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Presented by
EASTON

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MIKE CURTI

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WHETHER YOU'RE A PLAYER OR COACH, CHECK OUT THESE TIPS AND DRILLS FOR BOTH ICE AND INLINE HOCKEY.

WORKING ON THE WRIST AND BACKHAND SHOT

The ability to shoot quickly and accurately is one of the most important skills in the game. Accuracy is the key. A hard shot and quick release don't mean much if the shot is not on net.

The Wrist Shot



- **Form:** Players must execute shots using the key elements of correct technique if they are to develop the speed, consistency and accuracy needed to be an effective shooter.
- **Accuracy:** If the shot is not on net, there is virtually no chance of scoring. Developing accuracy takes a great deal of concentration and practice.
- **Quickness:** Time spent handling the puck provides the opposing players with the time needed to position themselves for strong defense. When the situation dictates, players must be able to shoot the puck quickly.
- **Variety:** Shooting situations within the game vary greatly. The skillful player must, therefore, have a variety of shots that match the opportunities that develop. The amount of time a player has, the location and defensive player positioning require that different shots (or variations of the same shot) be used.

Forehand Shot

Key Elements



- Hold your hands about 12 to 15 inches apart.
- Begin with the puck at the side of your body and slightly behind your back foot.
- Keep the blade of your stick cupped over the puck.
- Shift your weight from your back foot to your front foot as you slide the puck forward.
- Start the puck near the heel of the blade. As you bring it forward, it slides up the blade of the stick and is released near the toe of the blade.
- Your follow through will dictate the height and accuracy of the shot.

Suggestions for Coaches

- Have your players practice the sweeping movement, following through to an imaginary target. Have them practice shifting their weight from the back to the front foot.
- For young players, have them practice the proper technique using lighter pucks that are properly suited to their strength.
- Remember that success goes a long way to developing confidence. Learning to get off a crisp, accurate wrist shot using lighter pucks will help in the development of younger players.



Backhand Shot

The backhand shot is one of the most difficult shots to perform. It's also one of the most difficult shots to stop because a goalie has trouble reading where it's going to go. Like the wrist shot, it's important to generate speed of the stick blade.

Key elements

- Hold your hands approximately 12 to 15 inches apart.
- Like the wrist shot, a backhand shot begins with the puck at the side of the body and behind the back foot.

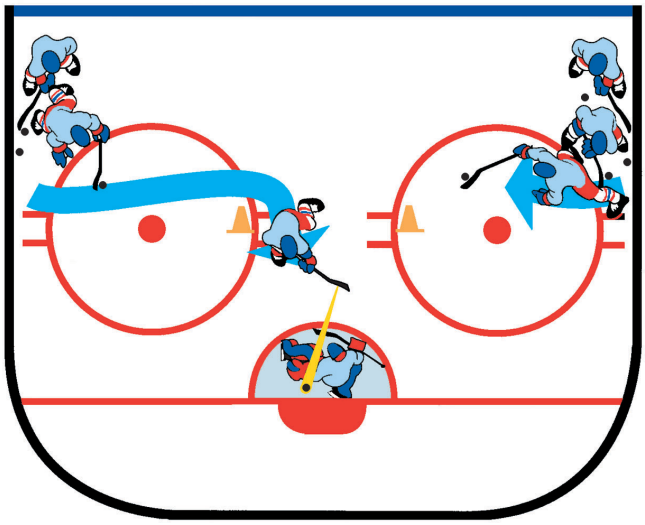




- The blade of the stick is cupped over the puck.
- Shift your weight from your back foot to your front foot as the puck is brought forward.
- The follow-through will dictate the height and accuracy of the shot.

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ON-ICE DRILLS



Beginner
Stand about 10 feet from the boards with a puck and practice shooting. The puck should come right back to you if you're properly following through on your shot. If the puck rebounds off at an angle, you need to point your stick at an imaginary target and follow through.

Intermediate
Line up two groups of players along the boards at the hash marks of the face-off circles. Place a pylon at the hash marks on the inside of the face-off circles. On the coach's whistle, the first player skates around the pylon with a puck and takes a shot on goal. Alternate sides so you can practice both forehand and backhand shots.

Advanced
Play "Around the World" with a couple of teammates. Standing out near the hash marks, the first player aims for the left post. If he hits it, he goes for the crossbar and then the right post. If he misses it, the next player goes. Once a player hits the two posts and crossbar, he has to reverse the direction, hitting the right post (again), crossbar and left post. The first player to go "Around the World" wins. For a more challenging game, move to the top of the face-off circle, or use slap shots, snap shots or backhand shots.

OFF-ICE DRILLS



Backyard Practice Range
String a piece of rope between two trees and drape a heavy blanket over it. Then make a goal using some tape. You can also place smaller circles or squares to show the four corners and five-hole. Put down a piece of Plexiglas or plywood to shoot pucks off of. If you don't have two trees, hang a tire from one tree and try to shoot through the middle.

Resistance Drill
Another great way to improve the strength of your shot is to use some resistance on your stick. You can put some weights on the bottom of the shaft of your stick, down near the blade, or you can attach one end of a large rubber band to the end of your stick and the other to a tree or other stationary object. Practice a shooting motion. The resistance will help you get more power behind your shot. But don't forget about accuracy.

Seated Push/Pull Shooting
- A player is seated on a chair or platform so that his or her legs are eliminated from shooting motion. This isolates the push/wrist snap and roll of the lower hand with the pull of the upper hand.
- Pucks are placed off to the side of the platform, with the player seated facing the target.
- An intense push/pull shooting motion is performed, emphasizing hands/wrists/forearms and accuracy of shooting.