

Stickhandling

Key Points:

- Hand position – using the arm of your normal top hand of the stick - hold the top 'butt' end of the stick at that elbow and where the hand on that arm ends up at on the stick is where you put your lower arm. So it is length of elbow to hand (forearm) on one arm to that should be the approximate distance between hands.
- Proper stance – head up, chest up – do NOT lean over, knees bent, shoulder width apart
- Rolling wrists and full 'loose' arm movement – do not have cement hands or be hand cuffed in moving the puck. Get the hands outside the body – on power turns on your forehand the top hand should be able to 'push through' and to the other side of your body.
- Eyes up – to get used to keeping your head up stare a few feet in front of the puck that way using their peripheral vision they can see players coming at them as well as see the puck. Eventually this needs to move into keeping the head up and feeling the puck.
- Once having proper hand placement, wrist movement and head up vary the movement – short side movement (on both sides), long movement side to side hands away from body, then on left side front to back, then right side, pull through legs, toe drag, figure 8 through legs, etc.
- Advanced – creating movement with upper body separate from lower body – legs skating and moving, turning, etc. and upper body and hands/arms moving in any direction – dekes/fakes, head and upper body movement, freezing/pausing to mislead defender.

Passing

Giving a Pass - Key Points:

- Should not be facing their teammate – front shoulder (shoulder to shoulder straight line to target) should point in direction of pass to other player. Baseball players don't face the pitcher when hitting!!
- You must look up at your target see where the blade of the stick is of your teammate, how fast are they moving and in what direction will they be by the time the pass will reach them!
- By having the proper form is key and the intended pass can at any time become a shot.
- Always pull the puck back behind rear leg, roll wrists and cup the puck or it will be off your stick and no control. Lower hand will slide up and down on the stick through the movement of the pass.
- Just like a shot when you pull the puck back, your weight is on back leg and as you move through the pass you shift your weight and this is where much of your power will come from not arm strength.
- Follow through and point at your target.
- Do NOT slap at puck
- Do NOT pass if the puck is in front of you of your legs, the puck must be pulled back to get any strength or control of your pass.
- Do NOT stretch the puck too far back or too far away from your body or you have lost control and strength.
- Same with backhand passing the strength comes from pulling it back and it is even more important in cupping puck as the blade is curved in the opposite direction!
- Advanced – raising puck to a desired height to hit any target through traffic. Saucer pass being able to keep the puck flat in raising in the air to keep a flat target for the recipient.

- As someone is coming at you it is critical for you to look past that player at options for the pass – especially in older levels when checking is in play be prepared for a check, but look past them to make the pass.

Receiving a Pass Key Points:

- Eyes up watching the puck, stick on the ice providing a target – move to open space – communicate (verbal and non-verbal) to let the passer know your intentions & direction when moving- don't slap stick.
- Same principles as giving a pass keep stick & hands out in front of the body as target and cushion (allow stick to flow freely back) to accept the pass. Still maintain firm pressure so the puck does not fly off the blade, but flexible enough to cushion the pass all the way back behind the rear leg – by doing this you are immediately in a position to make another pass or shoot.
- Get in the habit of once the puck is on your stick and you feel it get your eyes up to see what is around you.
- Key for any player before receiving a pass is to scan the ice around you to know your next option of what to do with the puck after receipt of that pass.

Shooting

Key Points – Wrist shot:

- Stance – head up, chest up, legs shoulder width or slightly wider, knees bent. Just like passing front shoulder pointing to target. Baseball players don't face the pitcher when hitting!!
- Hand position – like passing, the arms may start out at about 'forearm' length, but in shooting the lower hand may slide/move on stick.
- Look up and try to keep eyes up so you see the target, see where the goalie is or where he may be moving, open parts of the net or open spaces in pads under their arms, etc.
- Puck movement – same as pass for wrist shot pulling the puck back behind rear leg and cupping puck
- Transfer weight to rear leg when pulling puck back and shifting weight to front as puck moves through the travel to releasing the shot.
- Through the release of the wrist shot your wrists will be rolling through and to keep it low roll them through and over - Follow through with shot and point at target - aim low you will shoot low.
- You must have firm pressure on the stick to increase the flex and 'snap' produced by the sticks (especially composites). **Push down on lower hand while 'pulling' top hand back while blade pressure is maintained (stick is flexing) produces that power.**

Key Points Backhand:

- Same principles as wrist shot above and backhand pass
- Keys are to pull that puck behind you, cup it and the release and pressure is now the pulling of the lower hand and 'pushing' of top hand and a clean release following through with pointing at your target.