

Special Olympics Coaching Guide

FLOOR HOCKEY



Special Olympics





Special Olympics

FLOOR HOCKEY COACHING GUIDE



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Advancing the public well-being through improved communication

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Special Olympics welcomes your ideas and comments for future revisions of this guide. We apologize if, for any reason, an acknowledgement has been inadvertently omitted.

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Planning a Floor Hockey Training & Competition Season



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Goals

Realistic yet challenging goals for each athlete are important to the motivation of the athlete both at training and during competition. Goals establish and drive the action of both training and competition plans. Sport confidence in athletes helps to make participation fun and is critical to the athlete's motivation. Please see the Principles of Coaching section for additional information and exercises on goal setting.

Benefits of Goal Setting

- Increases athlete's level of physical fitness
- Teaches self-discipline
- Teaches the athlete sports skills that are essential to a variety of other activities
- Provides the athlete with a means for self-expression and social interaction

Goal Setting and Motivation

Developing Self-Confidence through Goal Setting

Accomplishing goals at practice through repetition in settings similar to the competition environment will instill confidence. Setting goals is a joint effort between athletes and coaches. The main features of goal setting include:

1. Goals must be structured as short-term, intermediate and long-term.
2. Goals should be viewed as stepping stones to success.
3. Goals must be accepted by the athlete.
4. Goals should vary in difficulty — from easily attainable to challenging.
5. Goals must be measurable.
6. Goals should be used to establish the athlete's training and competition plan.

Athletes with or without an intellectual disability may be more motivated by accomplishing short-term goals than long-term goals; however, do not be afraid to challenge athletes. Include athletes in setting their personal goals. For example, ask the athlete, "How many goals do you want to score today? Let's see how many goals you scored at the last practice. What is your personal best? What do you think you can do?" Awareness of why the athlete is participating is also important when setting goals. There are participation factors which may influence motivation and goal setting:

- Age appropriateness
- Ability level
- Readiness level
- Athlete performance
- Family influence
- Peer influence
- Athlete preference

Performance Goals versus Outcome Goals

Effective goals focus on performance, not outcome. Performance is what the athlete controls. Outcomes are frequently controlled by others. An athlete may have an outstanding performance and not win a contest because other athletes have performed even better. Conversely, an athlete may perform poorly and still win if all other athletes perform at a lower level. If an athlete's goal is to score 2 goals in a competition, the athlete has greater control in achieving this goal than winning. This performance goal ultimately gives the athlete more control over his/her performance.



Motivation through Goal Setting

Goal setting has proved to be one of the most simple and effective motivational devices developed for sport within the past three decades. While the concept is not new, today the techniques for effective goal setting have been refined and clarified. Motivation is all about having needs and striving to have those needs met. How can you enhance an athlete's motivation?

1. Provide more time and attention to an athlete when he/she is having difficulty learning a skill
2. Reward small gains of achievement in skill level
3. Develop other measures of achievement outside of winning
4. Show your athletes that they are important to you
5. Show your athletes that you are proud of them and excited about what they are doing
6. Fill your athletes with self-worth

Goals give direction. They tell us what needs to be accomplished. They increase effort, persistence and the quality of performance. Establishing goals also requires that the athlete and coach determine techniques for how to achieve those goals.

Measurable and Specific

Effective goals are very specific and measurable. Goals stated in the form of "I want to be the best that I can be!" or "I want to improve my performance!" are vague and difficult to measure. It is positive sounding but difficult, if not impossible, to assess whether they have been reached. Measurable goals must establish a baseline of performance recorded during the past one or two weeks for them to be realistic.

Difficult, but Realistic

Effective goals are perceived as challenging, not threatening. A challenging goal is one perceived as difficult but attainable within a reasonable amount of time and with a reasonable amount of effort or ability. A threatening goal is one perceived as being beyond one's current capacity. Realistic implies that judgment is involved. Goals based upon a baseline of performance recorded during the past one or two weeks are likely to be realistic.

Long- versus Short-Term Goals

Both long- and short-term goals provide direction, but short-term goals appear to have the greatest motivational effects. Short-term goals are more readily attainable and are stepping stones to more distant long-term goals. Unrealistic short-term goals are easier to recognize than unrealistic long-term goals. Once they are identified, unrealistic goals can then be modified before valuable practice time has been lost.

Positive versus Negative Goal Setting

Positive goals direct what to do rather than what not to do, whereas negative goals direct our attention too heavily to the errors we wish to avoid or eliminate. Positive goals also require coaches and athletes to decide how they will reach those specific goals. Once the goal is decided upon, the athlete and coach must determine specific strategies and techniques which allow that goal to be successfully attained.

Set Priorities

Effective goals are limited in number and meaningful to the athlete. Setting a limited number of goals requires that athletes and coaches decide what is important and fundamental for continued development. Establishing a few carefully selected goals also allows athletes and coaches to keep accurate records without becoming overwhelmed with record keeping.

Mutual Goal Setting

Goal setting becomes an effective motivational device when athletes are committed to achieving those goals. When goals are imposed or established without significant input from the athletes, motivation is unlikely to be enhanced.



Set Specific Time Lines

Target dates provide urgency to an athlete's efforts. Specific target dates tend to eliminate wishful thinking and clarify which goals are realistic and which are not. Time lines are especially valuable in high-risk sports where fear often promotes procrastination in learning new skills.

Formal versus Informal Goal Setting

Some coaches and athletes think that goals must be set in formal meetings outside of practice and require long periods of thoughtful evaluation before they are decided upon. Goals are literally progressions that coaches have been using for years but are now expressed in measurable performance terms rather than as vague, generalized outcomes.

Team versus Individual Goals

While team goals appear to have great importance for team sports, the reality is that most team goals can be broken down into individual roles or responsibilities. Each player must achieve these individual roles or responsibilities for the team to function effectively.

Goal Setting Domains

When asked to set goals, athletes typically focus on the learning of new skills or performances in competitions. A major role of the coach is to broaden the athlete's perception of those areas, and goal setting can be an effective tool. Goals can be set to enhance fitness, improve attendance, increase intensity, promote sportsmanship, develop team spirit, find more free time or establish consistency.

Goal Setting Summary

Setting goals is a joint effort between the athlete and coach. Following are the main features of goal setting:

Structured into short-term and long-term

- ♦ Stepping stones to success
- ♦ Must be accepted by the athlete
- ♦ Vary in difficulty from easily attainable to challenging
- ♦ Must be measurable

Short-Term Objective

- ♦ Learning floor hockey in a fun environment

Long-Term Goal

The athlete will acquire basic floor hockey skills, appropriate social behavior and functional knowledge of the rules necessary to participate successfully in floor hockey competitions.



Assessing Goals Checklist

1. Write a goal statement.
2. Does the goal sufficiently meet the athlete's needs?
3. Is the goal positively stated?
4. Is the goal under the athlete's control?
5. Is the goal a goal and not a result?
6. Is the goal important enough to the athlete that he/she will want to work toward achieving it?
7. What barriers might the athlete encounter in working toward this goal?
8. What does the athlete need to learn?
9. What risks does the athlete need to take?



Planning a Floor Hockey Season

There will be many different skills to teach players during the course of a season. A season-long training plan will help coaches present skills in a systematic and effective way. The sessions in the plan below are organized in a twice-a-week format. Make time at each practice to work individually with your goalkeepers for 10-15 minutes. If you do not have an assistant coach, you may have to do this before or after the practice session.

| Basic Practice | |
|---|--|
| Athletes put equipment on Warm-ups Drill 1 Water break Drill 2/scrimmage Cool-downs Athletes put equipment away | |
| Preseason | |
| Week #1 | Athlete/parent meeting Drill 1: Use the Individual Skills contest to assess your athletes Drill 2/scrimmage: Finish Individual Skills contest assessment |
| Week #2 | Drill 1: Passing and Receiving Drill 2/scrimmage: Dodge Puck |
| Competition Season | |
| Week #3 | Drill 1: Stick Checking and Face-offs Drill 2/scrimmage: Two on Two Drill |
| Week #4 | Drill 1: Red Light, Green Light & Steal the Bacon Drill 2/scrimmage: Shoot Around the Goal |
| Week #5 | Drill 1: Assess athletes: play a mini game, playing all athletes Drill 2/scrimmage: Using assessment, repeat a previous practice drill to reinforce a skill team needs to work on |
| Week #6 | Drill 1: Screening Drill Drill 2/scrimmage: Give and Go Drill |
| Week #7 | Drill 1: Triangle Drill Drill 2/scrimmage: Play a full game |
| Week #8 | Drill 1: Four Corner Drill Drill 2/scrimmage: Play a full game |



Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide Planning a Floor Hockey Training and Competition Season

Confirmation of a Floor Hockey Season Schedule

Once your venue has been determined and assessed, you are now ready to confirm your training and competition schedules. It is important to publish training and competition schedules to submit to the interested groups below. This can help generate community awareness for your Special Olympics Floor Hockey Program.

- Facility Representatives
- Local Special Olympics Program
- Volunteer Coaches
- Athletes
- Families

The training and competition schedule should contain the following information:

- Training dates
- Training start and end times
- Training location
- Competition dates
- Competition start and end times
- Competition location
- Contact name and phone numbers



Essential Components of a Floor Hockey Training Session

Special Olympics athletes respond well to a simple, well-structured training routine with which they can become familiar. An organized plan, prepared before you get to the facility, will help establish such a routine and help make the best use of your limited time. A basic training plan is outlined below.

Warming Up

- Every athlete warms up.
- Stretch each muscle group.
- Have athletes lead the stretching while coaches assist individual athletes when necessary.

Skills Instruction

- Quickly review previously taught skills.
- Introduce the theme of the skills activity.
- Demonstrate skills simply and with enthusiasm.
- Divide into smaller groups, if possible.
- Physically assist and prompt lower ability athletes when necessary.
- Introduce and practice new skills early in the training session.

Competition Experience

- Athletes learn a lot by simply playing the game.
- Use drills (i.e. One on One / Three on Two) to teach basic skills.
- Use scrimmages to teach game mechanics and teamwork.
- Try to end the training with a fun competitive activity.

Cooling Down

- Slow run/walk/stretch.
- As the athletes cool down, comment on the session and the next training session and/or competition.
- Finish with a team cheer.



Considerations for Training

- When designing trainings, exercises and drills, consider the strengths and weaknesses of each athlete and your team as a whole. Choose activities that allow your athletes to improve.
- Make trainings fun. Design trainings that hold the athletes' attention. Use exercises and drills that your athletes enjoy. Use these exercises to lighten the load of hard work and to establish positive team attitude. When practicing drills, do enough to improve technique, yet not so much as to bore your athletes.
- Keep your talking to a minimum. Short, concise instructions are better than long explanations.
- Be willing to create or adapt drills to meet unique needs of your team. Skilled athletes master drills fairly quickly, so add some new twists to challenge these athletes.
- As you introduce new skills and techniques, you also need to review fundamental ones. Drills are a good way to improve your athletes' skills.
- Introduce new skills early in the training session, when athletes are fresh and attentive. Practice new skills for several sessions before incorporating them into more complex drills and game scenarios.
- Use drills and scrimmages that encourage communication and teamwork among athletes.
- Above all, be organized.



Preparing for a Training Session

Your Training Plan

Training is where you teach, make mistakes, gain fitness, practice game strategy and tactics and prepare for the next competition. A successful training plan creates an environment that helps you accomplish your goals. With your goals in mind, design your trainings specifically to fulfill those goals. Be sure to determine the time needed for each phase of training. However, be willing to make time adjustments, depending on specific circumstances.

Equipment Setup

Before each training session begins, determine the sequence of drills and where you will set up equipment. When possible, set up your facility and equipment before the start of training. You can also designate exercise captains to help organize players for drills, creating leaders within the team.



Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide
Planning a Floor Hockey Training and Competition Season

Sample Training Plan Form

| | | | | | |
|---------------|--|------------------|--|--------------|--|
| Date: | | Location: | | Time: | |
| Goals: | | | | | |

Warm-Up - Make the body ready for training.

| Leader | Activity | Equipment |
|--------|----------|-----------|
| | | |

Team Talk - Let the athletes know your expectations for training.

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Goals for Today | |
| Previous Skill Lesson | |
| New Skill Lesson | |

Skill Development - Games and exercises to reinforce learning. Make it fun.

| Leader | Activity | Equipment |
|--------|----------|-----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Break - Supply water and take the skill into the scrimmage.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Reinforce Skill from Today | |
|-----------------------------------|--|

Scrimmage - Emphasize last week's skill and new skill.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Previous Skill | |
| New Skill | |

Team Talk - Emphasize new skill and techniques from scrimmage.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Scrimmage Lesson 1 | |
| Scrimmage Lesson 2 | |
| Review Last Week's Skill | |

Cool-Down - Cool the body down after training.

| Leader | Activity | Equipment |
|--------|----------|-----------|
| | | |

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Tips for Conducting Successful Training Sessions

- Assign assistant coaches their roles and responsibilities in accordance with your training plan.
- When possible, have all equipment and stations prepared before the athletes arrive.
- Introduce and acknowledge coaches and athletes.
- Review intended program with everyone. Keep athletes informed of changes in schedule or activities.
- Alter the plan according to weather or changes in the facility, and to accommodate the needs of the athletes.
- Change activities before the athletes become bored and lose interest.
- Keep drills and activities brief to hold athletes' attention.
- Devote the end of the training to a group activity that can incorporate challenge and fun, always giving the athletes something to look forward to at the end of training.
- If an activity is going well, it is often useful to stop the activity while interest is high.
- Summarize the session and announce arrangements for next session.
- Keep the **fun** in fundamentals.



Tips for Conducting Safe Training Sessions

Though the risks can be few, coaches have a responsibility to ensure that athletes know, understand and appreciate the risks of floor hockey. The safety and well-being of athletes are the coaches' primary concerns. Floor hockey is typically not a dangerous sport, but injuries do occur. It is the head coach's responsibility to minimize the occurrence of injuries by providing safe conditions.

1. Establish clear rules for behavior at your first training and enforce them.
 - Keep your hands and sticks to yourself.
 - Listen to the coach.
 - When you hear the whistle, "Stop, look, and listen."
 - Ask the coach before you leave the court/facility.
2. When the weather is poor, have a plan to immediately remove athletes from a training facility in inclement weather.
3. Encourage the athletes to bring water to each training session.
4. Keep a fully stocked first-aid kit with equipment; restock supplies as necessary.
5. Train all athletes and coaches on emergency procedures.
6. Review your first aid and emergency procedures. It is recommended to have someone who is trained in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on or very near to the facility during trainings and games.
7. Check the facility and remove unsafe objects. Be particularly vigilant when you are playing in cluttered indoor gyms. Remove anything that an athlete might run into.
8. Warm up and stretch properly at the beginning of each training to prevent muscle injuries. Cool down at the end of each training session.
9. Train to improve the general fitness level of your athletes. Physically fit athletes are less likely to get injured. Make your trainings active.
10. Make sure that athletes are of equal ability in games where they play against each other head-to-head (e.g., one-on-one drills).
11. Require all your athletes to wear mandatory equipment. The use of athletic supporters and fitted mouth guards is recommended.



Selecting Team Members

The key to the successful development of a traditional Special Olympics or Special Olympics Unified Sports® team is the proper selection of team members. We have provided some primary considerations below.

Ability Grouping

Traditional or Unified Sports Floor Hockey teams work best when all team members have similar sports skills. Floor hockey teams should be composed of athletes with similar skills and abilities. Athletes or Unified Sports partners with abilities that are far superior to other teammates will control competition. In both situations, the goals of interaction and teamwork are diminished and a true competitive experience is not achieved.

Age Grouping

All team members should be closely matched in age when possible.

- Within 3-5 years of age for athletes 21 years of age and under.
- Within 10-15 years for athletes 22 years of age and over.

Creating Meaningful Involvement in Unified Sports

Unified Sports embraces the philosophy and principles of Special Olympics. Unified Sports teams are organized to provide meaningful involvement for both athletes and partners. Every teammate should play a role and have the opportunity to contribute to the team. Meaningful involvement also refers to the quality of interaction and competition within a Unified Sports team. Achieving meaningful involvement by all teammates on the team ensures a positive and rewarding experience for everyone.

Indicators of Meaningful Involvement

- Teammates compete without causing undue risk of injury to themselves or others.
- Teammates compete according to the rules of competition.
- Teammates have the ability and opportunity to contribute to the performance of the team.
- Teammates understand how to blend their skills with those of other athletes, resulting in improved performance by athletes with lesser ability.

Meaningful Involvement Is Not Achieved When Team Members

- Have superior sports skills in comparison to their fellow team members.
- Act as on-field coaches rather than teammates.
- Control most aspects of the competition during critical periods of the game.
- Do not train regularly and only show up on the day of competition.
- Lower their level of ability dramatically, so that they do not hurt others or control the entire game.



Special Olympics

FLOOR HOCKEY COACHING GUIDE

Teaching Floor Hockey Skills



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The Warm-Up

A warm-up period is the first part of every training session or preparation for competition. The warm-up starts slowly and gradually involves all muscles and body parts. In addition to preparing the athlete mentally, warming up also has several physiological benefits.

The importance of a warm-up prior to exercise cannot be overstressed. Warming up raises the body temperature and prepares the muscles, nervous system, tendons, ligaments and cardiovascular system for upcoming stretches and exercises. The chances of injury are greatly reduced by increasing muscle elasticity.

Warming Up:

- ♦ Raises body temperature
- ♦ Increases metabolic rate
- ♦ Increases heart and respiratory rate
- ♦ Prepares the muscles and nervous system for exercise

The warm-up is tailored for the activity to follow. Warm-ups consist of active motion leading up to more vigorous motion to elevate heart, respiratory and metabolic rates. The total warm-up period takes at least 25 minutes and immediately precedes the training or competition. A warm-up period will include the following basic sequence and components.

| Activity | Purpose | Time (minimum) |
|---|----------------------------|----------------|
| Slow aerobic walk/ jog/ fast walk/ run | Heat muscles | 3-5 minutes |
| Stretching | Increase range of movement | 5 minutes |

Aerobic Warm-Up

Activities such as walking, light jogging, walking while doing arm circles and/or jumping jacks.

Walking/ Jogging

Walking/ jogging is the first exercise of an athlete's routine. Athletes begin warming the muscles by walking quickly/ jogging for 3-5 minutes. This circulates the blood through all the muscles, thus providing them greater flexibility for stretching. The sole objective of the warm-up is to circulate the blood and warm the muscles in preparation for more strenuous activity.

Running

Running is the next exercise in an athlete's routine. Athletes begin warming the muscles by running slowly for 3-5 minutes. This circulates the blood through all the muscles, thus providing them greater flexibility for stretching. The run starts out slowly and then gradually increases in speed. The athlete however never reaches even 50 percent of maximum effort by the end of the run. Remember, the sole objective of this phase of the warm-up is circulating the blood and warming the muscles in preparation for more strenuous activity.

Stretching

Stretching is one of the most critical parts of the warm-up and an athlete's performance. A more flexible muscle is a stronger and healthier muscle. A stronger and healthier muscle responds better to exercise and activities and helps prevent injury. Please refer to the Stretching section for more in-depth information.



Stretching

Flexibility is critical to an athlete's optimal performance in both training and competition. Flexibility is achieved through stretching. Stretching follows an easy aerobic jog at the start of a training session or competition.

Begin with an easy stretch to the point of tension and hold this position for 15-30 seconds until the pull lessens. When the tension eases, slowly move further into the stretch until tension is again felt. Hold this new position for an additional 15 seconds. Each stretch should be repeated 4-5 times on each side of the body.

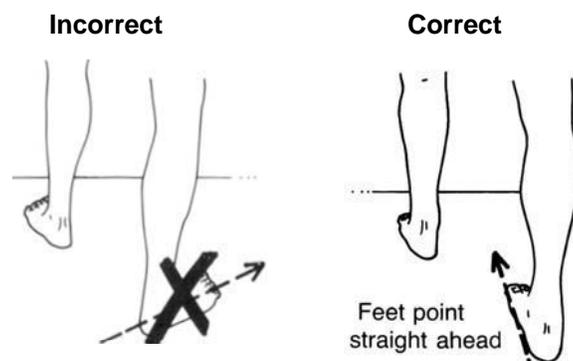
It is also important to continue to breathe while stretching. As you lean into the stretch, exhale. Once the stretching point is reached, keep inhaling and exhaling while holding the stretch. Stretching should be a part of everyone's daily life. Regular, daily stretching has been demonstrated to have the following effects:

1. Increase the length of the muscle-tendon unit
2. Increase joint range of motion
3. Reduce muscle tension
4. Develop body awareness
5. Promote increased circulation
6. Make you feel good

Some athletes, like those with Down Syndrome, may have low muscle tone that makes them appear more flexible. Be careful not to allow these athletes to stretch beyond a normal, safe range. Several stretches are **dangerous** to perform for all athletes and should never be part of a safe stretching program. These **unsafe stretches** include the following:

- Neck Backward Bending
- Trunk Backward Bending
- Spinal Roll

Stretching is effective only if the stretch is performed correctly. Coaches need to assist athletes in focusing on proper body positioning and alignment. Take the calf stretch, for example. Many athletes do not keep the feet forward, in the direction that they are running.





Another common mistake in stretching is bending the back in an attempt to get a better stretch from the hips. An example is a simple sitting forward leg stretch.

Incorrect



Correct



This guide will focus on some basic stretches for major muscle groups. Along the way, the guide will also identify some stretches that are floor hockey specific. The guide will start at the top of the body and work down the body to the legs and feet.



Upper Body

Chest Opener



Clasp hands behind back
Palms facing in
Push hands toward sky

Side Stretch



Raise arms over head
Clasp forearms
Bend to one side

Side Arm Stretch



Raise arms over head
Clasp hands, palms up
Push hands toward sky
If the athlete is unable to clasp the hands, a good stretch can still be achieved by pushing the hands to the sky

Trunk Twist



Stand with back to wall
Turn, reach palms to wall



Triceps Stretch



Raise both arms over head
Bend right arm, bring hand to back
Grasp elbow of bent arm and pull gently toward
the middle of the back
Repeat with other arm

Shoulder Stretch



Take elbow into hand
Pull to opposite shoulder
Arm may be straight or bent



Chest Stretch



Clasp hands behind neck
Push elbows back
Keep the back straight and tall



This is a simple stretch that the athletes may not feel when stretching. However, it opens up the chest and inner shoulder areas, preparing the chest and arms for the workout.

Neck Stretch



Roll the neck from shoulder to shoulder with chin touching body at all times

Do not perform full circles as they may hyperextend the neck

Tell athlete to roll neck to right, center and left. Never have the athlete roll neck backwards.



Low Back & Glutes

Crossed Ankle Stretch



Sit, legs outstretched, crossed at ankles
Reach extended arms in front of body

Groin Stretch



Sit, bottoms of feet touching
Hold feet/ankles
Bend forward from hips
Ensure that the athlete is pulling up in the lower back

Here, the athlete is correctly bringing his chest to his feet and not pulling his toes toward his body



Hip Rolls



Lie on back, arms outstretched
Bring knees to chest
Slowly drop knees to left (exhale)
Bring knees back to chest (inhale)
Slowly drop knees to right (exhale)

Work on keeping the knees together to get the full stretch through the buttocks

Supine Hamstring Stretch



Lie on back, legs outstretched
Bring legs to chest, alternating legs
Bring both legs to chest for a variation on the stretch

Downward Facing Dog



Kneel, hands directly under shoulders, knees under hips
Lift heels until standing on toes
Slowly lower heels to ground
Continue alternating up and down slowly



Drop heels to ground
Excellent stretch for the lower back

Alternate raising to toes on one leg, while keeping other foot flat on ground
Excellent stretch to prevent and help shin splints



Lower Body

Calf Stretch



Bend forward leg slightly
Bend ankle of back leg
Athlete may also stand facing a wall/fence

Calf Stretch w/Bent Knee



Bend both knees to ease strain

Hamstring Stretch



Legs straight out and together
Legs are not locked
Bend at hips, reach toward ankles
As flexibility increases, reach for feet
Push out through the heels, forcing toes to the sky

Seated Straddle Stretch



Legs straddled, bend at hips
Reach out toward the middle
Keep the back straight



Hurdle Stretch



Correct alignment of the lead leg is important in a hurdle stretch. The foot must be aligned in the forward direction of running.

- Bend knee, touch bottom of foot to opposite thigh
- Straight leg, toes are toward sky
- Push out through the heel, forcing toes to the sky
- Bend at hips in nice easy stretch, reaching toward the feet or ankles
- Bring chest to knee

Quad Stretch



- Stand with foot flat on ground
- Bend knee towards buttock while grasping ankle with hand
- Pull foot directly toward buttock
- Do not twist knee
- Stretch can be done standing alone or balancing with partner or fence/ wall



Forward Bend



Stand, arms outstretched overhead
Slowly bend at waist
Bring hands to ankle level without strain
Point toward feet



Stretching - Quick Reference Guidelines

Start Relaxed

Do not begin until athletes are relaxed and muscles are warm

Be Systematic

Start at the top of body and work your way down

Progress from General to Specific

Start general, then move into sport-specific exercises

Easy Stretching before Developmental

Make slow, progressive stretches

Do not bounce or jerk to stretch farther

Use Variety

Make it fun; use different exercises to work the same muscles

Breathe Naturally

Do not hold your breath; stay calm and relaxed

Allow for Individual Differences

Athletes will start and progress at different levels

Stretch Regularly

Always include time for warm-up and cool-down

Stretch at home as well



The Cool-Down

Even though the cool-down is as important as the warm-up, it is often ignored. Stopping an activity abruptly may cause pooling of the blood and slow the removal of waste products in the athlete's body. It may also cause cramps, soreness and other problems for Special Olympics athletes. The cool-down gradually reduces the body temperature and heart rate and speeds the recovery process before the next training session or competitive experience. The cool-down is also a good time for the coach and athlete to talk about the session or competition. Note that cool-down is also a good time to do stretching. Muscles are warm and receptive to stretching movements.

| Activity | Purpose | Time (minimum) |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Slow aerobic jog/ run | Lowers body temperature Gradually lowers heart rate | 5 minutes |
| Light stretching | Removes waste from muscles | 5 minutes |

Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide

Teaching Floor Hockey Skills



Stick Handling

The most important aspect of floor hockey is stick control. Without stick control, the coach cannot teach any of the other aspects of the game.



| Your Athlete Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pick up stick and put proper end on ground | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with one hand controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with two hands controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pass the puck to another athlete | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pass the puck without a high stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move stick from one side of body to the other while moving | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Change grip to accommodate next move | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move puck without looking down at it | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Look in one direction and pass puck in another | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move around the court while controlling puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stick check | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoot on goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoot on goal without a high stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Perform a lift shot | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Totals



Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide Teaching Floor Hockey Skills

Athlete Readiness

Beginning athletes will have very limited control with their stick. They will rarely catch the puck with their stick and when, passing the puck to another athlete, will have just as much chance to pass it as to leave it at their feet. Their grip will change with every exercise and from one side of the body to the other. When they have possession of the puck, they will always be looking at the puck and not at any other athletes on the court. When you ask them to pass the puck, they will generally not look at the athlete whom they are supposed to pass to. When passing a puck, it will always remain on the ground. Also, when following through on a pass, they may have a high stick.



Intermediate athletes will have moderate control with their stick. They will usually catch the puck with their stick and can pass the puck in the correct direction, but not always directly to the person intended. They will have their own grip, but usually from only one side of the body. They cannot tell if their stick has the puck without looking, but they can move with the puck and pass while looking up about half of the time and at the puck the other half. If they concentrate hard enough, they can do a lift shot, but never under pressure. At this level, they will be aware of their high sticks and work on keeping them down.

Advanced athletes will have complete control with their stick. They will always catch the puck with their stick and can pass the puck directly to the feet of their intended receiver. They can move the puck without having to look down to see if they still have it and can pass using their stick on either side of the body. They will always perform a lift shot and will have several grips to use as needed to aid them in getting the puck where they want it to go (corners of goal, etc.).

The Grip

Teaching the Skill

Before athletes can learn any pass, they must first learn to hold the stick properly. Teach the basic grip: the dominant hand should be the lower hand. If the athlete is right handed, the right hand should be under the left hand. Have athlete “shake hands” with the stick, with the palms facing up as though they were shoveling. Hands should be a couple of inches apart, with elbows loose and bent and arms hanging loosely, ready for any action. If this grip is uncomfortable, try reversing hands, putting the dominant hand on top. Also, move hands so that the palms face down as though they were sweeping, and see if this grip is more comfortable.



Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide

Teaching Floor Hockey Skills



Teaching Points

Encourage athletes to keep the tip of their stick below their waist at all times. Show them how to control the stick by using both hands. The bottom hand acts as a pivot point and the top hand is the control. The lower you drop that top hand, the higher the tip will come off the ground.

Key Words

- ♦ “Two hands on the stick”
- ♦ “Keep your stick down”
- ♦ “Keep you head up”

Coaching Tip

Encourage athletes to handle the puck without looking at it. Let them know that everyone misses at times and they will learn to “feel” the puck at the end of their stick eventually. In the meantime, it’s OK when they miss or leave the puck behind them. The more they practice, the sooner they will master this skill.

Moving with the puck

Teaching the Skill

“Moving with the puck” allows an athlete to move the puck from one area of the court to another without giving up control. Your athletes need to be aware of several things at the same time: where they are on the court in relationship to their teammates and those on the opposing team, and where the goal is. In this case, “practice makes perfect” – that is to say, the more hands-on experience your athletes get in this area, the better they will be. Have the athletes concentrate on where they want to go first, and then add in obstacles as they master control of this skill. Use drills to hone this skill.

Teaching Points

As with all skills involving the puck, your athletes must learn to “feel” the puck at the end of the stick. Keeping the head up and looking at the other athletes on the court is a main priority. As the athletes move around on the court with the puck, show them how to avoid having the puck taken from them by turning their body to shield the puck from an attacker and keeping their body between that athlete and the puck.

