



## **Player Development Plan**

Welcome to the 2024-2025 Hockey season! Thank you for trusting WAHA with your players' development. I'm Kris Smith, your ACE Coordinator. My role is to offer guidance, resources, and suggestions for player improvement following the guidelines set by USA Hockey.

USA Hockey has conducted extensive research on player development and has outlined recommendations for each age group. I have prepared a document for each age category, which includes a summary, a skills checklist, and a link to a sample practice plan.

If you have any queries or require assistance beyond what your coaches can provide, please don't hesitate to contact me via email or phone.

Kris Smith, PA-C  
WAHA Coach/ACE Coordinator  
304-830-1750  
WHGHockey@gmail.com

## 8-and-Under

At the 8-and-Under level coaches should develop **fun engaging practices**. We can never underestimate the value of fun to peak players' interest. We are trying to plant a hockey for life seed in all our players. This is the most important age group for growth of the game and our program.

### **Practice Ratios**

- Individual Skills: 85%
- Hockey Sense: 15%
- Systems: 0%

When coaches develop these practices the focus will be on making fun practices with a high work to rest ratio. Players will not require as much recovery. We are looking to **make lines shorter** and **repetitions higher**. This high workload is best created through **station-based practices**. You may also see small area games to help develop “hockey sense.”

### **Optimal Skills Training**

- Speed: constant stopping, starting, changing direction and puck races in small area games
- Flexibility: perform a variety of activities through a full range of motion

### **Practice Plan**

<https://www.icehockeysystems.com/share/practice/616946>

# 8-and-Under Skills Checklist

<p><b>Player Knowledge:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Rules</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Face-offs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Body Contact</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Offsides</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Icing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Checking from Behind</li> </ul> </li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Common Infractions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cross Checking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Unsportsmanlike Conduct</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tripping</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> High Sticking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hooking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interference</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Holding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Checking</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Skating:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ready Position</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Edge Control</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Start</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Stride</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Controlled Stop           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Two Foot</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One Foot Snow Plow</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Controlled Turn</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Crossover</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backward Skating</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backward Stop</li> </ul>
<p><b>Puck Control:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lateral Stickhandling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Front to Back Stickhandling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Diagonal Stickhandling</li> </ul>	<p><b>Passing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forehand Pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backhand Pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Receiving a Pass</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shooting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wrist Shot</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backhand</li> </ul>	<p><b>Body Contact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stick on Puck</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stick Lift</li> </ul>

# 10-and-Under

At the 10-and-Under level coaches should continue creating **fun engaging** practices. This is the **Golden Age of Skill Development**. We are trying to create a fun environment that increases players' desire to further their skills. The next four years of development will have the largest impact on these players' long-term development.

## Practice Ratios

- Individual Skills: 75%
- Hockey Sense: 15%
- Systems: 10%

When developing practices coaches will focus on **activating players** for the majority of each practice session. They will review practice plans with a statistical approach, **how many reps are players getting** in their 60-minute practice. This high workload is best created with **station-based** practices. When looking at the effectiveness of a drill they will review the ability to increase or decrease difficulty to players abilities. We will encourage a positive environment where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities.

## Optimal Skills Training

- Speed: constant stopping, starting, changing direction, and puck races in small area games
- Flexibility: perform a variety of activities through a full range of motion
- Skill Acquisition and Development: science shows this is the prime age for children to acquire and develop sport skills, therefore it's known as the Golden Age of Skill Development

## Practice Plan

<https://www.icehockeysystems.com/share/practice/594646>

# 10-and-Under Skills Checklist

<p><b>Player Knowledge:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Rules</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Face-offs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Body Contact</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Offsides</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Icing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Checking from Behind</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Common Infractions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cross Checking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Unsportsmanlike Conduct</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tripping</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> High Sticking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hooking</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interference</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Holding</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Checking</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Skating:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ready Position</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Edge Control</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Start</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Stride</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Controlled Stop           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Two Foot</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One Foot Snow Plow</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Controlled Turn</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Crossover</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backward Skating</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backward Stop</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>One Foot Stop</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Backward Crossover</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mohawk Turn</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Puck Control:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lateral Stickhandling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Front to Back Stickhandling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Diagonal Stickhandling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Puck Protection</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Change of Pace</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Toe Drag</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Give and Go</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Accelerate with Puck</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Passing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forehand Pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backhand Pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Receiving a Pass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Saucer Pass</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Receive a Pass with Skate</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Indirect Pass</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Shooting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wrist Shot</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Backhand</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Screen Shot</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Deflection</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Off Rebound</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Body Contact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stick on Puck</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stick Lift</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Poke Check</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Gap Control</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Body Position and Angles</b></li> </ul>

# 12-and-Under

At the 12-and-Under level coaches will continue to **push skill development** while introducing more game tactics. Players should have developed the desire to further their skill development over the past year and we can now begin to teach more tactics. We need to find a balance **focusing on skill development to further tactics**. Players at this age should be encouraged through small area games. As parents we may see more drills than team scheme, but these drills should be teaching basic concepts of scheme I.e. odd man rush drills, and keep away drills translate to powerplay.

