



HOCKEY QUEBEC

NOVICE HALF-ICE HOCKEY PROGRAM

OPERATIONS GUIDE





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Note: The common gender is used as a neutral gender with the sole intent of simplifying text.



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Section 1: Introduction





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DEVELOPING SKILLS FIRST

Hockey Canada and Hockey Quebec Novice program is an essential component in developing hockey skills for all children playing hockey in Canada.

Introduction

The initial hockey experience for a player is crucial. The first years of hockey must be a positive experience, filled with fun and excitement.

If a beginner has fun while developing basic skills and building confidence, the better chance they will continue to enjoy hockey for a lifetime. But if a young player has an unhappy, unrewarding experience, they might quit at an early age and never discover the real joy of playing hockey. As Canadians, every young player deserves the opportunity to enjoy playing hockey for life!

Almost all local Minor Hockey Associations organize house leagues or manage double letter teams. However, more and more Minor Hockey Associations also offer age-appropriate programming. Young players who are unprepared and are directly exposed to the adult version of the game are clearly disadvantaged compared to young players who have had the benefits of experiencing progressive skills development.

Hockey Quebec's goal is to offer a positive, safe and accessible environment, as well as programs based on learning and fun for all hockey players in the province of Quebec. Novice half-ice program must ensure progressive skills development through well-delivered practice sessions and age-appropriate game play in an environment well suited to each player's skill level.

The implementation of an Initiation Program (MAHG Program) based on an age-appropriate environment for Novice players will serve as the foundation upon which an entire Minor Hockey Association is built. The use of such a program allows the development of players' skills, but also those of coaches who interact with young players.

More than 30 years ago, Hockey Quebec developed the MAHG Initiation Program to ensure a fun, safe and positive hockey experience. It served as a structured, learn-to-play program designed to introduce beginners to basic skills. It also enabled young players to build a solid skill base and become contributing members of a team effort, develop self-confidence and experience a sense of personal achievement - goals achieved in an atmosphere of fun and fair play.



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“Learning basic skills at a young age will set the foundation for everything a player will accomplish in the game of hockey.”

Corey McNabb, Director of Hockey Development Programs, Hockey Canada

Hockey Canada Policy for Novice Hockey

The future of hockey lies within today's youth. Because of this, Hockey Canada has developed age-appropriate programming as a way to encourage the growth of foundational skills. Minor Hockey Associations and coaches lead the implementation of the Novice program with the assistance of volunteers, parents and others associated with hockey. The programming must provide opportunities for a wide range of participants to get involved through sound instruction and enjoyable play.

The success of grassroots hockey programming is measured by the level of development young players achieve. To optimize these levels, dedicated adults must play a large role as leaders and teachers who will create a challenging and motivating environment for all young players.

About Pre-novice and Novice Programs

- Programming should be delivered through a progressive learn-to-play teaching curriculum for the five-to-eight-year-old age group. Children learn best through participating in practice drills and sessions as well as informal and modified games, such as friendly games and obstacle courses.
- The program consists of three levels of instruction, designed specifically for young hockey players. Each level consists of a series of practice plans (lesson plans) that follow a defined path of progression.
- Skills such as skating, puck control, passing and shooting are introduced and refined in a progressive “one step at a time” manner.
- Although the emphasis is on fun and skills development, hockey at that age should also allow young players to experience fitness, fair play and cooperation.
- To ensure a positive experience for children, coaches can do an initiation training seminar. Those seminars focus on communication, teaching skills, leadership, skill analysis, lesson organization, and safety and risk management.



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PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

- Hockey Canada developed the program to ensure that player's early experiences with hockey are delivered in a safe and positive way.
- The program enables participants to become contributing members of a team effort, develop self-confidence and experience a sense of personal achievement.

PROGRAM GOALS

- Teach the basic skills to enable players to have fun while playing hockey.
- Promote the development and the improvement of physical activity and basic motor skills.
- Develop and encourage team spirit by players participating in activities on and off the ice.
- Promote physical fitness, fair play and cooperation as well as having fun while playing.

"Scaling down is important and the research shows that when children are more actively engaged, they touch the puck more often, have the puck on their stick longer and are interacting with one another to a greater extent."

Dr. Stephen Norris, Consultant to Hockey Canada



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Section 2: Rationale of Novice half-ice program





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Benefits of Half-Ice Games

*"You have to be able to make plays in pretty small areas.
The more you practice in small spaces the better off you are."
Sidney Crosby, Canada's National Men's Team*

Long-Term Player Development Model

Based on many scientific studies, it must be acknowledged that hockey on a full ice is not presently adapted to the physical and psychological development of seven-and-eight-year-old children. At that age, the emphasis must be placed on the development of the player's technical skills, in a positive context, where learning is prioritized over competition.

