

GETTING STARTED

USA Hockey strives to provide grassroots support and leadership to its members through a comprehensive network of volunteers in each of the organization's 12 geographical districts. For information about ice hockey teams and leagues registered with USA Hockey in your area, identify the state in which you live and contact the appropriate district representative.

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THIS IS USA HOCKEY

USA Hockey provides the foundation for the sport of ice hockey in America; helps young people become leaders, even Olympic heroes; and connects the game at every level while promoting a lifelong love of the sport.

An organization that was born out of a shoebox in Tom Lockhart's New York City apartment back in the fall of 1937 is today represented in all 50 states and includes a record one million-plus players, coaches, officials, parents and volunteers.

USA Hockey's primary emphasis is on the support and development of grassroots hockey programs. Its cutting-edge American Development Model, which was launched in January 2009, provides associations nationwide with a blueprint for age-appropriate athlete development. Always a leader in safety, USA Hockey furthered the enhancement of those efforts by advancing the USA Hockey SafeSport Program in June 2012.

While youth hockey is a main focus, USA Hockey also has vibrant junior and adult hockey programs that provide opportunities for players of all ability levels. The organization also supports a growing disabled hockey program.

Beyond serving those who play the game at the amateur level, USA Hockey has certification programs for coaches and officials, inclusive of industry-leading online education modules, to ensure standards are met that coincide with the level of play. Furthermore, a large focus is put on parent education with equipment needs, rules of the game and parental roles in youth sports among common topics.

Members of the organization are entitled to many benefits, including a subscription to *USA Hockey Magazine*, the most widely circulated hockey publication in the world; excess accident, general liability and catastrophic insurance coverage; industry-leading education; access to USAHockey.com; and opportunities to participate in USA Hockey National Championships, as well as player development camps.

As the National Governing Body for the sport of ice hockey in the United States, USA Hockey is the official representative to the United States Olympic Committee and the International Ice Hockey Federation. In this role, USA Hockey is responsible for organizing and training men's and women's teams for international tournaments, including the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and IIHF World Championships. USA Hockey also works closely with the NHL and NCAA on matters of mutual interest.

USA Hockey is divided into 12 geographical districts throughout the United States. Each district has a registrar to register teams; a referee-in-chief to register officials and organize clinics; a coach-in-chief to administer education programs for coaches; a risk manager to oversee liability and safety programs; and a skill development program administrator to facilitate learn-to-play programs. Within USA Hockey's 12 districts, a total of 34 affiliates provide the formal governance for the sport.



HOCKEY TALK

*Answering The Most Commonly
Asked Questions About
The Sport Of Ice Hockey*



PROGRESSING TO THE TOP

Hundreds of thousands of boys and girls throughout the United States participate in the sport of hockey, many who dream of one day representing their country in international competition as a member of a U.S. National or Olympic Team. Earning a spot as a national-level hockey player for the United States is a long process that begins early in a player's career. Membership in USA Hockey and participation in the programs offered by USA Hockey provide an early start to young players who hope to one day experience the thrill of international competition.

For young hockey players, the initial step usually begins at the local level. Evaluation camps are conducted within each of USA Hockey's 12 districts to identify players who will participate in Select 14, 15, 16 and 17 Girls' and Boys' Player Development Camps. Player Development Camp participants receive on- and off-ice training under the direction of leading USA Hockey coaches, along with current and former National Hockey League and Olympic team players and coaches.

USA Hockey took an aggressive step forward in its player development efforts in 1996-97 with the introduction of the National Team Development Program. A residency program based in Plymouth, Michigan, the NTDP annually trains 46 of the top male American ice hockey players under the age of 18. The NTDP is broken into two teams - the U.S. National Under-17 Team and the U.S. National Under-18 Team. The NTDP is a member of the United States Hockey League, the nation's only Tier I league, and both teams compete against USHL members throughout the season. Additional competition comes against NCAA teams and in international tournaments.

A full-time national coaching staff oversees a concentrated on- and off-ice training program that emphasizes principles of athletic, academic and social development. The ultimate goal of the NTDP is to better prepare America's national-caliber ice hockey players for success at the highest levels of competition, including world championships at various levels and the Olympic Winter Games.