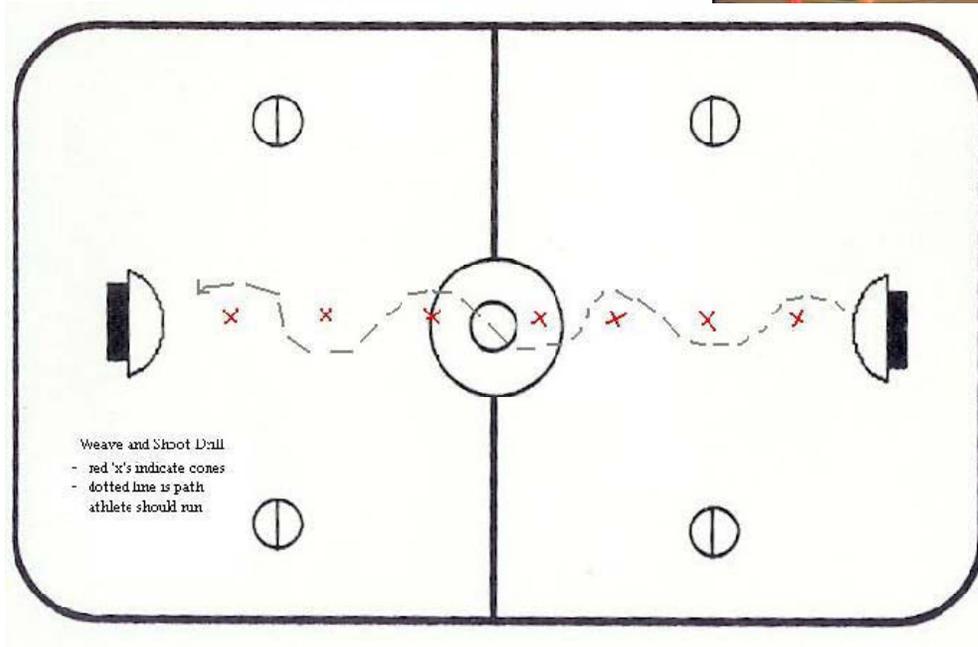
Key Words

- ♦ “Keep your head up”
- ♦ “Keep moving”
- ♦ “Shield/ protect your puck”



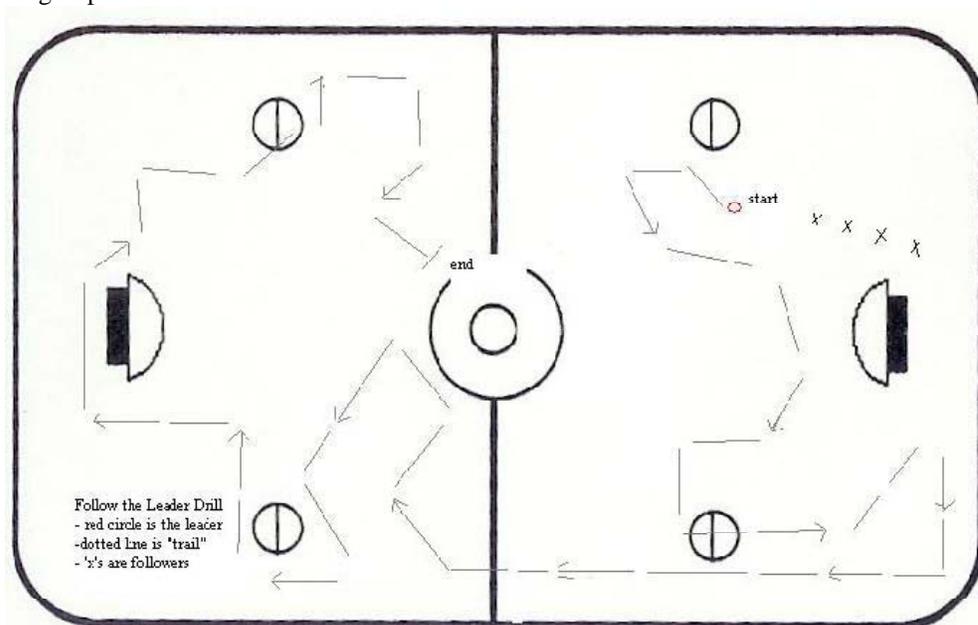
Stick Handling Drills

1. **Weave and Shoot Drill (same drill as Individual Skills Contest):** Athlete weaves 21 meters through cones placed every 3 meters and shoots at goal.

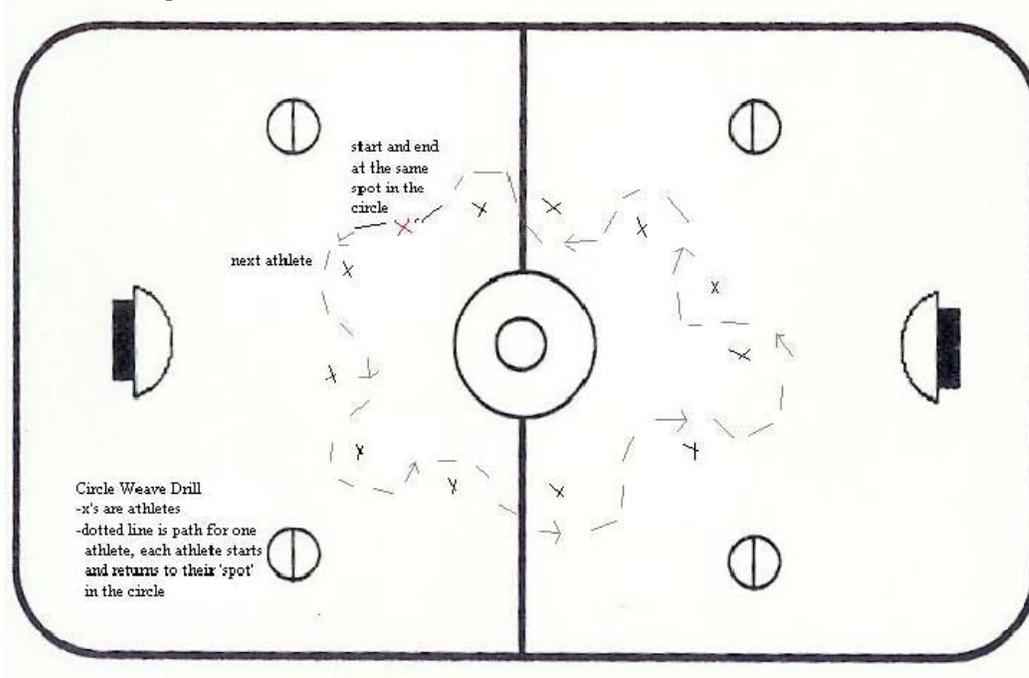




- Follow the Leader Drill:** Athletes practice stick handling behind the leader, who can go in any path. Leaders should vary their speed and navigate around obstacles as appropriate for the level of the team. Have several groups with several leaders.

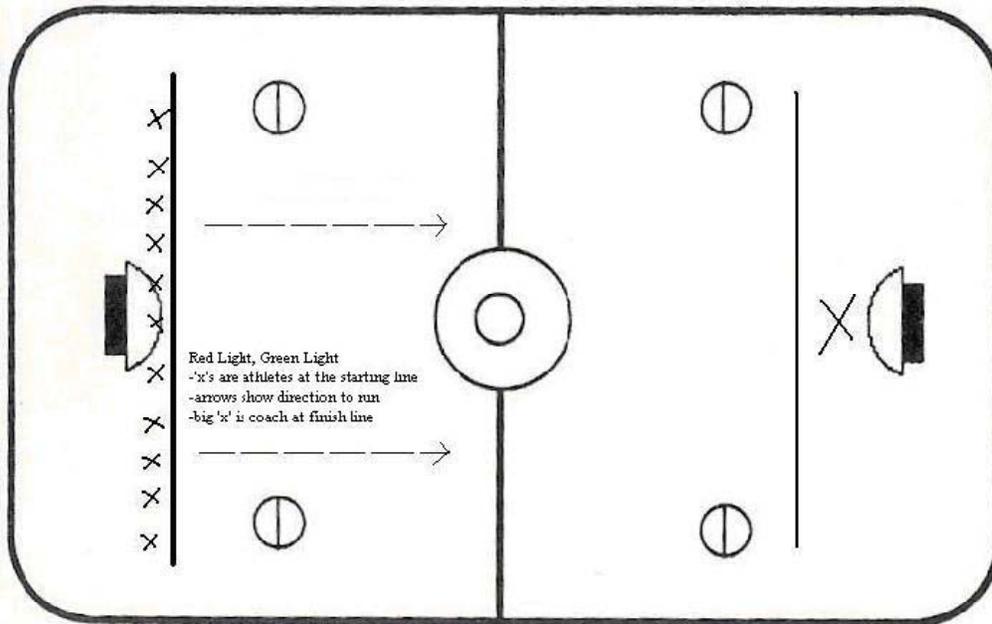


- Circle Weave Drill:** Athlete stick handles a puck in and out of a circle of teammates. Athlete then gives the puck to next person who does the same. Continue until the entire team has made the run. Lower level teams may start this drill at a walk and then build up to a jog or trot. Higher level teams may start at a jog or trot and then build up to a run.



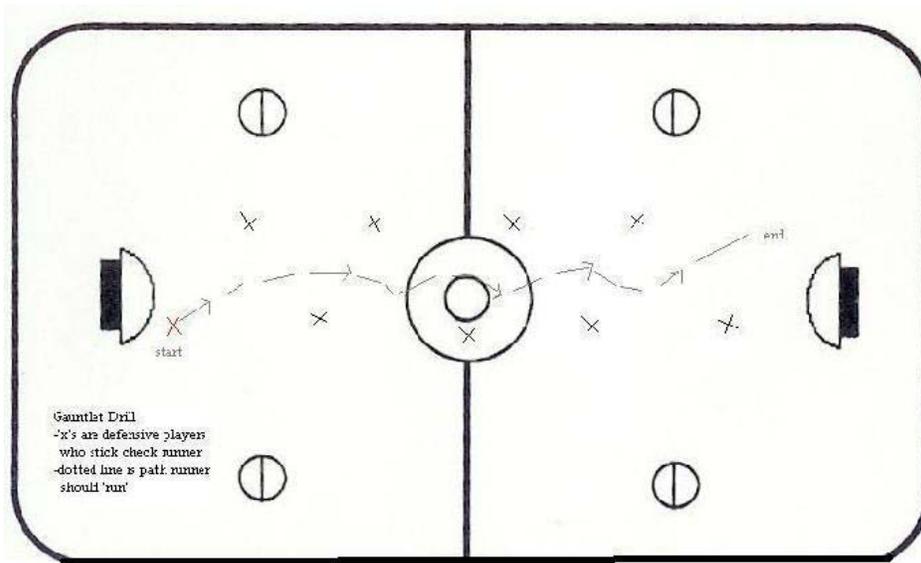


4. **Red light-Green light Drill:** Athletes line up at the starting line at one end of the court. On coach's command "green light," athletes move forward with stick and puck. On coach's command "red light," athlete stops. Any athlete moving during the "red light" returns to starting line. First athlete to the finish line wins. The coach should make the "green lights" short enough so that the athletes stop 2 to 4 times before they can reach the other side of the court.

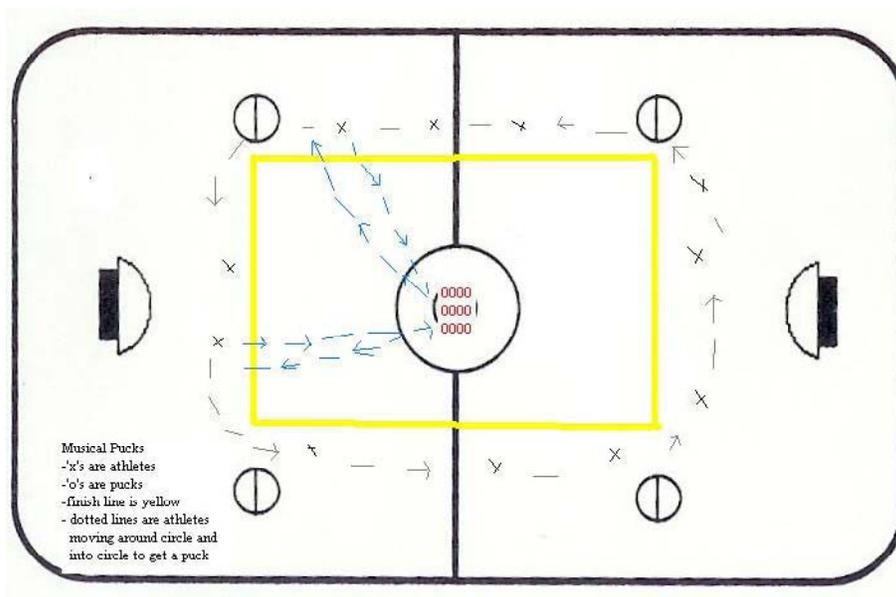


5. **Gauntlet Drill:** Athlete stick handles a puck in a straight line past a double line of teammates, which are staggered at 2-meter intervals on either side. The stick handling lane should be a minimum of 2 meters wide. If a teammate is successful in stick checking the athlete who is running the gauntlet, that teammate becomes the next runner of the gauntlet, from the beginning. The athlete who was stick checked takes the place of the new runner in the line. The teammates on the line should not step into the lane; they should only stick check as the runner passes through their area on the line. NOTE: The line will not be able to steal the puck, only dislodge it from the runner's stick.



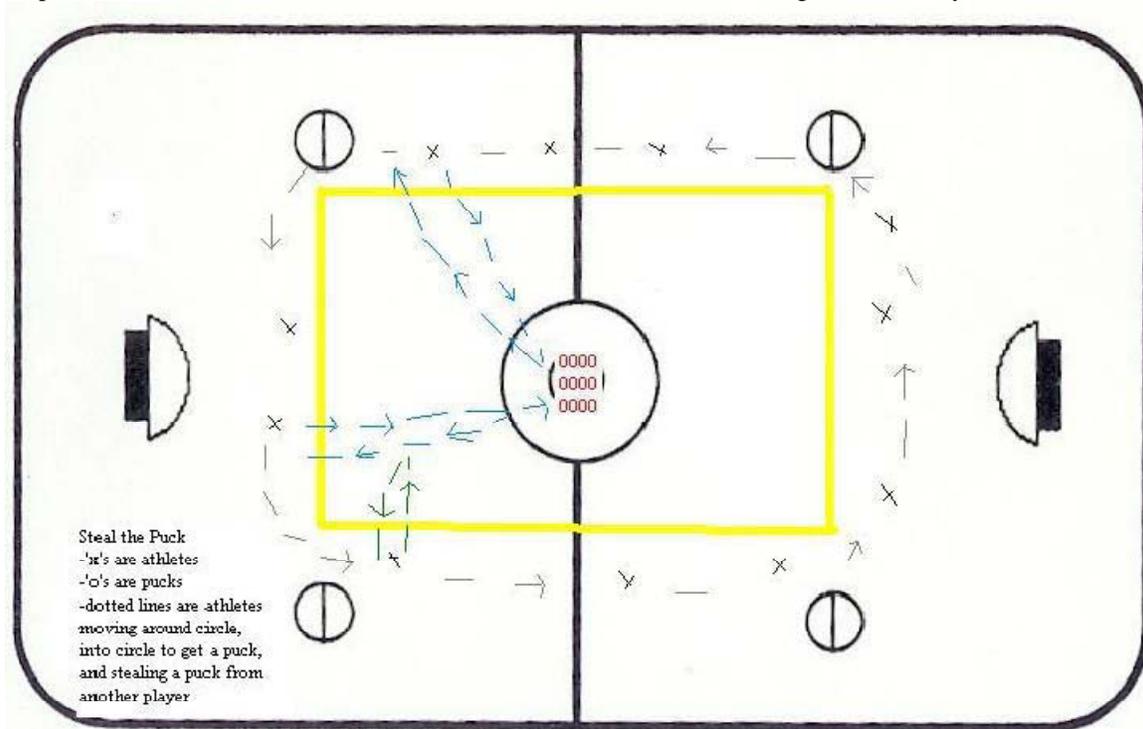


6. **Musical Pucks Drill:** Athletes run outside a circle of cones or a line on the court. On a whistle, each athlete has to retrieve a puck from the center and stick handle it to a cone or outside the lined area. There are fewer pucks than athletes. Whoever doesn't get a puck is out. The drill can be varied with the number of pucks and can continue until one or more athletes are left controlling pucks.





7. **Steal the Puck Drill:** This is the same game/ variation as the musical pucks drill (see above drill), only the pucks can be stick checked from another athlete before that athlete can get to the safety zone.



8. **Relay Races:** Evenly divide athletes into several lines. Demonstrate a designated skill and then have the athletes try the skill. First team that has all of its athletes finished and sitting down gets a point. To even out abilities of teams, let the losing team “draft” from the winning team and give the winning team an athlete in exchange. Stick handling races can include: forward, backward, accelerate, stop on whistle, weave in and out of cones (forward, backward, two at a time), weave around defender, weave up and pass back to next in line, move to next cone and pass (keep repeating until reaching last cones), etc.
9. **Square Relay Race:** Evenly divide athletes to four corners of square. Races can include weaving in and out of cones in the same direction, opposite directions, diagonally across the square, passing across the square, etc. Give points to winning teams, draft pick to losing teams.



Faults & Fixes -- Stick Handling

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill Reference |
|--|--|--|
| Athlete leaves the puck behind | Remind athlete to keep stick on ground | Musical Pucks Drill Follow the Leader Drill |
| While in possession of the puck the athlete keeps eyes on the ground | Remind athlete to keep head up while in possession of the puck | Follow the Leader Drill |
| Coach does not know which hand is dominant on the athlete | Determine from athlete which hand is dominant | Circle Weave Drill |



Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide

Teaching Floor Hockey Skills

Passing

Passing is the act of moving the puck from one athlete to another across the court.



| Your Athlete Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pick up stick and put proper end on ground | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with one hand controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with two hands controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pass a puck to another athlete | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pass the puck without a high stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pass puck without looking down at it | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Look in one direction and pass puck in another direction | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Follow through on a pass by pointing the tip of the stick toward direction of the receiving athlete | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pass around another athlete | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Totals

Teaching the Skill

For passing, athletes can use any acceptable grip. Coaches should demonstrate the basic grip and adapt as necessary. The athletes will need to step forward as they release the puck. Their follow-through should have the tip of the stick pointing in the direction of the target. As the athletes gain confidence, have them move farther away from the target, trying to double the distance from where they first started. As they gain even more confidence, have them pass faster and harder, emphasizing speed and accuracy.

Teaching Points

If an athlete is having trouble making an accurate pass, try changing the grip. As a coach, you may need to start back with the basics and re-teach the skill again. If that still doesn't work, help the athlete adapt a grip he or she can use.

Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide

Teaching Floor Hockey Skills



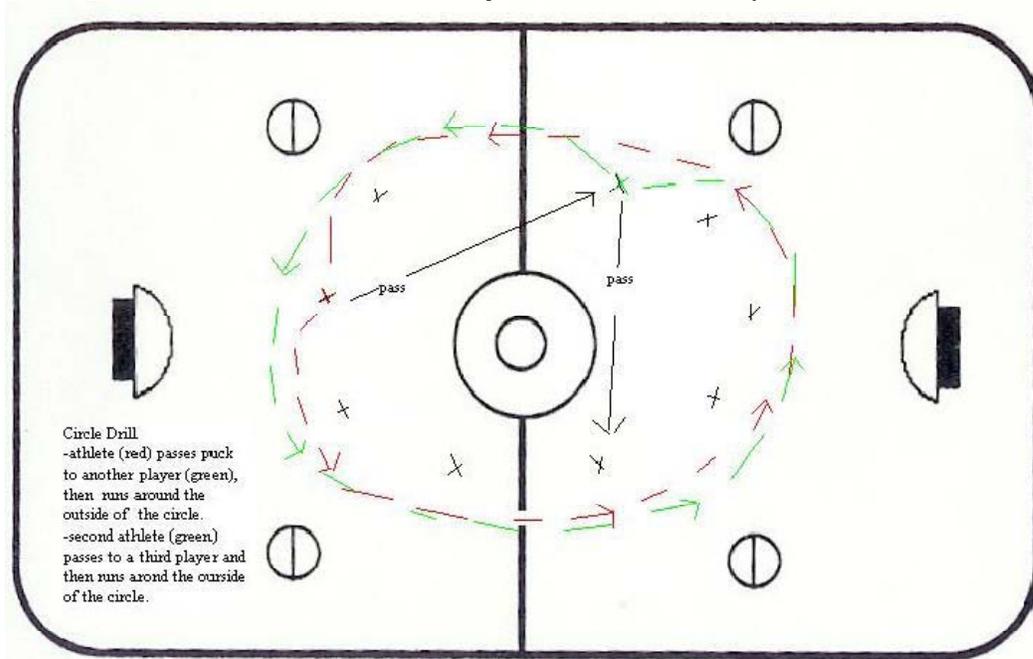
Key Words

- ♦ “Keep your head up”
- ♦ “Look at your target”
- ♦ “Step into the pass”
- ♦ “Use both hands”
- ♦ “Put the stick in the puck”
- ♦ “Follow through”



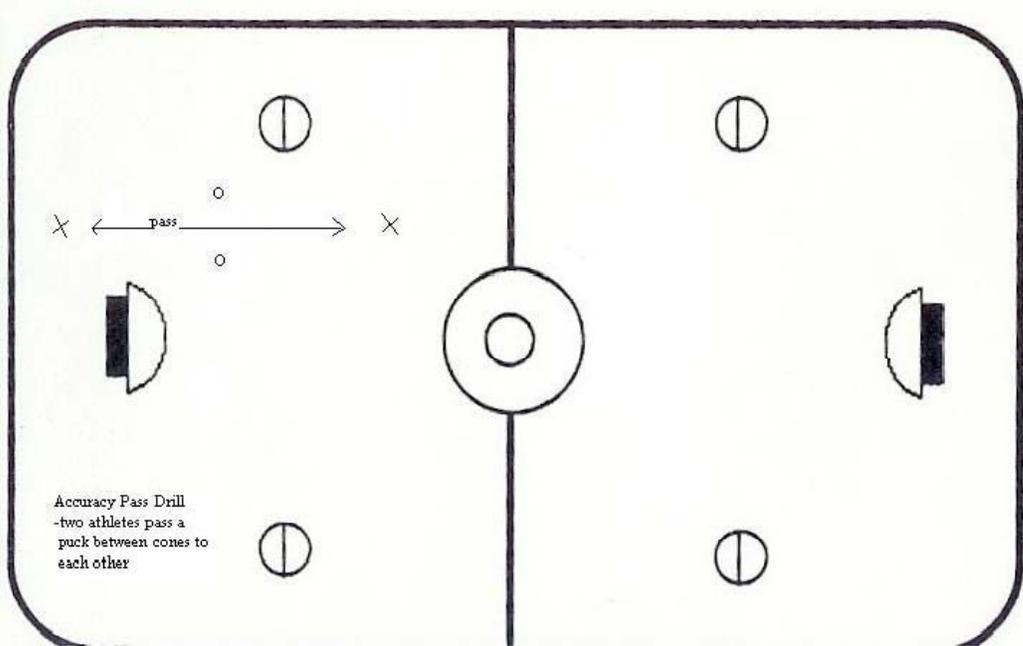
Passing Drills

1. **Circle Drill:** Arrange athletes in a circle. An athlete with the puck passes to another athlete who then runs around the outside of a circle while stick-handling and returns to his/her space. That athlete then passes the puck to another teammate. Make sure that every athlete has a chance to practice the drill.

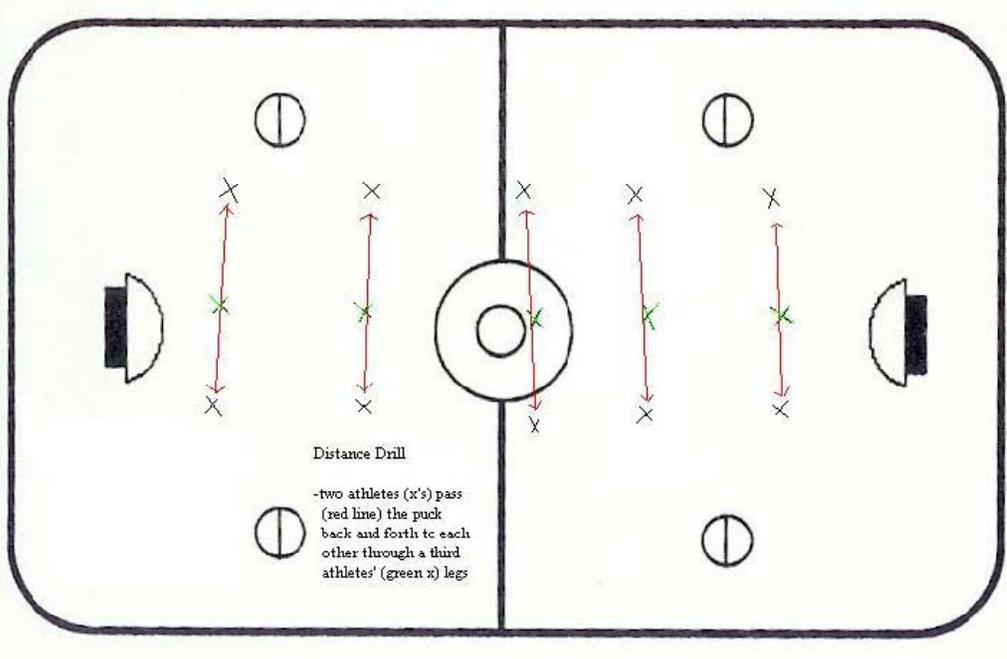


2. **Accuracy Pass Drill:** Have athletes pass the puck back and forth between markers. Instruct them to pass soft and slow when they start. As their skill increases, move the athletes farther apart and have them make their passes harder and faster.



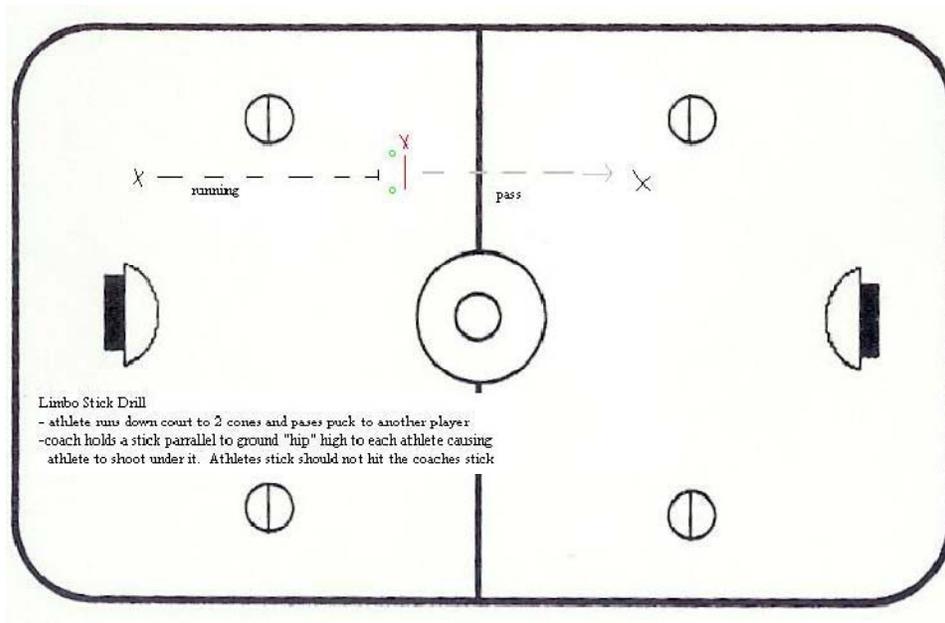


3. **Distance Drill:** This drill teaches passing accuracy and gives the athlete a feel for the amount of force needed to pass a specific distance. Two athletes stand at least three meters apart, facing each other. Another athlete stands between them with legs spread. The two athletes on the end pass the puck back and forth between the third athlete's legs. Vary the difficulty by varying the distance.



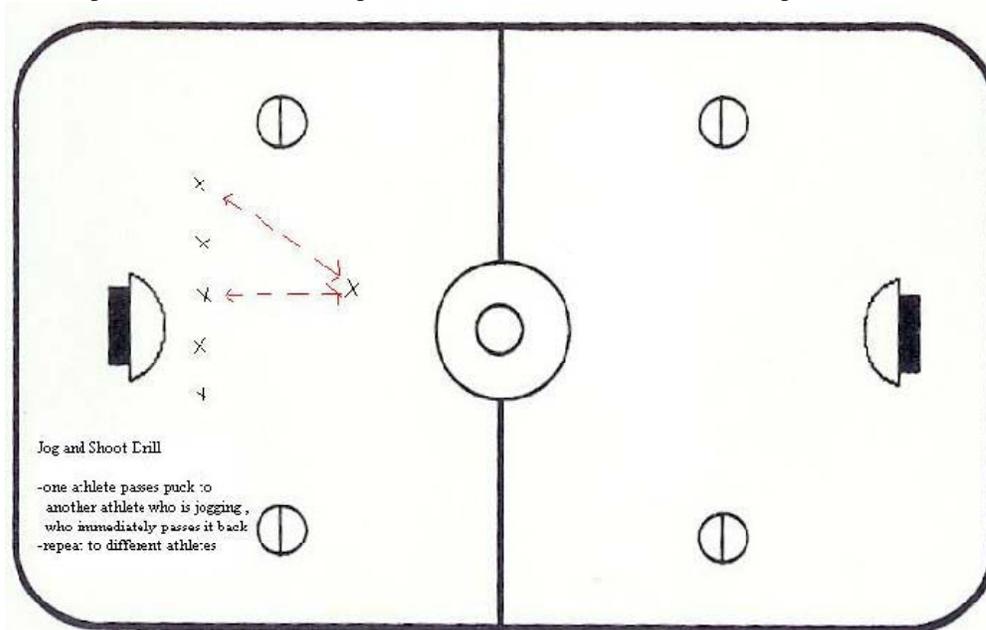


4. **Limbo Stick Drill:** The purpose of this drill is to emphasize stick control (high sticking) after a pass. Standing just past two cones, a coach holds a stick parallel to the ground at the height of the athlete's hips (adjust to accommodate each athlete's height). The athletes form a single line. One at a time, they run toward the cones and pass the puck to a designated target or another athlete while keeping their stick from striking the coach's stick (limbo stick).



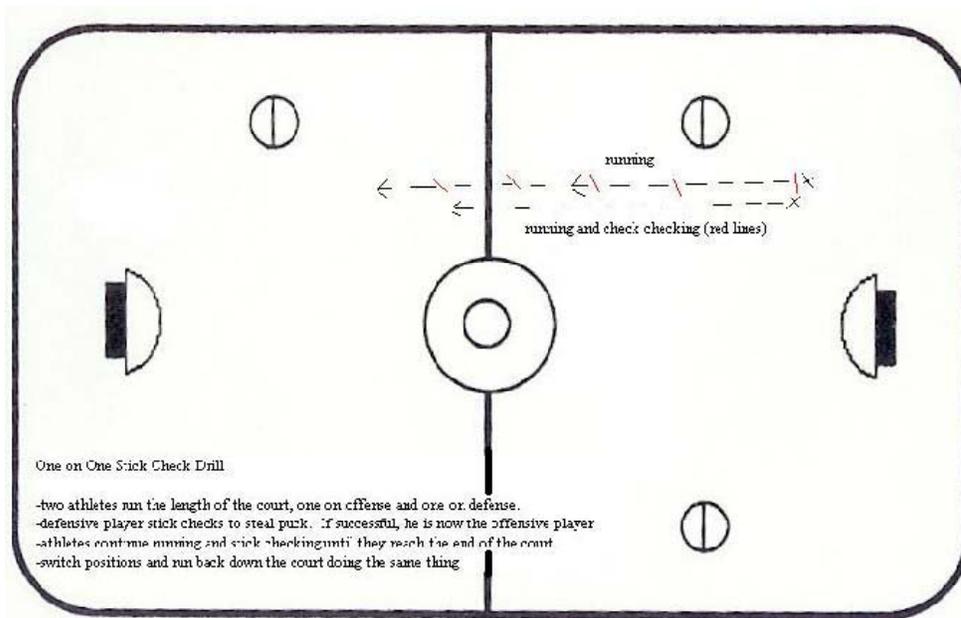


5. **Jog and Shoot Drill:** Arrange several athletes in a line, jogging in place. Pick an athlete to be the server, who passes the puck to a teammate in the line, who passes back to the server. The server passes to another teammate, who passes back to server. Repeat until all athletes have had a turn to pass.



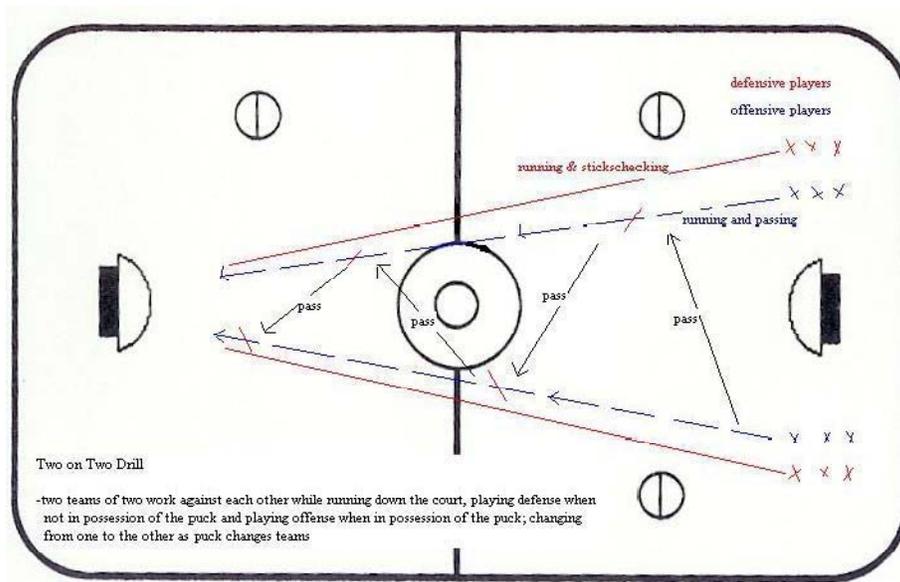
6. **One on One Drill:** Athletes form a single line at one end of the facility. Two athletes step forward (one athlete on offense and one on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes run the length of the facility. The athlete on defense tries to stick check the athlete on offense while the athlete on offense tries to protect the puck. When the athlete on defense properly stick checks the athlete on offense and gains control of the puck, that athlete switches to offense and the athlete who was stick checked switches to defense. The objective of this drill is to emphasize proper stick checking while moving on the court.



