

BASIC RULES

Generally, gym hockey follows the rules of the National Hockey League. The most significant difference is the elimination of face-offs in gym hockey. Modifications based on the number of participants on each team and the playing facility can be made easily. Keeping the rules simple adds to the enjoyment of the game.

The do's and don'ts and basic rules of gym hockey can be taught in fifteen minutes.

- a. Play the puck or ball – not the opponent.
- b. Sticks must be carried and used below the waist, never raised above.
- c. Checking is forbidden.
- d. Players should anticipate the movement of the puck or ball.
- e. Play is continuous. Players should be constantly moving.

PLAYING AREA

Any reasonably smooth indoor or outdoor surface can be used – gym, playground or athletic field. The playing area should be twice as long as it is wide and the boundary lines should be clearly marked. A line or markers should be used to indicate the center line. The goal area should not be more than five feet wide.

TEAMS

The standard game is played by two teams, each with six players. A center, two forwards, two defensemen and one goalie make up each team. If there are more than twelve players, split them into additional teams of six and rotate them as goals are scored or at timed intervals.

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PLAY

One team begins the game at the center line. After a goal has been scored, play continues at the goal line by the team scored upon. The ball or puck may not be caught or held in the hand, except by the goalie. It may be stopped, but cannot be held, passed or advanced with the hand.

PERIODS

A regulation game, with two teams of six, consists of three ten-minute periods.

GOALS

A goal is scored when a player hits, sweeps or pushes the

puck or ball into the net with his stick directly, or deflects it off one of his teammates or a defensive player into the goal. A player may advance the puck or ball with his feet but he cannot kick it directly into the net to score. If a player kicks the puck or ball and it deflects off a defenseman into the goal, the goal will be allowed. If a defenseman shoots or kicks the puck or ball into his own net, the opposing team shall be awarded a goal. The puck or ball may not be thrown into the net to score.

GOALIE

The goaltender is the sole player permitted to catch the puck or ball and can do so only when he is in the crease. When he catches or stops the puck or ball, he must be given room to either throw or pass it to one of his teammates. The goalie should be instructed to remain standing to avoid being hit in the face by the puck, ball or stick. We advise that gloves, padding, eye protection, a helmet and mouth guard be worn.

OUT OF BOUNDS

If the ball or puck crosses the boundary lines of the playing surface, the last team having contact with it loses possession. This applies to side and goal lines. Play resumes where the ball or puck went out of bounds.

PUCK OR BALL BEHIND NET

If the puck or ball becomes stuck in the netting of the goal, or travels more than ten feet behind the goal, the defending team begins play at their goal line.

INFRACTIONS AND PENALTIES

- a. Loss of possession is assessed for:
Catching or carrying the ball or puck in the hand, except by the goalie.
Throwing the ball or puck, except by the goalie.
Offsides – the ball or puck must precede all forwards playing across their side of the center line. This prevents “goal hanging”.
Out of bounds – the last team to touch the ball or puck before it leaves the playing area loses possession.
- b. Penalties – When a penalty is called, the offending player must leave the game for two minutes, or until the other team scores.
The instructor may award a penalty shot instead of removing a player for two minutes. Play is stopped and one player is chosen to take a single shot. The goalie is the only defender as the shot is taken not less than twenty feet from the goal. No rebounds are allowed. If a goal is scored, missed or saved the team that was penalized begins play at their goal line.
An intentional infraction of the rules is a major penalty. Either the offending player leaves the game for four minutes, or two penalty shots to make one goal are awarded. Major penalties are rarely called. The instructor must judge whether the infraction was intentional.
- c. Calling penalties – Penalties should be called for any action not directed at the puck or ball, unnecessary roughness or illegal use of the stick.
Body contact is permitted only if the player is going for the puck or ball; however, intentional blocks, as in football, are penalties. Fighting is prohibited; offending players should be ejected from the game.
- d. Types of penalties:
1) Interference and Charging 2) Elbowing 3) Cross Checking and Slashing 4) Butt Ending 5) High Sticking 6) Tripping and Hooking

ZONE HOCKEY

FOR CLASSES OF 24-30 STUDENTS Zone hockey is a simple modification of gym hockey whereby the playing area is divided into zones. It emphasizes experience at each position and is ideal for classes with more than six players per team.

Players may move around freely, provided they keep their feet within the boundaries of their assigned zones. Zones are rotated every period and each position (center, forward and defenseman) is played twice. Many instructors prefer to eliminate the goalie in zone hockey because there are so many defensemen on each team.

A game consists of six periods. Each period lasts anywhere from one to three minutes, depending on the time available. One team begins the game at the center line. Play resumes there when either a goal is scored, the puck or ball goes out of bounds, or a rule is violated. One point is awarded for each goal scored and the team with the most points at the end of the six periods is the winner.

Zones

- a. Forwards – Four or five players stationed in the area closest to the opponent's goal who constitute the offense.
b. Centers – Four or five players occupying the center area of the playing surface. They are responsible for putting the puck or ball into play.
c. Defensemen – Four or five players stationed in the zone containing their own goal.

IMPORTANT

Close supervision is essential for the success of a gym hockey program. The rules concerning body checking and keeping sticks below the waist are critical elements of an injury-free game. Furthermore, we recommend the elimination of face-offs as used in ice hockey. We advocate protective goggles and mouth guards be worn by all players.



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