



LEARN TO PLAY PRACTICE MANUAL



DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM

Growing the game is a key part of the IIHF's mission to develop and promote ice hockey globally. With so many leisure options available to young people these days, we must look beyond simply hosting recruitment events. We must ensure that new players, especially children, have the best possible experience when they step on the ice for their first practice.

This IIHF Learn to Play Manual has been created to help the Member National Associations and Clubs to achieve that. The IIHF aims to give instructors and coaches the tools to teach the basics of our game in a fun and safe environment, to build passion for ice hockey and for sports in general.

It is important to acknowledge that this resource alone is not enough. It is crucial that the Member National Associations continuously keep sending relevant staff to IIHF education programs, such as the IIHF Development Camp, to ensure their knowledge is up to date and that they will be able to further pass on the information to regions and clubs.

The IIHF is here to assist its members, and together we can share our love of the game with new players around the world.

Sincerely,



RENÉ FASEL
IIHF President




It has become more and more apparent how important it is for Member National Associations and Clubs to have long-term athlete development models and vplayer development pathways. Those are the key developmental components for all athletes, regardless of age or gender.

It is also very clear that we must use ice time as efficiently as possible. In many countries, ice availability is very limited, and it is our responsibility to ensure that children get as much activity as possible during the sessions. To achieve that goal, we strongly recommend station-based training and playing a lot of small-area games. It is the responsibility of the organizations to ensure that the new players can experience our game in an organized, efficient but safe environment.

The IIHF will naturally base its Learn to Play educational programs, such as the development camps and the workshops, on this manual.

We trust that this manual will help all relevant organizations and people to introduce our game to many new athletes, young or old. Our sport has many great values and, through providing enjoyable experiences, we are not only creating good players but good people.

Sincerely,



PETR BRIZA

Council Member



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Learn To Play and/or Play To Learn.

The main objective of the IIHF Learn to Play Program (LTP) is to give 6 to 9 year old boys and girls the ultimate hockey experience. Hockey at this level should be based on having fun, participation by all, and being taught basic hockey skills. This program is based on these ideals.

The Learn To Play Practice Manual is for anyone who is interested or involved in setting the right environment to develop children in the game of ice hockey. The IIHF Learn to Play Program is based on a model of practicing and playing on different small ice formats. “Why small-ice”, you may ask, “I want my child playing on the big ice surface like the adults do”. That is the point, children are not mini adults, they learn differently than adults, and they see the world differently than adults do. This small-ice practicing and playing model has been used in many of the leading hockey nations in the world for a number of years and has stood the test of time. It has shown that children who begin their hockey training in this environment have an outstanding hockey experience.

Playing Rules for Children Under 10 Years Old, which have also been tested and developed over time in many countries around the world, are included in chapter 5 (starting on page 60). These rules enable the children to develop hockey skills in an environment that fosters fun, learning, participation by all, and mental and physical development.

MANUAL FORMAT

The components are laid out in a progressive order to help the LTP coach prepare for and operate an efficient practice. The four components of a lesson are:

- Specific Objectives
- Key Instructional Points
- Teaching Tools Needed
- Practice Plan

The Practice Plans are intended as worksheets for the LTP coach to write on while preparing the practice. Once the practice is prepared the LTP coach should put the Practice Plan in a plastic cover, take it onto the ice and hang it on the boards for quick reference during the practice.

In the practices you will find drawings, silhouettes of these drawings and ice diagrams which illustrate and explain the desired skills and drills which are covered in the test.

Descriptions of the components of a typical practice plan are illustrated on the following pages.

On the last page of each section is a Skills Checklist to help the coach determine if the players have successfully carried out the skills in that level and ready to advance.