In that sense, half-ice hockey is an advantageous solution for the development of young hockey players aged eight or younger, whether they are beginners or more advanced. By separating the ice, the configuration of the playing area is better adapted to the physical, technical and tactical abilities of young players. An overview of some statistics taken from scientific studies illustrates the many advantages to the smaller surface games model.

TWICE AS MANY PUCK TOUCHES

Smaller area results in more engagement in the play:

All players are close to the play at all times and have many more opportunities to touch the puck. Regardless of the skill level or the ability of each player, their opportunities to be engaged in the play are doubled when the playing area is smaller.

SIX TIMES AS MANY SHOT ATTEMPTS

A very large difference between full-ice and small areas:

There are six times as many shots on goal in a half-ice game, because players are closer to the puck and the opponent's net at all times. The puck therefore finds its way to the net much more often.

THREE TIMES AS MANY SHOTS ON GOAL

Shrinking the playing surface increases offence:

Players are much closer to the net, skate shorter distance from goal to goal and have increased opportunities to take part in the offensive play.



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TWICE AS MANY PASS ATTEMPTS

Collective play is more apparent:

Passes and attempts to pass the puck are more frequent, for two main reasons:

- 1- All players are close enough to pressure the puck carrier more frequently, who then has to pass the puck to allow his team to keep it in their possession.
- 2- Teammates are in close support of the puck carrier at all times which gives more options for the puck carrier.

FIVE TIMES AS MANY PASSES RECEIVED

Short, quick passes find their target:

In smaller spaces, more passes are attempted and most of these passes are short (an average of five to ten feet). When passes are shorter, accuracy improves, and players have more success receiving the pass. Players also start to understand the importance of team puck possession.

Other advantages of half-ice games:

- Teach all basic skills of hockey so players can enjoy the game;
- Increased emphasis on skating skills, including elements like agility, balance, coordination and quickness;
- The number of puck battles increases;
- Puck control and puck protection skills are enhanced, which will help players succeed at higher levels;
- The fundamentals of skating, puck control, passing and shooting are reinforced at a greater rate during games;
- Proximity and constant pressure from the opponent require players to play with their head up, preparing players for proper use of body contact and checking skills in the future;
- Less time and space increases the frequency of decisions and improves hockey sense;
- The intensity level of competition increases with the progressive skill development of players.

*"You need to be able to make quick passes and have quick communication.
Small area games are important."*

Brianne Jenner, Canada's National Women's Team



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Section 3: Guidelines - Novice Half-Ice Season





Guidelines for the Novice half-ice program

POLICY OVERVIEW

Games for seven-and-eight-year-old players will be played on half-ice from November to March.

- **Development Phase**, during the months of September, October and November.
 - All players will follow Hockey Quebec's Novice program (18 lessons).
 - An evaluation period of one or two half-ice games can take place after the ninth lesson. This period will allow to form preliminary teams for the last portion of the lessons.
 - The final team selection can only take place after the 18th lesson.
 - The only games played during the Development Phase will be both evaluation games, between lessons 9 and 10.
- **Season Phase**, from November to March.
 - All games will be played on half-ice during this period.
 - A team will not be allowed to participate in a tournament if it has not previously completed their 18 lessons.
- **Transition Phase (seven-year-old players)**, starting on March 15th.
 - For the seven-year-old players, each association will organize an event at the end of their season. All games will be played half-ice.
- **Transition Phase (eight-year-old players)**, starting on March 15th.
 - To prepare players for their arrival in the Atom division, eight-year-old players will be able to participate in full-ice practices and exhibition games.

SEASONAL STRUCTURE

This section identifies a set of standards that Hockey Quebec members must follow. If the season starts in October or even as late as November, Minor Hockey Association should still follow the guidelines of a balanced season approach. Some of the dates and timeframes are guidelines while others are set. The number of games and practices are also recommendations based on what Hockey Canada has set out in the Long-Term Player Development Model and Novice Player Pathway documents.



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The start date for the Development Phase for Novice players will be the first full weekend following Labour Day. The start date for the Regular Season Phase has been set to the third complete weekend of November and the Transition Phase will begin on March 15. The Development, Regular Season, and Transition Phases cannot start earlier than planned.

1. DEVELOPMENT PHASE

During the development phase, coaches should be focusing on skill development. The ideal practice frequency has been set at two practices per week. In every practice, an average of 20 minutes of modified games has already been planned. The Development Phase includes 18 hours of training during which players can be separated in groups according to their abilities.

