

Ice Hockey 101

An introduction to the world's fastest game!



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A New Zealand Tradition Since Ages Ago

It is said that the game of ice hockey originated on the frozen lakes and waterways of Canada in the 1870's with players fastening steel blades on to their boots and using crude sticks to hit a piece of wood into the goals.

From there the game has spread around the world and has become extremely popular in North America and many European countries such as Finland, Sweden, Russia, Switzerland, Germany and the Czech Republic. There are more than 65 member nations in the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF). Professional leagues are now played throughout the world, with North America's NHL being the pinnacle and the Stanley Cup being hockey's Holy Grail. The sport has also been part of the Winter Olympics since 1920.

Ice Hockey has been played in New Zealand for over 70 years and started in the South Island high country where farmers and farm workers played on frozen lakes. The first organised ice hockey tournament was played in 1937 when a man named Wyndham Barker donated a trophy called the Erewhon Cup. A meeting was held afterwards and the New Zealand Ice Skating Association (NZISA) formed. It wasn't until 1986 when the New Zealand Ice Hockey Federation (NZIHF) was formed at a meeting at Lake Tekapo that ice hockey began to flourish.



This photo is from the 1948 Erewhon Cup played at Opawa, near Albury in South Canterbury.



The NZIHF has been the sole national governing body for New Zealand ice hockey ever since. It links players, coaches, officials and all others involved in local ice hockey associations across New Zealand to all other regional, national and international bodies.

Today there are over 1200 registered players in New Zealand playing in local, regional and National age-grade competitions. Ice hockey is played in Auckland, Christchurch and also in Otago/Southland. There are three official Regions registered with the NZIHF: Auckland, Canterbury and the Southern Ice Hockey League, which encompasses clubs in Gore, Tekapo, Dunedin, Ranfurly, Alexandra and Queenstown.



Each Region holds its own local leagues in the respective age grades and is responsible for conducting these competitions.

Along with administering National Teams for Senior Men (Ice Blacks), Senior Women (Ice Fernz), U20, U18, and U16 Development Team, the NZIHF also run National Championships Competitions held each year for junior age grades at U13 and U19, as well as a new national U16 league in 2010 called the NZJEL. We



also hold National Senior Club Championships and a Senior Women's Championship tournament. For Senior Men we have the premier domestic competition called the New Zealand Ice Hockey League (NZIHL), which was first established in 2005. Five teams currently play in the NZIHL: the West Auckland Admirals, Botany Swarm, Canterbury Red Devils, Dunedin Thunder, and Southern Stampede.

The NZIHF is a member of the International Ice Hockey Federation and is represented at IIHF Congresses. The IIHF offer considerable help to developing countries in the form of Development Camps and programs for Players, Coaches, Referees and Administrators as well as administering World Championship tournaments at all levels.




Encouraging and Motivating




Emphasizing fun while playing minor ice hockey is the most important rule for parents.


Ice hockey is a great way for kids to learn self-confidence, discipline, teamwork and sportsmanship while having fun.


Your job as a parent is to make sure they are learning and having fun. The best way to do this is to encourage and motivate your children in positive ways. Below are a couple of tips for making ice hockey for parents and kids alike a positive and memorable experience.


 **FUN** - Always remember to emphasize that hockey is a game and games are fun.


 **Speaking highly of others** - Whenever talking to your child about other team members, coaches or even other teams always remember to speak highly of them. Not only praise your child's play, but praise their effort, the team's performance in general and their coaches and the referee for volunteering their time to coach and teach your kids. If you show respect for others in the organization, your children will learn to show respect as well.




 **After the game** - One of the most important things to remember after practice or a game is to praise your child and their efforts. Never talk to kids about what they did wrong. That is one of the jobs of the coaches.

 **Learn the game** - Familiarizing yourself with the rules of the game and basic strategies will help you understand referee calls and take any frustrations you might have out of the game.

 **Mentally prepare yourself** - Make sure in your own mind that you are 100% clear that hockey is about having fun, meeting friends and learning new skills. Putting your child in ice hockey does not mean you are prepping them for National Teams or the NHL.

 **Get Involved** - The best way to motivate your kids is to show them how much you want to be involved. If they see that you are excited about the game and positively cheering them on, then they are going to be excited about the game too. That may mean volunteering with the team, playing along with them in the driveway or back yard or learning to coach or referee too or taking them to watch NZIHL games.

 **Help your kids handle their feelings in a positive way** - Kids can get upset and frustrated easily if a game is lost or they feel they didn't play well enough. Help them out by remaining positive and suggesting that they be positive as well. It's good to remind them that there are future games, ways to learn how to play better and that after all; it's just a game.