In addition to monitoring the development of America's top women's ice hockey players through a series of national training camps, USA Hockey directs the U.S. Women's National Program at two world championships, the Olympic Winter Games and other various international events throughout the year. After the U.S. Olympic Women's Team captured the first-ever Olympic gold medal in women's ice hockey in 1998, the U.S. women have since earned three silver medals (2002, 2010, 2014) and one bronze medal (2006). The U.S. Women's National Team, which captured its first gold medal in the IIHF World Women's Championship in 2005, has claimed five of the last six world titles. In addition, the U.S. Women's National Under-18 Team has won four gold medals in the IIHF World Women's U18 Championships.

USA HOCKEY MERCHANDISE

USA Hockey offers a complete line of officially-licensed merchandise and apparel, including custom-designed sweatshirts, t-shirts, jerseys and caps. USA Hockey also offers instructional videotapes, manuals and other resource materials for players, coaches, officials and parents.

For more information about USA Hockey merchandise and resource materials, log on to the official USA Hockey website, usahockey.com.

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOCKEY

There is a wealth of information on the sport of ice hockey both online and at your local library. Both options are terrific resources for information and contain information on the history and rules of hockey as well as instructional manuals that offer tips and drills to help improve playing skills. You can also learn more about hockey by talking to the players, coaches, referees and volunteers who are involved with the sport in your community.

THE HOCKEY DICTIONARY

ASSIST: Point awarded to a player or players for helping set up a goal; usually the last two offensive players to handle the puck prior to a goal being scored are credited with assists.

BOARDS: The wooden and glass walls that surround the rink.

BODY CHECK: Using the hip or shoulder to impede the progress of an opponent who has the puck.

BREAKAWAY: A scoring opportunity that occurs when there are no defending players between the puck carrier and the opposing goaltender.

CHANGING ON THE FLY: Substitution of players without a stoppage in play.

FACE-OFF: To initiate play, the puck is dropped between two opposing players who face each other.

FORECHECKING: Pressuring the opposition when they control the puck in the neutral or defensive zone.

HAT TRICK: Three goals scored by one player in a single game.

POWER PLAY: When a team has more players on the ice because of a penalty (or penalties) called against the opposing team.

PULL THE GOALIE: Usually in an attempt to tie the score, a team trailing by one or two goals may take its goalie off the ice and send out an extra skater. This typically occurs in the closing minute(s) of a game.

SHORTHANDED: When a team is forced to play with fewer than six players because one or more have been sent to the penalty box.

SLAP SHOT: A sweeping motion with an accentuated back swing to shoot the puck.

WRIST SHOT: The motion of shooting with the puck directly against the blade of the stick.

HOW? WHAT? WHY? WHEN?

HOW MANY PLAYERS ARE ON A TEAM?

Each team may have six players on the ice at one time - generally three forwards, two defensemen and one goaltender. In addition to the players on the ice, each team keeps extra players on the bench to rotate into the game when on-ice players become tired.

WHAT KIND OF GEAR IS REQUIRED?

All youth players wear protective helmets with face shields (made of Plexiglas or reinforced wire), gloves and plenty of padding to help protect their shoulders, ribs, chest, hips, groin and lower back. The goalie's padding is heavier than that of other players and includes extra-thick leg pads. The goalie also wears a face guard that is attached to his or her helmet and has a catching glove and a blocker for use in handling and deflecting the puck.

HOW FAST DOES THE PUCK TRAVEL?

Some professional players can shoot the puck more than 100 miles per hour. As a matter of fact, speeds of up to 120 miles per hour have actually been recorded by some of the hardest shooters in hockey.

WHY DO PLAYERS DEFLECT THE PUCK?

Many people think that deflections are mere luck. Actually, players practice deflections by standing off to the side or in front of the net and deflecting shots from that position into another area of the goal. Seldom does a goaltender have sufficient time to react to a deflection since the puck suddenly changes direction off an offensive player's stick.

CAN A PUCK BE KICKED INTO THE NET FOR A SCORE?

A puck cannot intentionally be kicked in and still count as a goal. However, a puck can be deflected off a skate or a player's body and still count as a goal if no attempt was made to deliberately throw or kick it in.

WHAT DOES OFFSIDE MEAN?

A team is offside when any attacking player crosses the blue line before the puck. The puck must always cross the blue line before an attacking player may legally enter the offensive zone. All players from the attacking team must maintain skate contact with the neutral zone at the instant the puck crosses the blue line.

WHEN DOES ICING OCCUR?

In youth hockey, icing occurs when a player shoots the puck from his/her defensive side of the center-ice red line across the opponent's goal line. Icing is nullified if: (1) the team shooting the puck is shorthanded; (2) a player from the defending team could have played the puck before it crossed the goal line; or (3) a player from the icing team plays the puck before it crosses the goal line.