice
 - a. give feedback to guide improvement
 - b. use feedback as a measure of progress
 - c. use feedback as reward or punishment

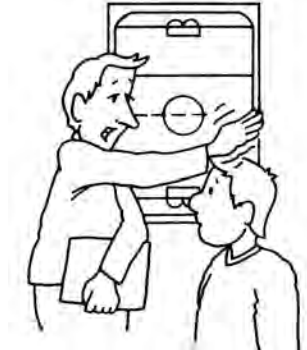


TEACHING SKILLS

EXAMPLES OF INEFFECTIVE LISTENING



Player: “Mr. Brown, I’m a bit worried about the skill we are going to be learning today.”
Instructor: “Okay guys, let’s get ready for warm-up.”



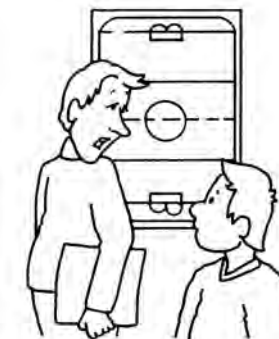
Player: “I’m worried about learning how to ...”
Instructor: “Don’t worry, Johnny ...”



Player: “Mr. Brown, I’d like to talk ...”
Instructor: “Okay guys, let’s go.”



Player: Silence
Instructor: “Okay guys, let’s get out there.”

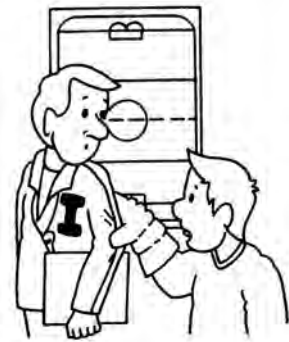


Player: “Mr. Brown, could I ...”
Instructor: “What is it?”



TEACHING SKILLS

EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE LISTENING



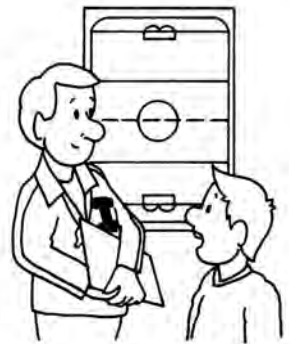
Player: "Mr. Brown, I'm a bit worried about the skill we are going to be learning today."

Instructor: "I see." (bridging)



Player: "I don't know ... I guess because I might look dumb if I can't do it."

Instructor: "Johnny do you remember when we talked about doing your best? We agreed that what was most important was for you to do your best when we learned new skills. Well, I want you to just try to do your best today. It doesn't really matter to me what anyone else does. All you can do is give it your best shot ... no one can do more than that."



Player: "Yeah, I have a scared feeling since I talked to some of the guys."

Instructor: "The guys?" (restating)



Player: "Thanks, Mr. Brown. I feel a bit better now."

Instructor: "Good, I know you'll be okay Johnny ... Okay guys, let's get ready for the warm-up."

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Skill Analysis

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

On completion of this chapter, you should have a better understanding of:

- *what skill analysis is;*
- *what principles of movement are and how they relate to hockey; and*
- *correction methods to use in skill analysis.*

WHAT IS SKILL ANALYSIS?

An instructor is a judge of hockey skill. To be a good judge of these skills, the instructor must be able to:

- Break complex skills down into simple parts.
- Separate the good parts of technique from the bad parts.
- Focus on the important parts of technique and not be distracted by ones that are less important.
- Find a way to correct technique.
- Put the whole technique back together to form the whole skill.

couple of these basic principles, you can become a hockey skill analyst.

Before skill analysis was used in sport, coaches tried to:

- Memorize all the details of each skill.
- Correct errors in performance by demonstrating a series of poses for players.
- Use expressions such as, "Skate hard," "You're not trying," "Put more wrist into your shot," which were not specific enough to give the player something to change.

These methods do not work effectively.

All the principles of movement are based on how forces are made by or act on the player's body. The action of the muscles of the body produce forces at the joints that in turn produce movements of certain speed, acceleration or momentum and these properties of a player's movements in turn determine the quality of the skill.

The two basic principles of movement that will be covered in the Skill Development Program are:

1. Use all the joints that can be used (summation of joint forces)
2. Use each joint in order (continuity of joint forces).

PRINCIPLES OF MOVEMENT

Experts have discovered ways to assist you in developing your skills in the analysis and correction of performance. These experts are sports scientists who have applied some of the basic ideas of physics to the analysis of sports skills and have determined that:

"There are a few principles of movement that explains how all sports skills are done."

These principles are ideas that are true for hockey as well as for other sports. They explain how the different parts of the body should be used in skating, stick handling, passing, shooting, and all the other skills in hockey. If you can understand and apply a



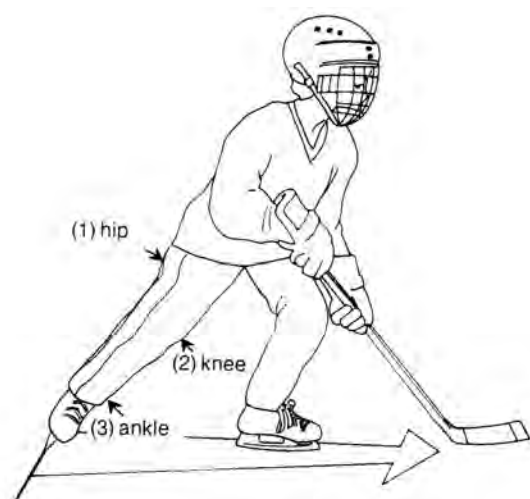
SKILL ANALYSIS

Both of these principles apply specifically to power skills such as skating, passing, and shooting where the player is trying to create as much force as possible.