The objective of each Minor Hockey Association must be to provide a schedule that promotes learning without rushing through the MAHG Program. Hockey Quebec's MAHG Program proposes a series of well-crafted practice plans (ice sessions) that focus on developing fundamental skating skills like starting, turning and stopping, puck control skills like shooting, passing and deking, and more general motor skills like agility, balance and coordination. All of these components should be a part of player overall skill development, without forgetting to be done in a fun and safe environment that promotes self-confidence.

2. REGULAR SEASON PHASE

The Regular Season Phase represents the bulk of the season in the Novice seasonal structure. The practice to game ratio shifts to one practice for every two games played.

It is important that coaches continue to focus on skill development during practice sessions. Once again, Hockey Canada Novice Skills Development Manual provides a wide variety of resources set in the form of practice sessions as well as drills that meet the skill development needs of young players. Hockey Canada has developed additional resources to support coaches in their efforts to develop practice plans. The Hockey Canada Network, Drill Hub and the Initiation Program all contain age-appropriate and skill-specific resources to meet the needs of young Novice hockey players.

Even though the Regular Season Phase has a lower practice to game ratio, it is still possible to have 18 practice sessions to support and encourage young players throughout this phase of the season.



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3. TRANSITION PHASE

Starting March 15, the Transition Phase serves to prepare each player for the following season, depending on which division they will play in. This phase will last between two and four weeks, depending on the ice availability of each Minor Hockey Association. During this phase, the seven- and eight-year-old players will be separated and will follow a different program.

Seven-year-old players will be reunited to continue training activities and participate in an end-of-season event, where they will play three to four more games on half-ice.

For eight-year-old players, the transition phase will focus on preparing for the Atom division. Players will be able to participate in full-ice practices and exhibition games to familiarize themselves with playing area and rules for next season.

PROPOSED SEASONAL STRUCTURE				
PHASE		DEVELOPMENT	REGULAR SEASON	TRANSITION
DATES (2019-2020)		Sept 7th to Nov. 10th	Nov. 16th to March 10th	From March 15th
ICE SET-UP		1/4-ice	1/2-ice	1/2-Ice (7 years old) Full ice (8 years old)
NUMBER OF PLAYERS/ICE		48	36	24-36
VOLUME	SEASON %	33%	60%	7%
	WEEKS	10 weeks	18 weeks	2-4 weeks
	PRACTICES	18	18	6-8
	GAMES	2	38	4-6
	ACTIVITIES (*included in the total of games)	1 event	3 tournaments	1 event
	PRACTICE/GAME RATIO	9:1	1:2	2:1

TABLE 1: Novice Seasonal Structure



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4. ORGANIZATION

4.1 EQUIPMENT AGREEMENT

- Before the beginning of the season, each association is responsible for reaching an agreement with its city or arena for equipment installation (dividers and intermediate goals) before games and for storage during the season.
 - Any volunteer who is required to go on the ice to install the equipment must first be registered in Hockey Canada Registry (HCR) to be covered by Hockey Canada's insurance in the event of an accident.
 - Wearing a helmet and skates (or crampons) is mandatory for volunteers on the ice. For ease of movement, skates are recommended.
 - To reduce storage requirements, equipment purchase costs and the number of agreements to be made, it is recommended that a Minor Hockey Association centralizes their Novice games at the same arena for the entire season.

4.2 TEAM SET-UP

- Team classification will be done according to a four-class format (1-2-3-4). Each Minor Hockey Association will have to follow the classification table (see Hockey Quebec's Administrative Regulations) to determine the number of teams it will have to line up in each class.
 - An association may apply for reclassification request for one its team, according to the existing policy.
 - A region will be able to reclassify a team during the season so that it plays in a more appropriate class.
- Ideally, each team should be made up of 8 players and 1 goaltender.
 - A team must have a minimum of 6 players and 1 goaltender.
 - A team can have a maximum of 12 players and 1 goaltender.
 - A team with two goaltenders will be able to rotate one of their goaltenders as a player for every game.
 - A team will also be able to rotate different players as goaltender so that they can experience the position throughout the season (N.B. Full goaltender equipment is required for a game. See Appendix 1 for an example of recommended equipment).
- Each team will have a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 3 coaches behind the bench during a game.
 - Each team can still register more than 3 coaches on its official team roster.
 - Registered coaches and team personnel must have completed the required training, in accordance with regulations.
 - All coaches must have completed the Respect in Sport course as well as the HU-Online Coach ½.



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- At least one coach must have completed the Initiation 1 - Coach Initiation course.
- Each team may use affiliated players to replace their absent players, according to regulations.