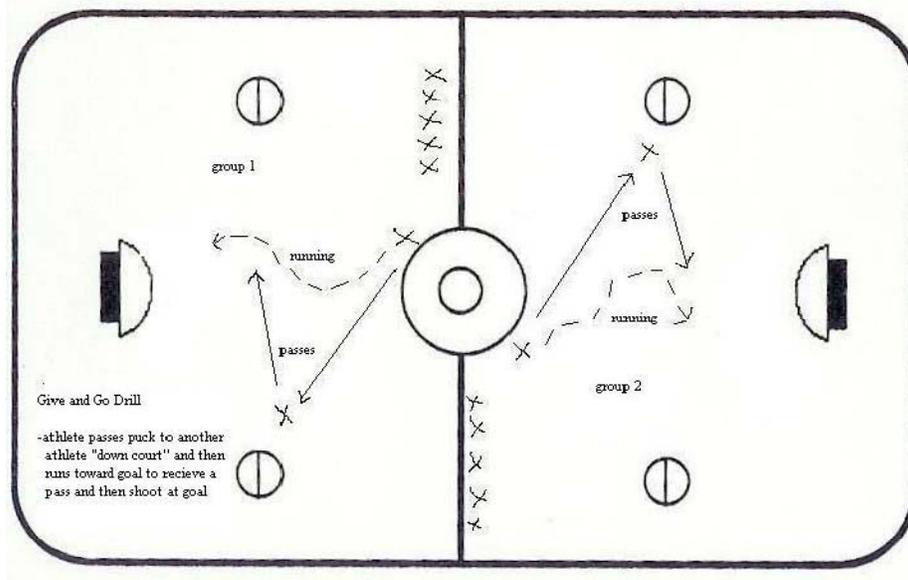


7. **Two on Two Drill:** Athletes form two lines at one end of the facility. Four athletes step forward (two athletes on offense and two athletes on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes on offense pass to each other while running the length of the facility. The athletes on defense a) try to impede the forward movement of the athletes on offense; b) try to block the view of the athletes on offense; or c) try to stick check the puck away from the athletes on offense. When the athletes on defense properly gain control of the puck from the athletes on offense, those athletes switch to offense and the athletes who lost control of the puck switch to defense. This is the same drill as the One on One Drill, except the athletes work in pairs.





- Give and Go Drill:** Divide athletes into groups. Working in pairs, one athlete passes down court to the second athlete and then runs past the teammate to receive a pass. Athletes should continue passing and running ahead until they reach the other end of the court. This encourages passing and staying aware of teammate position. NOTE: Passing should always be in front (between the receiver and the goal) of the intended athlete so that the athlete does not have to slow down or stop forward motion to gain control of the puck. It is important that the athletes understand this concept.





Faults & Fixes - Passing

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill Reference |
|---|--|------------------------|
| Athlete leaves the puck behind | Keep stick on the ground and in the puck | Circle Drill |
| Puck is short of the target | Put more force behind the pass | Distance Drill |
| Puck is passed with too much force | Put less force behind the pass | Distance Drill |
| Puck misses the target | Look at target and follow through in the direction of target | Accuracy Pass Drill |
| High stick occurs during follow-through | Keep tip of stick below waist height | Limbo Stick Drill |



Receiving

Receiving is the act of stopping the puck and taking possession/control from a pass.



| Your Athlete Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pick up stick and put proper end on ground | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with one hand controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with two hands controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move stick from one side of body to the other while moving | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Change grip to accommodate next move | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use stick to stop the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use foot to stop the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move toward the puck to receive the pass | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move around obstacle to receive the pass | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Place tip of stick inside of puck while the puck is moving | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Place tip of stick inside of puck while the athlete is moving | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Totals | | | | |

Teaching the Skill

The receiver will need to keep focused on the puck as it moves toward him/her. The coach will need to show the athlete how to step toward the moving puck and “catch it” by putting the stick inside the puck, or by stopping it with the foot. If necessary, the athlete can slap it down with the hand.

Teaching Points

If athletes are having trouble “catching” a pass, hand-toss pucks on the floor for them until they can judge the speed, and then return to the drill.

It is very important to teach the athletes the importance of keeping control of the puck within their team and away from the opposing team.



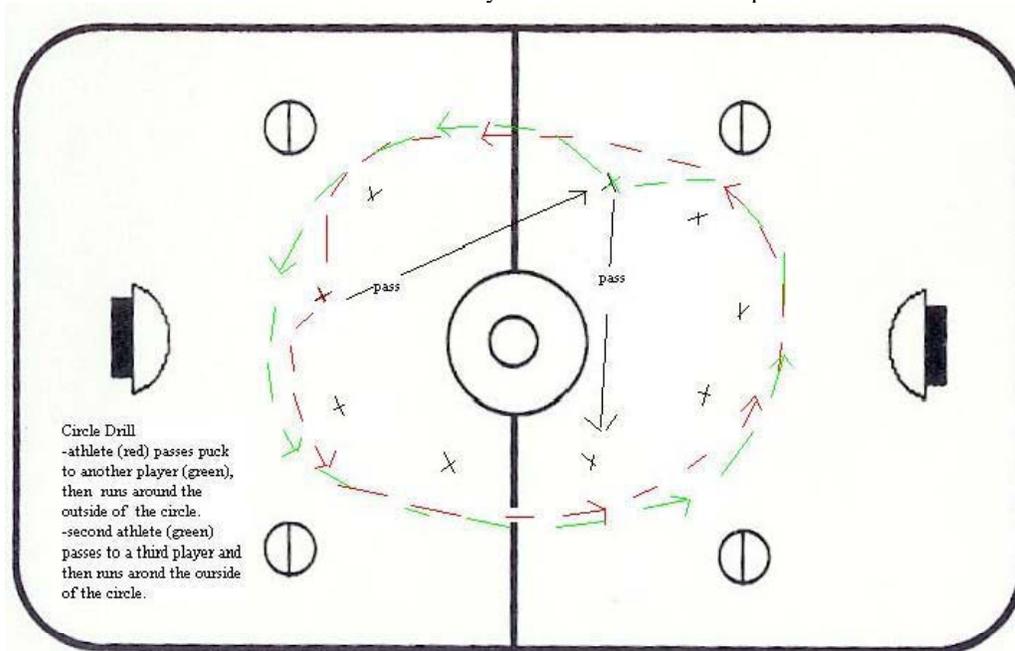
Key Words

- ♦ “Keep your head up”
- ♦ “Step toward the puck”
- ♦ “Stop the puck”
- ♦ “Control the puck”



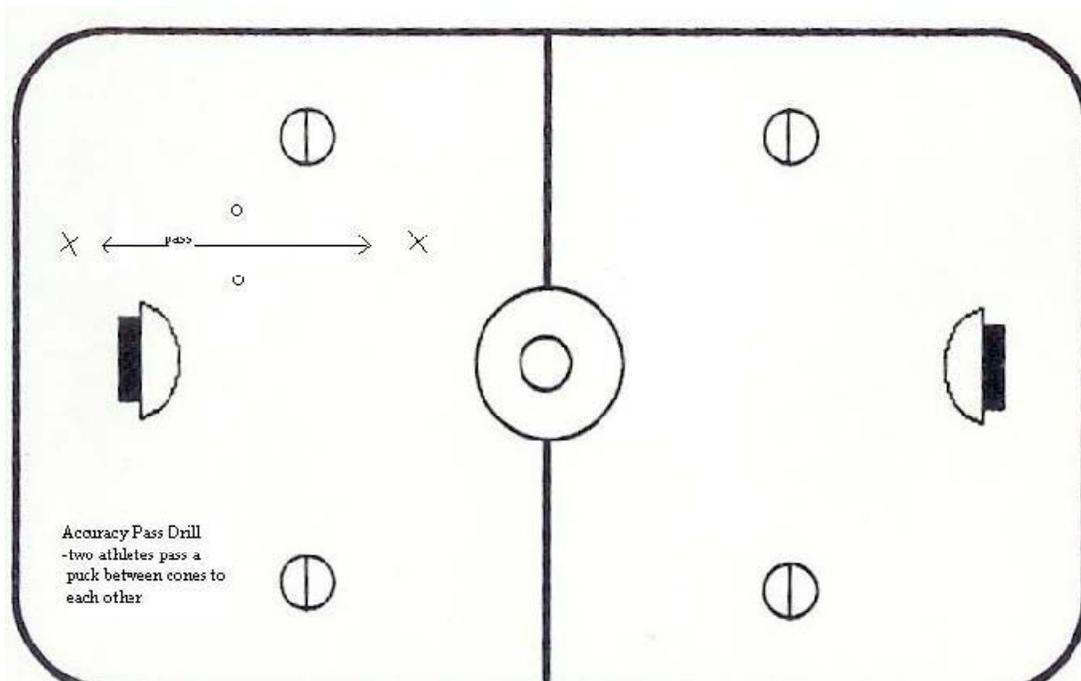
Receiving Drills

1. **Circle Drill:** Arrange athletes in a circle. An athlete with the puck passes to another athlete who then runs around the outside of a circle while stick handling and returns to his/her space. That athlete then passes the puck to another teammate. Make sure that every athlete has a chance to practice the drill.

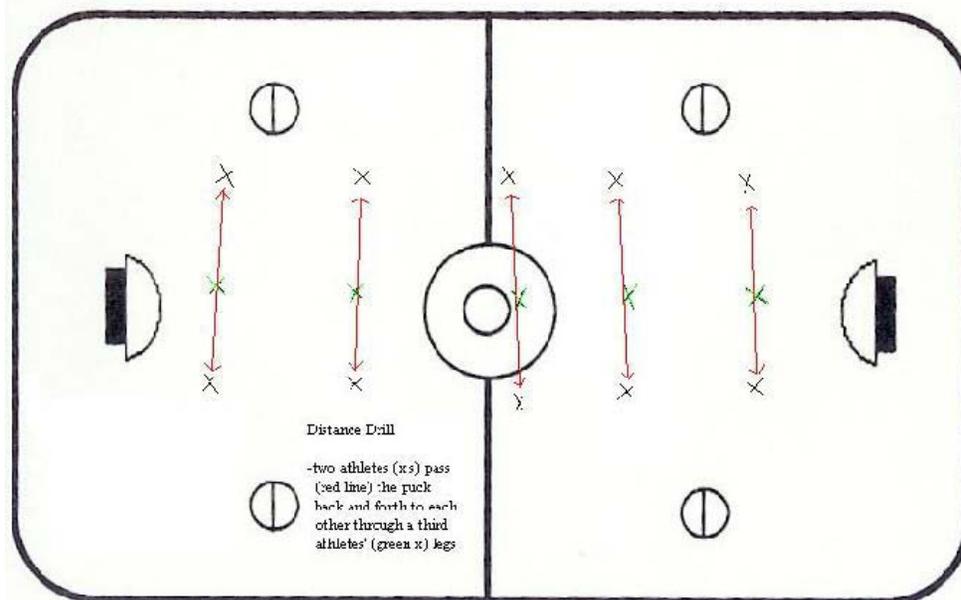


2. **Accuracy Pass Drill:** Have athletes pass the puck back and forth between markers. Instruct them to pass soft and slow when they start. As their skill increases, move the athletes farther apart and have them make their passes harder and faster.

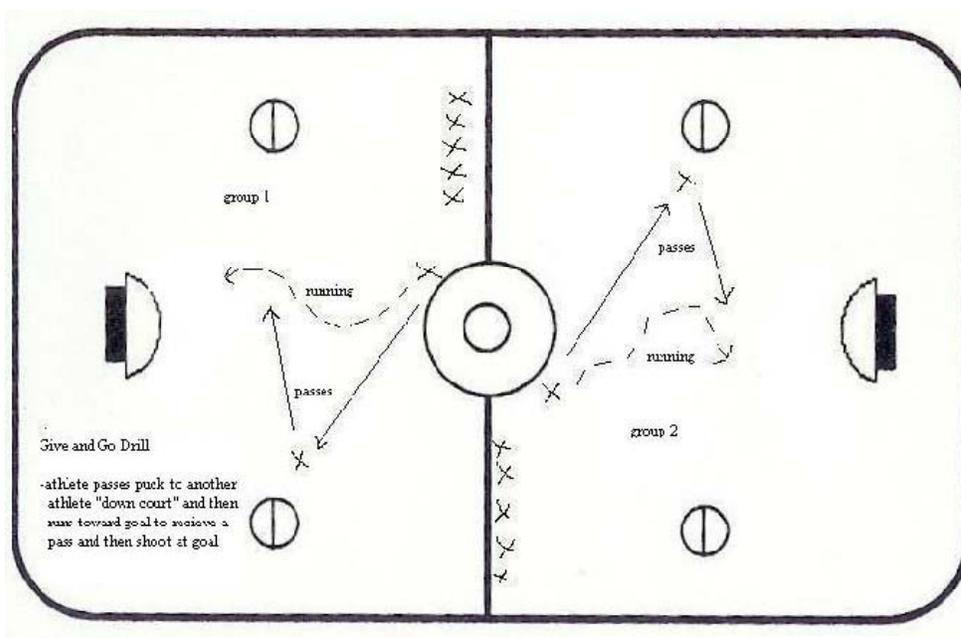




3. **Distance Drill:** This drill teaches passing accuracy and gives the athlete a feel for the amount of force needed to pass a specific distance. Two athletes stand at least three meters apart, facing each other. Another athlete stands between them with legs spread. The two athletes on the end pass the puck back and forth between the third athlete's legs. Vary the difficulty by varying the distance.



4. **Give and Go Drill:** Divide athletes into groups. Working in pairs, one athlete passes down court to the second athlete and then runs past the teammate to receive a pass. Athletes should continue passing and running ahead until they reach the other end of the court. This encourages passing and staying aware of teammate position. NOTE: Passing should always be in front (between the receiver and the goal) of the intended athlete so that the athlete does not have to slow down or stop forward motion to gain control of the puck. It is important that the athletes understand this concept.



Faults & Fixes – Receiving

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill Reference |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Athlete misses the puck | Keep your eye on the puck | Accuracy Pass Drill Distance Drill |
| Athlete cannot control puck after stopping it | Put stick inside of puck to control the puck | Give and Go Drill |
| Athlete catches the puck and holds instead of slapping it down | Teach athlete to slap the puck down instead of holding the puck | Accuracy Pass Drill Distance Drill |



Stick Checking

Stick checking is the act of momentarily jarring the opponent's stick out of the puck to let the athlete put his or her own stick inside of the puck. Stick checking is the most effective way to take the puck away from an opponent.

| Your Athlete Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pick up stick and put proper end on ground | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with one hand controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with two hands controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move stick from one side of body to the other while moving | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Change grip to accommodate next move | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Identify the opponent with the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move the bottom end of the stick under the opponent's stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lift the opponent's stick out of the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Place his/her own stick in the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Control the puck after taking possession | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Totals | | | | |

Teaching the Skill

Instruct your athlete to move toward the athlete with the puck. Have the athlete move the bottom of his or her stick under the opposing athlete's stick and make a short upward or sideways movement, dislodging the other athlete's stick from the center of the puck. The athlete then places his or her own stick in the puck, gaining control from the other athlete/team. Sometimes the puck will travel away from the athletes after the controlling stick is dislodged. Show your athlete how to follow it and take possession on the "move."

Teaching Points

It is important that as the opponent's stick is hit, the athlete does not allow his or her own stick to "high-stick." Teach the athlete how to keep the stick low.

Key Words

- ♦ "Stick check"
- ♦ "Underneath"
- ♦ "Lift their stick"
- ♦ "Keep your stick low"
- ♦ "Get the puck"

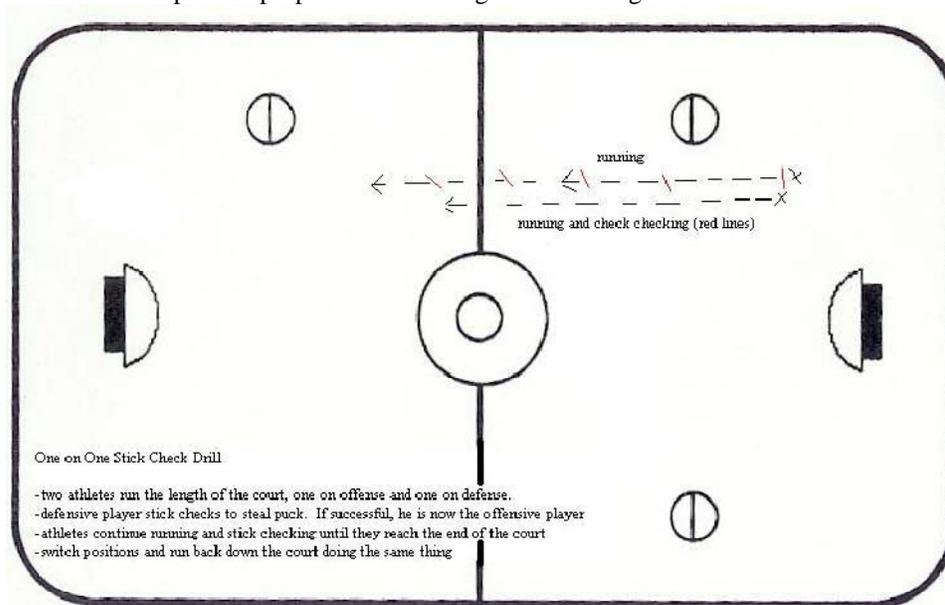
Coaching Tips

Stick checking can be done face-to-face, or your athlete can come up from behind and stick check from beside the opposing athlete. As both athletes are moving in the same direction, the puck will definitely be "loose," and your athlete will need to follow it to retrieve it.



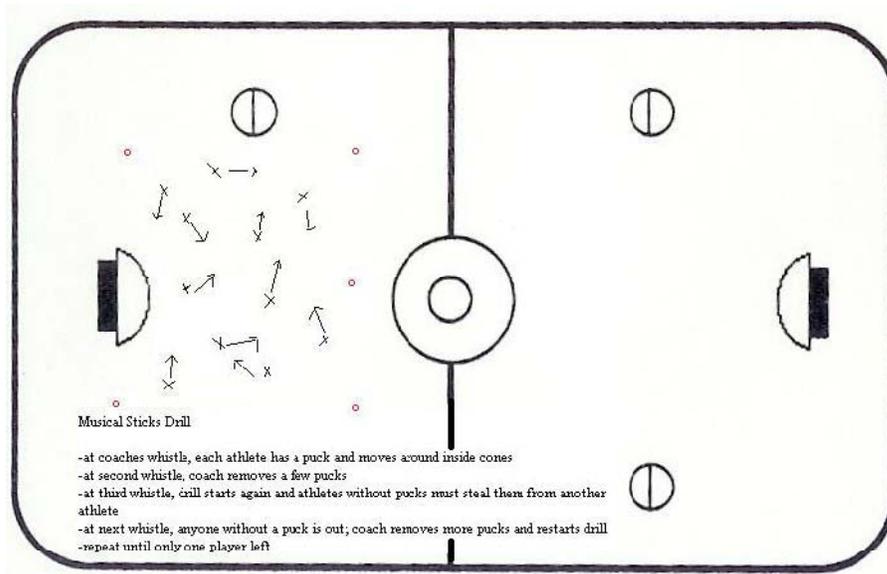
Stick Checking Drills

1. **One on One Stick Check Drill:** Athletes form a single line at one end of the facility. Two athletes step forward (one athlete on offense and one on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes run the length of the facility. The athlete on defense tries to stick check the athlete on offense while the athlete on offense tries to protect the puck. When the athlete on defense properly stick checks the athlete on offense and gains control of the puck, that athlete switches to offense and the athlete who was stick checked switches to defense. The objective of this drill is to emphasize proper stick checking while moving on the court.



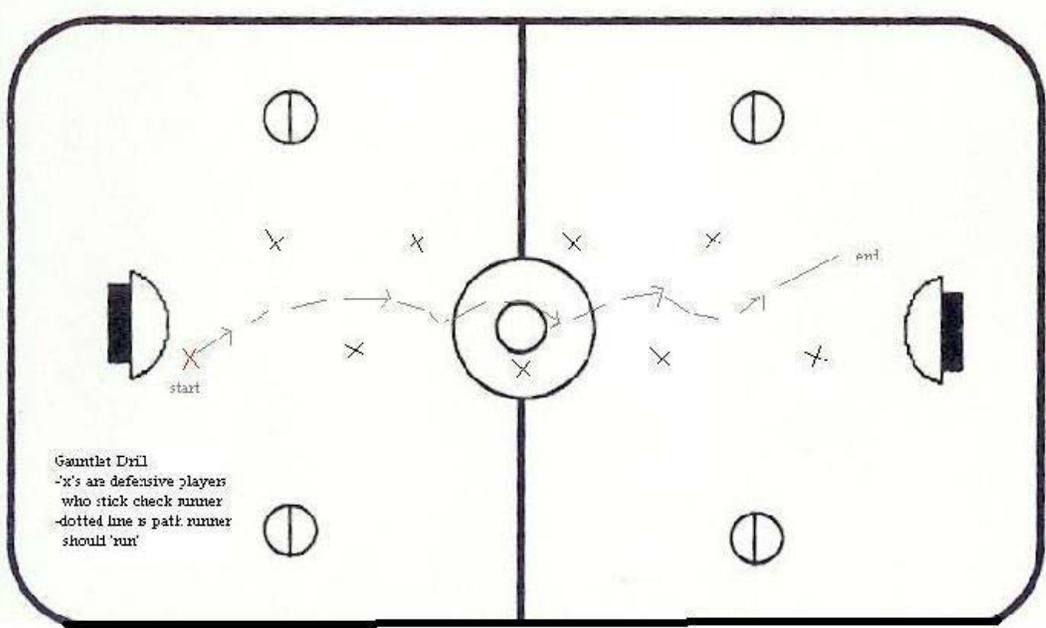
2. **Musical Sticks Drill:** Athletes run outside a circle of cones or a line on the court. On the coach's whistle, each athlete has to retrieve a puck from the center and stick handle it to a cone or outside the lined area. There are fewer pucks than there are athletes, so an athlete can stick check a puck before another athlete gets it to a cone or outside of the lined area, designated as a "safe zone." Whoever doesn't retrieve a puck and make it to the "safe zone" is out.





- Gauntlet Drill:** Athlete stick handles a puck in a straight line past a double line of teammates, who are staggered at 2-meter intervals on either side. The stick handling lane should be a minimum of 2 meters wide. If a teammate is successful in stick checking the athlete who is running the gauntlet, that teammate becomes the next runner of the gauntlet, from the beginning. The athlete who was stick checked takes the place of the new runner in the line. The teammates on the line should not step into the lane; they should only stick check as the runner passes through their area on the line. **NOTE:** The teammates will not be able to steal the puck, only dislodge it from the runner's stick.





Gauntlet Drill
-x's are defensive players
who stick check runner
-dotted line is path runner
should 'run'



Faults & Fixes -- Stick Checking

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill Reference |
|---|---|--|
| Athlete stick checks his or her own teammate | Teach athlete to only stick check an opponent | One on One Stick Check Drill |
| High stick from missed stick check | Keep tip of stick below waist height | Limbo Stick Drill |
| Athlete slashes opponent rather than performing a stick check | Teach athlete to have an upward or sideways movement of stick | Musical Sticks Drill Gauntlet Drill One on One Stick Check Drill |



Face-off

Face-off is the act of starting play after each stoppage of play.



| Your Center Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pick up stick and put proper end on ground | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with one hand controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with two hands controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Identify the face-off circle | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stand outside of the face-off circle | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Keep stick on own side of the face-off circle | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wait for the whistle before sweeping | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| React to whistle | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sweep puck out of the circle | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sweep puck to intended target | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Totals | | | | |



Teaching the Skill

Use one of the face-off circles on the court. Have your center stand on one side of the line, with an opposing center on the other side. Show the centers where to put their sticks (anywhere on the circle on their side of the line) and then help them sweep the puck from the circle so they understand what they are supposed to do. Explain to the athletes that they will do this “on the whistle” and that they cannot take control of the puck, but must sweep it to another athlete. After an athlete does this for the first time, the coach should make any corrections to the athlete’s stance (too far away, too close, etc.), hands, feet and body positions. Repeat exercise until each athlete has a firm grasp of his or her own responsibility.



Teaching Points

Your athletes will need to understand that they must continue to sweep the puck until it leaves the circle or until another athlete has taken possession. If the puck does not clear the circle on the first sweep, the athletes should continue sweeping, or they can kick the puck out of the circle with their foot. Once another athlete has touched the puck, they can then attempt to take control of the puck themselves by putting their stick inside the center of the puck.

Key Words

- ♦ “Listen for the whistle”
- ♦ “Eyes on the puck”
- ♦ “Use both hands”
- ♦ “Sweep the puck”

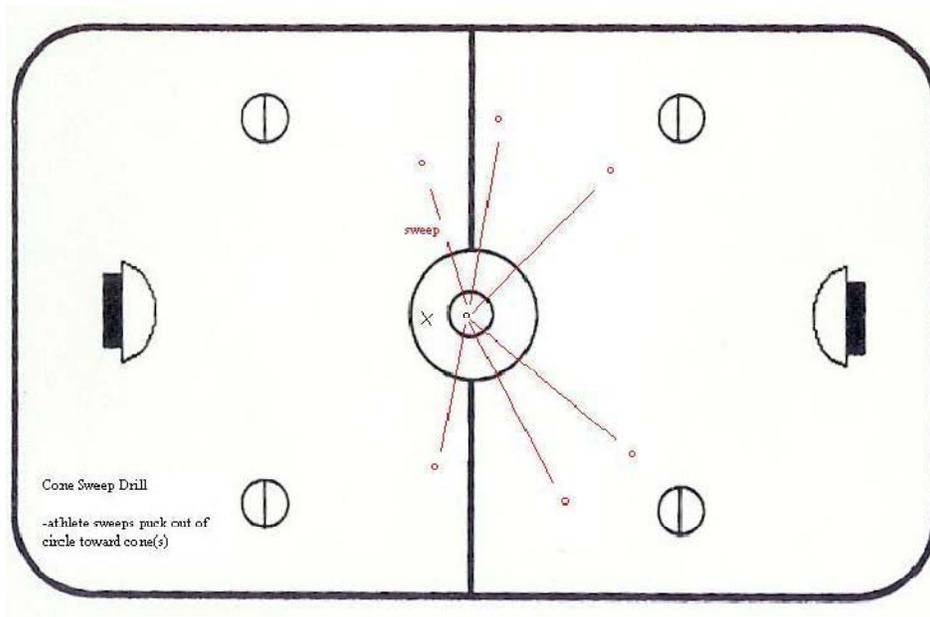
Coaching Tips

Most athletes will want to sweep the puck “back” to their teammates. Teach the athletes to control the puck and that they can sweep the puck forward, sideways or backward depending on your coaching preference and the ability of the athletes.



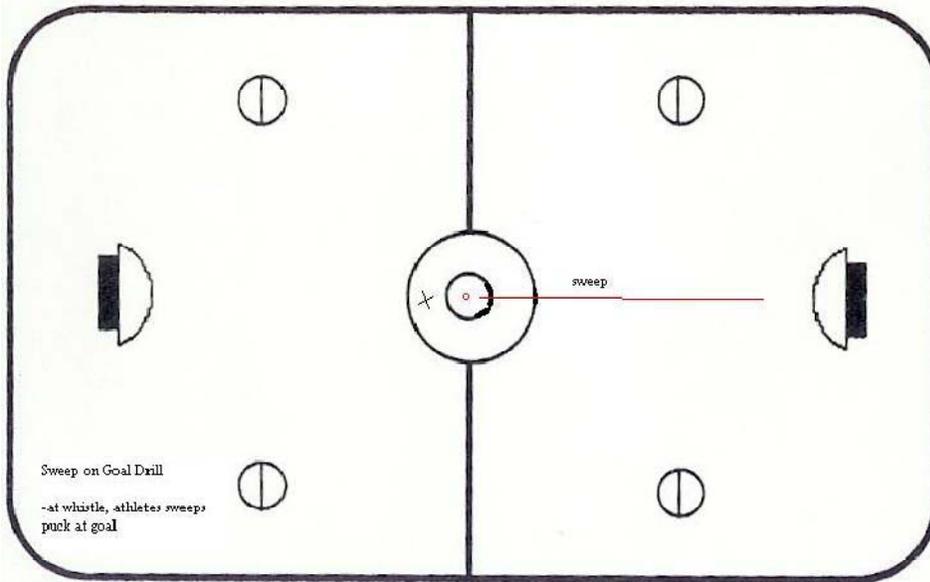
Face-off Drills

1. **Sweeper Pass Drill:** On the coach's whistle, the athlete sweeps the puck to a stationary teammate; score a point for an accurate sweep to teammate.
2. **Swiftest Sweeper Drill:** On the coach's whistle, two athletes attempt to sweep the puck out of circle. Round 2: winners play each other and losers play each other.
3. **Cone Sweep Drill:** On the coach's whistle, the athlete sweeps the puck out of circle toward designated targets that are set up at various angles around the face-off circle. The objective of this drill is to improve the athletes' accuracy while sweeping the puck.





4. **Sweep on Goal Drill:** On the coach's whistle, the athlete sweeps the puck toward the goal as a shot.





Faults & Fixes -- Face-off

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill/Test Reference |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Center puts the stick inside of the puck at whistle | Teach the center to sweep the puck | Sweeper Pass Drill |
| Center misses the puck when sweeping | Teach the center to sweep the puck | Swiftest Sweeper Drill |
| Center cannot control the direction of sweep | Teach the center to sweep the puck to target | Cone Sweep Drill |
| Center takes control of the puck before another athlete touches the puck | Teach the center to wait until the puck touches another athlete before taking control | Sweeper Pass Drill |



Shooting on Goal

Shooting on goal is the act of moving the puck forward in an attempt to score a goal.

| Your Athlete Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pick up stick and put proper end on ground | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with one hand controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grip the stick with two hands controlling stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Put tip of stick inside of puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Control the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoot puck without looking down at it | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoot on goal while standing still | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoot on goal while moving | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoot on goal without a high stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoot on goal without causing a crease violation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Execute a forehand shot on goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Execute a backhand shot on goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Execute a lift shot on goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Score a goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Totals | | | | |

Teaching the Skill

Athletes will need to place the tip of the stick inside the puck. Have them focus their eyes on the goal. While taking steps forward, have them sweep stick across the body, shooting puck toward the goal. Make sure they follow through with stick pointing toward desired target area. Coaches should teach the athletes to shoot:

1. In front of the net
2. At various angles from the net
3. At various corners of the net
4. While moving toward the net
5. While moving and receiving a pass
6. While being guarded
7. While screening the goalie and staying out of the crease
8. Off of a deflected shot, staying out of the crease
9. While faking a shot in another direction
10. As accurately and as hard as they can



Forehand Shot

Athlete stands facing the goal, with the stick in the puck on his or her dominant side. Dominant hand should be lower on the stick, arm almost fully extended and the palm should be facing up. The other hand should be near the top of the stick and the palm should be facing down. With eyes focused on target, athlete should move the puck back a few inches and then forward again, following through to make a “shot,” while stepping forward with the non-dominant foot. On the follow-through, the stick tip should be pointing at the target, no higher than waist level. A snap of the wrist will produce more power on the shot.