PRINCIPLE #1 – Use all the joints that can be used

Since most sport skills are done by using the muscles around several joints, the first principle tells us how many joints should be used.

The forces from each joint must be combined to produce the maximum effect. This is best done when all joints that can be used are used.



This principle means that every joint that could be involved in a skill movement does play a role in either contributing to good performance or hindering performance.

The important thing to remember is that every joint must be used to get the most speed, power or acceleration out of the movement.

EXAMPLES

Skill: skating
Fault: stiff-legged
Violation of #1: not using knee and/or hip joints

Skill: shooting
Fault: weak shot
Violation of #1: not using elbow and/or shoulder joints

EXERCISE – Pick out some common errors in beginners hockey skills that may be caused in part by leaving out a joint that should be used.

PRINCIPLE #2 – Use every joint in order

When several joints are used in doing a skill, their sequence and timing are important. This principle tells us **when** the joints should be used.

Joints which have large muscles and are in the center of the body should be used before joints that have small muscles and are found at the ends of the arms and legs. The resulting motion should be fast and continuous.

Movement should begin with the large muscle groups and move out through the progressively smaller ones. This movement through the body must happen in proper sequence, without any breaks in flow if the skill is to be performed correctly.

Watching players performing skills, your job is to ask two questions:

- Did they use all the joints they should have used?
- Did they use the joints in the right order without gaps or breaks in the movement?

Use the chart on the next page to help you answer these questions.

CORRECTION METHODS

If your players violate either principle, i.e., they don't use a joint which they should or use a wrong sequence or have gaps in joint movement, how do you fix it?

- There are two main correction methods:
1. Check for preliminary movements
 2. Teach whole-part-whole

Check for preliminary movements

Have you ever noticed that before you jump up, you have to crouch down? ... before you skate forward your leg has to go back? ...

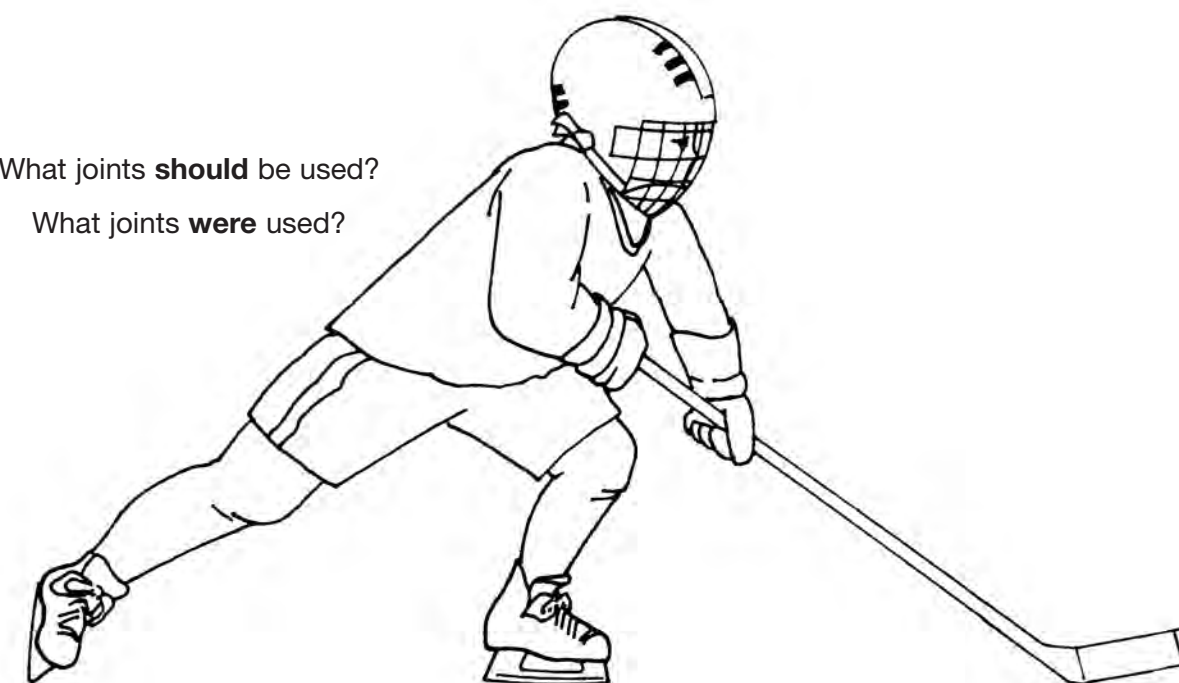
SKILL ANALYSIS



before you shoot a puck you have to “cock” your wrists? Most preliminary movements are opposite to the pay-off movements that follow. Muscles are arranged in opposite pairs – so preliminary movements help stretch the muscles that do the pay-off movements. In this movement, the stretched muscles contract or shorten. If your players are not using every joint, you can tell them what preliminary movement is missing.

What joints **should** be used?

What joints **were** used?



SKILL	#1	#1	#2	#2
JOINT	(✓) if should be used	(✓) if actually used	(✓) if should be used	(✓) if actually used
Shoulder				
Elbow				
Wrist				
Trunk				
Hip				
Knee				
Ankle				
Others				



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Lesson Organization

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

On completion of this chapter, you should have a better understanding of:

- how to properly plan and prepare for a lesson;
- how to organize teaching stations depending on the number of players you have;
- the concepts of team teaching;
- how to use equipment and space effectively;
- how to group players effectively;
- correct on-ice communication techniques; and
- how and when to use drills and games.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Although you have at your disposal a very comprehensive and complete set of lesson plans to guide and assist you with your ice sessions, a certain amount of planning is necessary to ensure a successful lesson. In order that 100% of your ice time is put to good use and your goals and objectives for each lesson are met, the following guidelines are provided.