Novice Classification Project - Half-Ice																
CLASS	PLYRS	1 TM	PLYRS	2 TMS	PLYRS	3 TMS	PLYRS	4 TMS	PLYRS	5 TMS	PLYRS	6 TMS	PLYRS	7 TMS	PLYRS	8 TMS
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	1	8	1	8	1	8	1	16	2
2	8	1	8	1	8	1	8	1	8	1	16	2	16	2	16	2
3	0	0	8	1	8	1	8	1	16	2	16	2	16	2	16	2
4	0	0	0	0	8	1	8	1	8	1	8	1	16	2	16	2
TOTAL	8		16		24		32		40	5	48	6	56	7	64	8

CLASS	PLYRS	9 TMS	PLYRS	10TMS	PLYRS	11 TMS	PLYRS	12 TMS	PLYRS	13 TMS	PLYRS	14 TMS	PLYRS	15 TMS	PLYRS	16 TMS
1	16	2	16	2	16	2	24	3	24	3	24	3	24	3	32	4
2	16	2	16	2	24	3	24	3	24	3	24	3	32	4	32	4
3	24	3	24	3	24	3	24	3	32	4	32	4	32	4	32	4
4	16	2	24	3	24	3	24	3	24	3	24	4	32	4	32	4
TOTAL	72	9	80	10	88	11	96	12	104	13	112	14	120	15	128	16

TABLE 2: Novice teams classification

4.3 TEAM REGISTRATION

- Each player must be pre-registered in the HCR system at the beginning of each season.
- Player tracking items must be updated before the start of the regular season.
- Teams can be created in the HCR system after being completed in November.
- Any volunteer who is required to go on the ice to install equipment must be registered in HCR as a bench personnel unless he or she is already a coach.

4.4 NOVICE PLAYERS MOVED TO ATOM

Eight-year-old players willing to be upgraded to the Atom Division will have to go through a procedure put in place by Hockey Quebec (and its regional offices). See Administrative Regulations for more details.



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5. NOVICE GAME PLAY GUIDELINES

In order to reproduce as closely as possible, the conditions of a game played on full ice and to ensure that everyone's experience is positive, the quality of selected equipment and game set-up are of the utmost importance.



The Game Play format is referred to as the Four-Team Game Play Model (see Figure 1). In this model, two teams play one another on one half of the ice and share a bench, while two other teams do the same on the other half of the ice. Teams do not change opponents between periods. This way, two games played on the ice can be of different classes. The recommended number of players for each team is eight, plus a goaltender. This way, it is possible to have two equal shifts of four players. Nonetheless, a team may consist of 6 skaters minimum and a maximum of 12.



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To facilitate the organization of games, it is recommended to identify the half of the ice where the game is to take place (Side A and Side B). In an effort to standardize identification of each half-ice, Side A should always be on the same side as the Zamboni door.

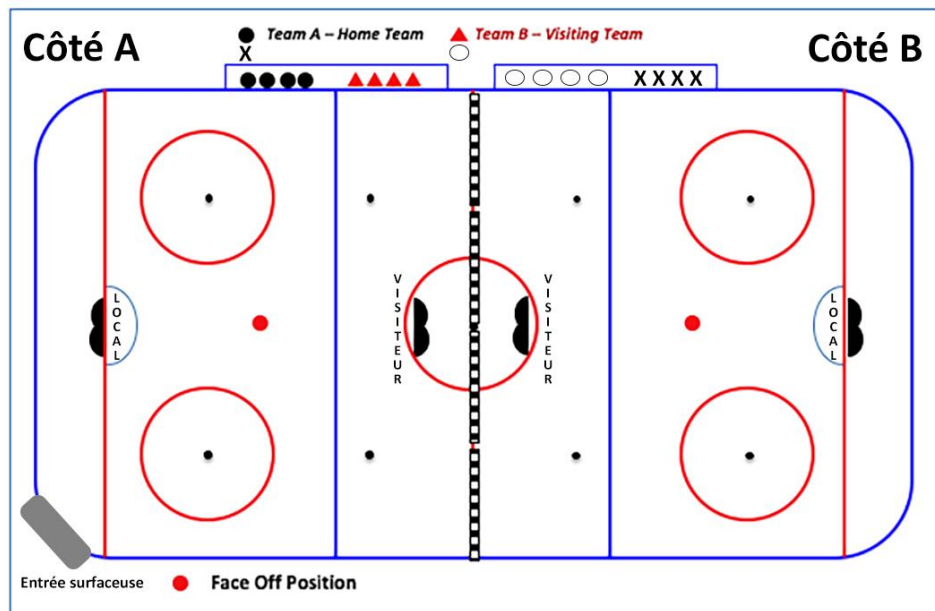


FIGURE 1: Four Teams – Two Half-Ice Games Model

Depending on distribution of ice times in an association, it may happen that only one game is scheduled on the ice. If this is the case, the ice is still divided in two halves, but only one half will be used for a game. The other half of the ice can be used for a practice (see Figure 2).