Fair Play



Fair play is a universal concept that forms the foundation of all sport. Fair play does not change the rules of the game. Fair play goes far beyond scoring and winning; it is about the development of skills and character, on and off the ice, that lead to a life long enjoyment of sport and recreation. Fair play allows all athletes the same opportunity to develop skills, the chance to display those skills in an atmosphere of respect, and to develop an appreciation for the efforts of all participants.

Everyone involved in the game must be proactive and a good role model in the promotion of the values of fair play. The following are recommended fair play codes for players and parents.

Fair Play Codes

Players

- I will play ice hockey because I want to, not because my family, friends or coaches want me to.
- I will play by the rules of ice hockey, and in the spirit of the game.
- I will control my temper - fighting and "mouthing off" can spoil the game for everybody.
- I will respect my opponents.
- I will do my best to be a true team player.
- I will remember that winning isn't everything; that having fun, improving skills, making friends and doing my best are also important.
- I will acknowledge all good plays / performances - of my team and my opponents.
- I will remember that coaches and officials are there to help me.
- I will accept their decisions and will show them respect.



Parents

- I will not force my child to participate in ice hockey.
- I will remember that my child plays ice hockey for his or her enjoyment, not for mine.
- I will encourage my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning.
- I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard.
- I will never ridicule or yell at my child for making a mistake or losing a game.
- I will remember that children learn best by example.
- I will applaud good plays/performance by both my child's team and their opponents.
- I will never question the officials' judgment or honesty in public.
- I will support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from children's ice hockey.
- I will respect and show appreciation for the volunteer coaches who give their time to coach hockey for my child.
- I will show respect for my team's opponents, because without them there would be no game.
- I will not use foul language, nor will I harass players, coaches, officials or other spectators.

Preparation

Before you leave the house to hit the ice, remember to check these points off your list:

- Ensure all equipment is in your bag before you head out. There is no equipment or protective gear that can be 'left out just once'. Don't count on being able to borrow fellow teammate's equipment.
- Make sure you have a large water bottle full for the game or practice. Hydration is key to keeping players alert and safe on the ice.
- Double check to make sure your skates are sharp. If the blades are too dull it will greatly affect a player's ability to stop, turn and in general, skate properly, which can cause accidents and injury.
- Eat a healthy meal earlier in the day with lots of good carbohydrates. This will prevent feeling tired and lethargic on the ice.

Training

For ice hockey players under the age of ten off-ice training is not a huge priority. However it is never too early for young players to start practicing stick handling, passing and shooting off the ice as well as working on overall body control, agility and speed. The important thing for young players is having fun, which in the long run makes them much better players and will help to associate the game with positive memories. Here are a few more tips on how to start honing some hockey skills.

- Getting out with your kids on weekends for a leisurely public skate. It is a prime opportunity to have fun, get some exercise and start practicing skating skills. It's a good chance to bond with you kids too!
- Getting kids into routines when they are young is key for when they are older ice hockey players. Teaching them how to warm-up and cool down before games and practices is important in preventing injuries.
- Teaching kids about nutrition before games and trainings is key when they are young. Proper hydration is important before, during and after activity, to be playing at their best.

Keeping Your Equipment Clean

Most older hockey players can tell you how badly hockey equipment smells when it is not taken care of properly. Not only does the equipment smell bad; but it can also be a breeding ground for bacteria. Here are some helpful hints on the proper methods of taking care of your equipment so that you can avoid that "hockey" smell.

