

BEGINNER STAGE SUMMARY

With the IIHF Player Development Guide, the IIHF promotes station-based training and cross-ice games at the Beginner stage, as well as providing guidelines for off-ice training, and bio-psycho-social development.

In the Beginner stage, station-based training will provide the players with plenty of puck touches per ice session, which will develop their stickhandling, puck-possession and skating skills. They will receive direct feedback from their coaches and will be active for the entire practice session.

Through cross-ice games (3-on-3), the players and goalkeepers are more engaged in the game, have to make more decisions and are more active. This will increase their enjoyment and fun in the game and will develop their passion for a lifelong participation in ice hockey.

With station-based drills and cross-ice games each hockey player is more actively engaged in the action and will develop better skills. Cross-ice games are not just played in the start and intermediate phase, even advanced and elite hockey players engage in cross-ice games to work on their puck handling, decision making and agility skills.

During a cross-ice practice (station-based or small area games) players will touch the puck, will change direction, change the skating speed, start and stop, battle for puck possession, have more repetitions and make decisions more often. All this will support their development into skillful hockey players.

Playing cross-ice games and organizing station-based practices will increase player participation, creativity, engagement, decision-making, stickhandling and will encourage self-learning.

Through the station-based training system coaches can give feedback directly to the players because the training area is smaller and fewer players are at any one time at a station.

BEGINNER STAGE SUMMARY

START PHASE

- More puck touches
- Individualized feedback and support
- Increased ice utilization
- More engaged players during practice and games
- Enjoyment for all players

Further, it is recommended that players participate in up to 4 other sports throughout the year to develop multiple sport skills, athleticism and physical literacy which is the foundation for versatile sport skill development and a long lasting enjoyment in sports.

Recommendation in the Start phase is a game to practice ratio of 1:7, or jamborees, tournaments once a month. No traveling for more than 50 km for games.