- primary and secondary objectives of the lesson must be clear in your mind;
- after determining that the lesson content is appropriate for the skill(s) to be taught, review all the teaching points to ensure your own familiarity with the content;
- review the lesson with respect to time allotment for each section or sections to be covered;
- ensure that you have a copy of the lesson for periodical on-ice reference (a clip-board or book is recommended);
- ensure the necessary teaching aids are in place; and
- ensure your teaching assistants are aware of their specific duties as well as the overall lesson content

Factors relating to skills teaching sessions which will lead to a faster rate of acquisition of motor skills for beginners:

1. keep explanations very brief;
2. break skills down into the smallest possible component parts; and
3. keep practice sessions brief.

When planning ice sessions it is important to get off on the “right foot” with your players.

Here are a few ideas:

- arrive well ahead of the scheduled start time so as to be available for instructor discussions, to arrange equipment, and to do a safety check;
- greet your players by name;
- project a good mood;
- use idle chatter to create a feeling of ease;
- conduct a group, close-together activity early in the warm-up phase so as to generate a feeling of togetherness;
- keep your starting activities fairly constant so as to set up a routine. Progress from simple, familiar routines to difficult, unknown ones;
- use good-natured humor as a way of “breaking the ice” and for building up

LESSON ORGANIZATION



- instructor/player relationships; and
- look for early signs of improvement in your players’ performance and try to say something positive.

TEACHING STATIONS

The most effective way to teach the basic skills of hockey is to divide your total group of players up into smaller manageable groups. The number of smaller groups you will be able to use depends upon:

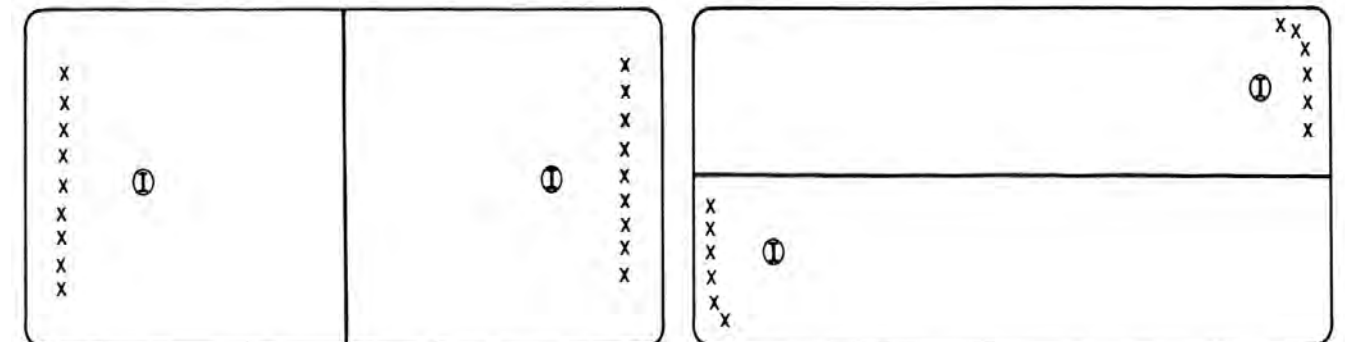
1. the total number of players (try to divide them evenly);
2. the different levels of skill of the players;

3. the number of assistant instructors you have working with you;
4. the number of different skills or components of each skill you intend to teach; and
5. the amount of ice available for your use.

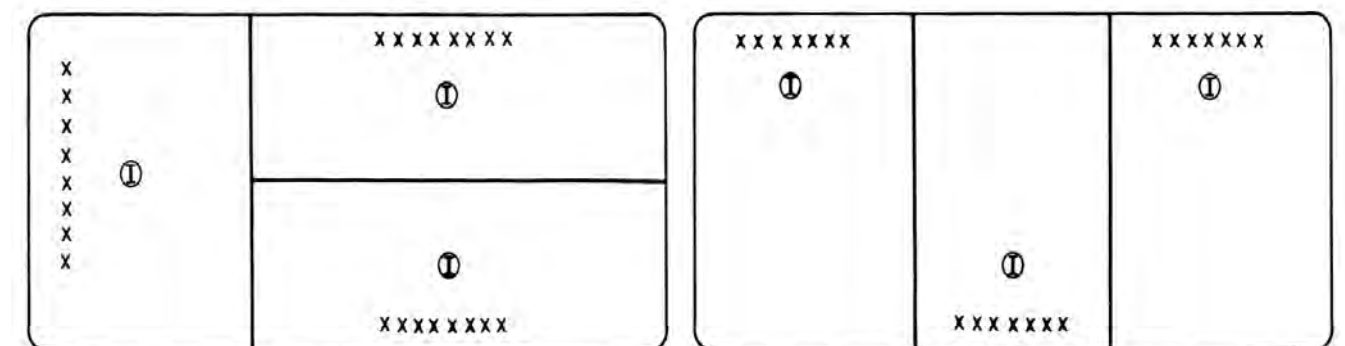
The following diagrams are suggestions for dividing the ice into suitable areas for skills instruction, depending upon the number of groups you have.

In the diagrams, ① stands for coach, X stands for players.