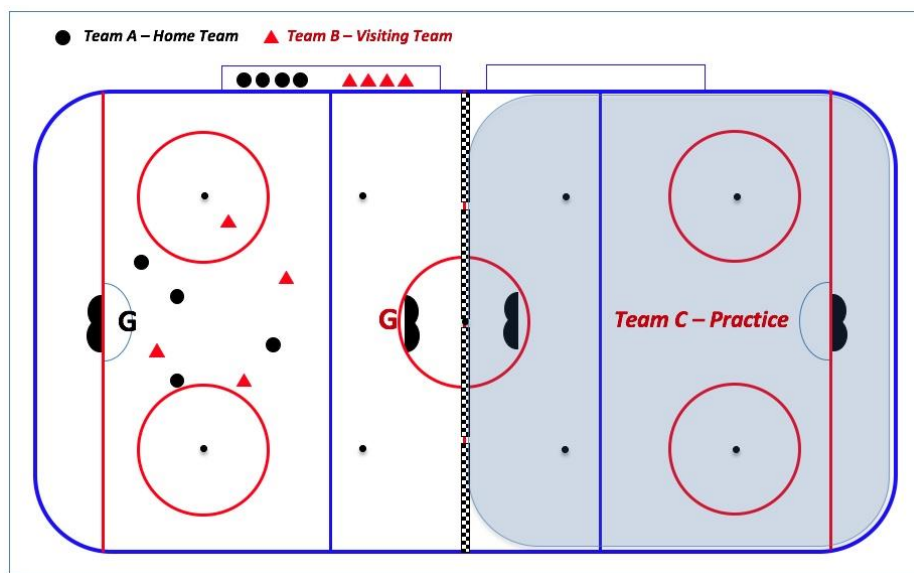


FIGURE 2: Two Teams – One Half-Ice Game Model with Practice.



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- Dividers are placed on the red line to define each game area. The Minor Hockey Association can use the model of its choice.
 - For more information on the recommended equipment, please refer to Appendix1.
 - If a volunteer is required to go on the ice to install equipment, he must first be registered in HCR and wear the required equipment (a helmet and skates or crampons).
- For the 2019-2020 season, it is highly recommended to use intermediate nets (36" x 48"). The same net size must be used for teams playing one another.
- It is recommended that the faceoff dot should be painted on each half-ice (permanently or temporarily), to indicate where the face-off will take place. The dot is to be placed at the midpoint between both nets.
- The minimal length of a game is 45 minutes, including warm-up and break between periods.
- The main score clock can be used to keep time for both games simultaneously.
- Officials work together to keep the games synchronized.
- No score is kept.
- For player verification purposes, each coach must give the scorekeeper a copy of the team's lineup before every game.
- Teams playing one another will share the same bench. Each team will be using the gate closer to their end of the ice.
 - When the position of the benches does not allow both teams to access the ice through separate doors, the penalty bench can be used as a team's bench.
- During the first period, the home team shall defend the net at the end of the rink, while the visiting team defends the net at center ice.
- After the first period, teams shall change sides, without changing half-ice. They will also switch sides on the bench, allowing to use the gate closest to their end zone.

6. PLAYING RULES

6.1 GENERAL RULES

- The Novice Game Play Model uses a 4-on-4 format.
- Playing time is divided as follows:
 - Warm-up: 2 minutes
 - 1st period: 21 minutes
 - Break (Side change): 1 minute
 - 2nd period: 21 minutes
 - The second period may exceed 21 minutes to fully use the available ice time.
- There will be one "conventional" face-off at the beginning of each period.
- Voluntary physical contact or bodychecking is not permitted.
- There is no icing and there are no offsides.



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6.2 SHIFTS

- Shift length – 90 seconds. A buzzer or whistle will sound to signal players change.
 - The clock continues to run throughout the 21-minute period.
- On the buzzer/whistle sound, players leave the puck immediately and return to their respective bench. The referee will pick up the puck and position himself at center ice.
- If a team has fewer than eight players, players will, in turn, do double shifts to ensure that there are always four players on the ice.
 - The player designated to stay on the ice for the following shift must tag up the bench prior to continuing play.
 - Coaches must ensure that ice time is evenly distributed among all players.
- The game will resume with a quick face-off.
 - As soon as a player from each team reaches the faceoff dot, the puck is dropped at center ice.
 - The remaining players join the game as soon as they leave the bench.
 - It is recommended that coaches rotate players who will come out of the bench first, so they can take a face-off during the game.

6.3 CHANGE OF POSSESSION

- When the goaltender freezes the puck, the referee blows the whistle to end play. The attacking team backs off and the defending team gets back possession.
- When the puck is shot out of play, the offending team backs off and the referee gives the non-offending team a new puck to continue the game.
- After a goal, the referee blows the whistle to allow the defending team to obtain possession. The scoring team shall back off.