Lift Shot (Forehand)

NOTE: The forehand lift shot is very similar in technique to the forehand shot, with a few exceptions.

1. The tip of the stick must catch the lower front lip of the inside of the puck to obtain the necessary lift.
2. The forehand lift shot will usually not flip through the air as is often the case with the basic backhand shot. This allows for potentially more power and is normally more difficult to master.
3. Obtaining maximum lifting potential is aided by a strong wrist snap from the lower right hand.
4. Depending on shooting style, some athletes find it effective to lower the upper torso over the puck to some degree before bringing the arms forward and snapping the wrist to create lift.

Backhand Shot

Athlete stands facing the goal, with the stick in the puck on his or her non-dominant side. Dominant hand should be lower on the stick, arm almost fully extended and the palm should be facing up. The other hand should be near the top of the stick and the palm should be facing down. With eyes focused on target, athlete should move the puck back a few inches and then forward again, following through to make a “shot,” while stepping forward with the dominant foot. On the follow-through, the stick tip should be pointing at the target, no higher than waist level. A snap of the wrist will produce more power on the shot.

NOTE: If shooting the puck from the right side, the left foot steps forward; if shooting the puck from the left side, the right foot steps forward.



Lift Shot (Backhand)

Taught the same as the backhand shot, but with more wrist snap and arm whip. Often the puck is shot in more of a round sweeping motion, as opposed to the back and forth motion of the stick when shooting the basic backhand shot.



Focus is on getting the tip of the stick to catch the front of the puck at the bottom to achieve lift. Once athletes have developed a strong stationary backhand lift shot, they will be ready to learn how to create lift and power simultaneously. The difference in this shot is that the puck will not flip when lifted, but will fly as a saucer with much improved aerodynamics.



Advanced Skills

As athletes' shooting skills develop, introduction of the following is appropriate:

- ♦ Dynamic shot – Shooting on the run is most common and should be encouraged.
- ♦ Sliding forehand – Shooting puck while body is sliding to shooting side (i.e. sliding into base in baseball).
- ♦ Blind backhand – Shooting with back to goal target; no visual contact with goal.
- ♦ Between legs – Shooting as backhand normally, flip puck between legs toward goal; no visual contact with target.
- ♦ Re-direction – Re-directing puck that is moving toward goal area. Usually comes from a pass or another shot. Stick strikes outside edge of moving puck and re-directs it towards goal.

Teaching Points

Make sure athletes understand that while shooting on goal, the “high stick” rule still applies. Make sure that athletes understand about the goal crease. Teach the athletes that their stick is an extension of their body and it also cannot cross the crease. Have them practice shooting as close to the goal as possible without causing a crease violation.

Key Words

- ♦ “Take a step”
- ♦ “Look at the goal”
- ♦ “Shoot”
- ♦ “Follow through”
- ♦ “Keep your stick down”
- ♦ “Watch the crease”

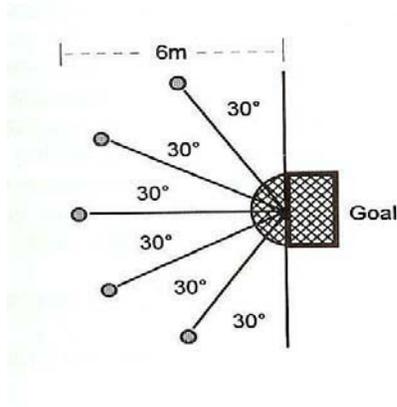
Coaching Tips

Train your athletes to shoot around, not at, the goalie. Eventually you will be able to teach your athletes to pick the open spot(s) to shoot at on the goal. Athletes should be able to vary the placement of their shots to increase their odds of scoring a goal.

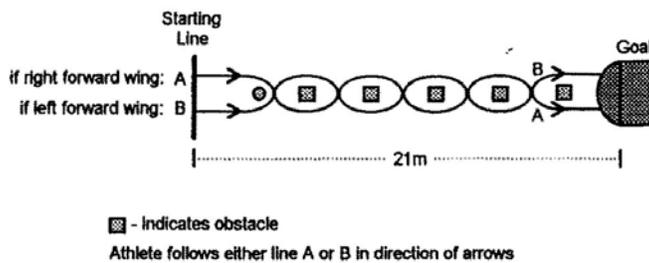


Shooting on Goal Drills

1. **Shoot Around the Goal Drill (same drill as Individual Skills Contest):** Five pucks are placed at varying places around the goal. Athlete moves from puck to puck shooting on goal while being timed.



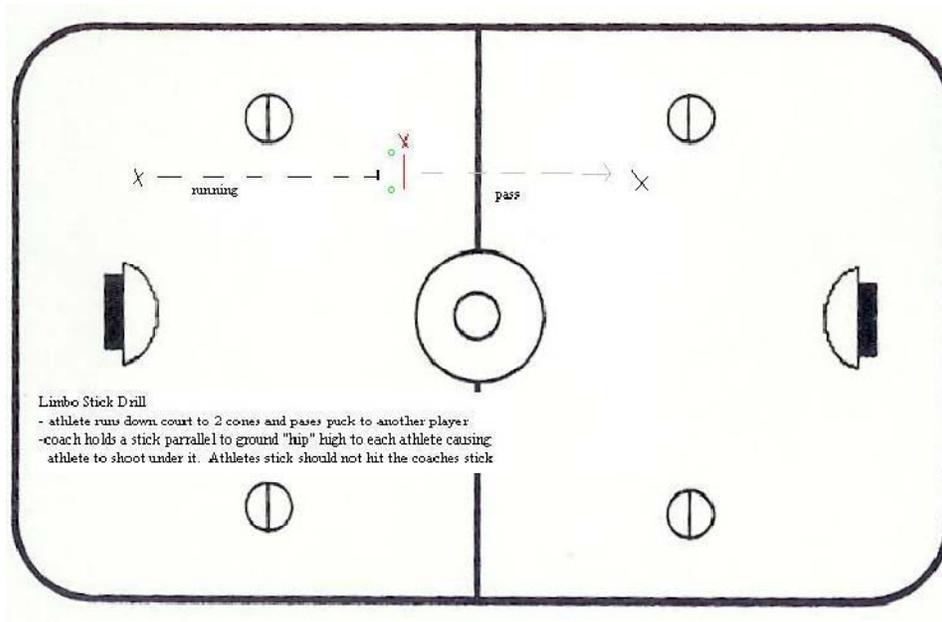
2. **Weave and Shoot Drill (same drill as Individual Skills Contest):** Athlete weaves 21 meters through cones placed every 3 meters and shoots at goal.



| SCORING CHART | |
|---------------|------------------------------|
| 25 | |
| - | (time elapsed) |
| - | (1 pt. for each cone missed) |
| + 5 | (bonus if goal is scored) |
| TOTAL | |

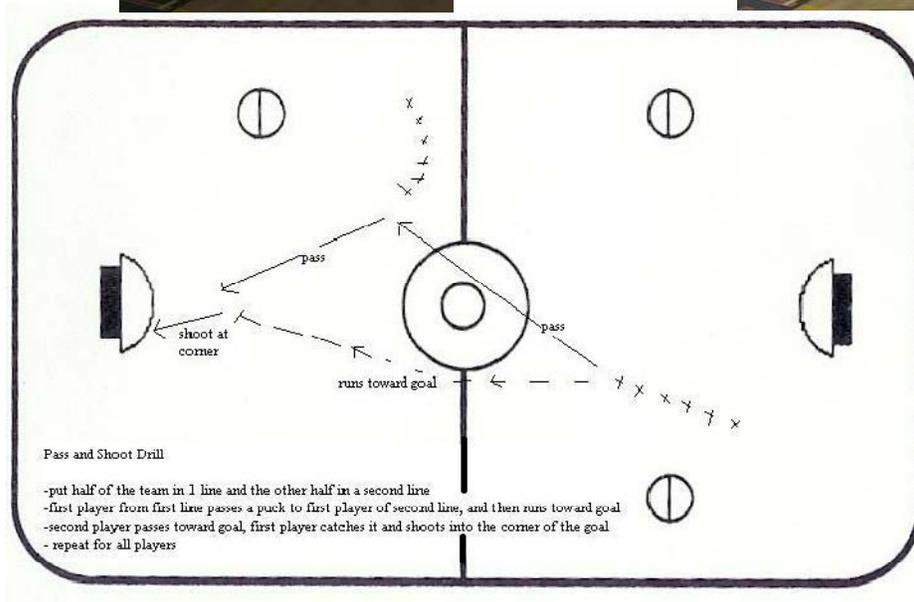
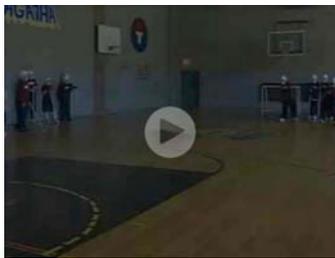


3. **Limbo Stick Drill:** The purpose of this drill is to emphasize stick control (no high sticking) after a shot. A coach holds a stick parallel to the ground at the height of the athlete's hips (adjust to accommodate each athlete's height), just past two cones. The athletes form a single line. One at a time, they run, toward the cones where the coach is holding the stick and shoot the puck on goal while keeping their stick from striking the coach's stick (limbo stick). An additional modification to this drill is to add a goalie.



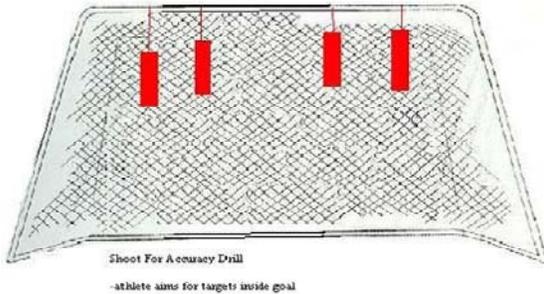


4. **Pass and Shoot Drill:** One line of athletes faces the goal and advances, one at a time, toward the goal. Another line of athletes is off to the side. The athlete at the head of the first line passes to the athlete at head of the second line, runs toward the goal to receive the return pass and then shoots for corner of goal. Have athletes return to the opposite line to continue the drill. Make sure each athlete does the drill from both lines at least once.

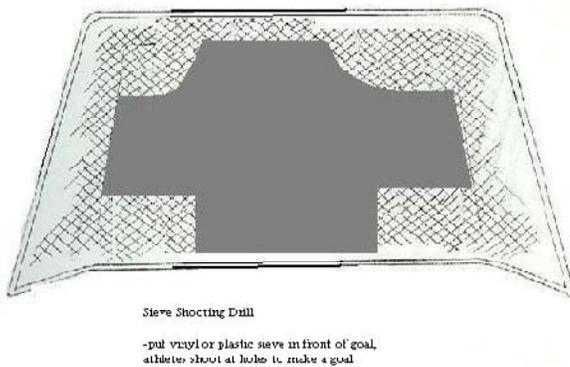




5. **Shoot for Accuracy Drill:** Practice against a target to ensure success. Progress from wide and close targets to narrow and more distant ones. Spray-painted milk cartons hung on the goal crossbar make good targets for goal shooting. NOTE: Targets may be as simple as taped "X's" on the wall.



6. **Sieve Shooting Drill:** A vinyl or plastic sieve is attached to the goal. The sieve has the corners cut out to give the athletes a target at which to shoot.



NOTE: All above drills can be performed using Forehand, Backhand and/or Lift shots.



Faults & Fixes -- Shooting on Goal

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill Reference |
|---|--|---|
| Puck misses target | Keep eye on target Follow through | Shoot for Accuracy Drill Shoot Around the Goal Drill |
| Athlete causes crease violation | Have athlete shoot from farther distance | Weave and Shoot Drill |
| High stick occurs during follow-through | Keep tip of stick below shoulder height | Limbo Stick Drill |
| Athlete shoots at the goalie | Teach the athlete to shoot around the goalie | Shoot for Accuracy Drill Sieve Shooting Drill |



Defense

Defense is the act of assisting your team's goalie in protecting the goal.

| Your Athlete Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Identify his or her own goalie | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Position self between the opponent and the goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Maintain proper defensive position | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Track a moving puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Block or stop puck with body | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Block or stop puck with stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stick check an opponent | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Body check an opponent | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Intercept a moving puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Clear the puck out of the defensive end | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Clear the puck from the goal crease without stepping into the crease | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Communicate with teammates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Work with another teammate to trap an opposing athlete | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Make an outlet pass to a teammate to start an offensive play | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Totals

Teaching the Skill

The easiest way to take the puck back is to intercept a pass. This is an excellent method of stopping the opponent's scoring threat. The athlete has to use both the eyes and body to get in position to intercept a pass. Once in position, the athlete only has to place the body or stick in front of the puck to intercept it. By anticipating where the opponents are going to pass, the athlete can move into a strategic intercepting position. Some opponents have certain patterns that they always seem to follow. If your athletes know the pattern, they can then intercept the pass.

Be sure your athletes know that stick checking is the optimal way to steal the puck. (Refer back to Stick Handling – Stick Checking for skill). Forwards should also be taught to look for opportunities to “trap” the opposing athlete with the puck. “Trapping” involves a guard delaying the athlete on offense while a forward moves in on the other side and “traps”/steals the puck, like a double team.

Maintaining proper position is important in minimizing goal scoring opportunities by the opponents. That is why each athlete should know where to be and what to do at any given time. Teammates should work together to try to stop the opponents from scoring. Positioning gives order to otherwise random play.

GUARDS: The right defenseman stays on the right half of the court while the left defenseman stays on the left half of the court. When an opponent gains control of the puck, the right defenseman should be positioned on the right side in front of the goal crease, and the left defenseman should be in the middle protecting the front of the goal and watching for a pass across court. The right defenseman should be positioned between the opponent with the puck and the goal. If the puck is in the middle, the right and left defensemen should be next to each other between the opponent with the puck and the goal. If the puck is on the left side, the right defenseman should be in the middle protecting the front of the



goal crease and watching for a pass. The right and left defensemen must work together, playing a zone defense outside the goal crease.

FORWARDS: The center plays the whole court. When an opponent gains control of the puck, the center should be positioned in the middle and in front of the goal. The center works with the two defensemen in defending the opponents and trying to steal the puck. The right wing can help out on defense if needed. The left wing does exactly the same, but on the left side of the court. There is no rule requiring athletes to maintain these positions, as they can go anywhere on the court except in the goal crease area. In general, the athletes should maintain these positions. Only the athletes of the team on offense may put their sticks in the goal crease to clear the puck. No athlete (except the goalie) can put his or her body inside of the goal crease.

Teaching Points

Athletes can handle or block a moving puck using their foot, stick or hand. The puck may be blocked or kicked forward, but may not be kicked into the opposing goal. If an athlete kicks the puck into his or her own team's net, the goal counts for the opposing team.

When maintaining proper position on an opponent with the puck, athletes should remain between their opponent and their own goal. Athletes should not try to stick check the puck away or intercept a pass if it gives the opponent an opportunity to get closer to the goal. Demonstrate how easy it is to score a goal when an opponent on offense gets between the defender and the goal, and how hard it is to score a goal when the defender stays between the opponent and the goal.

Body checking is the most effective way to take the puck away from an opponent if both athletes have their sticks inside the puck. The objective is to gain leverage to dislodge the puck from the opponent. By stepping in front of the opponent, the athlete is in position to use his or her back to push the opponent away from the puck. Even though an athlete can use his or her own body to push an opponent away from the puck, by stepping in front of the opponent, the athlete will get penalized for elbowing, tripping, kicking, etc.

Taking the puck from an opponent is a defensive play, and making an outlet pass to a teammate is the start of an offensive play. This transition from defense to offense is critical. When making an outlet pass, the athlete needs to minimize the chances of the opponents regaining control of the puck and scoring a goal. When an outlet pass goes across the middle and is intercepted by the opponents, they will have an excellent opportunity to score right away. However, when an outlet pass travels parallel to the sideline on the side passed from and is intercepted by the opponents, the opponents will not have an easy scoring opportunity. They will have to bring the puck back into the middle, giving the opponents a chance to get back on defense. Stick handling the puck up the middle through opponents can also be dangerous. Stick handling the puck behind a team's own goal and then making an outlet pass to the closest sideline or up the sideline is safer.

Key Words

- ◆ "Defense"
- ◆ "Get the puck"
- ◆ "Get back"
- ◆ "Stay with them"
- ◆ "Move your feet"
- ◆ "Stay between the puck and the goal"
- ◆ "Block the puck"
- ◆ "Talk to each other"

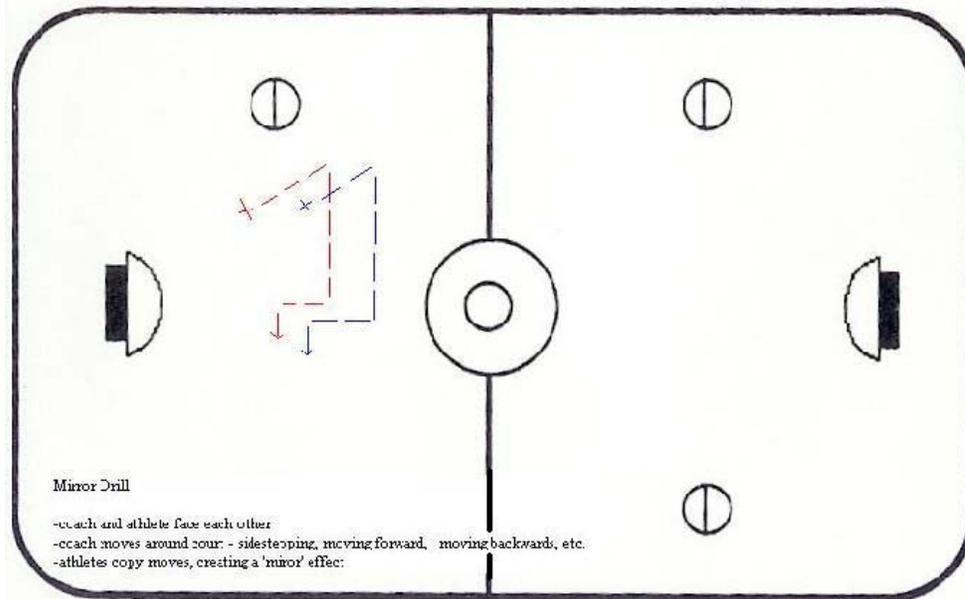
Coaching Tips

It is important to teach your athletes to communicate with each other on the court in order to ensure full coverage of the defensive zone and to prevent blocking your own goalie. Teammates should work together to try and stop the opposing team from scoring a goal.



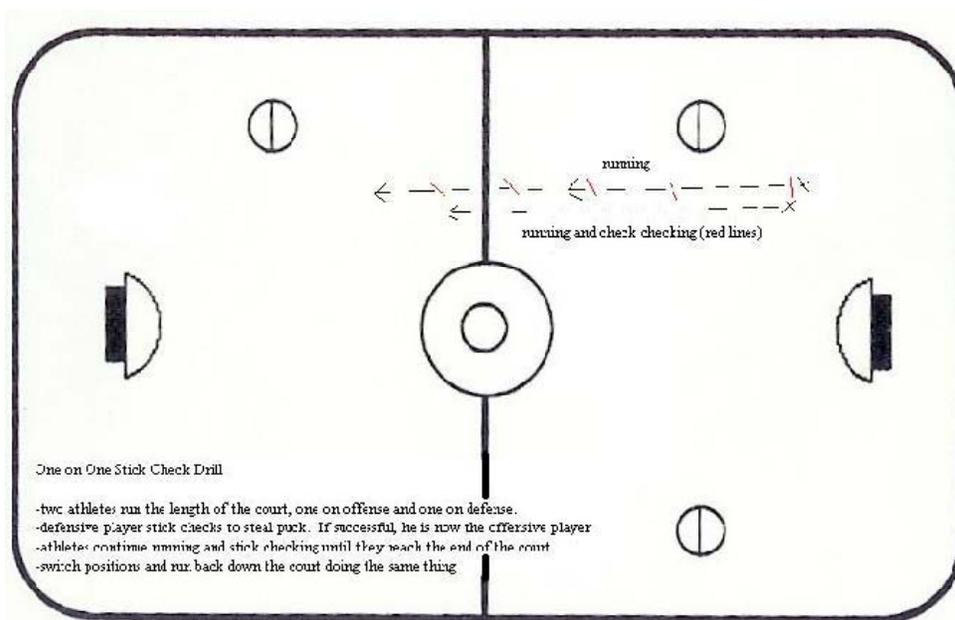
Defense Drills

1. **Mirror Drill:** Place athlete between goal and coach. As the coach slides left or right with the puck, have the athlete slide in the same direction. As the coach slides forward or backward with the puck, have the athlete slide in same direction. Coach can point or say which direction to go if the athlete does not follow.

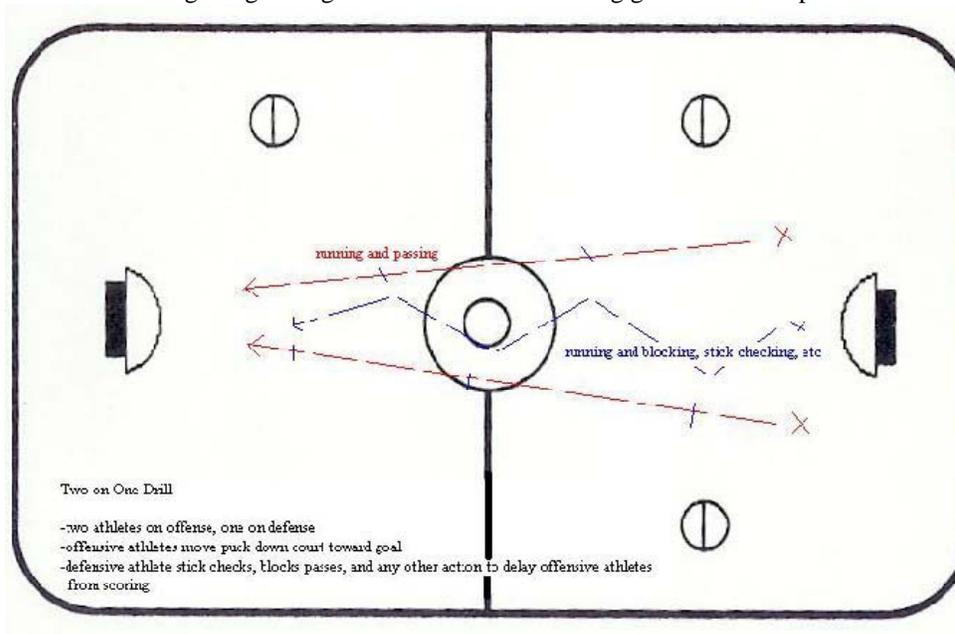


2. **One on One Stick Checking Drill:** Athletes form a single line at one end of the facility. Two athletes step forward (one athlete on offense and one on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes run the length of the facility. The athlete on defense tries to stick check the athlete on offense while the athlete on offense tries to protect the puck. When the athlete on defense properly stick checks the athlete on offense and gains control of the puck, that athlete switches to offense and the athlete who was stick checked switches to defense. The objective of this drill is to emphasize proper stick checking while moving on the court.



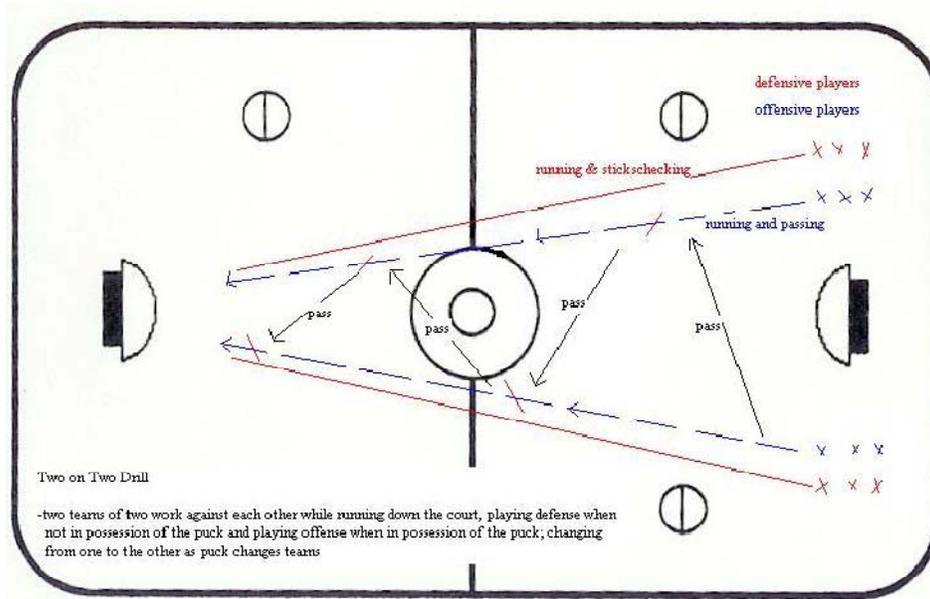


3. **Two on One Drill:** Athletes form a single line at one end of the facility. Three athletes step forward (two athletes on offense and one on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes run the length of the facility while the defensive athlete tries to: a) delay the athletes on offense, b) gain control of the puck or c) prevent the athletes from getting off a good shot while maintaining good defensive position.



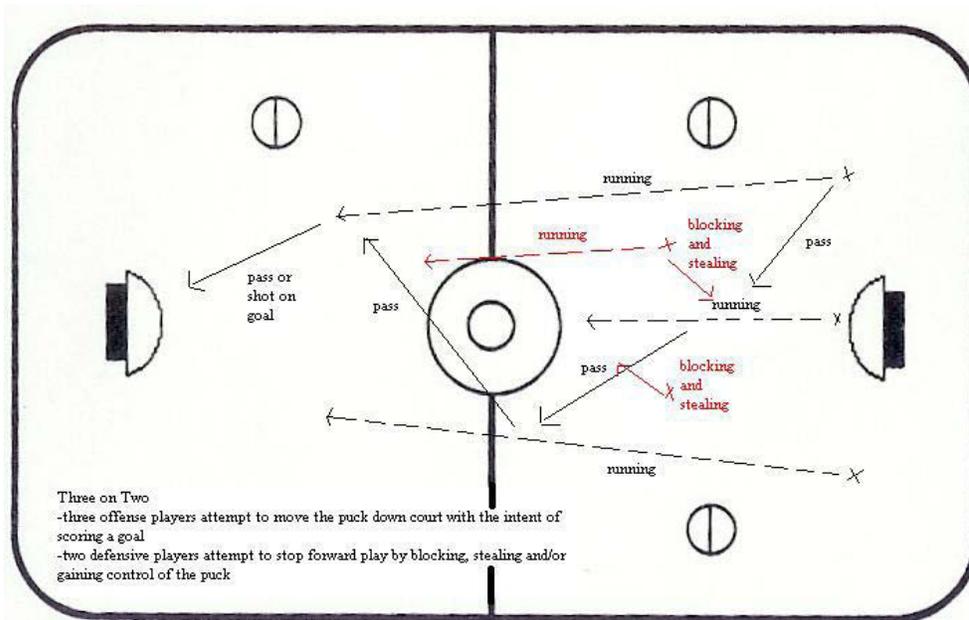


4. **Two on Two Drill:** Athletes form two lines at one end of the facility. Four athletes step forward (two athletes on offense and two on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes on offense pass to each other while running the length of the facility. The athletes on defense: a) impede the forward movement of the athletes on offense, b) block their view or c) stick check or capture the puck. When the athletes on defense properly gain control of the puck from the athletes on offense, those two athletes switch to offense and the two athletes who lost control of the puck switch to defense. This is the same drill as the One on One Drill, except the athletes work in pairs. This drill can emphasize teamwork, both on offense and defense.



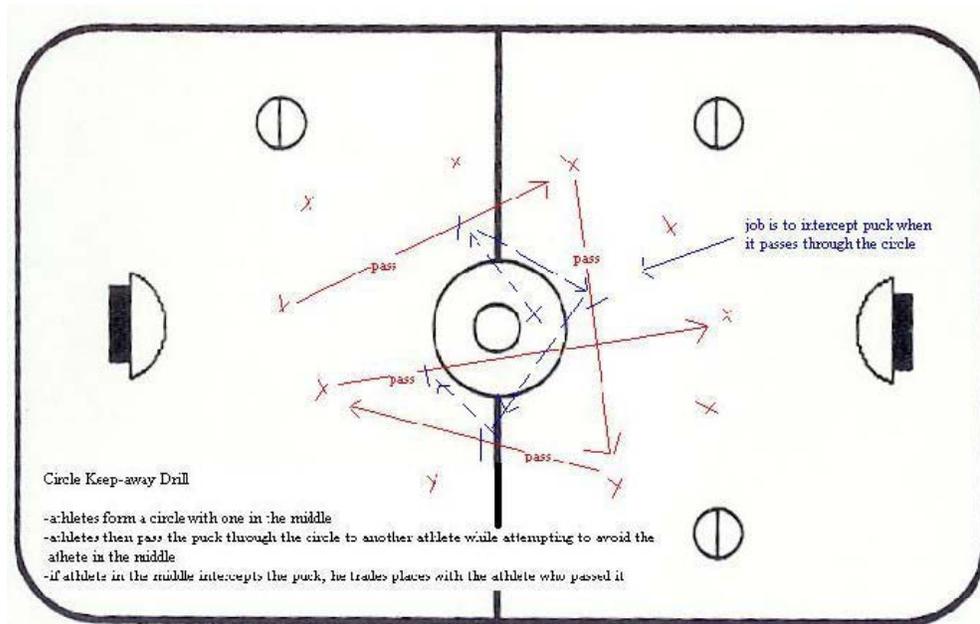
5. **Three on Two Drill (same as the Two on One Drill except with additional athletes):** Athletes form a single line at one end of the facility. Five athletes step forward (three athletes on offense and two on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes run the length of the facility while the defensive athletes try to: a) delay the athletes on offense, b) gain control of the puck or c) prevent the athletes from getting off a good shot while maintaining good defensive position. This drill can emphasize teamwork, both on offense and defense.



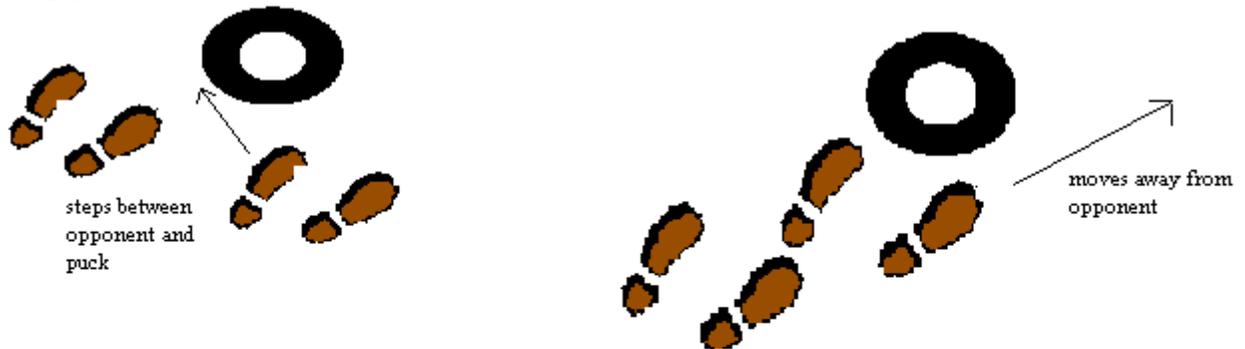


- Circle Keep-Away Drill:** Athletes form a circle and pass around an athlete who tries to intercept the puck. Athlete whose pass gets intercepted goes in the middle, and the athlete who intercepts returns to the circle. Variations: a) Add more people in the middle. b) Add more pucks. c) Person in middle only has to touch the puck. d) If athlete makes a bad pass out of the circle or bad block or pass, then the athlete goes in the middle.