2 GROUPS



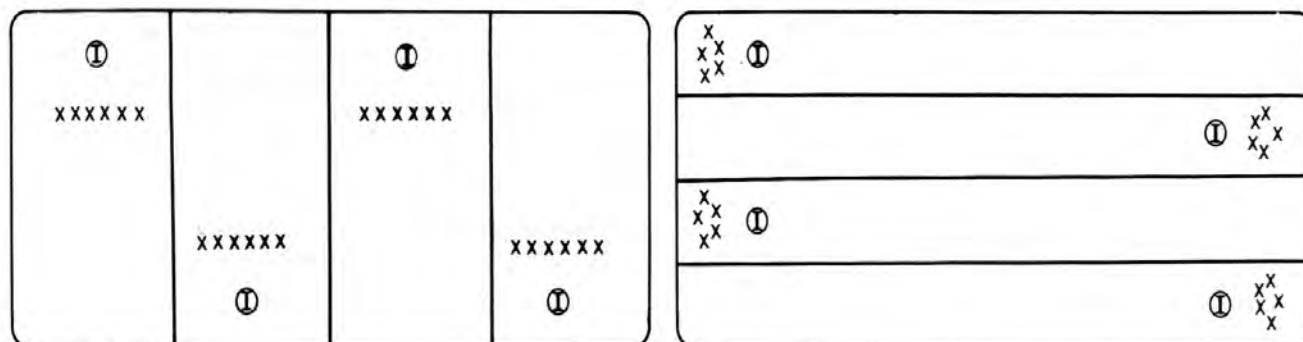
3 GROUPS



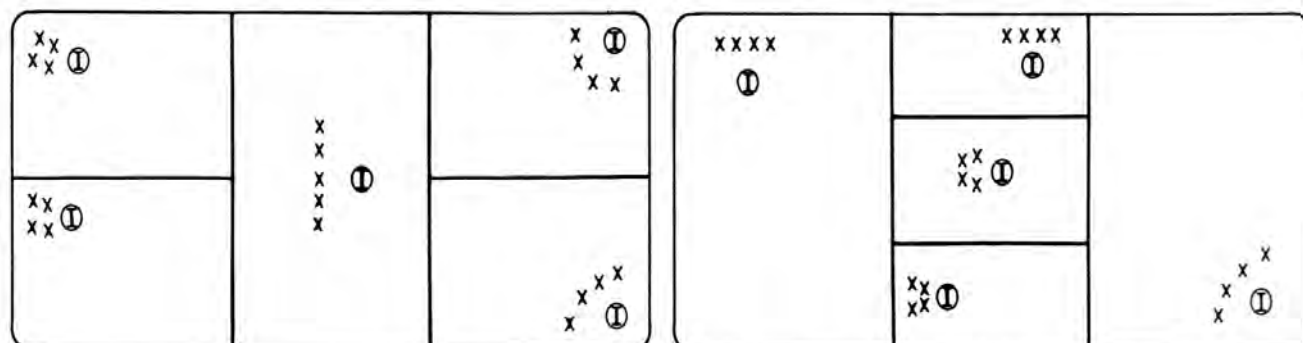


LESSON ORGANIZATION

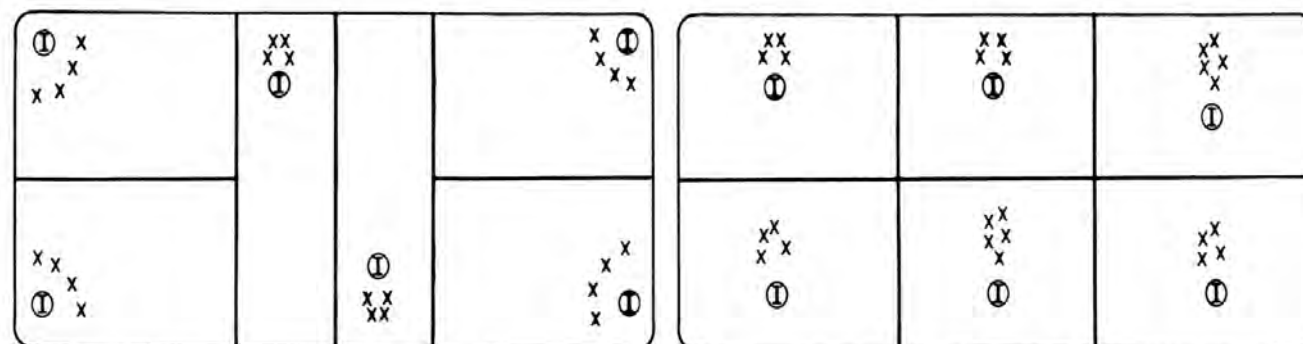
4 GROUPS



5 GROUPS



6 GROUPS



LESSON ORGANIZATION



Once groups have been formed and the teaching stations established, there are a number of basic rules that should be observed:

1. players should face away from distractions i.e. spectators, other groups;
2. instructors must be visible to all players;
3. instructors should try to maintain eye contact with players;
4. try to keep players stationary (kneeling in front of the instructors);
5. deal with a minimum of teaching points (maximum of 2-3 at a time);
6. formations must allow for a quick and smooth transition to the drill; and
7. ensure that prearranged signals for movement from one station to the next are known by all players and instructors.

TEAM TEACHING

To ensure a smoothly operating and efficient ice session that involves a number of different stations, a team teaching approach is essential. This requires the designation of a head instructor and a number of assistant instructors to make up the team. Teamwork is a necessity if the concept is to work properly.

The following guidelines are recommended for assistant or group instructors:

1. Listen to the head instructor to ensure understanding. If you are not certain of your responsibilities, ask!
2. Assist with the set up/organization of any total group drills and be prepared to move quickly into your group activity.
3. Provide individual instruction through error correction.
4. Keep players well spaced and spread out to ensure drills are being performed correctly and so that there is sufficient room to view possible errors.