6.4 PENALTIES

- Minor penalties are called by the referee raising his arm to indicate a penalty. The referee blows the whistle to stop the play once the offending team takes control of the puck after the penalty.
- Each penalty results in a penalty shot with pressure.
 - The player on whom the fault was committed will take the penalty shot from center ice.
 - All the other players must be positioned three metres behind the shooter.
 - All the players leave at the signal of the referee.
 - If a goal is scored or if the goaltender freezes the puck, the change of possession rules will apply. If not, the game resumes immediately.
 - If the penalty is called at the end of a shift (90 seconds), the penalty shot will be taken without pressure while the other players complete the line changes. The game will resume with a quick face-off in the center of the ice.



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- The team will not play short-handed and the offending player will not serve two minutes in the penalty box.
 - However, coaches are encouraged to educate players on their misconduct on their return to the bench.
- Should a penalty that would normally require a player to be ejected from the game occur (game misconduct, match penalty or gross misconduct), the player will be ejected from the remainder of the game. The referee will have to fill out a game report under the current procedure.

7. LEAGUES

The organization of Novice leagues will have to follow the same criteria as any other divisions, while integrating the specific elements of this new regulation.

- The league will produce a schedule similar as any other divisions, indicating the game number, the local team and the visiting team.
 - To facilitate organization of games, it is recommended to identify the half of the ice where the game is to take place (Side A and Side B)
- Each team must be identified by their name on the league's schedule.
- No score is kept, and there will be no rankings.
- It is recommended, when possible, to centralize Novice games at the same arena to optimize equipment usage.
- In order to reduce the number of days dedicated to hockey for families, it is recommended to group two games at the same place, on the same day, for a team.
 - The minimum rest period for a team between the end of its first game and the start of its second is 60 minutes.
 - A team can play a maximum of two games in one day.
- In order to limit travel times, it is recommended to make geographical divisions within each league.
- The regular season will be longer, and will have a maximum of 26 games. There will be no playoffs and regional championships at the end of the season.

8. TOURNAMENTS

8.1 REGULATIONS



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All Novice tournaments will be required to take place on half-ice without exception.

- Playing rules will be the Novice half-ice rules.
- Each team will have to play a minimum of four guaranteed games during the course of a tournament.

8.2 TOURNAMENT FORMAT

Regardless of the format, each tournament will have to meet the above-mentioned criteria for gameplay and half-ice regulation, as well as the number of guaranteed games to teams.

- In line with the half-ice Novice program, it is recommended to use a tournament format focused on players' participation and enjoyment.
- An elimination format can be adopted for a tournament.



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Section 4: Frequently Asked Questions





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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are the core requirements of the Novice Half-Ice Game Play Model?

The Novice half-ice game model was designed to maximize the opportunity to engage all players in the game. The core elements of this model are the smaller playing surface, the faster pace of games and the progressive integration of game situations into the development of the player, with a priority on the development of individual skills at a young age.

2. How will player development be affected if there is no offside or icing called during game play?

The Novice gameplay model uses a 4 on 4 format (plus goaltenders) on half-ice. Learning offside and icing will come in time, but the primary focus in an age-appropriate training and programming needs to be on skill development in the areas of skating, puck control, passing, receiving and shooting. Concepts like offside, icing, positional play and face-offs can be introduced at a later stage when players move to the full-ice gameplay model in the transition to Atom hockey.

3. Are Novice teams permitted to identify a full-time goaltender?

The recommendation in the Novice program is that all players have an opportunity to play in net. All players should rotate through the goaltender position throughout the season. The Hockey Canada Long-Term Player Development Model encourages a wide range of skill development at a young age and focusing on a single position may limit the opportunity to practise skills in all areas.

4. Are Novice half-ice games required to be two 21-minute periods?

This is the recommended timeframe for the game. The game time established for Novice games is based on a 50-minute ice session. Ice sessions can be shorter or longer. If this is the case, adjust accordingly ensuring that the guidelines for the duration of games are followed.

5. Are Novice teams permitted to play full-ice games?

During the season, no full-ice games can be played in the Novice division. For eight-year-old players, a transition period to the Atom division is planned at the end of the season to organize exhibition games on full ice.



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6. Are smaller nets required for half-ice games in the Novice division?

It is highly recommended to use intermediate nets (3' x 4') because they're better adapted to the Novice player environment. However, it is not required to use intermediate nets, but their use has a really positive influence on the course of the games.

7. Is there a need to draw a goal crease in front of the neutral zone nets?

There is no need to draw a crease for the neutral zone nets. Each net should be placed just inside the center ice circle which will provide a small marking to aid the goaltender's positioning. If there is no circle, a crease may be drawn on the ice.