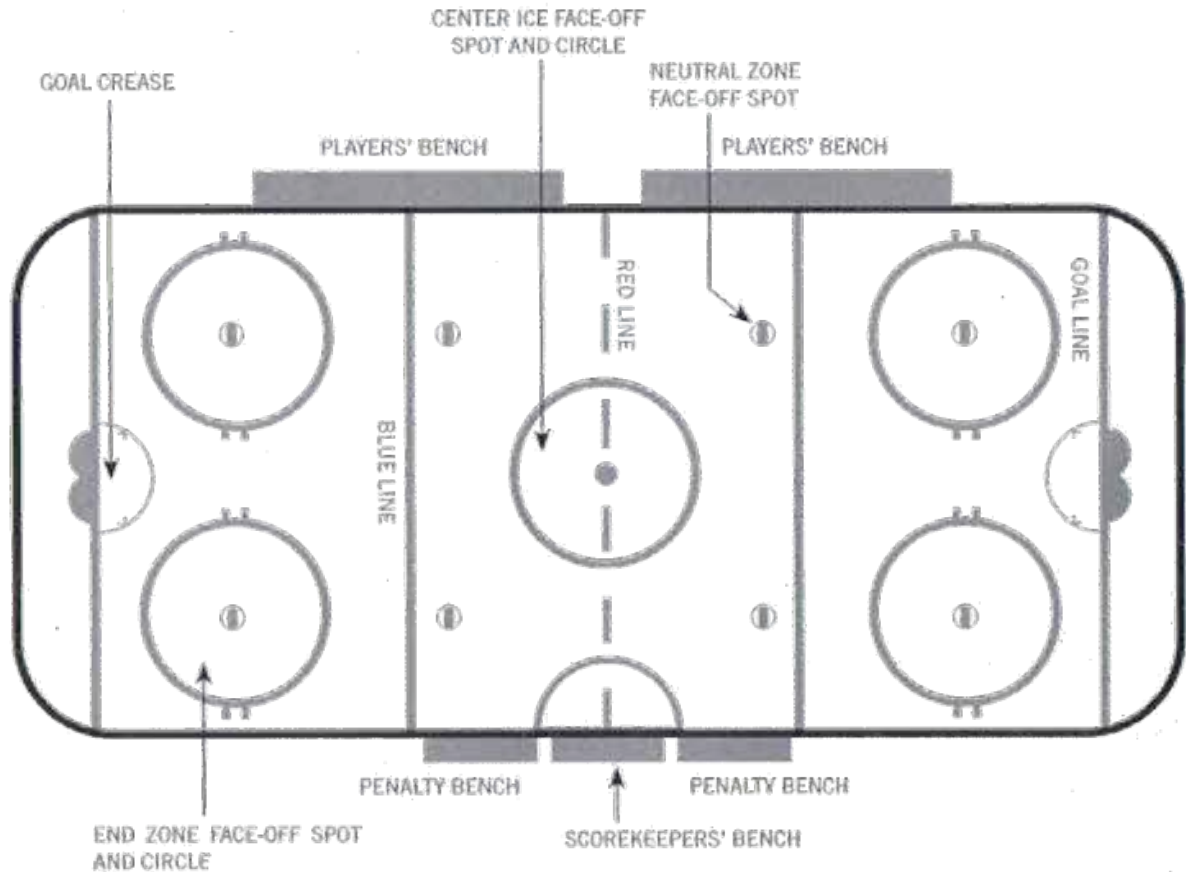
Immediately after every game and practice, take you equipment out of the bag and hang it up to dry. Moisture allows bacteria to grow, so air-drying after every use is essential. This will help prolong the life of your equipment. Loosen up your laces and pull the tongue of your skates forward and take the foot bed out; dry the skate blades with a clean, dry rag.

Hang up your jersey and be proud to be a member of your team. All equipment, including the bag, should be washed/cleaned on a regular basis and periodic spraying with an equipment disinfecting spray is also highly recommended.

The Hockey Rink



An ice hockey rink is an ice surface specifically designed for the game of hockey. It is rectangular in shape, approximately 30m across by 60m long with rounded corners and is surrounded by a wall, called the 'boards' about a metre high and sometimes the rink has glass around the top of the boards. There are 9 face-off spots, red and blue lines dividing up into three zones. The two goals set at opposite ends of the rink.