Things for the instructor to avoid:

1. skating around aimlessly;
2. shooting pucks;
3. passing pucks with another instructor; and

4. talking to players or other assistants while the head instructor is talking or demonstrating.

The head instructor is the one "in charge" of the ice session and has the responsibility of ensuring a smoothly conducted practice. One of his/her prime tasks is to help the assistant instructors carry out their duties. The head instructor should:

1. provide and organize the necessary equipment for your group as required in the lesson;
2. assist in error detection and correction for teaching individuals in your group for short periods;
3. briefly take over your group for clarification of a drill or to reinforce teaching points; and
4. be responsible for the timely and efficient conduct of the lessons by the various instructors.

ORGANIZATION OF EQUIPMENT AND SPACE

Two of the instructor's most important resources are equipment and teaching aids. Without these, lessons are much less effective as usually without variety and often become dull and boring. Performance of some skills, particularly at the basic level for beginners, is virtually impossible to perform without equipment and the necessary teaching aids.

The list is virtually limitless, but you should not be without the following:

- pylons
- chairs
- pucks
- tennis balls
- sticks
- whistle(s)
- clipboard(s)

Also nice to have:

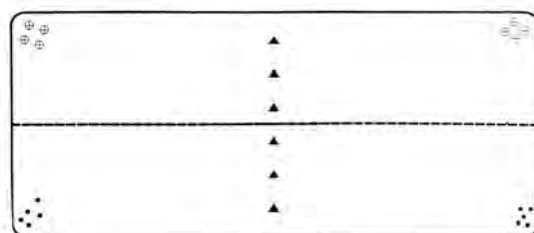
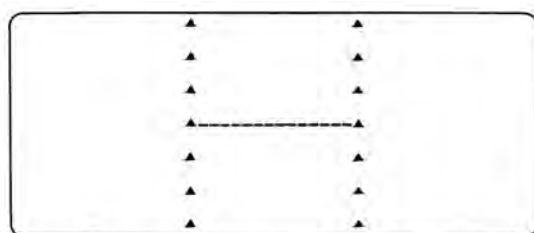
- blackboard (with rink markings)
- magnetic board
- street hockey nets
- boards/planks for reduced size ice use



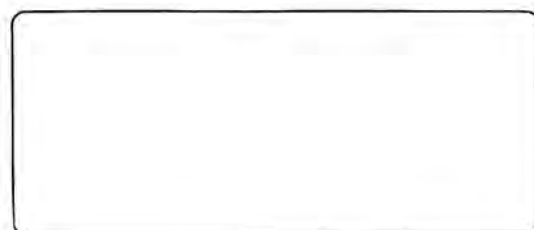
LESSON ORGANIZATION

The following diagrams are examples of effective **pre-planning** of equipment on the ice surface which will provide maximum use of ice for skills instruction:

- ▲ Pylon
- Puck
- ⊕ Ball
- Sticks/Boards



Can you think of some alternate ideas on your own?



GROUPING OF PLAYERS

At the beginning of the year, one of your first tasks as an instructor, particularly if you are the head instructor, will be to divide the group into more manageable smaller groups. This will normally take place during and after the first ice session, once you have had the opportunity to view the players' abilities, etc. Adjustment to initial grouping may be necessary as sessions progress.

There are a number of factors to consider in grouping your players:

1. the number of assistants you have
2. the amount of ice available
3. the age range of the players
4. the level of ability of the players

Ideally, the instructor to pupil ratio should be kept as low as possible (1:1 is perfect but unrealistic). A good ratio is 1:4 or 1:5; the maximum should be 1:8 or 1:10 for effective control and instruction.

Instructors must also guard against "bombarding" a player with feedback and corrections. Avoid having more than one instructor giving help to the same player.

EXERCISE

1. Describe and diagram a system for dividing 35 players of the same age with slightly varying levels of ability into 5 groups for instruction purposes in Skill Development Program Manual A.





LESSON ORGANIZATION

2. Describe and diagram two methods of dividing 32 players ranging in age from 5-9 and of varying ability from Skill Development Program A-D who are on the ice together for a 50 minute period.



DRILLS AND GAMES

Using a variety of skill drills and fun games and/or relays will go a long way toward making your ice sessions educational and fun. Use these types of activities to break up difficult drills or skills, to relieve boredom, to add variety, and to finish off a session on a high note.

Your lesson plans contain a wide variety of drills and games such as:

- British Bulldog
- red light, green light
- scatterball
- freeze tag
- pond hockey
- cops and robbers
- exchange game
- relays
- rope skipping
- soccer

LESSON ORGANIZATION SUMMARY

1. Adherence to the principles of preparation and planning will ensure that a good lesson is presented.
2. Effective use of the ice will result if carefully thought-out teaching stations are used.
3. Use of team teaching techniques will maximize use of ice and instructors.
4. Sufficient and appropriate equipment is a necessity for a good ice session.
5. Grouping of players according to age, ability, space, and resources is a decision to be made by the head instructor.
6. Use of games and fun activities is a necessary part of every lesson.



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Principles of Safety

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

On completion of this chapter, you should have a better understanding of:

- *injury prevention techniques;*
- *the importance of protective equipment;*
- *the value of warm-up; and*
- *on-ice safety precautions*

INJURY PREVENTION

Virtually all injuries sustained by Skill Development Program participants will be caused by lack of skill and will be minor in nature. As an instructor, you should strive to minimize the chance of injury occurring, particularly injuries that could be caused by faulty equipment or unsafe facilities.