8. What are the advantages of practising in small areas and playing half-ice games?

Smaller playing surface results in more engagement in the play for young players. Through the small-area station-based practices and cross-ice games, players are closer to the play at all times and have much more opportunity to touch the puck. Regardless of the skill level or the ability of each player, their opportunities to be engaged in the play are doubled when the playing area is smaller. An NHL Analytics research has illustrated that all skill areas of the game increased substantially when players played in small spaces better suited to their age and skill level.

9. What are the ice dimensions of a half-ice hockey game?

The average dimensions of a regular ice surface in Canada is 200' x 85'. The half-ice playing surface can be a maximum of 100' x 85' if the dividers are placed at the center-ice line. In a study conducted by Hockey Alberta, Novice players needed the same numbers of stride to cross the half-ice distance as an adult does on a full-ice surface.

10. Is it a requirement to use a blue puck instead of a black puck? What are the advantages?

It is not a requirement to use a blue puck for Novice hockey. The regulation black puck weighs six ounces, while the blue puck weighs four ounces. Scaling down all aspects of practice and game play for players eight and under is very beneficial. The blue puck is an appropriate weight in relation to the height and weight of these young players. Use of the blue puck can promote proper mechanics in shooting, passing and carrying the puck.

11. Should Novice players and/or Novice teams be split according to their skill level?

Grouping players of similar ability can be a very important principle for setting young players up for success and enjoyment. The focus of the Novice program is player development. It is important in



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both station-based practices and in half-ice game play that players are grouped by similar ability levels when possible or necessary.

12. Do the officials need to be fully registered?

During games, the use of fully accredited officials is required. Supervised officials taking part in the initiation training is also permitted. It must be noted that Novice half-ice games provide an excellent opportunity to introduce officials to the game.

13. What support is available for coaches at the Novice level?

The Initiation certification is designed for Pre-novice and Novice coaches who need to learn the proper instructional approach with children of this age. The Community Coach clinic is part of the new online NCCP Coaching Clinic available through the online Hockey University. Recognizing the necessity to provide a positive experience for young hockey players, those seminars are built upon a number of values necessary to provide an experience of great quality for players.

14. What guidelines should be followed when storing and setting up equipment at community arenas?

Each facility and association is unique and will have its own standard operating procedures when it comes to the storage, set-up and takedown of the divider system. In many cases, municipalities have developed procedures that apply to all arenas within their territory. Each association is responsible for reaching an agreement with its city or arena manager.

It will be important to work with facility management to ensure proper protocols are being followed. These efforts will maximize efficiency, ensure safe practices for all and promote a harmonious relationship between the arena staff and members of the local Minor Hockey Association.

15. Where can dividers and intermediate goals be purchased?

There are a number of suppliers for ice equipment across the province. Hockey Quebec does not presently have an agreement with a particular supplier, but recommends the purchase of board dividers measuring 42 inches with rounded corners. It is recommended to look at different options and suppliers to obtain the best possible price and to minimize shipping cost.



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16. Who can we contact for questions about the Novice half-ice program?

For any questions regarding the implementation and operation of the program within your association:

Contact your region (see the regional directory at the end of the guide).

For any questions regarding the orientations of the Novice program:

Hockey Quebec - novicedemiglace@hockey.qc.ca.



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Section 5: Hockey Quebec Oversight





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Hockey Quebec Oversight

In order to ensure the proper implementation of the rules of the new Novice program, Hockey Quebec, in collaboration with its regions, has the responsibility to ensure uniformity of application at the provincial level.

Hockey Quebec also ensures proper support for its associations in the process by promoting a constructive and progressive approach.

Associations unable to respect the guidelines or having difficulties in setting up the program will be monitored and assisted by their region and Hockey Quebec.

As an initial step, a conference call (MHA, the region and Hockey Quebec) will be planned to identify issues and jointly find a possible solution. The region will be responsible for the follow-up.

In a further step, if the association does not correct the situation, a formal meeting will be organized (MHA, the region and Hockey Quebec) to establish a joint action plan to permanently correct the situation. The region will be responsible for the follow-up.



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Appendix 1: Recommended equipment





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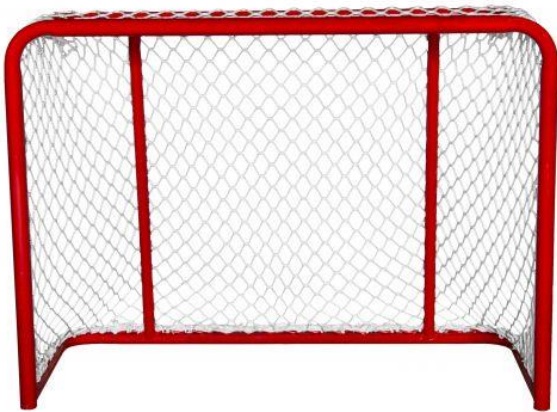
1. DIVIDERS



Rink dividers
42" high
Rounded corners

This model is highly recommended as it replicates the look of a full ice.