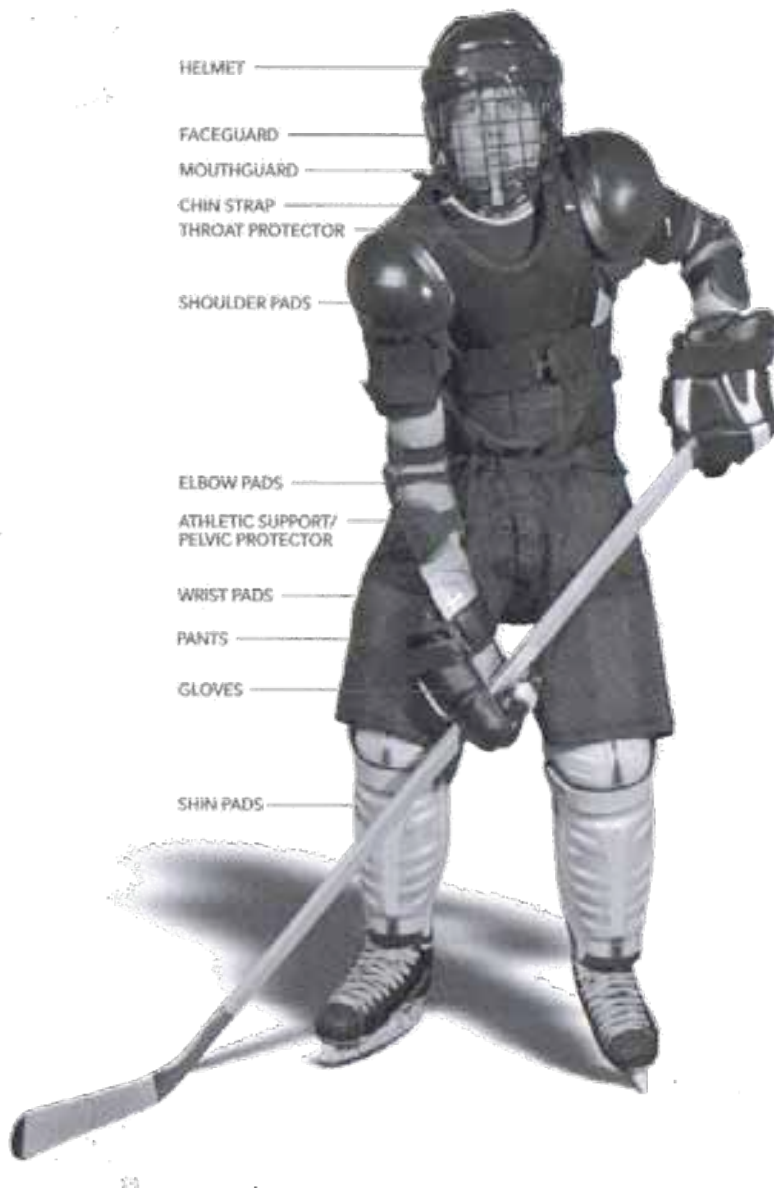
Age Divisions

The age divisions in the NZIHF are as follows (as of 1 January in the year of the competition):

- Pee Wee (Under 13/non-checking)
- Midget (Under 16/checking)
- Junior (Under 19/checking)
- Women (13 & older/non-checking)
- Men (16 & older/checking)
- Club (16 & older/non-checking)
- Masters- all non-checking
(Female- 30 & older)
(Male- 35 & older)



The Importance of Properly Fitting Equipment



Properly fitting equipment is essential to the safety of all players. As well, it maximizes mobility, feel and player performance.

Hockey Helmets

Your ice hockey helmet is one of your most important pieces of equipment. To make sure that your helmet is properly fit; make sure it is snug and comfortable with one finger width between the lower front edge of the helmet and your eyebrow.

Adjust the chinstrap so that it gently makes contact under your chin when fastened. Most helmets come in different sizes and are adjustable.

Face Guard (Cages and Shields)

The traditional cage facemask is strong and durable. It provides excellent breathing and ventilation while protecting the face. It should provide clear vision straight ahead and peripherally. The chin cup should rest comfortably on the chin but still allow the player to be able to talk.

Full face protection is mandatory for all female players in any age grade and for male players up and including the U19 category.



Mouth Guards

Mouth guards not only significantly reduce the incidence and severity of injuries to the teeth and mouth, but they may act as a shock absorber against more serious injuries like jaw fractures and concussions. The NZIHF recommends that all players wear one!

Shoulder Pads

Your shoulder pads are your first line of defense in the event of an impact. Properly fitted pads will provide protection for the collarbone, chest, ribs, back and upper arms. It is important that the shoulder pads achieve this protection while still allowing a full range of motion.

Neck Guards

A neck guard is mandatory in all grades from U19 and down and for all female athletes in the NZIHF. It must be certified as a neck guard and not be tampered with. Its intent is to protect against skate blades not impact from sticks or pucks. It should cover the entire throat area and fit snugly and comfortably.

Elbow Pads

Elbows are an extremely vulnerable part of your body. That's why it is necessary to protect them. Your elbows should fit comfortably into the center of the pad cup. A good elbow pad will provide forearm protection by extending down to the cuff of your hockey glove.

Shin Pads

Not only do shin pads protect shins but they also help prevent knee injuries. The lower leg is an extremely high contact area, which must be shielded against injuries caused by collisions with sticks, pucks and skates.

Hockey Gloves

Gloves are another essential piece of equipment. They provide protection and help with stick control. A proper fit ensures that the gap between the glove and the elbow pad is minimal. The tightness of the glove is a personal preference, but the tips of your fingers should not go completely to the ends of the glove. The glove should also feature a lock thumb system, which will protect the thumb from being bent backwards.

Hockey Pants

Hockey pants protect your lower back and your upper legs from hits, sticks and pucks. Pants should be loose and comfortable but have the ability to be secured firmly by the belt around the waist. The bottom of the pants should overlap the top of the shin pad kneecaps by 3-5cm. This will ensure proper protection even when in a kneeling position.