7. **Body Check and Score Drill:** Two athletes have their sticks inside the puck facing the goal they are attacking. On whistle, athletes try to body check and score a goal. Rotate athletes until everyone has competed against each other.



Body Check and Score Drill

- two athletes, standing side-by-side, have their sticks in the puck
- one athlete steps in front of the other one to gain an advantageous position; effectively blocking his opponent from the puck
- athlete in control of the puck steps away from opponent with sole possession of the puck

8. **Two-on-Two Keep-Away Drill:** Two teams of two athletes wear different colored scrimmage vests. When one team gets three consecutive passes without losing the puck, they win. Winning teams play each other. Losing teams play each other. NOTE: The coach can use cones to section off the court into smaller areas so that all of the athletes are doing the same drill at the same time.
9. **Team Keep-Away Drill:** Two teams wear different colored scrimmage vests. Three consecutive passes by one team scores a point. This is a variation of the Two on Two Keep-Away Drill, using more athletes or the entire team.



Faults & Fixes – Defense

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill/Test Reference |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Athlete allows opponent between self and the goal | Teach the athlete correct defensive positioning | Mirror Drill One on One Drill |
| Athlete commits a crease violation | Teach the athlete to clear the puck without stepping in the goal crease | Two-on-Two Keep-Away Drill |
| Athlete passes puck forward with no intended target | Teach the athlete to pass puck to a teammate | Accuracy Pass Drill |
| Athlete blocks own goalie's line of sight | Teach the athlete to react to the goalie's communication | Three on Two Drill |



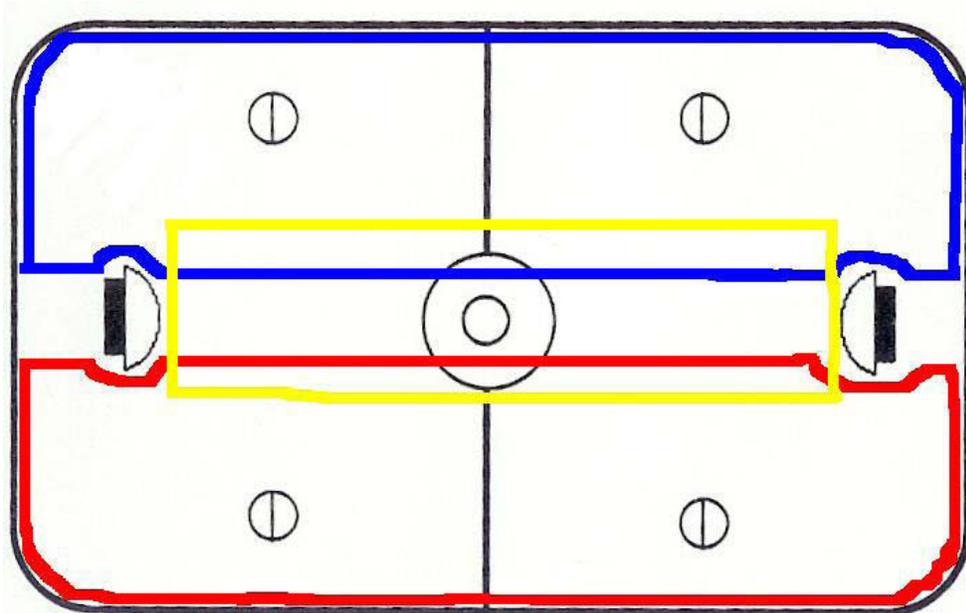
Offense

Offense is the act of controlling the puck with the intention of shooting on goal and scoring.

| Your Athlete Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Identify the opponent's goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Identify the offensive position | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Track a moving puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stick handle/ control puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pass the puck accurately | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Receive various passes from teammates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move to an open area on the court to receive a pass | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Communicate with teammates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Protect the puck from the defense | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoot on opposing goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Totals | | | | |

Teaching the Skill

In order to control the puck, the three forwards, from the same team, need to use teamwork. Since everyone is constantly moving, they need to be aware of where each of them is on the court and where the opposing athletes are located. Walking the areas of the court with each athlete should be the first thing you teach. While athletes are doing the drills, keep reminding them to "stay in their lanes." The wings should cover 1/2 of the court each, so that between them, they cover the entire court. The center will have his or her "lane" down the middle.





Break the passing combinations into individual components. After athletes learn one segment, add another until the athletes learn the entire sequence. If necessary, physically assist athlete through the sequence. After awhile, point or tell the athlete which direction to go. If the passing combination involves several choices based on the previous segment, review those choices with the athlete just before starting the passing combination. Placing cones at the various spots where the athletes will go helps the athletes locate them. Start with the easier passing combinations and progress to the harder ones according to each athlete's ability level. These passing combinations are to simulate game passing combinations. During controlled game situations, assist the athletes through some of these passing combinations.

Teaching Points

Maintaining proper position on offense is important in setting up various offensive plays. Each athlete should know where to be and what to do at any time. Teammates should know where to pass and where to find each other. This makes order out of otherwise random play.

The right wing stays on the right side of the court. When the team gets control of the puck on their half of the court, the right wing should be at the right side of center circle to receive a possible outlet pass. Once the puck has been passed down court, the right wing goes to the right offensive corner. In this position the right wing may pass and receive passes from the left wing (behind the goal), the center (in front of the goal), or the defensemen (near center circle). From the right side of the goal, the right wing can also shoot and retrieve missed shots. The left wing does exactly the same, but on the left side of the court.

Once the puck has been passed down court, the center goes to the area in front of the goal. In this position the center may pass and receive passes from the wings (either offensive corner) or the defensemen (near center circle). The center is the primary athlete to shoot, screen, deflect and retrieve missed shots.

The right defenseman stays on the right side of the court. When the team gets control of the puck, the right defenseman may make the outlet pass to the right wing. Once the puck has been passed down court, the right defenseman may go up to the right point (near center circle on right side). In this position the center may pass and receive passes from the wing (either offensive corner), the center (in front of goal) or the left defenseman (left point). The right defenseman can also shoot from the right front of goal. However, the right defenseman is always ready to move back to defense as soon as the puck is in possession. The left defenseman does exactly the same, but on the left side of the court.

If the defensemen are not capable or ready to play point on offense, leave defensemen in defensive positions in front of their own goal. There is no rule requiring athletes to maintain these positions, as they can go anywhere on the court except in the goal crease area. However, the athletes should maintain these positions whenever possible, as: a) if every athlete is running over the entire court, they will not have enough stamina to finish a game at the same level that they started with; b) the closer the athletes are to each other, the less chance they have to pass to a teammate in a more open area of the court and c) if the opposing team manages to take the puck, they have a greater likelihood of scoring from that unprotected area on the court.

One skill you will need to teach all of your athletes is how to avoid having the puck taken from them by "spinning" away from their attacker. Spinning is rotating the body away from the opponent by pivoting on one foot and keeping the back toward the opponent. Teach athletes to keep themselves between the puck and the opposing athlete.

The area behind the goal is very useful in setting up various offensive passing combinations. When passing or stick handling behind the opponent's goal, an opening may be found in the opponent's defense. When passing or stick handling behind the athlete's own goal, the puck is relatively safe and the athlete can set up an offensive play. In many drills it is useful to add a chase defender who follows the traveled path of the puck and tries to take it away from the offense. A time limit can be set to force the offense to complete the passing combination in a timely manner.

Key Words

- ♦ "Spread out"
- ♦ "Watch the puck"
- ♦ "Shoot"
- ♦ "Follow the shot"



- ♦ “Communicate”
- ♦ “Protect the puck”
- ♦ “Keep your position”
- ♦ “Move”
- ♦ “He/she is open”
- ♦ “Pass the puck”

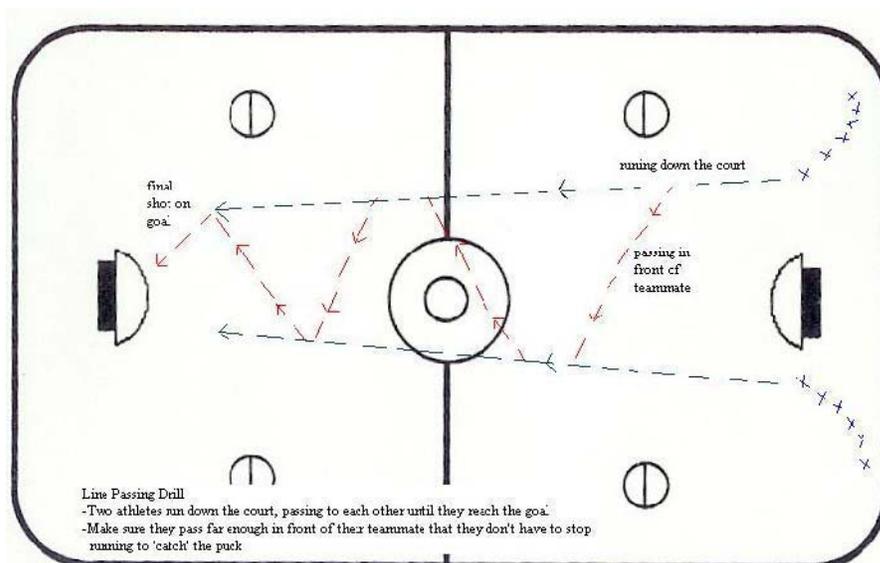
Coaching Tips

Once your athletes understand the importance of staying in position, you can teach them how to cover the entire court while switching positions. Athletes can tell teammates verbally that they are switching positions, or teammates adjust to playing different positions as the play occurs. Two athletes in the same position on the court indicate that one position is not covered and should be filled by one of those athletes. Switching can be very effective in setting up an offensive play because the defense won't always know whom to cover. By switching positions, an athlete may be able to find and utilize an open space.

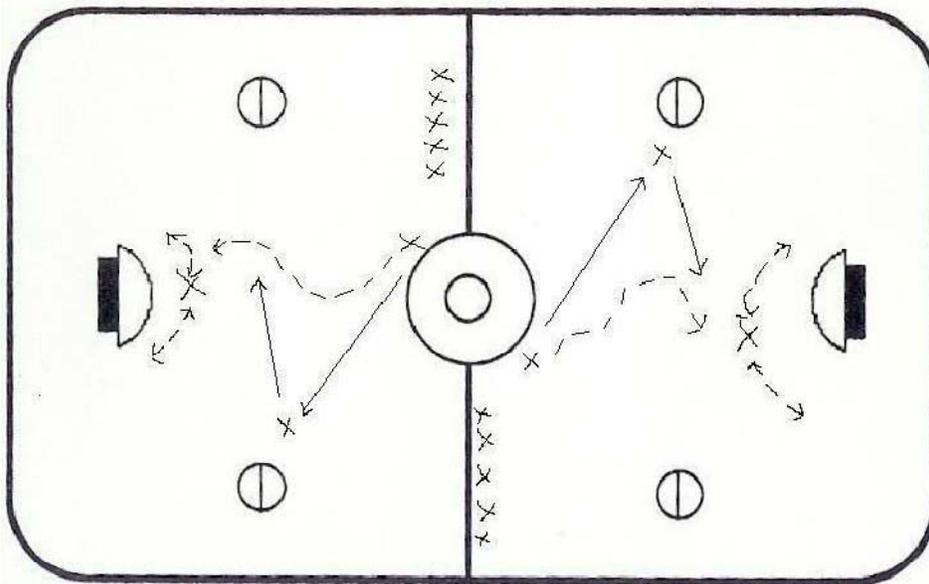


Offense Drills

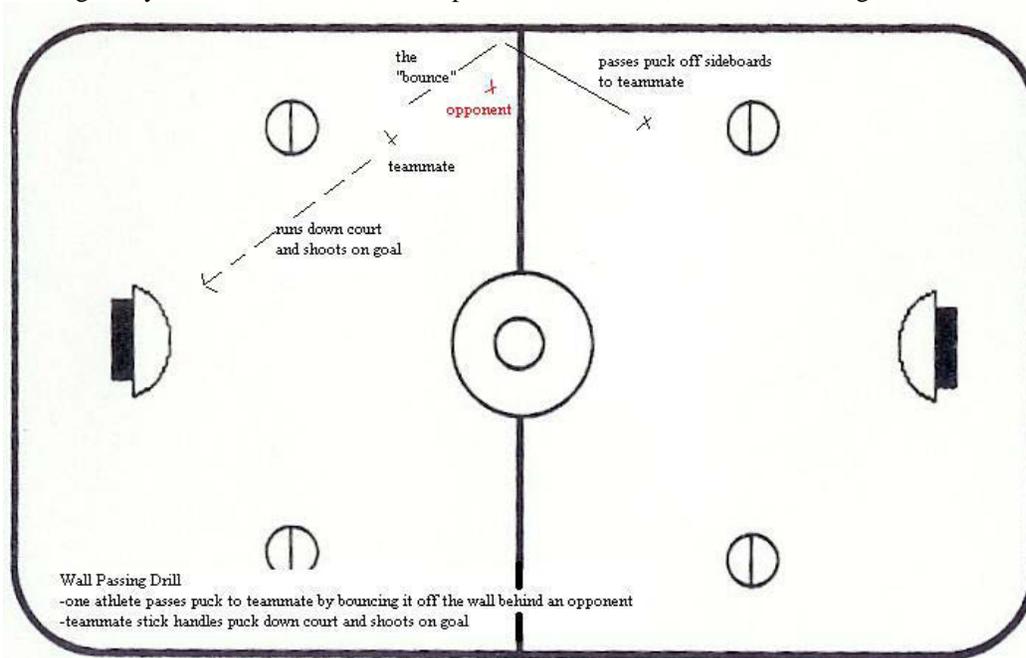
1. **Line Passing Drill:** Athletes form two lines with the athletes in the front going together. Left athlete passes the puck in front of right athlete. While running, right athlete receives the pass and passes in front of the left athlete. While running, left athlete receives the pass and passes in front of right athlete. Continue until athletes reach far goal, at which time one athlete shoots on goal. For variations, add: a) a goalie, b) time limit, c) defender (passive at first), d) third offensive athlete, or e) a second defender.



2. **Give-and-Go Drill:** Divide athletes into groups. Working in pairs, have one athlete pass down court to the second athlete and then run past the teammate to receive a pass. Athletes should continue passing and running ahead until they reach the other end of the court. This encourages passing and staying aware of teammate position. NOTE: Passing should always be in front (between the receiver and the goal) of the intended athlete so that the athlete does not have to slow down or stop forward motion to gain control of the puck. It is important that the athletes understand this concept.



3. **Wall Passing Drill:** Athlete passes puck off sideboard, around defender and back to self, then stick handles length of court and shoots. Add proper spin move when making the pass so that defender can't stick check. Variations: a) Athlete passes puck off sideboard around defender to teammate. Teammate stick handles length of court and shoots after receiving pass. b) Athlete passes puck off sideboard around defender to teammate. Athlete goes by defender, receives a return pass from teammate, stick handles length of court and shoots.



4. **Half Court Behind Goal Drill:** Center and two wings are in position at half court. Center passes to right corner. Right wing runs to right corner and receives pass. Left wing runs to left corner and receives pass from right wing. Center runs to area in front of goal, receives pass from left wing and shoots a goal. Repeat drill to opposite side. Variations: a) add a goalie, b) add a chase defender or c) have a time limit.

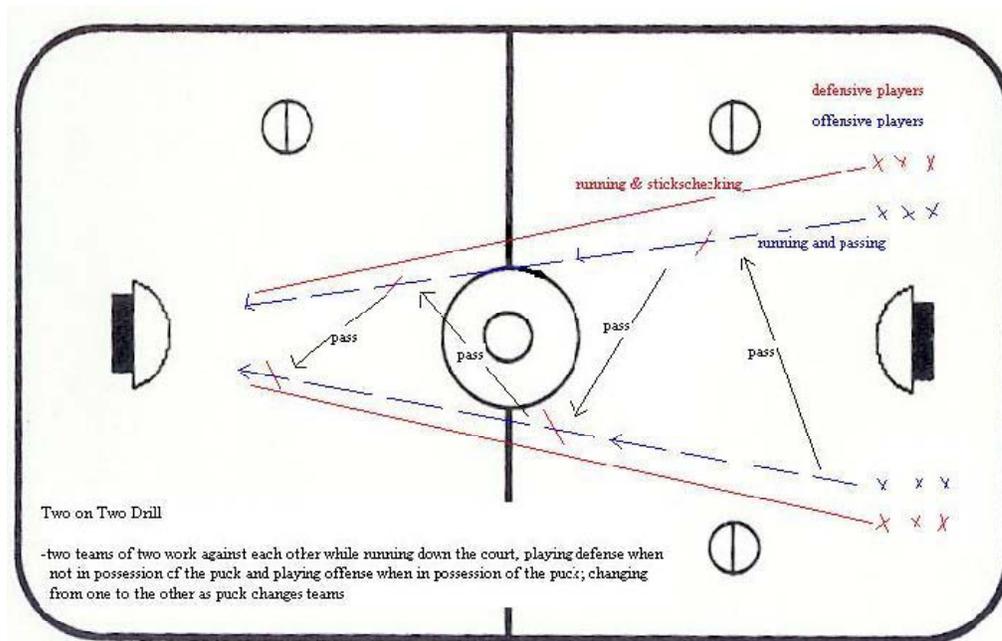


- 5. Full Court Behind Goal Drill:** Center gets puck behind own goal and passes to right wing at right side of center circle. Left wing runs from left side of center line to left corner and receives pass from right wing. Right wing runs to right corner and receives pass from left wing. Center runs to area in front of goal, receives pass from right wing and shoots a goal. Repeat drill to opposite side. Variations: a) add a goalie, b) add a chase defender or c) have a time limit.
- 6. Offense vs. Defense Drill:** Offense consists of center (in front of goal crease), right wing (right offensive corner), left offensive corner, right point defenseman (right side of center circle) and left point defenseman (left side of center circle). Defense consists of right defenseman (in front of goal crease on right side), left defenseman (in front of goal crease on left side), center (in front of goal crease), right wing (right side of center circle) and left wing (left side of center circle). Puck starts with the offense passing the puck around. If offense makes a goal, score one point for the offense. The two teams should wear different colored scrimmage vests. If offense is winning easily, add a goalie to the defense.



- 7. Two on Two Drill:** Athletes form two lines at one end of the facility. Four athletes step forward (two athletes on offense and two on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes on offense pass to each other while running the length of the facility. The athletes on defense: a) slow down and impede the forward movement of the athletes on offense, b) block their view and c) stick check or capture the puck. When the athletes on defense properly gain control of the puck from the athletes on offense, those athletes switch to offense and the two athletes who lost control of the puck switch to defense. This is the same drill as the One on One Drill, except the athletes work in pairs.





8. **Stick Handle Behind Goal Drill:** Athlete stick handles from right corner behind the goal to left corner. Teammate runs from right side to area in front of goal, receives a pass from athlete and shoots a goal. Then do the same drill to the opposite side. Variations: a) add a goalie, b) add a chase defender or c) have a time limit.
9. **Pass Around the Goal Drill:** Athlete "A" stick handles from right corner behind the goal to left corner. Teammate "B" runs from right side to area in front of goal and receives a pass from athlete "A." Athlete "A" runs back behind goal and receives a pass in right corner from teammate "B." Teammate "B" runs to left corner and receives a pass from athlete "A." Athlete "A" runs to area in front of goal, receives a pass from teammate "B" and then shoots on goal. Set a time limit for the event. Repeat drill, switching the athlete and teammate. Add a chase defender.
10. **Wing Crossover Drill:** On signal, the right wing runs from the right side of the center circle toward the left offensive corner, while the left wing runs from the left side of the center circle toward the right offensive corner. At the same time, the center stick handles the puck toward the offensive end. As the two wings cross over in front of the goal, the center shoots on goal. The goalie may get screened, or the wings may deflect the shot into the goal. The wings may get screened, or the goalie may deflect the shot into the goal. For variation, have the center pass to one of the wings as they cross over. The wing then takes a quick shot before the defense gets set.
11. **Full Court Switching Drill:** Center makes outlet pass from behind own goal to left wing (left side of center circle). Right wing (right side of center circle) runs to left offensive corner and receives a pass from the left wing. Center runs to right offensive corner and receives a pass behind the goal from the right wing (in left offensive corner). Left wing runs to area in front of the goal, receives a pass from the center (in right offensive corner) and shoots. Do same drill to opposite side. Add chase defender. Add time limit. Variation: After initial pass to left wing (left side of center circle), the drill may be run like the Wing Crossover Drill. The right wing and the center can time their runs to cross over in front of the goal. The left wing can now stick handle and shoot (with a possible screen or deflection) or pass to the wings as they cross over. This should confuse the defense (and probably the offense as well).

NOTE: Many of the Defensive Drills are beneficial for teaching Offense and vice versa.



Faults & Fixes – Offense

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill Reference |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| Athlete is out of position | Teach correct positioning on court | Three on Two Drill |
| Athletes are standing too close to teammates | Teach athletes to spread out on court | Offense vs. Defense Drill |
| Athlete is standing still | Teach athlete to move with and without the puck | Pass Around the Goal Drill |
| Athlete does not wait for opening to make a shot | Teach athlete to pass to another teammate who has a better shot | Pass Around the Goal Drill |
| Athlete refuses to pass the puck | Teach athlete to pass the puck | Give and Go Drill |
| Athlete shoots at the wrong goal | Teach athlete to recognize the opponent's goal | Offense vs. Defense Drill |
| Athlete runs in the wrong direction | Ask athlete to identify the opponent's goal | Offense vs. Defense Drill |



Goal Tending

Goal tending is the act of defending the goal from within the goal crease and preventing the puck from entering the net.

| Your Goalie Can | Never | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Identify own goal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Identify the goal crease | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Understand the rules of the position | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use and control the goalie stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Track moving puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move laterally in the crease | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Maintain proper position in the crease | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Keep feet within the goal crease at all times | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Communicate with teammates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stop the puck with the stick | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stop the puck with the body | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Control the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Clear the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Go to ground to stop the puck | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Return to standing position after going to ground | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Totals

Teaching the Skill

The Basic Goalie Stance (“Set” position)

- ♦ Feet are shoulder-width apart or with the pads touching.
- ♦ Knees and waist are bent slightly, with the weight forward on the balls of the feet.
- ♦ Back is kept straight with head up, always watching the play in front of the goal.
- ♦ Blade of stick is kept flat on the floor at all times.
- ♦ The stick is held firmly with one hand.
- ♦ The catching hand is held to the side, knee high, open, level with the stick glove and ready for a shot.



Teaching Points

- ♦ Focus eyes on puck at all times.
- ♦ Play the puck and the offensive athlete.
- ♦ Keep pads centered on the puck. Always try to keep legs TOGETHER – never apart.



- ♦ Recover from floor as quickly as possible.
- ♦ Catch puck whenever possible, and then release it to teammate as quickly as possible.
- ♦ After making a save, freeze the puck, place it where only teammates can get it or put it to a teammate.
- ♦ Keep feet in the goal crease at all times.
- ♦ Communicate with teammates.

A goalie should be taught two basic types of movements:

1. For moving short distances quickly and from side-to-side to keep position in front of the puck, use the side step. Take short steps without turning the foot. When side-stepping, the goalie is always in basic stance. The foot is never turned on this move. This move is also used when the puck carrier is behind the net and when the goalie must move from post to post.
2. For staying in line with a shooter, use the pivot. The goalie pivots his/her upper body to face the shooter when the shooter moves from the middle of the court to the outside.
3. The goalie may need to pivot and then side-step, or vice versa, to stay in position between the shooter and the goal.

Key Words

- ♦ “Watch the puck, not the athlete”
- ♦ “Keep legs together”
- ♦ “Keep stick flat on the floor”
- ♦ “Stay on your feet”
- ♦ “Get up”
- ♦ “Clear the puck”
- ♦ “Hold the puck”
- ♦ “Nice save”

Coaching Tips

Some tips the goalies should remember include the following:

- ♦ Always keep the blade of the stick flat on the floor.
- ♦ Concentrate on holding the set position from the time the attacking team advances over the center line until the puck leaves the defensive zone.
- ♦ Let the opponent make the first move – don’t commit to the first move.
- ♦ Try to predict what the opponents are going to do next.
- ♦ Stay on your feet (don’t go to the ground too early).
- ♦ Throw the puck like a plastic saucer disc so that it lands flat.
- ♦ Move out of the net, always staying in the goal crease, in order to cut down the shooting angle.
- ♦ Use the goalie stick and catching hand to determine position in the net.
- ♦ The goalie watches the puck, the defense watches the athlete.



Goal Tending Drills

1. **New Goalie Drill:** Roll a volleyball at the goalie, who should try to stop it with the stick.



2. **Angle Drill:** Move out from the net to challenge the shooter so that he/she has a smaller target area. In practice, the coach can tie two ropes of equal length to each goal post and hold the ends of ropes together to form a triangle. The ropes reflect where the goalie should be to cover the angle.
3. **Goalie Warm-up Drill:** Goalie takes shots from teammates. Line teammates up in a semicircle 6-8 meters (20-26 feet) in front of the net, each with two pucks. Athletes shoot one puck in sequence around the semicircle, then reverse shooting their second puck. Variations: Run up and shoot, coach calls on athletes to shoot, etc.

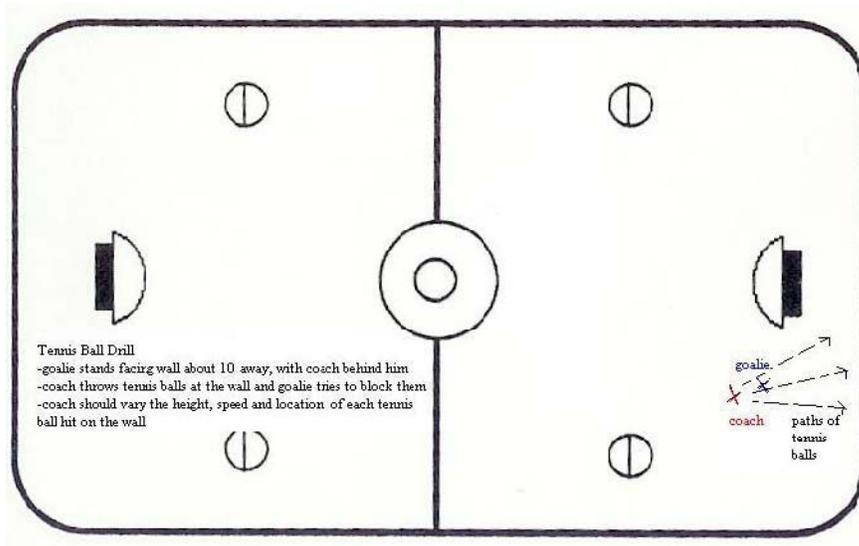


4. **Goalie Positioning Drill:** Two coaches or athletes, each on opposite sides of the goal 6-8 meters away, take turns shooting at the goal.
5. **Puck Tracking Drill:** Two or three coaches or athletes pass puck around goal, shooting randomly.





6. **Tennis Ball Drill:** Goalie faces wall from 3 meters (10 feet) out, with back to coach. Coach throws a tennis ball off the wall, and goalie reacts.



7. **Goalie Mirror Drill:** Coach (always in basic stance) makes a move, and the goalie follows and imitates as quickly as possible. Use moves in all directions.
8. **Reaction Drill:** On a whistle, the goalie should go to ground as if making a save. On a second whistle, the goalie gets back onto the feet and into a set position. Coaches should vary the time between whistles.





Faults & Fixes -- Goal Tending

| Common Mistakes | Correction | Drill Reference |
|---|--|---|
| Goalie comes out of the goal crease | Teach the goalie to keep feet in goal crease | Angle Drill Goalie Positioning Drill |
| Goalie goes to ground too early | Teach the goalie to wait until the opponent begins to take a shot | Reaction Drill |
| Goalie throws the puck up the middle of the court | Teach the goalie to throw the puck to the side or leave it in the crease | |
| Goalie does not control the save | Teach the goalie to prevent the puck from rebounding | Goalie Warm-up Drill Tennis Ball Drill |
| Goalie stays down too long after save | Teach the goalie to get back into standing position quickly | Reaction Drill |



Adaptations

In competition, it is important that the rules not be changed to suit athletes' special needs. However, coaches can modify the training exercises to accommodate each athlete's special needs and/or adapt sport equipment to assist athletes in achieving success.

Specific adaptations for floor hockey are listed below:

Orthopedic Impairments

If an athlete cannot grasp a stick, the coach can attach the stick to the athlete's arm with an ace bandage or wrist guard.

Auditory Impairments

Use hand signals along with whistle to start and stop play.



Cross Training in Floor Hockey

Cross training is a modern-day term that refers to the substitution of skills other than the skills directly involved in the performance of an event. Cross training came about as a result of injury rehabilitation and is now also used in injury prevention. When runners sustain injuries in the legs or feet that keep them from running, other activities can be substituted so that the athlete can keep up his/her aerobic and muscular strength.

There is a limited value and crossover to the specific exercise. A reason to cross train is to avoid injury and maintain muscular balance during a period of intense sport specific training. One of the keys to success in sports is staying healthy and training over the long haul. Cross training allows athletes to do event-specific training workouts with greater enthusiasm and intensity, or less risk of injury.

Swimming Pool Workouts

Have athlete swim or perform running actions in the pool. Have athlete swim at a steady state for a minimum of 2 minutes (aerobic). Using a flotation vest or inner tube, have athlete perform running actions while in an upright position. Use intervals of 30-120 seconds with 2:1 rest.



Bicycle Workouts

Have athlete ride a bicycle as interval and steady state workouts. The athlete works out on a stationary bike or spinning bike doing aerobic and anaerobic workouts. The athlete rides an outdoor bike for 2 minutes to an hour at various paces.



Special Olympics

FLOOR HOCKEY COACHING GUIDE

Floor Hockey Rules, Protocol & Etiquette



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Teaching Floor Hockey Rules

Good coaches begin teaching floor hockey rules the minute the athletes step into the first training of the season. The head coach should begin the season with a meeting for all athletes, coaches and parents/guardians. The head coach should be prepared to discuss the upcoming season and his/her expectations concerning the athletes' behavior during the season. The coach must establish an expectation of good sportsmanship and good participation by each and every athlete in the program for the entire season. Teaching the rules of floor hockey begins at this meeting. A general discussion of the rules of floor hockey may be included; however, teaching the rules will be a process that happens during each and every training.

The coach should begin training by having athletes put on their "mandatory equipment." This is the first opportunity to begin teaching the rules. Mandatory equipment is just what it says: **mandatory** under the rules. This includes, at a minimum, a helmet (with a full face mask) and shin guards. Recommended equipment also includes gloves, elbow pads and kneepads. No activity should be undertaken until the athletes have their equipment on. This will send a message that safety is the most important factor for everyone in the program. It will also force the athletes to become comfortable competing while wearing their equipment. This will set the tone for the season. It is up to the coaching staff, however, to be consistent throughout the season and maintain the expectations set during this opening meeting.

Rules for Floor Hockey Competition

Injuries can occur in floor hockey, and a majority of these injuries are caused by the floor hockey stick. The floor hockey stick is also the cause of the majority of penalties received in competition. There are no statistics to know the percentage of injuries caused by the illegal use of the stick versus inadvertent injuries that happen during normal play. What is known is that if the coaches are diligent with their players during training, many of these injuries and the related penalties can be avoided.

For example, training begins with the athletes warming up and stretching. Athletes should begin jogging (walking is acceptable depending on ability level) around the training facility with their equipment on and carrying a floor hockey stick. This will give each athlete the opportunity to become familiar with carrying / using the stick properly. It will also give you, as the coach, the chance to re-enforce the proper use of the stick, including the grip, using two hands and carrying the stick with the tip as low to the ground as possible when not in the process of shooting. Teaching the athletes to know what they are doing with their sticks at all times will avoid injuries and unnecessary penalties in the future.

The most common penalties called are for the improper use of the stick: high sticking, slashing, charging and tripping. High sticking is the most strictly called rule in floor hockey because of the injuries that can occur. However, each of the stick penalties can and do cause injuries.