If we can identify the causes of injuries, we can think of ways to reduce or prevent them. The following is a list of potential injury prevention techniques you can use.

1. All instructors should have a basic knowledge of first aid. If you do not, you should attempt to take a basic first aid course as soon as possible.
2. Get information on the health status of your players. This can be done by:
 - getting a health history from parents
 - getting reports on previous injuries
 - health insurance number
3. Try to anticipate problems that could arise on the ice:
 - check out facilities and equipment
 - see On-Ice Safety on page 37
4. Don't force players who have been injured back too soon.
 - Ensure the player demonstrates normal flexibility, strength and absence of pain before returning.
5. Be familiar with emergency procedures in the arena, the location of a fracture board,

stretcher, first aid kit, and telephone.

6. Take care of minor injuries quickly so they don't become major ones.
7. Check your players' equipment to see that it is appropriate, that it fits and that it is kept in good repair.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The following is a summary of the important points raised regarding each piece of equipment. It is the responsibility of every instructor to ensure that each of his/her players is adequately protected and that parents are advised of the necessity to wear properly fitting and approved equipment.

1. Athletic support and protective cup
 - must completely cover and protect genitalia
 - purchase according to correct waist size
2. Garter belt
 - must be properly adjusted to hold up hockey socks
 - purchase according to correct waist size
3. Shin pads
 - must properly protect shin bone and knee cap
 - shin and knee cap should be made of hard plastic with suspension in shin and extra padding in knee
 - space between knee cap and shin

PRINCIPLES OF SAFETY



section must be flexible yet well protected

- when knee cap is properly fitted over knee, bottom of pad must reach yet not extend beyond top of skate
4. Pants
 - Pants must protect the front and side of thigh, tailbone, hip, and kidney area. Unless they are properly fitted, they will not provide this protection.
 5. Girdles
 - Designed to fit snugly to the body
 - Padding must protect all areas noted above (pants)
 - Girdle should not shift around when the player walks
 - Bottom of girdle legs should touch top of knee cap when standing straight
 6. Shoulder pads
 - Constructed with hard caps for shoulder tips, plus flexible shock absorbing material over the upper arms, chest and back
 - Advisable to have adjustable straps on arms and body to ensure proper fit
 7. Elbow pads
 - must cover the complete elbow joint with good shock absorbing material
 - when fastened properly, should extend from shoulder pads to the gloves, and not be able to slip

8. Helmet
 - must be HECC approved
 - if adjustable, must fit properly and cover the forehead, temple, and base of the skull
 - straps must be fastened
 - available in different sizes, and must not move around the head
9. Face mask
 - must be HECC approved
 - available in clear plastic and wire cage
 - must be securely fastened to the helmet so that it will not make contact with the face
10. Gloves
 - must be well padded over fingers, thumb, and back of the hand, yet flexible to allow movement
 - should be hard fiber protection covered with shock absorbing material over wrist and forearm
 - glove must extend up arm to the elbow pad
 - gloves must fit snugly, yet be large enough so that the hand and wrist movement is not hindered
11. Skates
 - must provide good support and protection in toe, heel, and Achilles tendon areas
 - toe caps must be constructed of hard plastic
 - counter should also be constructed of plastic in order to provide long lasting support
12. Stick
 - must be of proper length and lie
 - should be taped on blade and upper handle
 - ensure a proper shaft size for the player (should be smaller for younger players)

WARM-UP

An important aspect of every prevention program is a proper warm-up. There are three main reasons for warm-ups:

- to stretch the muscles, tendons and ligaments, particularly those that are going to be used.



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

APPENDIX 1 – EVALUATION

To determine when beginners are ready to advance, their skills must be evaluated. Instructors should develop an ice plan for testing, including drills for skill evaluation purposes and a rating system.

Here are the key skills at each level of the Skill Development Program along with guidelines to be used when rating. Instructors should also review the Key Instructional Points in the appropriate manual.

LESSON MANUAL A

LESSON MANUAL A SKILL EVALUATION	RATING
(1) Stance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> skates parallel, shoulder width apart toes pointed straight ahead and knees bent head up with body leaning slightly forward stick close to ice, held in two hands 	
(2) T-Push <ul style="list-style-type: none"> skates in T-position to start does player make a strong push until leg is fully extended, then transfer weight to the glide foot? can player do with both legs? 	
(3) Glide Turns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shoulders and head initiating the turn does player lead with inside skate with weight slightly back on heel? can player perform the turn in both directions? 	
(4) Stopping (1 o'clock and 11 o'clock): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is player gliding in basic stance posture? is heel turned out and weight put on ball of foot? knees bent and back straight can player do both stops? 	
(5) Backward Stance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> keep head up, chest out, shoulders back are knees bent, back straight, feet shoulder width apart? is weight evenly distributed along the blade of both skates? 	
(6) Puckhandling Stance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does player have correctly sized stick of proper lie? is player in basic stance with stick on ice, trying to use peripheral vision to see puck? is player gripping stick correctly? 	

LESSON MANUAL A SKILL EVALUATION	RATING
(7) Stationary Puckhandling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does player roll wrists to cup the puck when moving it from side to side? is puck handled in middle of blade? is player trying to keep head up? 	
(8) Open Ice Carry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does player turn blades so that alternate pushes of the puck are with the bottom edge of the blade pointed left and then right? does player push puck just far enough to keep it under control? 	
(9) Sweep Pass Forehand (Stationary): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in puckhandling stance, can player propel puck reasonably accurately to a target area? does player keep head up, looking at target? is weight transferred from back to front leg as pass is made? 	
(10) Receiving Pass Forehand (Stationary): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does player put stick down for a target? is blade at 90 degrees to line of puck? does player "cushion" the pass on impact? 	
(11) Backhand Sweep Pass (Stationary): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does player start puck in the correct position with blade cupped over puck? is head up looking at the target? are hands well away from body? is weight transferred from back to front leg as pass is made? can player propel puck reasonably accurately to a target area? 	