Hockey Skates

A pair of skates is also one of your most important pieces of equipment. Skates generally fit 1 to 1½ sizes smaller than your shoe size. When lacing up your skates, always tap your heel back to ensure it is locked in place and tighten the laces from the bottom on up. When breaking in new skates you may want to use a hair dryer to warm them first, but be careful not to overheat any one area. You can wear your skates while you're doing your homework, reading or watching television. Just remember to have skate guards on.

Hockey Sticks

Skates might be one of your most important pieces of equipment but your stick is your most important tool! The best way to measure your stick is to stand in your stocking feet, without your skates. Place the tip of the blade on the ground between your feet and lean the stick straight up-and-down. The general rule is to cut the stick where the handle touches the tip of your nose. A defenseman may want to use a longer stick to give them a longer reach and a forward may want to use a shorter stick to help them stickhandle better.

Sticks often come in different lies (angle from the ground), curve/pattern, flex, shaft diameter and material. Make sure you have the proper stick for your age and ability.

Wood Sticks- Generally manufactured with a rectangular shape. They are generally heavier but are better value for money.

Composite Sticks

Can be found in different shapes, lighter weights and flexes. A composite stick should be purchased as you get older and more serious about the game.

Simple Rules of The Game

Every good parent knows that one of the most important things in making your child's ice hockey experience well rounded is to know the game yourself. That's why we are providing you with some of the basic rules and the who's who of the game.

1. Icing the Puck

Icing is when a player on his own team's side of the center red line shoots the puck all the way down the ice and it crosses the red goal line at any point other than the goal itself. When this occurs, play is stopped and the puck is returned to the other end of the ice for a face-off in the offending team's defensive zone.

2. Offside

A team is offside when any member of the attacking team precedes the puck or puck carrier over the attacking blue line. The position of the player's skates, and not that of his stick, is the determining factor. If both skates are over the blue line before the puck, the player is offside. If he or she has only one skate over the blue line and one on it, they are onside.

Icing the Puck Is Not Called:

- If the goalie plays the puck by leaving his net.
- When a defending player, in the judgment of the linesman, could have played the puck before it crossed the goal line.
- When a team is playing short-handed because of a penalty or penalties.



On-Ice Officials

In ice hockey, an official is a person who has some responsibility in enforcing the rules and maintaining the order of the game. There are two categories of officials, on-ice officials (who are the referees and linesmen that enforce the rules during game play), and off-ice officials (who are the score keepers and goal judges that have an administrative role rather than an enforcement role).

Referees

The referee is responsible for the general supervision of the game. He can be easily identified by his red armbands. He is the only official with the authority to assess penalties for violations of the rules.

Linesmen

Linesmen are primarily responsible for watching for violations involving the red lines and the blue lines. Such infractions include icing the puck and offside. Linesmen conduct face-offs, and break-up scuffles and other altercations that occur during the game.





Referee Signals



Boarding



Delayed Calling Penalty



Hooking



Roughing



Bodychecking



Delayed Offside



Icing the Puck



Slashing



Butt-Ending



Elbowing



Interference



Spearing



Charging



Goal Scored



Kneeing



Tripping



Checking from Behind



High Sticking



Match Penalty



Unsportsman-like Conduct



Checking to the Head



Holding



Misconduct



Washout



Cross-Checking



Holding the Stick



Penalty Shot

STEALTH S19

LIGHTNING. QUICK. RELEASE.

Engineered by the industry leader, tested by elite players, built for you. The Stealth S19 has been tuned with input from pro athletes for a lightning quick release. TORX™ technology brings pinpoint accuracy with incredible feel through our multi-core blade design. Experience the real deal.



COMPRESSION MOLDED SHAFT



The best shaft in the business uses proprietary Compression Molded carbon wrapped in a ballistic Kevlar®. Lively strong and light. There is no other like it.

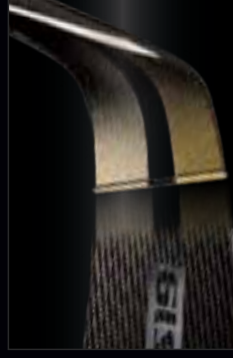


TORX™ TECHNOLOGY



The finest tuned taper section available. The elliptical profile stores and releases tensional energy giving lightning quick release.

Red Arrows - twisting motion blade opening up
Blue Arrows - torsional resistance keeping blade closed



CONTROLLED BLADE FLEX



Release the puck faster with our Micro-Bladder™ Multi Rib™ blade engineered to control torque and flex when shooting – providing pinpoint accuracy. Carbon wrapped high density core lets you feel the puck so you can look at the target, not your blade.