A high sticking penalty occurs when the stick is at or above a player's shoulder. The stick must be held below shoulder level at all times. The athletes should be taught to keep the tip of their sticks as low to the ground as possible at all times. The only time the stick should go above waist level is on the follow-through when shooting or in some instances when passing the puck.

The slashing penalty is caused when an athlete slashes down or across with the stick in an attempt to gain possession of the puck from the opposing player. The correct method to take possession of the puck is a technique called a stick check.

Charging penalties occur when an athlete holds the stick in both hands and runs into the opposing player in an attempt to move him/her away from the puck.

The tripping penalty may or may not be caused by use of the stick. Many tripping penalties are called when a player puts the stick between the opposing player's legs and causes the player to trip.

If coaches are diligent about teaching the proper use of the stick at each and every training session, you will notice fewer penalties and greater stick and puck control demonstrated by your athletes. Teaching floor hockey rules should become an integral part of training.



There are many other rules that should be taught during training. Some examples include:

1. Proper face-off techniques
2. The goal crease
3. Proper stick checking techniques
4. Proper body checking
5. Interference



Special Olympics Unified Sports® Rules

There are few differences in the general Floor Hockey rules for Special Olympics Unified Sports® competition, as stipulated in the official *Special Olympics Sports Rules*. The differences are highlighted below:

1. A roster consists of a proportionate number of athletes and partners. The goal of Unified Sports Floor Hockey is to field a team that consists of an equal number of Special Olympics athletes and partners of equal playing ability who compliment each other to form a team.
2. During competition, the line-up can contain no more than three partners on the court at any time. By the end of game, equal playing rules as stated in the rules (Section E, 1) shall apply.
3. Team sports must have an adult, non-playing coach. Player-coaches are not allowed in team sports.

Protest Procedures

Protest procedures are governed by the rules of competition and may change from competition to competition. Only rules violations can be protested. Judgment calls made by officials or divisioning decisions cannot be protested. The protest must site specific violations from the rulebook and a clear definition of why the coach feels the rule was not followed.

The role of the competition management team is to enforce the rules. As a coach, your duty to your athletes and team is to protest any action or events while your athlete is competing that you think violated the Official Floor Hockey Rules. It is extremely important that you do not make protests because you and your athlete did not get your desired outcome of an event. Protests are serious matters that impact a competition's schedule. Check with the competition team prior to competition to learn the protest procedures for that competition.



Floor Hockey Protocol & Etiquette

The establishing of proper protocols and etiquette at both training and competition is an important point from which to begin teaching sportsmanship. Being polite and respectful will set a proper example from which the athletes can learn.

During Training

For Coaches

- ♦ Arrive at training facility 15 minutes before the scheduled start time
- ♦ Come prepared to coach; know and understand the rules
- ♦ Ensure that athletes are wearing proper equipment before training begins
- ♦ Ensure that athletes participate in warm-ups, stretching and drills
- ♦ Have a copy of an up-to-date medical for every athlete
- ♦ Treat all athletes in the same manner
- ♦ Speak calmly when giving instructions or corrections
- ♦ Call players by their first names
- ♦ Maintain a calm and pleasant demeanor
- ♦ Listen to both athletes and parents when they have concerns
- ♦ Answer the athletes' questions in a respectful and reassuring tone
- ♦ Treat others as you would wish to be treated
- ♦ Set rules and expectations for all athletes and coaches

For Athletes

- ♦ Come prepared and on time to training
- ♦ Notify coach if not able to attend training
- ♦ Wear proper clothing for training (athletic shoes and properly fitted clothing)
- ♦ Give your best effort during training
- ♦ Notify coach of illness or injury



During Competition

For Coaches

- ◆ Ensure that you bring enough equipment
- ◆ Know where athletes are during the competition
- ◆ Get paperwork done on time or early (score sheets, etc.)
- ◆ Review all competition rules and procedures
- ◆ Attend all coaches meetings
- ◆ Encourage your athletes to play to the best of their ability at all times
- ◆ Practice the Honest Effort Rule
- ◆ Ensure athletes are wearing proper equipment and attire before competition begins
- ◆ Have a copy of an up-to-date medical for every athlete
- ◆ Treat all competition staff with respect; remember, they are also volunteers
- ◆ Maintain a calm demeanor throughout the competition
- ◆ Never use foul language or raise your voice in an angry tone
- ◆ Thank the competition staff and officials
- ◆ Set rules and expectations for all athletes and coaches

For Athletes

- ◆ Come prepared and on time to competition
- ◆ Notify coach if not able to attend competition
- ◆ Wear proper clothing to compete in (athletic shoes and properly fitted clothing)
- ◆ Give your best effort during the competition

Coaching Tips

- Use positive reinforcement when speaking to athletes
- Teach waiting one's turn during drills
- Teach good sportsmanship at all times
- Teach shaking hands at the end of all competitions
- Encourage athletes to cheer on teammates during training and competition



Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is both the coaches' and athletes' commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as fairness, respect for one's opponent and graciousness in winning or losing. It is those qualities that are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Below we highlight a few focus points and ideas on how to teach and coach sportsmanship to your athletes. Lead by example.

Competitive Effort

- Put forth maximum effort during each event (especially seeding games).
- Practice the skills with the same intensity as you would perform them in competition.
- Always compete at your best level during a competition, whether you are winning or losing: Never quit.

Fair Play at All Times

- Always comply with the rules.
- Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
- Respect the decision of the officials at all times.

Expectations of Coaches

- ♦ Always set a good example for athletes and fans to follow.
- ♦ Instruct athletes in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship and ethics the top priorities.
- ♦ Respect judgment of event officials, abide by rules of the event and display no behavior that could incite fans.
- ♦ Treat opposing coaches, directors, athletes and fans with respect.
- ♦ Shake hands with officials and the opposing coach in public both before and after the game.
- ♦ Develop and enforce penalties for athletes who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.
- ♦ Comply with Honest Effort Rule (team is playing to highest level possible at all times).
- ♦ Ensure that the team is seeded properly to ensure fair competition. Teams can be disqualified if this rule is not complied with.

Expectations of Athletes & Partners in Unified Sports®

- ♦ Treat teammates with respect.
- ♦ Encourage teammates when they make a mistake.
- ♦ Treat opponents with respect: Shake hands prior to and after contests.
- ♦ Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the contest and display no behavior that could incite fans.
- ♦ Cooperate with officials, coaches or directors and fellow athletes to conduct a fair contest.
- ♦ Do not retaliate (verbally or physically) if the other team demonstrates poor behavior.
- ♦ Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing Special Olympics.
- ♦ Define winning as doing your personal best.
- ♦ Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established by your coach.



Coaching Tips

- Discuss floor hockey sportsmanship, controlling temper and behavior at all times.
- Give sportsmanship awards or recognition after each competition or training.
- Always commend the athletes when they demonstrate sportsmanship.
- Respect other teams by not running up the score.
- Teach your athletes to respect their opponents and themselves.
- Teach your athletes to always stay under control, especially if they are feeling mad or angry.
- Teach your athletes to celebrate their accomplishments, but never in a taunting manner.
- Teach your athletes to always congratulate their opponents, win or lose.



Floor Hockey Attire

Appropriate floor hockey attire is required for all competitors. As a coach, discuss the types of sport clothes that are acceptable and not acceptable for training and competition. Discuss the importance of wearing properly fitted clothing, along with the advantages and disadvantages of certain types of clothing worn during training and competitions. A coach should set the example by wearing appropriate attire to training and competitions.



Shirts

For training, the athlete should wear a T-shirt that is comfortable and allows freedom of movement in the shoulders. For competition, the athlete should wear a clean uniform shirt that has a number on the back (see rules for proper numbering of uniforms). All shirts should be long enough to keep tucked into the athlete's shorts/ pants.

Pants/ Shorts

Coaches should encourage athletes to wear appropriate athletic attire such as sweatpants, warm-up pants or shorts. For example, jeans or jean shorts are not proper floor hockey attire for either training or competition. Explain that the athletes should not perform while wearing jeans that restrict their movement.

Shoes and Socks

Probably the most important article of clothing an athlete wears when playing floor hockey is properly fitting shoes. High-top basketball or athletic shoes are recommended because they provide the athlete with the best foot and ankle support. A cushioned insole and good arch and heel support are things to look for in a quality athletic shoe. Make sure laces are laced to the top. Discourage black-soled shoes that may leave marks on the playing surface. Socks should be worn to help prevent blisters.

Outerwear

The athlete should wear appropriate outerwear for warming up before, and for staying warm after, a floor hockey training or game. Teams sometimes wear warm-up pants during a game for more protection. A medium-weight cotton sweatshirt and sweatpants are excellent and inexpensive outerwear. Encourage your athletes to bring appropriate outerwear that may keep them warm after training.



Floor Hockey Equipment

The sport of floor hockey requires the type of sporting equipment described below. It is recommended that programs provide equipment that is in good working order, a minimum of one per athlete and if possible an adequate number of spares. Equipment should be checked regularly for damage and replaced as needed.



Helmets (Mandatory)

The most important piece of protective equipment a hockey player wears is a floor hockey helmet. The helmet must cover the entire head with a full mask. It is mandatory for all players. A chinstrap is necessary. The helmet must be worn at ALL times during training and competition, and it should fit snugly (not too tight, not too loose).



Shin Guards (Mandatory)

Floor hockey shin guards come in three styles: sponge padding that slides into the socks (not recommended), an ankle wrap with plastic sleeve inserts or a full-length knee-to-ankle shin guard. Higher skill level teams should use the full-length knee-to-ankle shin guard.





Gloves

Street hockey/ roller hockey style gloves with padding on tops of fingers and hand are strongly recommended to prevent hand injuries from sticks. Higher skill level teams should consider making gloves mandatory for their athletes.



Elbow pads/ Kneepads

Protective equipment consisting of a pad worn over the elbow or knee by floor hockey athletes.



Goalie Equipment

Goalie equipment includes a regulation ice/street/roller hockey goalie stick. The goalie is also required to wear a goalie helmet with full face mask. A goalie is allowed to wear regulation-size ice/street/roller hockey goalie pads and gloves or some reasonable facsimile thereof (e.g., cricket pads, baseball catcher's glove). Goalie pads cannot be any larger than regulation ice hockey pads. Goalies need proper equipment, and the equipment must fit well. The style of equipment chosen depends on individual preference.





Sticks

Floor hockey sticks are rods or dowels of uniform thickness. Sticks consist of wood and/or fiberglass with a circumference from 7.5cm to 10cm (3 to 4 inches) and length from 90cm to 150cm (3 to 5 feet). The floor end of the stick is rounded. No tape, string or other object is allowed that increases the diameter of the bottom of the stick. Some sticks have a felt tip on the end of the stick to lessen friction between the stick and the playing surface and to prevent damage to wooden playing surfaces.





Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide Floor Hockey Rules, Protocol & Etiquette

Pucks

Floor hockey pucks are “donut” shaped felt pucks with a center hole of 10cm (4 inches), a diameter of 20cm (8 inches), a thickness of 2.5cm (1inch) and a weight of 140 to 225 grams (5 to 8 ounces).



Goals/Nets

Floor hockey goals are 1.8 meters wide, 1.2 meters high and .6 meters deep (6 x 4 x 2 feet). The sides and back of a goal should have appropriate netting. Regulation ice/street/roller hockey nets are also permitted. See supplier list below.



Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaching Guide

Floor Hockey Rules, Protocol & Etiquette



Additional Equipment

Instructional equipment may be needed during the course of a floor hockey training program. The coach will find some of this equipment essential to teach the skills effectively:

- Whistles
- Cones or pylons
- Stopwatches and/or electric timers
- Equipment bags
- Tape (floor tape, masking tape and/or duct tape)
- Scrimmage vests
- Clipboards
- Pens/pencils or felt tip markers
- Labels (to label athletes' helmets with their names)
- Minor tools (screwdriver, pliers etc.)
- First aid kit

There are many ice/street/roller hockey companies that provide equipment that meets the requirements stated above. The following websites are good resources for locating much of the equipment required:

1. Mylec Inc. sells a full range of hockey equipment. <http://www.mylec.com/player.htm>
2. Hockey Giant <http://www.hockeygiant.com/>
3. [Bron Tapes is a good supplier of floor marking tapes in a variety of colors and widths.](http://www.brontapes.com)
<http://www.brontapes.com>
4. Slik Stik Floor Hockey Sticks
9 Windham Dr.
North York, Ontario, Canada
M2K 1X7
(416) 224-5002
Supplies regulation floor hockey sticks with felt tips, replacement felt tips and floor hockey pucks.

The four companies mentioned above are good resources; however, it is strongly recommended that you do research to find the equipment you need at the best prices.



Floor Hockey Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|-------------------|--|
| Backhand Pass | Passing puck by moving stick across the body with palm of bottom hand going in the backward direction (pull with bottom hand). |
| Backhand Shot | Shot made with the stick from the left side by a right-handed player or from the right side by a left-handed player. |
| Boards | The wall or boundaries around a floor hockey rink. |
| Body Check | Placing yourself between your opponent and the puck to gain advantage while both players have their sticks in the puck. Usually done by the defensive player to the offensive player. Body check does not involve hard physical contact between the players. |
| Charging | Running, jumping into or colliding into an opponent who has a clearly established position, regardless of whether either player has the puck. |
| Clearing the Puck | When an athlete gets the puck out of his or her own defensive zone. |
| Cross Checking | When a player holds the stick horizontally and shoves another player with it. |
| Defense | Players trying to prevent the other team from scoring. |
| Deflection | Changing the direction of shot with stick or body. |
| Face-off | The method of starting play; the dropping of the puck by the official between the sticks of two opposing players standing one stick length apart; used to begin each period or to resume play when it has stopped for other reasons. |
| Fake | Pretending to shoot in one direction and actually shooting in another direction. |
| Fast Break | Offensive strategy in which a team attempts to bring the puck into scoring position before the defense can set up. |
| Floor | Playing area that may be a gymnasium or other smooth, hard surface. |
| Forehand Pass | Passing puck by moving stick across the body with palm of bottom hand going in forward direction (pushing with bottom hand). |
| Forehand Shot | Shot made with the stick from the right side of a right-handed player or from the left side of a left-handed player. |
| Foul | Infraction that causes a stoppage of play without causing a penalty. |
| Give-and-Go | Passing to teammate and receiving a return pass down court. |
| Goal/ Net | The informal term used to refer to the area made up of the goalposts and the net guarded by the goalie and into which a puck must enter to score a point. |
| Goal Crease | Area for the goalie that is defined by a line on the court (goalies must remain inside this area and all other players outside of this area). |
| Goal Scoring | Act of the puck passing completely over the goal line into the goal/ net. |
| Goalie | Player in goal crease trying to prevent the other team from scoring. |
| Goalie Pads | Pads or protective equipment worn by the goalie. |



| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Goalie Stick | Stick for the goalie only (a regulation ice/street/roller hockey goalkeeper's stick is acceptable). |
| Helmet | A hard, plastic-type hat with chin strap. All players are required to have a full face mask. |
| High Sticking | Carrying the stick above shoulder level. |
| Holding | Impeding the progress of an opponent. |
| Interference | Impeding or preventing the progress of an opponent who is not in possession of the puck. |
| Jersey | A uniform shirt numbered on the back. |
| Lift Shot | A shot in which the puck rises off the floor. |
| Offense | Players trying to score goals using various passing combinations and shots. |
| Overtime | Continuation of a tied game after regulation play. |
| Pass | Advancing the puck to a teammate. |
| Penalty | An infraction of any rule resulting in a 1-minute penalty (minor), 2-minute penalty (major) or game expulsion. |
| Position Player | Forwards, center, defense and goalie. |
| Puck | A felt disk shaped like a donut. |
| Rebound | When a puck bounces off the goalie's body or equipment or off the goal posts. |
| Referee | On-court official who is in charge of the game and who calls penalties. |
| Roughing | Using any part of the body, such as elbow, to hit or modify the direction of an opponent. |
| Screen | Standing in the line of sight between puck and goalie. |
| Shooting | Shooting the puck at the goal. |
| Shooting Angle | The angle determined by the position of the shooting player in relation to the goal at the moment he or she shoots the puck. |
| Stick | Rod or dowel with rounded tip on bottom used to control puck. |
| Stick Check | Lifting an opponent's stick out of the puck. |
| Stick Handling | Controlling and moving the puck with a stick. |
| Switching | Player moving to another player's position. |
| Tripping | Causing an opponent to fall or stumble by using a stick or any part of the body. |
| Wall Passing | Using the boards to assist with passing. |



Special Olympics Coaching Quick Start Guide

FLOOR HOCKEY



Special Olympics

July 2007



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Special Olympics welcomes your ideas and comments for future revisions of this guide. We apologize if, for any reason, an acknowledgement has been inadvertently omitted.

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**Special Olympics Floor Hockey
Coaches Quick Start Guide**



Planning a Floor Hockey Season

There will be many different skills to teach players during the course of a season. A season-long training plan will help coaches present skills in a systematic and effective way. The sessions in the plan below are organized in a twice-a-week format. Make time at each practice to work individually with your goalkeepers for 10-15 minutes. If you do not have an assistant coach, you may have to do this before or after the practice session.

| Basic Practice | |
|---|--|
| Athletes put equipment on Warm-ups Drill 1 Water break Drill 2/scrimmage Cool-downs Athletes put equipment away | |
| Preseason | |
| Week #1 | Athlete/parent meeting Drill 1: Use the Individual Skills contest to assess your athletes Drill 2/scrimmage: Finish Individual Skills contest assessment |
| Week #2 | Drill 1: Passing and Receiving Drill 2/scrimmage: Dodge Puck |
| Competition Season | |
| Week #3 | Drill 1: Stick Checking and Face-offs Drill 2/scrimmage: Two on Two Drill |
| Week #4 | Drill 1: Red Light, Green Light & Steal the Bacon Drill 2/scrimmage: Shoot Around the Goal |
| Week #5 | Drill 1: Assess athletes: play a mini game, playing all athletes Drill 2/scrimmage: Using assessment, repeat a previous practice drill to reinforce a skill team needs to work on |
| Week #6 | Drill 1: Screening Drill Drill 2/scrimmage: Give and Go Drill |
| Week #7 | Drill 1: Triangle Drill Drill 2/scrimmage: Play a full game |
| Week #8 | Drill 1: Four Corner Drill Drill 2/scrimmage: Play a full game |



Essential Components of a Floor Hockey Training Session

Special Olympics athletes respond well to a simple, well-structured training routine with which they can become familiar. An organized plan, prepared before you get to the facility, will help establish such a routine and help make the best use of your limited time. A basic training plan is outlined below.

Warming Up

- Every athlete warms up.
- Stretch each muscle group.
- Have athletes lead the stretching while coaches assist individual athletes when necessary.

Skills Instruction

- Quickly review previously taught skills.
- Introduce the theme of the skills activity.
- Demonstrate skills simply and with enthusiasm.
- Divide into smaller groups, if possible.
- Physically assist and prompt lower ability athletes when necessary.
- Introduce and practice new skills early in the training session.

Competition Experience

- Athletes learn a lot by simply playing the game.
- Use drills (i.e. One on One / Three on Two) to teach basic skills.
- Use scrimmages to teach game mechanics and teamwork.
- Try to end the training with a fun competitive activity.

Cooling Down

- Slow run/walk/stretch.
- As the athletes cool down, comment on the session and the next training session and/or competition.
- Finish with a team cheer.



Considerations for Training

- When designing trainings, exercises and drills, consider the strengths and weaknesses of each athlete and your team as a whole. Choose activities that allow your athletes to improve.
- Make trainings fun. Design trainings that hold the athletes' attention. Use exercises and drills that your athletes enjoy. Use these exercises to lighten the load of hard work and to establish positive team attitude. When practicing drills, do enough to improve technique, yet not so much as to bore your athletes.
- Keep your talking to a minimum. Short, concise instructions are better than long explanations.
- Be willing to create or adapt drills to meet unique needs of your team. Skilled athletes master drills fairly quickly, so add some new twists to challenge these athletes.
- As you introduce new skills and techniques, you also need to review fundamental ones. Drills are a good way to improve your athletes' skills.
- Introduce new skills early in the training session, when athletes are fresh and attentive. Practice new skills for several sessions before incorporating them into more complex drills and game scenarios.
- Use drills and scrimmages that encourage communication and teamwork among athletes.
- Above all, be organized.

Tips for Conducting Safe Training Sessions

Though the risks can be few, coaches have a responsibility to ensure that athletes know, understand and appreciate the risks of floor hockey. The safety and well-being of athletes are the coaches' primary concerns. Floor hockey is typically not a dangerous sport, but injuries do occur. It is the head coach's responsibility to minimize the occurrence of injuries by providing safe conditions.

1. Establish clear rules for behavior at your first training and enforce them.
Keep your hands and sticks to yourself.
Listen to the coach.
When you hear the whistle, "Stop, look, and listen."
Ask the coach before you leave the court/facility.
2. When the weather is poor, have a plan to immediately remove athletes from a training facility in inclement weather.
3. Encourage the athletes to bring water to each training session.
4. Keep a fully stocked first-aid kit with equipment; restock supplies as necessary.
5. Train all athletes and coaches on emergency procedures.
6. Review your first aid and emergency procedures. It is recommended to have someone who is trained in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on or very near to the facility during trainings and games.
7. Check the facility and remove unsafe objects. Be particularly vigilant when you are playing in cluttered indoor gyms. Remove anything that an athlete might run into.
8. Warm up and stretch properly at the beginning of each training to prevent muscle injuries. Cool down at the end of each training session.
9. Train to improve the general fitness level of your athletes. Physically fit athletes are less likely to get injured. Make your trainings active.
10. Make sure that athletes are of equal ability in games where they play against each other head-to-head (e.g., one-on-one drills).
11. Require all your athletes to wear mandatory equipment. The use of athletic supporters and fitted mouth guards is recommended.



Selecting Team Members

The key to the successful development of a traditional Special Olympics or Special Olympics Unified Sports® team is the proper selection of team members. We have provided some primary considerations below.

Ability Grouping

Traditional or Unified Sports Floor Hockey teams work best when all team members have similar sports skills. Floor hockey teams should be composed of athletes with similar skills and abilities. Athletes or Unified Sports partners with abilities that are far superior to other teammates will control competition. In both situations, the goals of interaction and teamwork are diminished and a true competitive experience is not achieved.

Age Grouping

All team members should be closely matched in age when possible.

- Within 3-5 years of age for athletes 21 years of age and under.
- Within 10-15 years for athletes 22 years of age and over.

Creating Meaningful Involvement in Unified Sports

Unified Sports embraces the philosophy and principles of Special Olympics. Unified Sports teams are organized to provide meaningful involvement for both athletes and partners. Every teammate should play a role and have the opportunity to contribute to the team. Meaningful involvement also refers to the quality of interaction and competition within a Unified Sports team. Achieving meaningful involvement by all teammates on the team ensures a positive and rewarding experience for everyone.

Indicators of Meaningful Involvement

- Teammates compete without causing undue risk of injury to themselves or others.
- Teammates compete according to the rules of competition.
- Teammates have the ability and opportunity to contribute to the performance of the team.
- Teammates understand how to blend their skills with those of other athletes, resulting in improved performance by athletes with lesser ability.

Meaningful Involvement Is Not Achieved When Team Members

- Have superior sports skills in comparison to their fellow team members.
- Act as on-field coaches rather than teammates.
- Control most aspects of the competition during critical periods of the game.
- Do not train regularly and only show up on the day of competition.
- Lower their level of ability dramatically, so that they do not hurt others or control the entire game.



Floor Hockey Attire

Appropriate floor hockey attire is required for all competitors. As a coach, discuss the types of sport clothes that are acceptable and not acceptable for training and competition. Discuss the importance of wearing properly fitted clothing, along with the advantages and disadvantages of certain types of clothing worn during training and competitions. A coach should set the example by wearing appropriate attire to training and competitions.



Shirts

For training, the athlete should wear a T-shirt that is comfortable and allows freedom of movement in the shoulders. For competition, the athlete should wear a clean uniform shirt that has a number on the back (see rules for proper numbering of uniforms). All shirts should be long enough to keep tucked into the athlete's shorts/ pants.

Pants/ Shorts

Coaches should encourage athletes to wear appropriate athletic attire such as sweatpants, warm-up pants or shorts. For example, jeans or jean shorts are not proper floor hockey attire for either training or competition. Explain that the athletes should not perform while wearing jeans that restrict their movement.

Shoes and Socks

Probably the most important article of clothing an athlete wears when playing floor hockey is properly fitting shoes. High-top basketball or athletic shoes are recommended because they provide the athlete with the best foot and ankle support. A cushioned insole and good arch and heel support are things to look for in a quality athletic shoe. Make sure laces are laced to the top. Discourage black-soled shoes that may leave marks on the playing surface. Socks should be worn to help prevent blisters.

Outerwear

The athlete should wear appropriate outerwear for warming up before, and for staying warm after, a floor hockey training or game. Teams sometimes wear warm-up pants during a game for more protection. A medium-weight cotton sweatshirt and sweatpants are excellent and inexpensive outerwear. Encourage your athletes to bring appropriate outerwear that may keep them warm after training.



Floor Hockey Equipment

The sport of floor hockey requires the type of sporting equipment described below. It is recommended that programs provide equipment that is in good working order, a minimum of one per athlete and if possible an adequate number of spares. Equipment should be checked regularly for damage and replaced as needed.



Helmets (Mandatory)

The most important piece of protective equipment a hockey player wears is a floor hockey helmet. The helmet must cover the entire head with a full mask. It is mandatory for all players. A chinstrap is necessary. The helmet must be worn at ALL times during training and competition, and it should fit snugly (not too tight, not too loose).



Shin Guards (Mandatory)

Floor hockey shin guards come in three styles: sponge padding that slides into the socks (not recommended), an ankle wrap with plastic sleeve inserts or a full-length knee-to-ankle shin guard. Higher skill level teams should use the full-length knee-to-ankle shin guard.



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Gloves

Street hockey/ roller hockey style gloves with padding on tops of fingers and hand are strongly recommended to prevent hand injuries from sticks. Higher skill level teams should consider making gloves mandatory for their athletes.



Goalie Equipment

Goalie equipment includes a regulation ice/street/roller hockey goalie stick. The goalie is also required to wear a goalie helmet with full face mask. A goalie is allowed to wear regulation-size ice/street/roller hockey goalie pads and gloves or some reasonable facsimile thereof (e.g., cricket pads, baseball catcher's glove). Goalie pads cannot be any larger than regulation ice hockey pads. Goalies need proper equipment, and the equipment must fit well. The style of equipment chosen depends on individual preference.





Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaches Quick Start Guide



Sticks

Floor hockey sticks are rods or dowels of uniform thickness. Sticks consist of wood and/or fiberglass with a circumference from 7.5cm to 10cm (3 to 4 inches) and length from 90cm to 150cm (3 to 5 feet). The floor end of the stick is rounded. No tape, string or other object is allowed that increases the diameter of the bottom of the stick. Some sticks have a felt tip on the end of the stick to lessen friction between the stick and the playing surface and to prevent damage to wooden playing surfaces.



Pucks

Floor hockey pucks are “donut” shaped felt pucks with a center hole of 10cm (4 inches), a diameter of 20cm (8 inches), a thickness of 2.5cm (1inch) and a weight of 140 to 225 grams (5 to 8 ounces).



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Goals/ Nets

Floor hockey goals are 1.8 meters wide, 1.2 meters high and .6 meters deep (6 x 4 x 2 feet). The sides and back of a goal should have appropriate netting. Regulation ice/street/roller hockey nets are also permitted. See supplier list below.



Additional Equipment

Instructional equipment may be needed during the course of a floor hockey training program. The coach will find some of this equipment essential to teach the skills effectively:

- Whistles
- Cones or pylons
- Stopwatches and/or electric timers
- Equipment bags
- Tape (floor tape, masking tape and/or duct tape)
- Scrimmage vests
- Clipboards
- Pens/pencils or felt tip markers
- Labels (to label athletes' helmets with their names)
- Minor tools (screwdriver, pliers etc.)
- First aid kit



Teaching Floor Hockey Rules

Good coaches begin teaching floor hockey rules the minute the athletes step into the first training of the season. The head coach should begin the season with a meeting for all athletes, coaches and parents/guardians. The head coach should be prepared to discuss the upcoming season and his/her expectations concerning the athletes' behavior during the season. The coach must establish an expectation of good sportsmanship and good participation by each and every athlete in the program for the entire season. Teaching the rules of floor hockey begins at this meeting. A general discussion of the rules of floor hockey may be included; however, teaching the rules will be a process that happens during each and every training.

The coach should begin training by having athletes put on their "mandatory equipment." This is the first opportunity to begin teaching the rules. Mandatory equipment is just what it says: **mandatory** under the rules. This includes, at a minimum, a helmet (with a full face mask) and shin guards. Recommended equipment also includes gloves, elbow pads and kneepads. No activity should be undertaken until the athletes have their equipment on. This will send a message that safety is the most important factor for everyone in the program. It will also force the athletes to become comfortable competing while wearing their equipment. This will set the tone for the season. It is up to the coaching staff, however, to be consistent throughout the season and maintain the expectations set during this opening meeting.

Rules for Floor Hockey Competition

Injuries can occur in floor hockey, and a majority of these injuries are caused by the floor hockey stick. The floor hockey stick is also the cause of the majority of penalties received in competition. There are no statistics to know the percentage of injuries caused by the illegal use of the stick versus inadvertent injuries that happen during normal play. What is known is that if the coaches are diligent with their players during training, many of these injuries and the related penalties can be avoided.

For example, training begins with the athletes warming up and stretching. Athletes should begin jogging (walking is acceptable depending on ability level) around the training facility with their equipment on and carrying a floor hockey stick. This will give each athlete the opportunity to become familiar with carrying / using the stick properly. It will also give you, as the coach, the chance to re-enforce the proper use of the stick, including the grip, using two hands and carrying the stick with the tip as low to the ground as possible when not in the process of shooting. Teaching the athletes to know what they are doing with their sticks at all times will avoid injuries and unnecessary penalties in the future.

The most common penalties called are for the improper use of the stick: high sticking, slashing, charging and tripping. High sticking is the most strictly called rule in floor hockey because of the injuries that can occur. However, each of the stick penalties can and do cause injuries.

A high sticking penalty occurs when the stick is at or above a player's shoulder. The stick must be held below shoulder level at all times. The athletes should be taught to keep the tip of their sticks as low to the ground as possible at all times. The only time the stick should go above waist level is on the follow-through when shooting or in some instances when passing the puck.

The slashing penalty is caused when an athlete slashes down or across with the stick in an attempt to gain possession of the puck from the opposing player. The correct method to take possession of the puck is a technique called a stick check.

Charging penalties occur when an athlete holds the stick in both hands and runs into the opposing player in an attempt to move him/her away from the puck.

The tripping penalty may or may not be caused by use of the stick. Many tripping penalties are called when a player puts the stick between the opposing player's legs and causes the player to trip.

If coaches are diligent about teaching the proper use of the stick at each and every training session, you will notice fewer penalties and greater stick and puck control demonstrated by your athletes. Teaching floor hockey rules should become an integral part of training.

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There are many other rules that should be taught during training. Some examples include:

1. Proper face-off techniques
2. The goal crease
3. Proper stick checking techniques
4. Proper body checking
5. Interference

Special Olympics Unified Sports® Rules

There are few differences in the general Floor Hockey rules for Special Olympics Unified Sports® competition, as stipulated in the official *Special Olympics Sports Rules*. The differences are highlighted below:

1. A roster consists of a proportionate number of athletes and partners. The goal of Unified Sports Floor Hockey is to field a team that consists of an equal number of Special Olympics athletes and partners of equal playing ability who compliment each other to form a team.
2. During competition, the line-up can contain no more than three partners on the court at any time. By the end of game, equal playing rules as stated in the rules (Section E, 1) shall apply.
3. Team sports must have an adult, non-playing coach. Player-coaches are not allowed in team sports.