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



LESSON MANUAL B

LESSON MANUAL B SKILL EVALUATION	RATING
(1) Lateral Movement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does player completely cross front foot over back foot? is weight on front half of skates? does player keep shoulders square? can player perform movement in both directions? 	
(2) Front Start (Acceleration): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> does player turn skates to make "V" and lean forward to initiate the start? do skate blades on initial strides open to 70-80 degrees? does player use partial leg extension (running action for the first 5-6 strides)? are skates low to the ice for quick recovery? is player in full stride after six strides? 	
(3) Two-Foot Stop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is player using both blades? (i.e., inside edge of front skate and outside edge of back skate?) does player's body turn at 90 degrees to direction of motion? 	
(4) Crossover Pumping: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is player making a complete crossover of the outside skate over the inside skate? is player getting full extension of both legs while completing the stride? 	
(5) Backward V-Stop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are feet shoulder width apart? do toes turn out, heels in, and knees bend to begin stop? does body lean forward, as player digs in with inside edges? when stop is completed, does player end up in basic stance? 	

LESSON MANUAL B SKILL EVALUATION	RATING
(6) Forward to Backwards Pivot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is player able to make a 180 degree turn towards the left and a 180 degree turn towards the right? 	
(7) Backwards to Forward Pivot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is player able to make a 180 degree turn towards the left and a 180 degree turn towards the right? 	
(8) Tight Turn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is player making a definite body lean into the turn? does player exert pressure on inside edge of follow foot and outside edge of lead foot? is player rocking back on the skates, causing sufficient pressure to cut the ice? 	
(9) Use of Feet to Control Puck: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> can player use inside edges (not toe of blades) to control puck for width of ice? 	
(10) Lead Pass to Moving Target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> from a stationary position, can the player properly lead a moving pass receiver to complete a 12 foot pass two out of three times? 	
(11) Forehand and Backhand Sweep Shot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is stick gripped correctly? does player bring puck beyond plane of the body? is weight transferred? are wrists being used properly upon release? 	



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

LESSON MANUAL C

LESSON MANUAL C SKILL EVALUATION	RATING	LESSON MANUAL C SKILL EVALUATION	RATING
(1) Crossover Start (Forward): — does player get short powerful push from each blade? — does player maintain balance after crossing leg? — does player get good second push? — can player perform movement to both sides?		(6) Stopping with Puck (Forward Skating): — does player cup blade over puck as stop is initiated? — is puck kept close to body? — can player perform this stop on forehand and backhand?	
(2) Tight Turn: — does player maintain good balance throughout the turn? — are skates close together on the ice, using both edges? — is turn done on a tight radius? — can player perform tight turn to both sides?		(7) Stationary Flip Pass: — can player make a forehand flip pass over a low obstacle? — does puck have spinning action in flight? — does player follow through towards target?	
(3) Backward Stop (One Foot): — is player using inside edge of back skate to brake? — does player maintain balance and go into ready stance for T-push? — is player able to stop to either side?		(8) Backhand Reception and Pass (Stationary): — does player cushion pass on impact? — does player maintain balance and control of the puck? — is backhand pass delivered without setting up?	
(4) Pivot (Forward to Backward): — does player lead with head and shoulders? — is balance maintained on gliding skate during pivot? — is player ready to stride after pivot completed? — can player do this pivot to both sides?		(9) Puckhandling: — is player able to control puck on forehand and backhand? — can player carry puck skating in different directions? — does player keep head up?	
(5) Pivot (Backward to Forward): — does player maintain balance as one skate is lifted and rotated? — does player push off gliding leg as skate is planted? — can player do this pivot to both sides?		(10) Sweep Shot While Moving: — does player transfer weight from back to front skate? — is balance maintained after the shot? — can player do both forehand and backhand shots?	
		(11) Partner Passing While Moving: — does player receive and pass with backhand when puck comes that way? — does player lead partner with pass?	



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

LESSON MANUAL D

LESSON MANUAL D SKILL EVALUATION	RATING	LESSON MANUAL D SKILL EVALUATION	RATING
(1) Forward Crossover Start: — player is facing sideways to intended direction, skates slightly closer together than in basic stance — does player use inside edge of outside leg? — does player use outside edge of inside leg? — are first 3-4 strides short, then lengthened? — do head and shoulders rotate in direction of movement? — can player do to both sides?		(5) Faking: — can player perform a change of pace fake? — can player fake with his head and shoulders?	
(2) Front Foot Stop: — is body weight on front leg? — is player using inside edge of front skate? — is back leg slightly off the ice?		(6) Flip Shot: — does player tilt blade so that only bottom edge of blade contacts the puck? — is follow through high with a snapping of the wrists? — does player keep puck in front of front skate?	
(3) Lateral Movement: — does player start from basic stance? — does player's body move at right angles to the direction of movement? — can player do in both directions?		(7) Pass Receiving in Skates: — does player keep skate at a right angle to the direction of the puck's path?	
(4) Backward Crossover Start: — is head up looking at an imagined opponent? — does player get extension with both legs, using both inside and outside edges?		(8) Reverse Pivots: — does player lead with rotation of shoulders? — can player do in both directions?	
		(9) Two Foot Parallel Backward Stop: — is turn initiated by rotating head and shoulders? — does player put weight on front part of skates? — are knees flexed?	
		(10) Backhand Flip Shot: — does player start with puck in front of body? — is blade tilted so that only the bottom edge contacts the puck? — does player use high follow through?	




















SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

APPENDIX 2 – REFERENCES

1. National Coaching Certification Program Level 1 Coaching Theory Manual.
2. National Coaching Certification Program Level 2 Coaching Theory Manual.
3. “Volleyball Development Model” by Lorne Sawula and Terry Valeriote in cooperation with the CVA and the CAC.
4. National Coaching Certification Program Coach Level Manual – Designing a Safety Program – Hockey Canada.
5. National Coaching Certification Program Curriculum Design Series.
6. Guidelines for the Training and Recognition of Fitness Leaders in Canada 1984.
7. Hockey Canada Model Program Brochure.
8. “Growth in Sport: A Handbook for Creating a Sport Development Perspective” Fitness and Amateur Sport 1984.

APPENDIX 3 – ICE DIAGRAM LEGEND

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

Chair 	Puck 	Passing 
Pylon 	Stop 	Shooting 
Hockey Stick 	Forward Skate 	Agility Board 
Player X	Backward Skate 	Jump Over 
Coach 	Puck Carrying 	Step Over 
Paint Spot 	Lateral Movement 	Group of Players 



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

APPENDIX 4 – STANDARDS OF PLAY AND RULES EMPHASIS

Through the standard of rules enforcement, our game will continue to allow the opportunity for improved skill development and a more positive hockey environment for all participants. The mission of USA Hockey is clear; through this initiative a greater emphasis will be placed on skating, puck possession and the proper use of the body to establish position and a competitive advantage.

The goal of the enforcement standard is to reduce restraining infractions in the game and not to remove legal body checking or body contact. A hard body check or using body contact/position (non-checking classifications) to gain a competitive advantage over the opponent should not be penalized as long as it is performed within the rules.

The principles of this enforcement standard include the following:

- The use of the stick will be limited to only playing the puck.
- The stick will not be allowed to in any way impede a player’s progress.
- The use of a free hand/arm will not be allowed to grab or impede a player’s progress.
- Players who use their physical skills and/or anticipation and have a positional advantage shall not lose that advantage as a result of illegal acts by the opponent.
- Players will be held accountable for acts of an intimidating or dangerous nature.

Enforcement Standard – These penalties are to be called with very strict enforcement

HOOKING

- A player cannot use his/her stick against an opponent’s body (puck carrier or non-puck carrier) to gain a positional advantage. Examples include:
 - tugs or pulls on the body, arms or hands of the opponent which allows for the space between the players to diminish
 - placing the stick in front of the opponent’s body and locking on – impeding the opponent’s progress or causing a loss of balance.
 - stick on the hand/arm that takes away the ability for the opponent to pass or shoot the puck with a normal amount of force

TRIPPING

- A player cannot use his/her stick on the legs or feet of an opponent in a manner that would cause a loss of balance or for them to trip or fall. Examples include:
 - placing the stick in front of the opponents legs for the purpose of impeding progress, even if on the ice, with no effort to legally play the puck
 - placing the stick between the legs of the opponent (can opener/corkscrew) that causes a loss of balance or impedes the progress of the opponent.



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

HOLDING

- A player cannot wrap his/her arms around an opponent or use a free hand to clutch, grab or hold the stick, jersey or body on the opponent in a manner that impedes their progress. Examples include:
 - wrapping one or both arms around the opponent along the boards in a manner that pins them against the boards and prevents them from playing the puck or skating
 - grabbing the opponent's body, stick or sweater with one or both hands
 - using a free arm/hand to restrain or impede the opponent's progress

INTERFERENCE

- The use of the body ("pick" or "block") to impede the progress of an opponent with no effort to play the puck, maintain normal foot speed or established skating lane. Examples include:
 - intentionally playing the body of an opponent who does not have possession or possession and control of the puck.
 - using the body to establish a "pick" or "block" that prevents an opponent from being able to chase a puck carrier
 - reducing foot speed or changing an established skating lane for the purpose of impeding an opponent from being able to chase a puck carrier
- **Allowed Actions**
 - a player is entitled to the ice he/she occupies as long as they are able to maintain their own foot speed and body position between opponent and puck
 - players are allowed to compete for body position using their strength and balance in front of the goal or along the boards.

SLASHING

- The use of the stick will be limited to only playing the puck. Any stick contact, as a result of a slashing motion, to the hands/ arms or body of the opponent will be strictly penalized. In addition, hard slashes to the upper portion of the stick (just below the hands) of an opponent, with no attempt to legally play the puck, shall also be penalized.

OTHER INFRACTIONS

- In addition to the above mentioned enforcement standards, all other infractions, including contact to the head, checking from behind, cross checking, high sticking and roughing (including late avoidable check) shall be penalized to a strict enforcement standard.

CONCLUSION

All members of USA Hockey share an equal responsibility to ensure the integrity of the game is upheld. The onus to incorporate change is not only on the officials, but also on administrators, coaches, parents and players, as well.

Administrators are expected to hold players, coaches, officials and parents accountable for their actions in an effort to promote a safe and positive environment for all participants.



SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Coaches are expected to teach proper skills and hold their players accountable for illegal and dangerous actions, regardless as to whether they are properly penalized, or not.

Parents are expected to support the decisions of the officials and support the coaches in teaching the proper skills in a safe and positive environment.

Officials shall enforce a strict penalty standard according to the guidelines that have been established.

Players are expected to compete within the playing rules.

All USA Hockey members must demonstrate awareness and support for the application, spirit and the respect of the rules in order for continued improvement in the game of hockey.



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