



U8 INDIVIDUAL HOCKEY SKILLS

Players must learn and master:

1. Skating

- a. Ready position
- b. Edge control
- c. Forward state
- d. Forward stride
- e. Controlled stop: two-foot and one-foot snowplow
- f. Controlled turn
- g. Forward crossover
- h. Backward skating
- i. Backward stop
- j. ABC's of skating
 - i. Agility, balance, coordination and speed drills

2. Puck Control

- a. Lateral (side-to-side) stickhandling
- b. Front-to-back stickhandling
- c. Diagonal stickhandling
- d. Attacking the triangle

3. Passing and Receiving

- a. Forehand pass
- b. Backhand pass
- c. Receiving a pass properly with the stick

4. Shooting

- a. Wrist shot
- b. Backhand shot

5. Body Contact

- a. Stick on puck
- b. Stick lift

6. Goaltending

At this level, coaches should not designate full-time goaltenders so that players may begin the development of skills that will help improve their long-term skating and athleticism. These are crucial for goaltenders as they progress to higher age levels.

Players should learn and understand:

- 1. Puck Pursuit**
 - a. Players should pursue the puck aggressively and engage in battles to gain possession of the puck
- 2. Puck Support**
 - a. Players should learn to make themselves available for a pass whether they are close to the puck or further away.
 - i. This is the beginning of near- and far-support concepts, as well as creating and finding passing lanes.

NUTRITION

Players should be introduced to:

- 1. Proper hydration**
 - a. Players should learn the importance of proper hydration before, during and after all games and practices
- 2. Good eating habits**
 - a. Players should be encouraged to eat good meals and refrain from eating candy and other foods that lack nutritional value
- 3. Recovery drink**
 - a. While there are many recovery drinks on the market, players should be encouraged to drink chocolate milk following any practice or game session

OFF-ICE ACTIVITIES

Players should perform exercises and play games that improve their agility, balance, coordination and speed (ABC's).

For off-ice activities and exercises, coaches should utilize the 6-and-under/8-and-under Off-Ice Training Cards that are available through USA Hockey and are on the Mobile Coach App.

Exercise and activities should include:

1. Stretching/flexibility exercises
2. Fun games
3. Relays
4. Eye-hand coordination exercises
5. Exercises related to improving the ABC's