Protest Procedures

Protest procedures are governed by the rules of competition and may change from competition to competition. Only rules violations can be protested. Judgment calls made by officials or divisioning decisions cannot be protested. The protest must site specific violations from the rulebook and a clear definition of why the coach feels the rule was not followed.

The role of the competition management team is to enforce the rules. As a coach, your duty to your athletes and team is to protest any action or events while your athlete is competing that you think violated the Official Floor Hockey Rules. It is extremely important that you do not make protests because you and your athlete did not get your desired outcome of an event. Protests are serious matters that impact a competition's schedule. Check with the competition team prior to competition to learn the protest procedures for that competition.



Floor Hockey Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|-------------------|--|
| Backhand Pass | Passing puck by moving stick across the body with palm of bottom hand going in the backward direction (pull with bottom hand). |
| Backhand Shot | Shot made with the stick from the left side by a right-handed player or from the right side by a left-handed player. |
| Boards | The wall or boundaries around a floor hockey rink. |
| Body Check | Placing yourself between your opponent and the puck to gain advantage while both players have their sticks in the puck. Usually done by the defensive player to the offensive player. Body check does not involve hard physical contact between the players. |
| Charging | Running, jumping into or colliding into an opponent who has a clearly established position, regardless of whether either player has the puck. |
| Clearing the Puck | When an athlete gets the puck out of his or her own defensive zone. |
| Cross Checking | When a player holds the stick horizontally and shoves another player with it. |
| Defense | Players trying to prevent the other team from scoring. |
| Deflection | Changing the direction of shot with stick or body. |
| Face-off | The method of starting play; the dropping of the puck by the official between the sticks of two opposing players standing one stick length apart; used to begin each period or to resume play when it has stopped for other reasons. |
| Fake | Pretending to shoot in one direction and actually shooting in another direction. |
| Fast Break | Offensive strategy in which a team attempts to bring the puck into scoring position before the defense can set up. |
| Floor | Playing area that may be a gymnasium or other smooth, hard surface. |
| Forehand Pass | Passing puck by moving stick across the body with palm of bottom hand going in forward direction (pushing with bottom hand). |
| Forehand Shot | Shot made with the stick from the right side of a right-handed player or from the left side of a left-handed player. |
| Foul | Infraction that causes a stoppage of play without causing a penalty. |
| Give-and-Go | Passing to teammate and receiving a return pass down court. |
| Goal/ Net | The informal term used to refer to the area made up of the goalposts and the net guarded by the goalie and into which a puck must enter to score a point. |
| Goal Crease | Area for the goalie that is defined by a line on the court (goalies must remain inside this area and all other players outside of this area). |
| Goal Scoring | Act of the puck passing completely over the goal line into the goal/ net. |

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| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Goalie | Player in goal crease trying to prevent the other team from scoring. |
| Goalie Pads | Pads or protective equipment worn by the goalie. |
| Goalie Stick | Stick for the goalie only (a regulation ice/street/roller hockey goalkeeper's stick is acceptable). |
| Helmet | A hard, plastic-type hat with chin strap. All players are required to have a full face mask. |
| High Sticking | Carrying the stick above shoulder level. |
| Holding | Impeding the progress of an opponent. |
| Interference | Impeding or preventing the progress of an opponent who is not in possession of the puck. |
| Jersey | A uniform shirt numbered on the back. |
| Lift Shot | A shot in which the puck rises off the floor. |
| Offense | Players trying to score goals using various passing combinations and shots. |
| Overtime | Continuation of a tied game after regulation play. |
| Pass | Advancing the puck to a teammate. |
| Penalty | An infraction of any rule resulting in a 1-minute penalty (minor), 2-minute penalty (major) or game expulsion. |
| Position Player | Forwards, center, defense and goalie. |
| Puck | A felt disk shaped like a donut. |
| Rebound | When a puck bounces off the goalie's body or equipment or off the goal posts. |
| Referee | On-court official who is in charge of the game and who calls penalties. |
| Roughing | Using any part of the body, such as elbow, to hit or modify the direction of an opponent. |
| Screen | Standing in the line of sight between puck and goalie. |
| Shooting | Shooting the puck at the goal. |
| Shooting Angle | The angle determined by the position of the shooting player in relation to the goal at the moment he or she shoots the puck. |
| Stick | Rod or dowel with rounded tip on bottom used to control puck. |
| Stick Check | Lifting an opponent's stick out of the puck. |
| Stick Handling | Controlling and moving the puck with a stick. |
| Switching | Player moving to another player's position. |
| Tripping | Causing an opponent to fall or stumble by using a stick or any part of the body. |
| Wall Passing | Using the boards to assist with passing. |



Appendix: Skill Development Tips

Stick Handling

The most important aspect of floor hockey is stick control. Without stick control, the coach cannot teach any of the other aspects of the game.



Athlete Readiness

Beginning athletes will have very limited control with their stick. They will rarely catch the puck with their stick and when, passing the puck to another athlete, will have just as much chance to pass it as to leave it at their feet. Their grip will change with every exercise and from one side of the body to the other. When they have possession of the puck, they will always be looking at the puck and not at any other athletes on the court. When you ask them to pass the puck, they will generally not look at the athlete whom they are supposed to pass to. When passing a puck, it will always remain on the ground. Also, when following through on a pass, they may have a high stick.



Intermediate athletes will have moderate control with their stick. They will usually catch the puck with their stick and can pass the puck in the correct direction, but not always directly to the person intended. They will have their own grip, but usually from only one side of the body. They cannot tell if their stick has the puck without looking, but they can move with the puck and pass while looking up about half of the time and at the puck the other half. If they concentrate hard enough, they can do a lift shot, but never under pressure. At this level, they will be aware of their high sticks and work on keeping them down.

Advanced athletes will have complete control with their stick. They will always catch the puck with their stick and can pass the puck directly to the feet of their intended receiver. They can move the puck without having to look down to see if they still have it and can pass using their stick on either side of the body. They will always perform a lift shot and will have several grips to use as needed to aid them in getting the puck where they want it to go (corners of goal, etc.).

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The Grip

Teaching the Skill

Before athletes can learn any pass, they must first learn to hold the stick properly. Teach the basic grip: the dominant hand should be the lower hand. If the athlete is right handed, the right hand should be under the left hand. Have athlete “shake hands” with the stick, with the palms facing up as though they were shoveling. Hands should be a couple of inches apart, with elbows loose and bent and arms hanging loosely, ready for any action. If this grip is uncomfortable, try reversing hands, putting the dominant hand on top. Also, move hands so that the palms face down as though they were sweeping, and see if this grip is more comfortable.



Moving with the puck

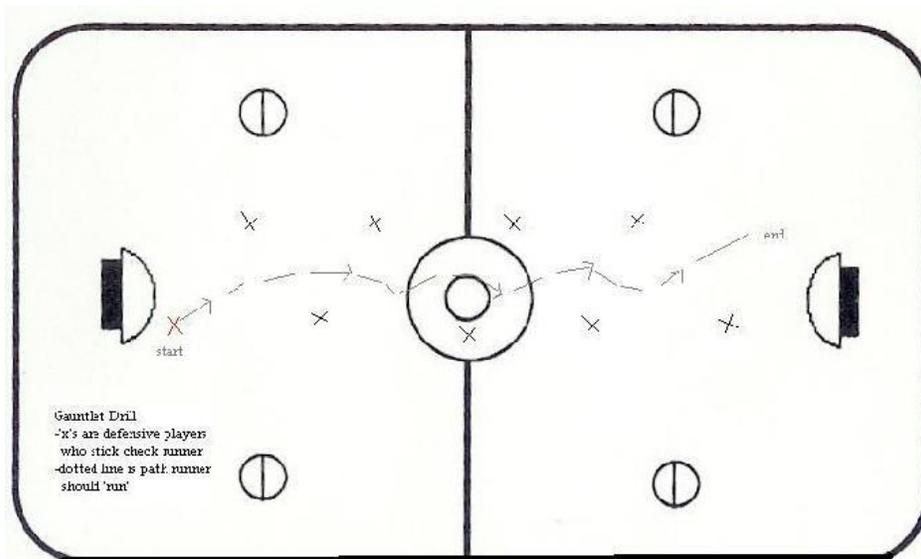
Teaching the Skill

“Moving with the puck” allows an athlete to move the puck from one area of the court to another without giving up control. Your athletes need to be aware of several things at the same time: where they are on the court in relationship to their teammates and those on the opposing team, and where the goal is. In this case, “practice makes perfect” – that is to say, the more hands-on experience your athletes get in this area, the better they will be. Have the athletes concentrate on where they want to go first, and then add in obstacles as they master control of this skill. Use drills to hone this skill.



Stick Handling Drills

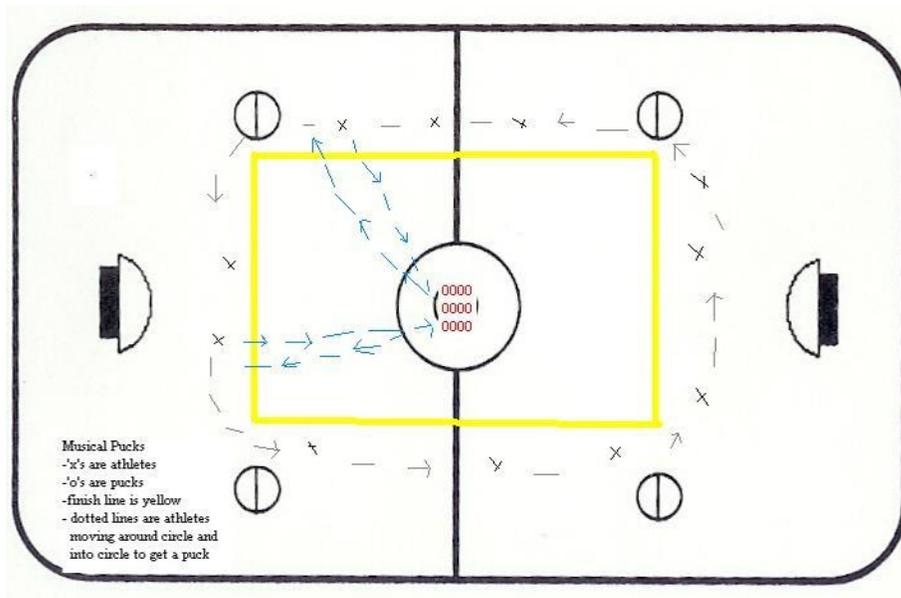
1. **Gauntlet Drill:** Athlete stick handles a puck in a straight line past a double line of teammates, which are staggered at 2-meter intervals on either side. The stick handling lane should be a minimum of 2 meters wide. If a teammate is successful in stick checking the athlete who is running the gauntlet, that teammate becomes the next runner of the gauntlet, from the beginning. The athlete who was stick checked takes the place of the new runner in the line. The teammates on the line should not step into the lane; they should only stick check as the runner passes through their area on the line. NOTE: The line will not be able to steal the puck, only dislodge it from the runner's stick.



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2. **Musical Pucks Drill:** Athletes run outside a circle of cones or a line on the court. On a whistle, each athlete has to retrieve a puck from the center and stick handle it to a cone or outside the lined area. There are fewer pucks than athletes. Whoever doesn't get a puck is out. The drill can be varied with the number of pucks and can continue until one or more athletes are left controlling pucks.



NOTE: For more Stick Handling Drills please refer to the full Floor Hockey Coaching Guide



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Passing

Passing is the act of moving the puck from one athlete to another across the court.



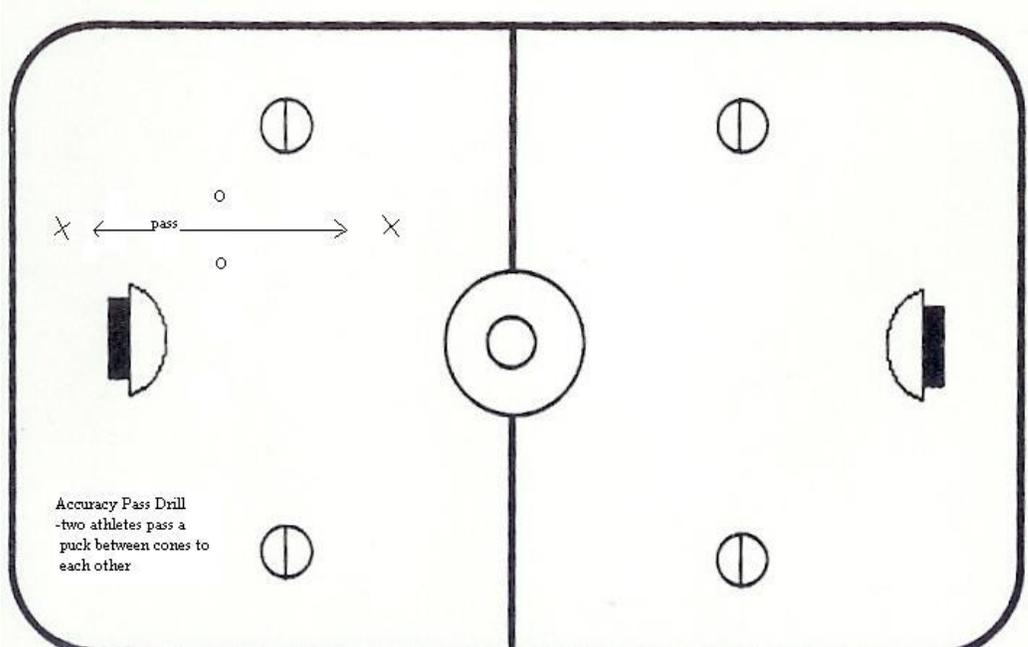
Teaching the Skill

For passing, athletes can use any acceptable grip. Coaches should demonstrate the basic grip and adapt as necessary. The athletes will need to step forward as they release the puck. Their follow-through should have the tip of the stick pointing in the direction of the target. As the athletes gain confidence, have them move farther away from the target, trying to double the distance from where they first started. As they gain even more confidence, have them pass faster and harder, emphasizing speed and accuracy.



Passing Drills

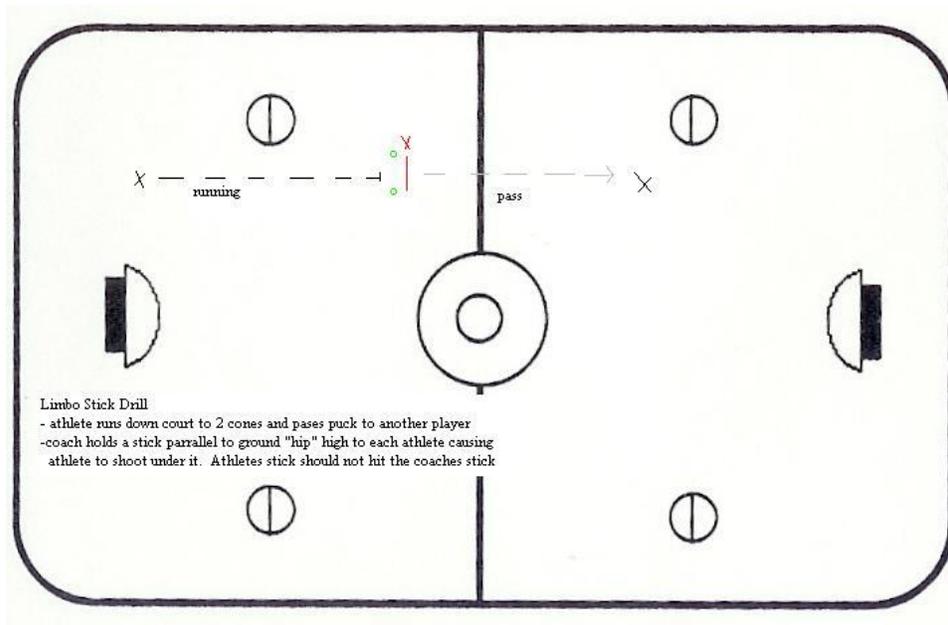
- 1. **Accuracy Pass Drill:** Have athletes pass the puck back and forth between markers. Instruct them to pass soft and slow when they start. As their skill increases, move the athletes farther apart and have them make their passes harder and faster.





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- Limbo Stick Drill:** The purpose of this drill is to emphasize stick control (high sticking) after a pass. Standing just past two cones, a coach holds a stick parallel to the ground at the height of the athlete's hips (adjust to accommodate each athlete's height). The athletes form a single line. One at a time, they run toward the cones and pass the puck to a designated target or another athlete while keeping their stick from striking the coach's stick (limbo stick).



- Two on Two Drill:** Athletes form two lines at one end of the facility. Four athletes step forward (two athletes on offense and two athletes on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes on offense pass to each other while running the length of the facility. The athletes on defense a) try to impede the forward movement of the athletes on offense; b) try to block the view of the athletes on offense; or c) try to stick check the puck away from the athletes on offense. When the athletes on defense properly gain control of the puck from the athletes on offense, those athletes switch to offense and the athletes who lost control of the puck switch to defense. This is the same drill as the One on One Drill, except the athletes work in pairs.

NOTE: For more Passing Drills please refer to the full Floor Hockey Coaching Guide

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Receiving

Receiving is the act of stopping the puck and taking possession/control from a pass.



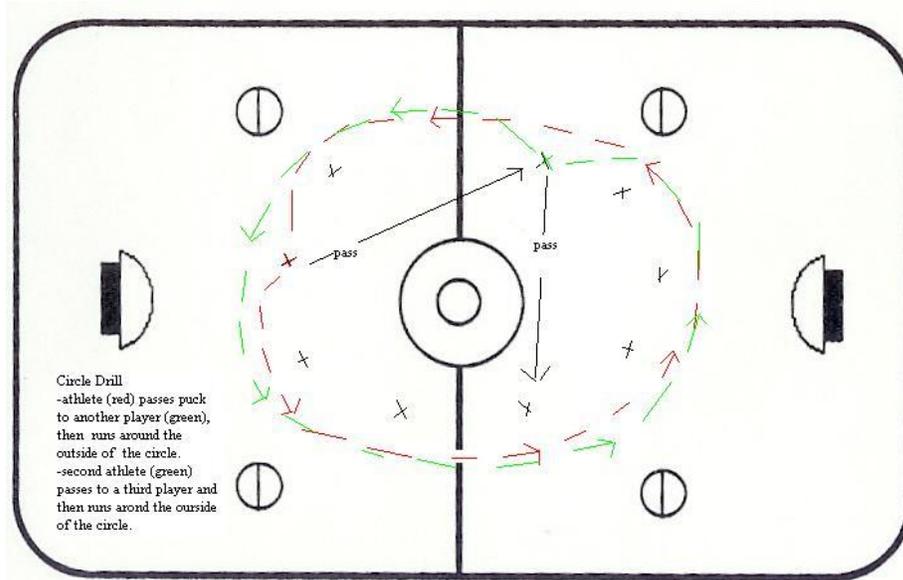
Teaching the Skill

The receiver will need to keep focused on the puck as it moves toward him/her. The coach will need to show the athlete how to step toward the moving puck and “catch it” by putting the stick inside the puck, or by stopping it with the foot. If necessary, the athlete can slap it down with the hand.

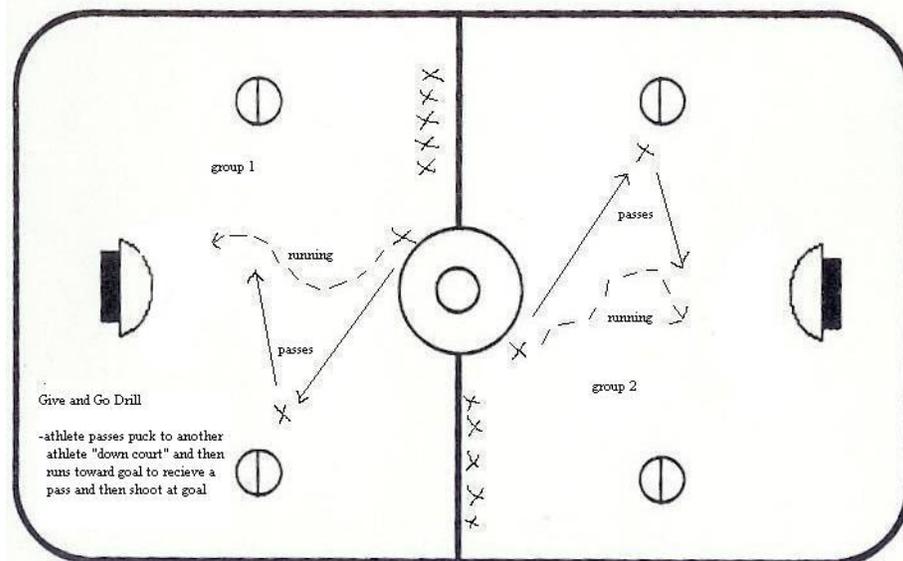


Receiving Drills

1. **Circle Drill:** Arrange athletes in a circle. An athlete with the puck passes to another athlete who then runs around the outside of a circle while stick handling and returns to his/her space. That athlete then passes the puck to another teammate. Make sure that every athlete has a chance to practice the drill.



2. **Give and Go Drill:** Divide athletes into groups. Working in pairs, one athlete passes down court to the second athlete and then runs past the teammate to receive a pass. Athletes should continue passing and running ahead until they reach the other end of the court. This encourages passing and staying aware of teammate position. NOTE: Passing should always be in front (between the receiver and the goal) of the intended athlete so that the athlete does not have to slow down or stop forward motion to gain control of the puck. It is important that the athletes understand this concept.



NOTE: For more Receiving Drills please refer to the full Floor Hockey Coaching Guide



Stick Checking

Stick checking is the act of momentarily jarring the opponent's stick out of the puck to let the athlete put his or her own stick inside of the puck. Stick checking is the most effective way to take the puck away from an opponent.

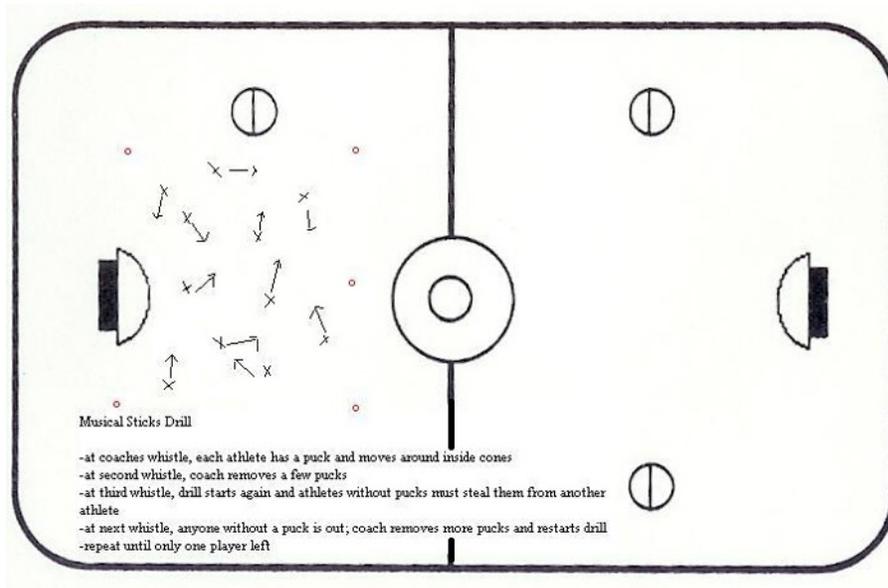
Teaching the Skill

Instruct your athlete to move toward the athlete with the puck. Have the athlete move the bottom of his or her stick under the opposing athlete's stick and make a short upward or sideways movement, dislodging the other athlete's stick from the center of the puck. The athlete then places his or her own stick in the puck, gaining control from the other athlete/team. Sometimes the puck will travel away from the athletes after the controlling stick is dislodged. Show your athlete how to follow it and take possession on the "move."



Stick Checking Drills

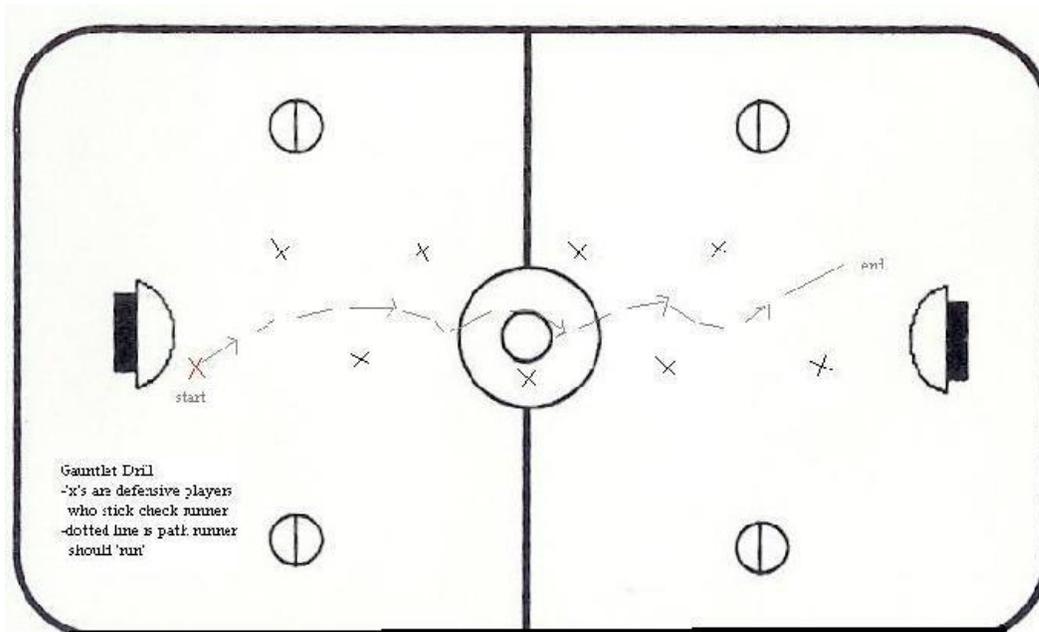
1. **Musical Sticks Drill:** Athletes run outside a circle of cones or a line on the court. On the coach's whistle, each athlete has to retrieve a puck from the center and stick handle it to a cone or outside the lined area. There are fewer pucks than there are athletes, so an athlete can stick check a puck before another athlete gets it to a cone or outside of the lined area, designated as a "safe zone." Whoever doesn't retrieve a puck and make it to the "safe zone" is out.



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- Gauntlet Drill:** Athlete stick handles a puck in a straight line past a double line of teammates, who are staggered at 2-meter intervals on either side. The stick handling lane should be a minimum of 2 meters wide. If a teammate is successful in stick checking the athlete who is running the gauntlet, that teammate becomes the next runner of the gauntlet, from the beginning. The athlete who was stick checked takes the place of the new runner in the line. The teammates on the line should not step into the lane; they should only stick check as the runner passes through their area on the line. NOTE: The teammates will not be able to steal the puck, only dislodge it from the runner's stick.



NOTE: For more Stick Checking Drills please refer to the full Floor Hockey Coaching Guide



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Face-off

Face-off is the act of starting play after each stoppage of play.



Teaching the Skill

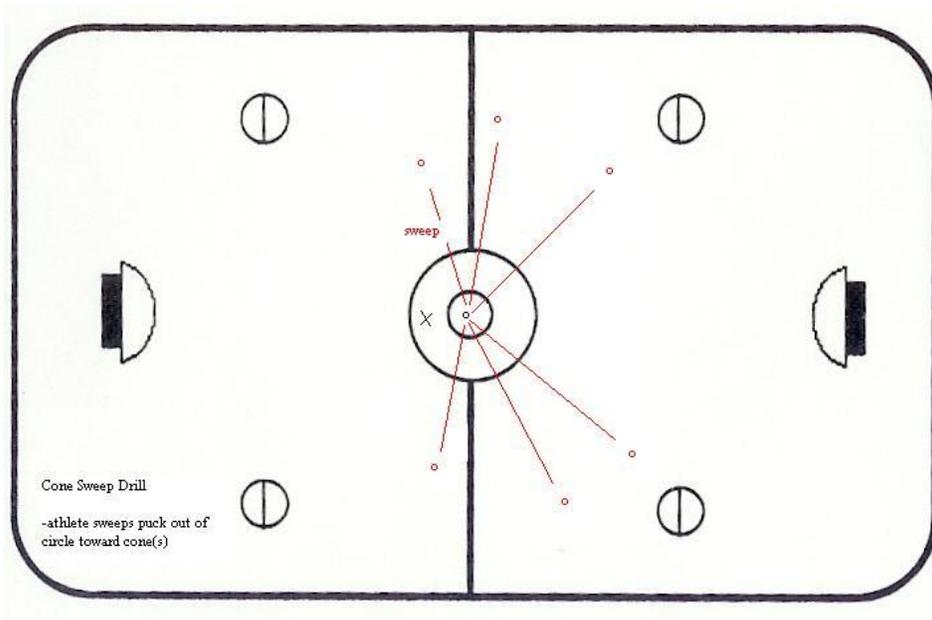
Use one of the face-off circles on the court. Have your center stand on one side of the line, with an opposing center on the other side. Show the centers where to put their sticks (anywhere on the circle on their side of the line) and then help them sweep the puck from the circle so they understand what they are supposed to do. Explain to the athletes that they will do this “on the whistle” and that they cannot take control of the puck, but must sweep it to another athlete. After an athlete does this for the first time, the coach should make any corrections to the athlete’s stance (too far away, too close, etc.), hands, feet and body positions. Repeat exercise until each athlete has a firm grasp of his or her own responsibility.





Face-off Drills

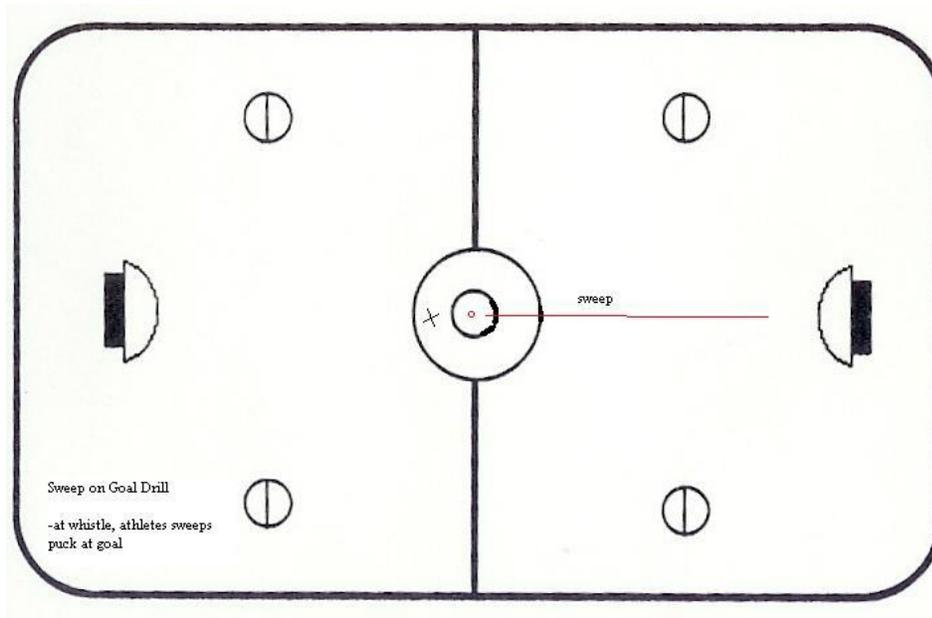
1. **Sweeper Pass Drill:** On the coach's whistle, the athlete sweeps the puck to a stationary teammate; score a point for an accurate sweep to teammate.
2. **Swiftest Sweeper Drill:** On the coach's whistle, two athletes attempt to sweep the puck out of circle.
Round 2: winners play each other and losers play each other.
3. **Cone Sweep Drill:** On the coach's whistle, the athlete sweeps the puck out of circle toward designated targets that are set up at various angles around the face-off circle. The objective of this drill is to improve the athletes' accuracy while sweeping the puck.