2. INTERMEDIATE NETS



Size: 4' x 3' (48" x 36")
Solid tubular steel goal posts
Nylon net



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3. GOALTENDER EQUIPMENT



To ease the transition from player to goaltender, a “quick change” equipment can be used. It features adapted leg pads and an oversized jersey designed to fit over the existing shoulder and elbow pads without limiting mobility. The gloves were designed to be easier to close, to facilitate the grip of the stick and to ease catching the puck.

4. EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS

The following suppliers are suggested. They offer all the necessary equipment for Novice half-ice games (dividers and intermediate nets). Each association should check with local suppliers to obtain the best possible price.

Distribution Sports Loisirs

2200, rue Léon-Harmel Suite 1
Quebec (Quebec), G1N 4L2
info@sport.qc.ca
Quebec: 418.684.2480
Montreal: 514.729.1498

Bandes de hockey Gyslain Lampron

3965, rue Howard
Longueuil (Quebec), J3Y 7C4
gyslainlampron@gmail.com
Phone : 514-358-3306

Le Groupe Sports-Inter Plus et Installations Sports-Inter

420, rue Faraday
Quebec (Quebec), G1N 4E5
Email : going1@sports-inter.com
Phone : 1 (418) 527-0244 / 1 (800) 463-5561

Agora Sport

1104 Rue Lévis
Terrebonne (Quebec), J6W 4L1
Email : info@agorasport.com
Phone : 450-824-1900 (office)



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OUR REGIONS



HOCKEY ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE
182, 10e Avenue Est
Amos (Quebec)
J9T 1H9
<http://www.hockeyat.ca/>



HOCKEY LAC ST-LOUIS
6875, boul. Timens, suite 200
Saint-Laurent (Quebec)
H4S 2C7
<http://www.hockeylsl.ca>



HOCKEY QUÉBEC CHAUDIÈRE-
APPALACHES
1090, rue Louis-Riel, bureau 101
Quebec (Quebec)
G1W 4A8
<http://www.hockeyqca.org>



HOCKEY BAS ST-LAURENT
18, rue du Lieutenant de Chaste, C.P.265
Cap-Chat (Quebec)
G0J 1E0
<http://www.hockeybsl.com/>



HOCKEY LAURENTIDES-LANAUDIÈRE
95, boul. De Gaulle, suite 111
Lorraine (Quebec)
J6Z 3R8
<http://www.hockeylaurentideslanaudiere.ca>



HOCKEY QUÉBEC RÉGION MONTRÉAL
8110, boul. Saint-Michel, bureau 202
Montréal (Quebec)
H1Z 3E2
[http://www.hockeyregionmontreal.com/
fr/index.html](http://www.hockeyregionmontreal.com/fr/index.html)



HOCKEY CÔTE-NORD
44, avenue du Parc, app.3
Baie-Comeau (Quebec)
G4Z 2N1
<http://www.hockeycotenord.com/>



HOCKEY LAVAL
4355, Autoroute Jean-Noël Lavoie (440)
Ouest, local 204
Laval (Quebec)
H7P 4W6
<http://www.hockeylaval.com>



HOCKEY RICHELIEU
565, boul. De Mortagne
Boucherville (Quebec)
J4B 1B7
<http://www.hockey-richelieu.qc.ca>



HOCKEY ESTRIE
2959, boul. de l'Université, suite 226
Sherbrooke (Quebec)
J1K 2X6
<http://www.hockeyestrie.qc.ca>



HOCKEY MAURICIE
C.P. 10035
Shawinigan, (Quebec)
G9T 5K7
<http://www.hockeymauricie.ca>



HOCKEY SAGUENAY LAC ST-JEAN
2435-113, rue St-Jean-Baptiste
Jonquière (Quebec)
G8A 1X3
<http://www.hockey-saglac.com/>



HOCKEY GASPÉSIE LES ÎLES
25 rue St-Onge
Carleton-sur-Mer (Quebec)
G0C 1J0
<http://www.hockeygaspesielesiles.ca>



HOCKEY OUTAOUAIS
499-101, boul. Labrosse
Gatineau (Quebec)
J8P 4R1
<http://www.hockeyoutaouais.com>



HOCKEY QUÉBEC
7450, boul. les Galeries d'Anjou,
suite 210,
Montréal (Quebec)
H1M 3M3
novicedemiglace@hockey.qc.ca