



***UNDER-11 PLAYER PATHWAY***



For players graduating from Under-9 hockey *and* for entry level hockey players who may start playing hockey at this age level, the Under-11 program is designed to meet the needs of all players.

It is a crucial part of enjoying sports for life and an important transition point from the previous age divisions. The U11 program focuses on enhancing basic hockey skills and takes them to **full-ice games**. Kids reconnect with teammates, increase self-confidence, and experience personal achievement, all through fun and fair play.

Development is at the core of U11 hockey, with the focus on refining skills so players will experience success in practices and games. Practice is where players have a chance to develop the most, and the progressive nature of U11 hockey is conducive to fun learning and development. It is delivered through a learn-to-play teaching curriculum that is age-appropriate and skill-specific for 9-year-olds and 10-year-olds.

It is a continuous opportunity for young players to develop and refine fundamental movement skills (skating, turning, acceleration), manipulation skills (shooting, puck control, passing), and overall motor skills (balance, coordination, agility) in a fun and safe environment, promoting skill development through self-confidence.

When players continue on a positive note, they enjoy the game and will go on to have fun playing hockey for many years!

Hockey Manitoba wants every youngster to have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from a program designed to meet their specific needs, one that ensures progressive skill development through well-delivered practice sessions and age-appropriate game play in an environment suited to their skill level.

Most of your season will be focused on technical skill development, with components of individual and team tactics, team play, and strategy also built into the programming over **five phases**.

Our needs-based programming is most appropriate for 9-year-olds and 10-year-olds, and is designed to aid both returning and new hockey players. The U11 format is optimized for maximum engagement, participation and **fun**.



## REQUIREMENTS

The U11 seasonal structure comes with certain REQUIREMENTS that all Minor Hockey Associations must abide by, and likewise some recommendations that can be implemented to enhance program delivery. Please refer to the graphic on the next page for program requirements and recommendations, which should be considered for both recreational and developmental streams of play.



## REQUIREMENTS

**NO** tryouts prior to or during first week of school or during Off-season Phase

**MUST** offer minimum 4 practices prior to evaluations

**MUST** have minimum 3 formal tryout sessions  
Ex: 1 skills, 1 small area games, 1 game

**MUST** have development sessions after team selection, before season starts

Tournament style playoffs – **NOT** elimination rounds

## RECOMMENDATIONS

2 seasonal breaks of **at least** 5 days (aside from Christmas)

Recommended max of **45 games** (inc. tryouts, reg. season, playoffs, tournaments)

No position specific tryouts - select teams based on skill

Fair and equal ice time in all situations

Rotate every player through goalie position

### For Coaches and Instructors

Whether you are new to the game or have played your whole life, you can become a U11 coach. Before a coach begins, they must meet requirements to ensure safety and enjoyment for players, coaches, parents and volunteers. Hockey Manitoba's coach volunteers are provided with class-leading resources to meet those requirements.



Some things to consider as a U11 coach:

### **Fair and Equal Ice Time**

All players get the same opportunity to contribute, regardless of skill or ability. A coach's responsibility is to develop all players. Shortening of the bench to in an attempt to win games is not permitted. All players and goaltenders should receive fair and as close to equal as possible ice time.

### **Recommendations:**

#### Positional rotation

- All players play all positions – forward (LW-C-RW)/defence (LD-RD)/goaltender
- All players get a chance to start the game and play in end-of-game situations

#### Goaltender rotation

- Full-time goaltenders allowed
- Goaltenders rotate for equal amount of playing time throughout the regular season and playoffs
- Goaltenders alternate games or split games as close to 50/50 as possible
- Each goaltender plays the final game in an equal number of tournaments

The rotation schedule should be done in consultation with the goaltender and parents – share games or alternate playing full games. If the goaltender is not playing in net, they should be allowed to play as a skater.

### **Head coaches of U11 teams require:**

- Hockey University – Online Community Coach training
- NCCP Coach 2 – Coach Level (only Trained status needed, not Certified)
- Checking Skills (if head coach)
- Respect in Sport – Activity Leader

Please use the Hockey Canada Network App and/or the Hockey Canada Drill Hub whenever possible, as there are U11 specific practice plans and drills. Coaches can contact the Hockey Manitoba office to receive a promo code to access drills through the app.