Special Olympics Floor Hockey Coaches Quick Start Guide

4. **Sweep on Goal Drill:** On the coach's whistle, the athlete sweeps the puck toward the goal as a shot.



NOTE: For more Face-off Drills please refer to the full Floor Hockey Coaching Guide



Shooting on Goal

Shooting on goal is the act of moving the puck forward in an attempt to score a goal.

Teaching the Skill

Athletes will need to place the tip of the stick inside the puck. Have them focus their eyes on the goal. While taking steps forward, have them sweep stick across the body, shooting puck toward the goal. Make sure they follow through with stick pointing toward desired target area. Coaches should teach the athletes to shoot:

1. In front of the net
2. At various angles from the net
3. At various corners of the net
4. While moving toward the net
5. While moving and receiving a pass
6. While being guarded
7. While screening the goalie and staying out of the crease
8. Off of a deflected shot, staying out of the crease
9. While faking a shot in another direction
10. As accurately and as hard as they can

Forehand Shot

Athlete stands facing the goal, with the stick in the puck on his or her dominant side. Dominant hand should be lower on the stick, arm almost fully extended and the palm should be facing up. The other hand should be near the top of the stick and the palm should be facing down. With eyes focused on target, athlete should move the puck back a few inches and then forward again, following through to make a “shot,” while stepping forward with the non-dominant foot. On the follow-through, the stick tip should be pointing at the target, no higher than waist level. A snap of the wrist will produce more power on the shot.



Lift Shot (Forehand)

NOTE: The forehand lift shot is very similar in technique to the forehand shot, with a few exceptions.

1. The tip of the stick must catch the lower front lip of the inside of the puck to obtain the necessary lift.
2. The forehand lift shot will usually not flip through the air as is often the case with the basic backhand shot. This allows for potentially more power and is normally more difficult to master.
3. Obtaining maximum lifting potential is aided by a strong wrist snap from the lower right hand.
4. Depending on shooting style, some athletes find it effective to lower the upper torso over the puck to some degree before bringing the arms forward and snapping the wrist to create lift.



Backhand Shot

Athlete stands facing the goal, with the stick in the puck on his or her non-dominant side. Dominant hand should be lower on the stick, arm almost fully extended and the palm should be facing up. The other hand should be near the top of the stick and the palm should be facing down. With eyes focused on target, athlete should move the puck back a few inches and then forward again, following through to make a “shot,” while stepping forward with the dominant foot. On the follow-through, the stick tip should be pointing at the target, no higher than waist level. A snap of the wrist will produce more power on the shot.

NOTE: If shooting the puck from the right side, the left foot steps forward; if shooting the puck from the left side, the right foot steps forward.



Lift Shot (Backhand)

Taught the same as the backhand shot, but with more wrist snap and arm whip. Often the puck is shot in more of a round sweeping motion, as opposed to the back and forth motion of the stick when shooting the basic backhand shot. Focus is on getting the tip of the stick to catch the front of the puck at the bottom to achieve lift. Once athletes have developed a strong stationary backhand lift shot, they will be ready to learn how to create lift and power simultaneously. The difference in this shot is that the puck will not flip when lifted, but will fly as a saucer with much improved aerodynamics.



Advanced Skills

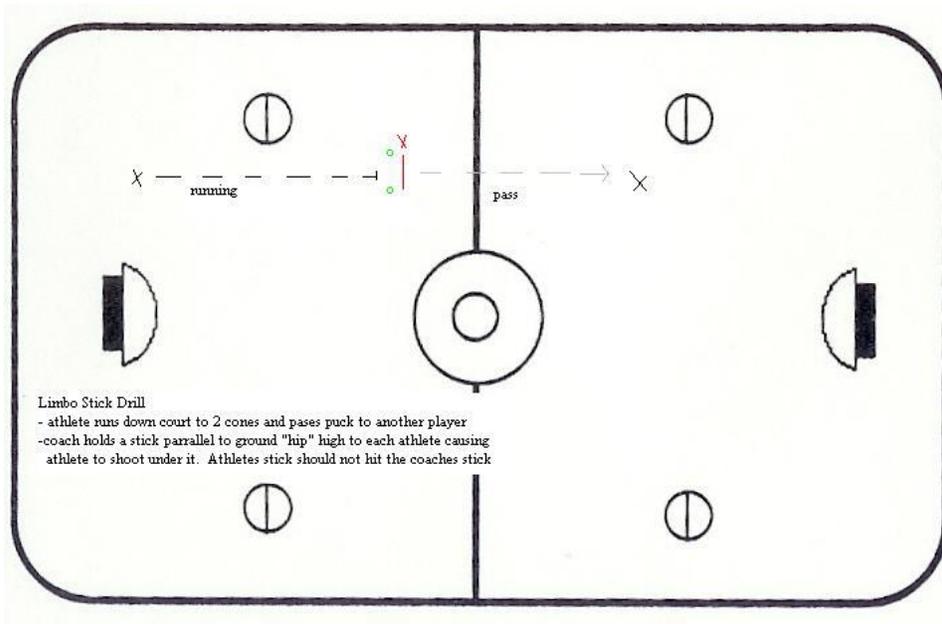
As athletes’ shooting skills develop, introduction of the following is appropriate:

- ♦ Dynamic shot – Shooting on the run is most common and should be encouraged.
- ♦ Sliding forehand – Shooting puck while body is sliding to shooting side (i.e. sliding into base in baseball).
- ♦ Blind backhand – Shooting with back to goal target; no visual contact with goal.
- ♦ Between legs – Shooting as backhand normally, flip puck between legs toward goal; no visual contact with target.
- ♦ Re-direction – Re-directing puck that is moving toward goal area. Usually comes from a pass or another shot. Stick strikes outside edge of moving puck and re-directs it towards goal.



Shooting on Goal Drills

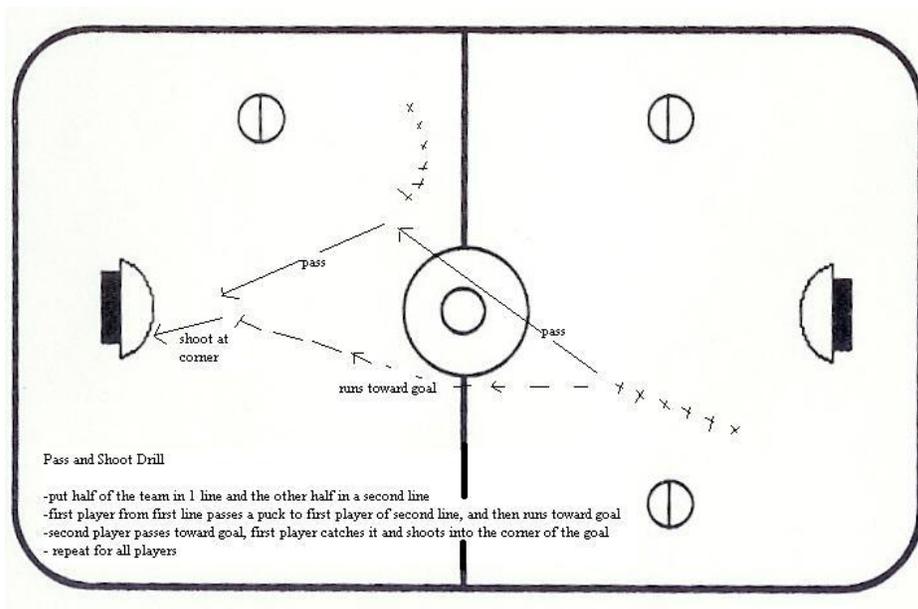
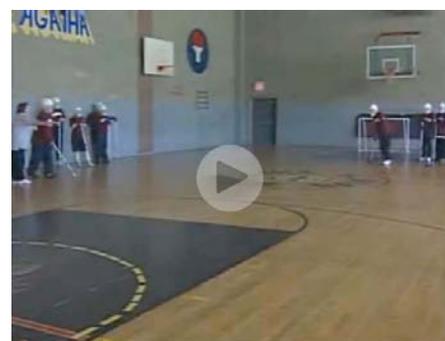
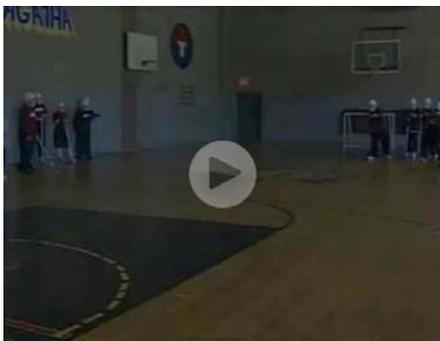
1. **Limbo Stick Drill:** The purpose of this drill is to emphasize stick control (no high sticking) after a shot. A coach holds a stick parallel to the ground at the height of the athlete's hips (adjust to accommodate each athlete's height), just past two cones. The athletes form a single line. One at a time, they run, toward the cones where the coach is holding the stick and shoot the puck on goal while keeping their stick from striking the coach's stick (limbo stick). An additional modification to this drill is to add a goalie.





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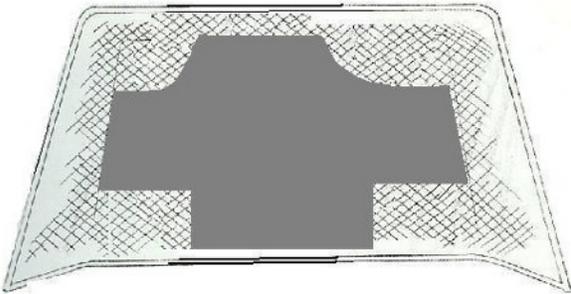
2. **Pass and Shoot Drill:** One line of athletes faces the goal and advances, one at a time, toward the goal. Another line of athletes is off to the side. The athlete at the head of the first line passes to the athlete at head of the second line, runs toward the goal to receive the return pass and then shoots for corner of goal. Have athletes return to the opposite line to continue the drill. Make sure each athlete does the drill from both lines at least once.



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3. **Sieve Shooting Drill:** A vinyl or plastic sieve is attached to the goal. The sieve has the corners cut out to give the athletes a target at which to shoot.



Sieve Shooting Drill
-put vinyl or plastic sieve in front of goal,
athletes shoot at holes to make a goal

NOTE: For more Shooting on Goal Drills please refer to the full Floor Hockey Coaching Guide



Defense

Defense is the act of assisting your team's goalie in protecting the goal.

Teaching the Skill

The easiest way to take the puck back is to intercept a pass. This is an excellent method of stopping the opponent's scoring threat. The athlete has to use both the eyes and body to get in position to intercept a pass. Once in position, the athlete only has to place the body or stick in front of the puck to intercept it. By anticipating where the opponents are going to pass, the athlete can move into a strategic intercepting position. Some opponents have certain patterns that they always seem to follow. If your athletes know the pattern, they can then intercept the pass.

Be sure your athletes know that stick checking is the optimal way to steal the puck. (Refer back to Stick Handling – Stick Checking for skill). Forwards should also be taught to look for opportunities to “trap” the opposing athlete with the puck. “Trapping” involves a guard delaying the athlete on offense while a forward moves in on the other side and “traps”/steals the puck, like a double team.

Maintaining proper position is important in minimizing goal scoring opportunities by the opponents. That is why each athlete should know where to be and what to do at any given time. Teammates should work together to try to stop the opponents from scoring. Positioning gives order to otherwise random play.

GUARDS

The right defenseman stays on the right half of the court while the left defenseman stays on the left half of the court. When an opponent gains control of the puck, the right defenseman should be positioned on the right side in front of the goal crease, and the left defenseman should be in the middle protecting the front of the goal and watching for a pass across court. The right defenseman should be positioned between the opponent with the puck and the goal. If the puck is in the middle, the right and left defensemen should be next to each other between the opponent with the puck and the goal. If the puck is on the left side, the right defenseman should be in the middle protecting the front of the goal crease and watching for a pass. The right and left defensemen must work together, playing a zone defense outside the goal crease.

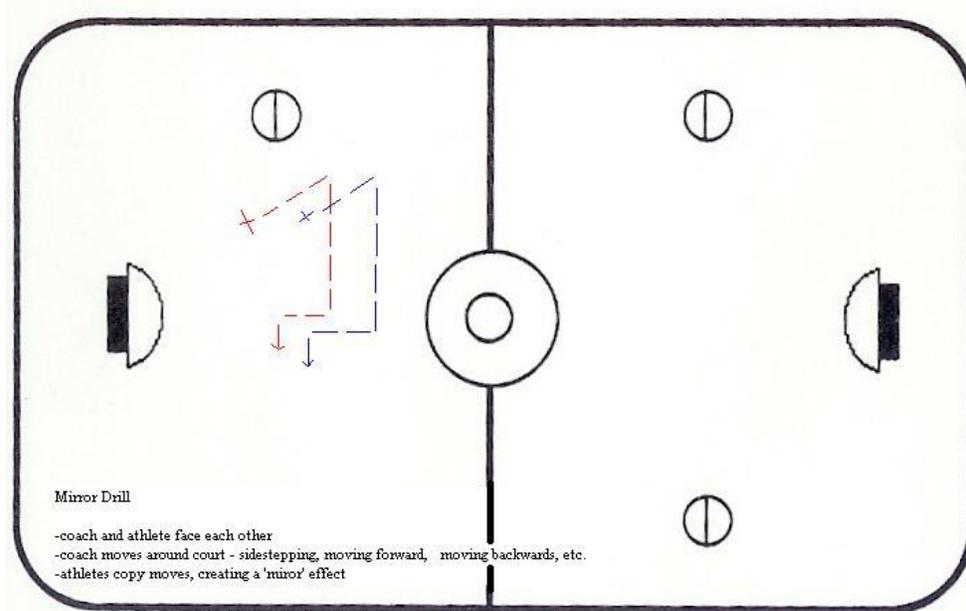
FORWARDS

The center plays the whole court. When an opponent gains control of the puck, the center should be positioned in the middle and in front of the goal. The center works with the two defensemen in defending the opponents and trying to steal the puck. The right wing can help out on defense if needed. The left wing does exactly the same, but on the left side of the court. There is no rule requiring athletes to maintain these positions, as they can go anywhere on the court except in the goal crease area. In general, the athletes should maintain these positions. Only the athletes of the team on offense may put their sticks in the goal crease to clear the puck. No athlete (except the goalie) can put his or her body inside of the goal crease.

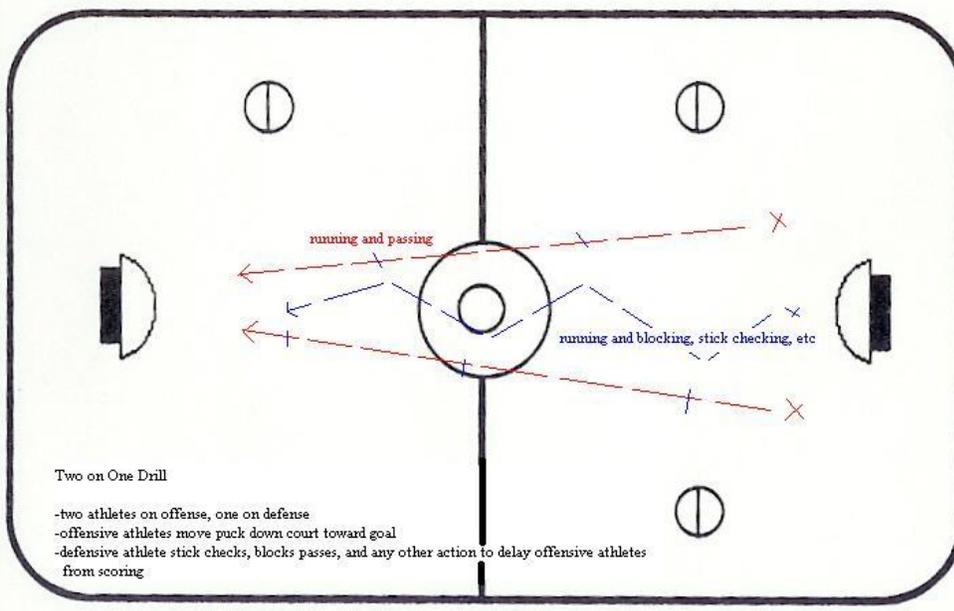


Defense Drills

1. **Mirror Drill:** Place athlete between goal and coach. As the coach slides left or right with the puck, have the athlete slide in the same direction. As the coach slides forward or backward with the puck, have the athlete slide in same direction. Coach can point or say which direction to go if the athlete does not follow.



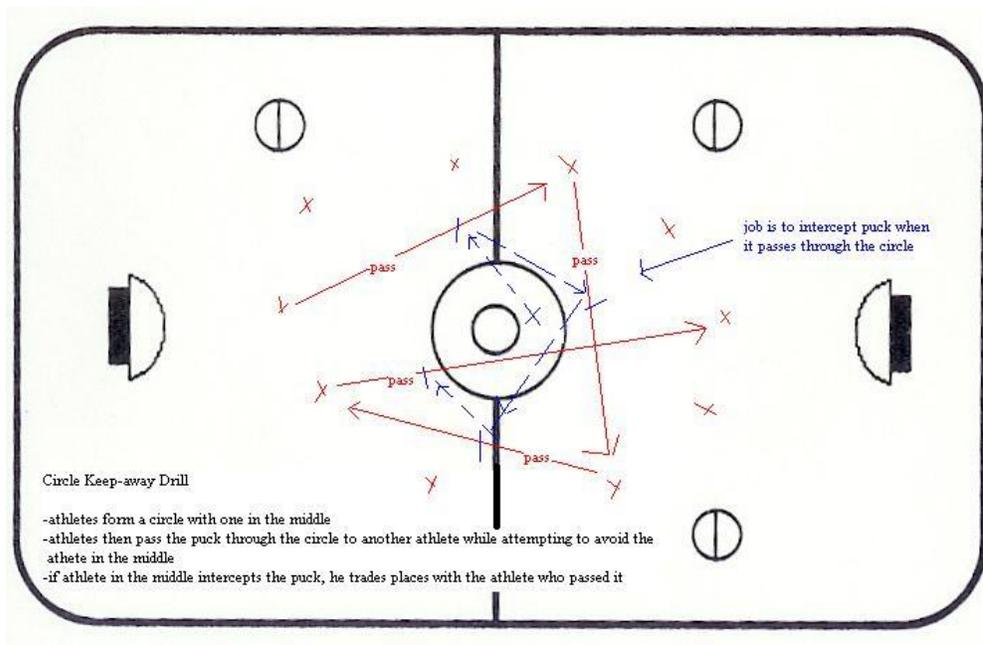
2. **Two on One Drill:** Athletes form a single line at one end of the facility. Three athletes step forward (two athletes on offense and one on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes run the length of the facility while the defensive athlete tries to: a) delay the athletes on offense, b) gain control of the puck or c) prevent the athletes from getting off a good shot while maintaining good defensive position.





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3. **Circle Keep-Away Drill:** Athletes form a circle and pass around an athlete who tries to intercept the puck. Athlete whose pass gets intercepted goes in the middle, and the athlete who intercepts returns to the circle. Variations: a) Add more people in the middle. b) Add more pucks. c) Person in middle only has to touch the puck. d) If athlete makes a bad pass out of the circle or bad block or pass, then the athlete goes in the middle.



NOTE: For more Defense Drills please refer to the full Floor Hockey Coaching Guide

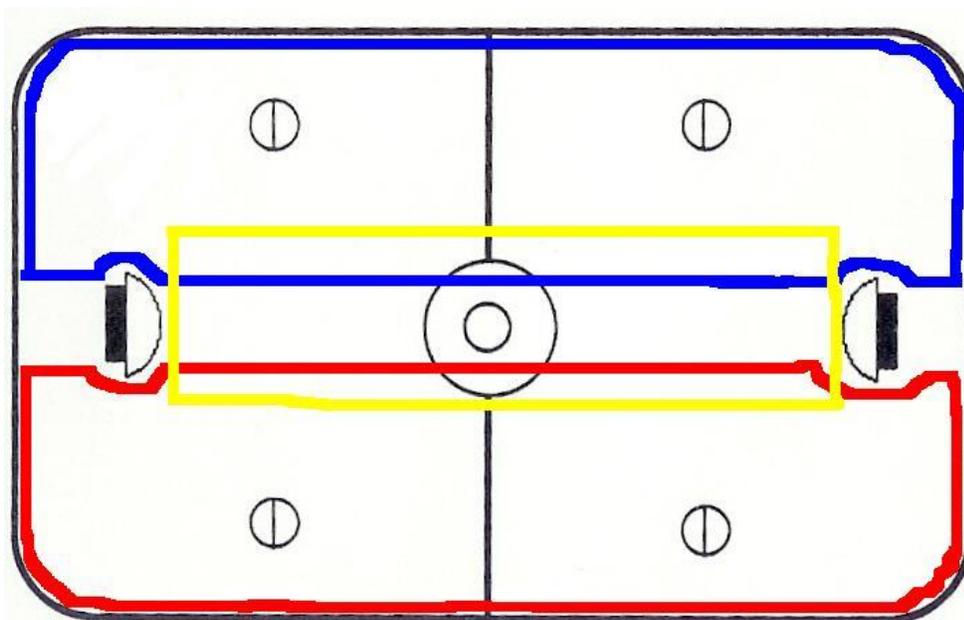


Offense

Offense is the act of controlling the puck with the intention of shooting on goal and scoring.

Teaching the Skill

In order to control the puck, the three forwards, from the same team, need to use teamwork. Since everyone is constantly moving, they need to be aware of where each of them is on the court and where the opposing athletes are located. Walking the areas of the court with each athlete should be the first thing you teach. While athletes are doing the drills, keep reminding them to “stay in their lanes.” The wings should cover 1/2 of the court each, so that between them, they cover the entire court. The center will have his or her “lane” down the middle.

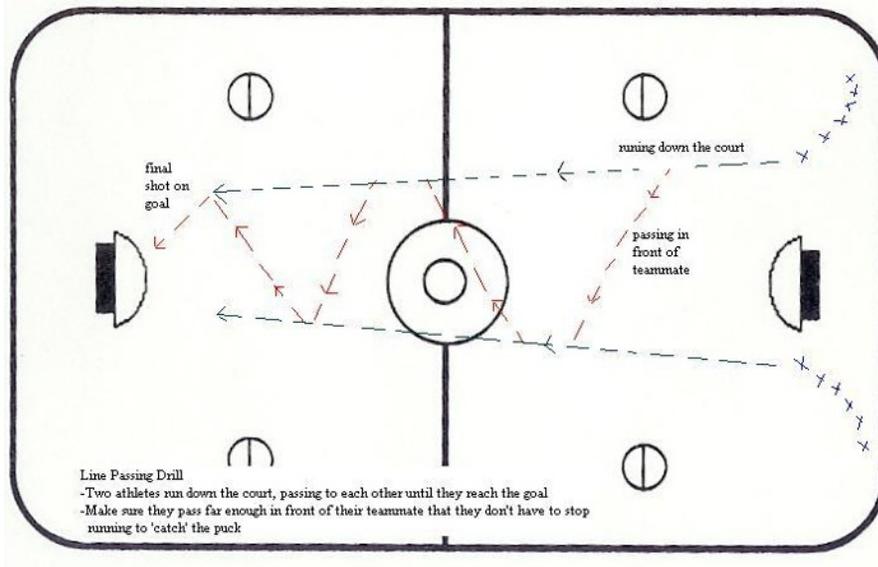


Break the passing combinations into individual components. After athletes learn one segment, add another until the athletes learn the entire sequence. If necessary, physically assist athlete through the sequence. After awhile, point or tell the athlete which direction to go. If the passing combination involves several choices based on the previous segment, review those choices with the athlete just before starting the passing combination. Placing cones at the various spots where the athletes will go helps the athletes locate them. Start with the easier passing combinations and progress to the harder ones according to each athlete's ability level. These passing combinations are to simulate game passing combinations. During controlled game situations, assist the athletes through some of these passing combinations.



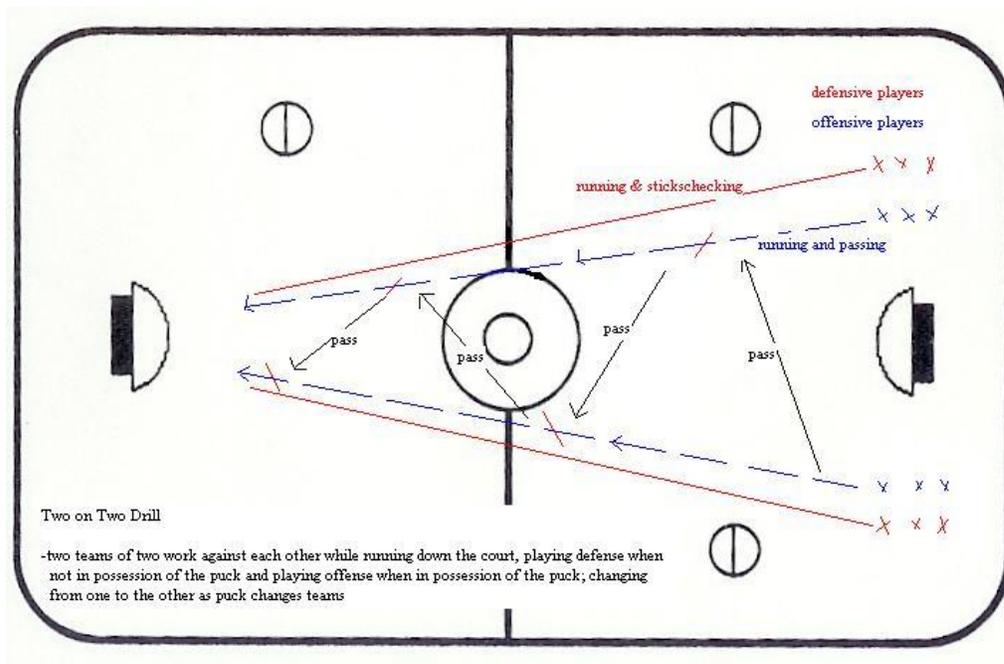
Offense Drills

1. **Line Passing Drill:** Athletes form two lines with the athletes in the front going together. Left athlete passes the puck in front of right athlete. While running, right athlete receives the pass and passes in front of the left athlete. While running, left athlete receives the pass and passes in front of right athlete. Continue until athletes reach far goal, at which time one athlete shoots on goal. For variations, add: a) a goalie, b) time limit, c) defender (passive at first), d) third offensive athlete, or e) a second defender.





2. **Two on Two Drill:** Athletes form two lines at one end of the facility. Four athletes step forward (two athletes on offense and two on defense). On the coach's whistle, the athletes on offense pass to each other while running the length of the facility. The athletes on defense: a) slow down and impede the forward movement of the athletes on offense, b) block their view and c) stick check or capture the puck. When the athletes on defense properly gain control of the puck from the athletes on offense, those athletes switch to offense and the two athletes who lost control of the puck switch to defense. This is the same drill as the One on One Drill, except the athletes work in pairs.



3. **Pass Around the Goal Drill:** Athlete “A” stick handles from right corner behind the goal to left corner. Teammate “B” runs from right side to area in front of goal and receives a pass from athlete “A.” Athlete “A” runs back behind goal and receives a pass in right corner from teammate “B.” Teammate “B” runs to left corner and receives a pass from athlete “A.” Athlete “A” runs to area in front of goal, receives a pass from teammate “B” and then shoots on goal. Set a time limit for the event. Repeat drill, switching the athlete and teammate. Add a chase defender.



NOTE: For more Offense Drills please refer to the full Floor Hockey Coaching Guide

Goal Tending

Goal tending is the act of defending the goal from within the goal crease and preventing the puck from entering the net.

Teaching the Skill

The Basic Goalie Stance (“Set” position)

- ◆ Feet are shoulder-width apart or with the pads touching.
- ◆ Knees and waist are bent slightly, with the weight forward on the balls of the feet.
- ◆ Back is kept straight with head up, always watching the play in front of the goal.
- ◆ Blade of stick is kept flat on the floor at all times.
- ◆ The stick is held firmly with one hand.
- ◆ The catching hand is held to the side, knee high, open, level with the stick glove and ready for a shot.



Teaching Points

- ◆ Focus eyes on puck at all times.
- ◆ Play the puck and the offensive athlete.
- ◆ Keep pads centered on the puck. Always try to keep legs TOGETHER – never apart.
- ◆ Recover from floor as quickly as possible.
- ◆ Catch puck whenever possible, and then release it to teammate as quickly as possible.
- ◆ After making a save, freeze the puck, place it where only teammates can get it or put it to a teammate.
- ◆ Keep feet in the goal crease at all times.
- ◆ Communicate with teammates.

A goalie should be taught two basic types of movements:

1. For moving short distances quickly and from side-to-side to keep position in front of the puck, use the side step. Take short steps without turning the foot. When side-stepping, the goalie is always in basic stance. The foot is never turned on this move. This move is also used when the puck carrier is behind the net and when the goalie must move from post to post.
2. For staying in line with a shooter, use the pivot. The goalie pivots his/her upper body to face the shooter when the shooter moves from the middle of the court to the outside.
3. The goalie may need to pivot and then side-step, or vice versa, to stay in position between the shooter and the goal.



Goal Tending Drills

1. **New Goalie Drill:** Roll a volleyball at the goalie, who should try to stop it with the stick.



2. **Angle Drill:** Move out from the net to challenge the shooter so that he/she has a smaller target area. In practice, the coach can tie two ropes of equal length to each goal post and hold the ends of ropes together to form a triangle. The ropes reflect where the goalie should be to cover the angle.
3. **Goalie Warm-up Drill:** Goalie takes shots from teammates. Line teammates up in a semicircle 6-8 meters (20-26 feet) in front of the net, each with two pucks. Athletes shoot one puck in sequence around the semicircle, then reverse shooting their second puck. Variations: Run up and shoot, coach calls on athletes to shoot, etc.



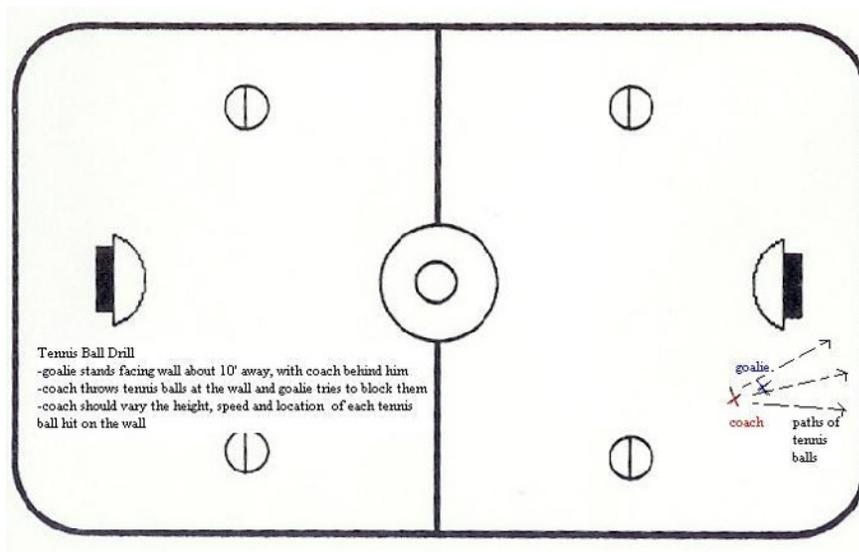
4. **Goalie Positioning Drill:** Two coaches or athletes, each on opposite sides of the goal 6-8 meters away, take turns shooting at the goal.
5. **Puck Tracking Drill:** Two or three coaches or athletes pass puck around goal, shooting randomly.





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6. **Tennis Ball Drill:** Goalie faces wall from 3 meters (10 feet) out, with back to coach. Coach throws a tennis ball off the wall, and goalie reacts.



7. **Goalie Mirror Drill:** Coach (always in basic stance) makes a move, and the goalie follows and imitates as quickly as possible. Use moves in all directions.
8. **Reaction Drill:** On a whistle, the goalie should go to ground as if making a save. On a second whistle, the goalie gets back onto the feet and into a set position. Coaches should vary the time between whistles.