## Practice Ratio

- Individual Skills: 65%
- Hockey Sense; 25%
- Systems 10%

Coaches are still focusing on skill development, but they can begin to use small area games more creatively to increase hockey sense and system play. The games should lead players to the desired outcome or strategy, it should not be provided to them. At this age will **adjust practice repetitions from high activity to interval training**. While players do not begin live contact at this age group we will begin the **introduction to contact**. Players should be taught good habits including angling, stick on stick, delivering contact with purpose and receiving contact.

## Optimal Skills Training

- Skill Acquisition and Development: Science has shown this is the prime age for children to acquire and develop sport skills, therefore it's known as the Golden Age of Skill Development
- Speed (For Girls): This is the prime time to increase speed by improving the stride length and frequency through drills requiring high velocity for shorter intervals of time
- Stamina (For Girls): This is the prime time to improve the endurance of each female athlete

## Practice Plan

<https://www.icehockeysystems.com/share/practice/614591>

# 12-and-Under Skills Checklist

<p><b>Puck Control:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Lateral Stickhandling</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Front to Back Stickhandling</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Diagonal Stickhandling</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Puck Protection</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Change of Pace</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Toe Drag</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Give and Go</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Accelerate with Puck</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Change of Direction</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Backward puck Control</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fakes with Puck</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Puck Off Boards</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Skating:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Ready Position</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Edge Control</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Start</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Stride</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Controlled Stop<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Two Foot</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> One Foot Snow Plow</li></ul></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Controlled Turn</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Crossover</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Backward Skating</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Backward Stop</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> One Foot Stop</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Backward Crossover</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Mohawk Turn</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Lateral Skating</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Backward Cross Under</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Backward two skate stop</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Backward Power stop</b></li></ul>
<p><b>Shooting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Wrist Shot</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Backhand</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Screen Shot</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Deflection</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Off Rebound</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Snapshot</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Slapshot</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fake Shot</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Passing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Forehand Pass</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Backhand Pass</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Receiving a Pass</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Saucer Pass</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Receive a Pass with Skate</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Indirect Pass</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Receive Pass with Proper Hand</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Surround the Puck</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>One-Touch Pass</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Area Passes</b></li></ul>

**Goaltending:**

- Position
  - Proper Stance
  - Angles
- Movement
  - Forward
  - Backward
  - Lateral
- Save Technique
  - Stick
  - Gloves
  - Body and Pads
  - Butterfly
  - Sliding Butterfly
- Recovery
- Stopping Puck Behind the Net
- Puck Retention
  - Cradling
  - Rebound Control
- Game Situations
  - Screen Shots
  - Walkouts
  - Wraparounds

**Body Contact:**

- Stick on Puck
- Stick Lift
- Poke Check
- Gap Control
- Body Position and Angles
- Stick Press**
- Delivering Contact**
- Receiving Contact**



# 14-and-Under

At 14-and-Under we realize these players are **facing several physical and emotional challenges**, but there still is an excellent opportunity for development. Coaches will make sure these players are **engaged and excited to be at the rink**. These next several years' players will have many other extracurricular activities.

## Practice Ratios

- Individual Skills: 50%
- Hockey Sense: 35%
- Systems: 15%

Practices will focus on creating opportunities for **individualized skill levels**. We will encourage players to help each other, this will help to bring the group closer together both in skills and community. Contact will be a regular part of every practice at this age group, continuing to encourage proper mechanics and purpose during checking. You will see small area games used to build hockey sense and systems. Players should find themselves working hard for **short bursts with active recovery**.

## Optimal Skills Training

- Speed (For Boys and Girls): This is the prime to increase speed by improving the stride length and frequency through drills requiring high velocity for shorter intervals of time
- Stamina (For Boys and Girls): This is the optimal development stage to improve the endurance of each athlete
- Strength (For Girls): Following puberty is the ideal time to improve the strength of an athlete

## Practice Plan

<https://www.icehockeysystems.com/share/practice/617066>

# 14-and Under Skills Checklist

## Puck Control:

- Lateral Stickhandling
- Front to Back Stickhandling
- Diagonal Stickhandling
- Puck Protection
- Change of Pace
- Toe Drag
- Give and Go
- Accelerate with Puck
- Change of Direction
- Backward puck Control
- Fakes with Puck
- Puck Off Boards
- Stop and Go**
- Fake Shot**
- Spin Around**

## Skating:

- Ready Position
- Edge Control
- Forward Start
- Forward Stride
- Controlled Stop
  - Two Foot
  - One Foot Snow Plow
- Controlled Turn
- Forward Crossover
- Backward Skating
- Backward Stop
- One Foot Stop
- Backward Crossover
- Mohawk Turn
- Lateral Skating
- Backward Cross Under
- Backward two skate stop
- Backward Power stop
- Quickness**
- Speed**
- Agility**
- Power**
- Change of Direction**
- Balance**

**Shooting:**

- Wrist Shot
- Backhand
- Screen Shot
- Deflection
- Off Rebound
- Snapshot**
- Slapshot**
- Fake Shot**

**Passing:**

- Forehand Pass
- Backhand Pass
- Receiving a Pass
- Saucer Pass
- Receive a Pass with Skate
- Indirect Pass
- Receive Pass
- Surround the Puck
- One-Touch Pass
- Area Passes
- Crisp Passes**

**Goaltending:**

- Position
  - Proper Stance
  - Angles
- Movement
  - Forward
  - Backward
  - Lateral
- Save Technique
  - Stick
  - Gloves
  - Body and Pads
  - Butterfly
  - Sliding Butterfly
- Recovery
- Puck Handling
  - Stopping Puck Behind the Net
  - Passing the puck**
    - Forehand**
    - Backhand**
  - Clearing the Puck**
    - Forehand**
    - Backhand**
- Puck Retention
  - Cradling
  - Rebound Control
- Game Situations
  - Screen Shots
  - Walkouts
  - Wraparounds
  - Breakaways**
  - Line Rushes**
  - Faceoffs**
  - Communication with Teammates**

**Body Contact:**

- Stick on Puck
- Stick Lift
- Poke Check
- Gap Control
- Body Position and Angles
- Stick Press
- Delivering Contact
- Receiving Contact
- Shoulder Check**
- Receiving a Body Check**

# 18-and-Under

At the 18-and-Under level coaches will focus on providing players with an adequate amount of **fun and challenge**. These players have the most opportunity for other activities, so we must keep their interest by providing a fun yet challenging environment. **Small area games** will be used to teach desired skills and concepts. A focus on team will be encouraged, continuing building a close knit community. We will challenge these players to be responsible for themselves and allow parents to enjoy being a fan.

## Practice Ratios

- Individual Skills: 50%
- Hockey Sense: 30%
- Systems: 20%

When developing practices for this age group coaches will focus on **engaging athletes**. They have a multitude of options for their free time, so hockey must be fun and they must have **ownership in the activity**. Drills with high pace intervals will be used. **Small area games** can be used to teach concepts and systems. Players will discover the concept during play, they won't always be told the purpose, but rather discover it through strategy.

## Optimal Skills Training

- Speed (For Boys and Girls): Continue to increase speed by improving the stride length and frequency through drills requiring high velocity for shorter intervals of time
- Stamina (For Boys): This is the ideal stage to improve the endurance of each athlete
- Strength (For Boys and Girls): Following puberty is the ideal time to improve the strength of an athlete

## Practice Plan

<https://www.icehockeysystems.com/share/practice/475031>

# 18-and-Under Skills Checklist

## Puck Control:

- Lateral Stickhandling
- Front to Back Stickhandling
- Diagonal Stickhandling
- Puck Protection
- Change of Pace
- Toe Drag
- Give and Go
- Accelerate with Puck
- Change of Direction
- Backward puck Control
- Fakes with Puck
- Puck Off Boards
- Stop and God
- Fake Shot
- Spin Around
- Stickhandling in tight areas**
- While skating backward stickhandle with puck to side**

## Skating:

- Ready Position
- Edge Control
- Forward Start
- Forward Stride
- Controlled Stop
- Controlled Turn
- Forward Crossover
- Backward Skating
- Backward Stop
- One Foot Stop
- Backward Crossover
- Mohawk Turn
- Lateral Skating
- Backward Cross Under
- Backward two skate stop
- Backward Power stop
- Quickness
- Speed
- Agility
- Power
- Change of Direction
- Balance
- Forward Pivot**
- Backward Pivot**
- Backward Skating with minimal cross over**

### Shooting

- Wrist Shot
- Backhand
- Screen Shot
- Deflection
- Off Rebound
- Snapshot
- Slapshot
- Fake Shot
- Adjust body angle prior to shot**

### Passing

- Forehand Pass
- Backhand Pass
- Receiving a Pass
- Saucer Pass
- Receive a Pass with Skate
- Indirect Pass
- Receive Pass
- Surround the Puck
- One-Touch Pass
- Area Passes
- Crisp Passes

**Goaltending:**

- Position
  - Proper Stance
  - Angles
- Movement
  - Forward
  - Backward
  - Lateral
- Save Technique
  - Stick
  - Gloves
  - Body and Pads
  - Butterfly
  - Sliding Butterfly
- Recovery
- Puck Handling
  - Stopping Puck Behind the Net
  - Passing the puck
    - Forehand
    - Backhand
  - Clearing the Puck
    - Forehand
    - Backhand
- Puck Retention
  - Cradling
  - Rebound Control
- Game Situations
  - Screen Shots
  - Walkouts
  - Wraparounds
  - Breakaways
  - Line Rushes
  - Faceoffs
  - Communication with Teammates

**Body Contact:**

- Stick on Puck
- Stick Lift
- Poke Check
- Gap Control
- Body Position and Angles
- Stick Press
- Delivering Contact
- Receiving Contact
- Shoulder Check
- Receiving a Body Check
- Hip Check**
- Containing and Stalling**