



# KMHA U7 Program 2023/2024





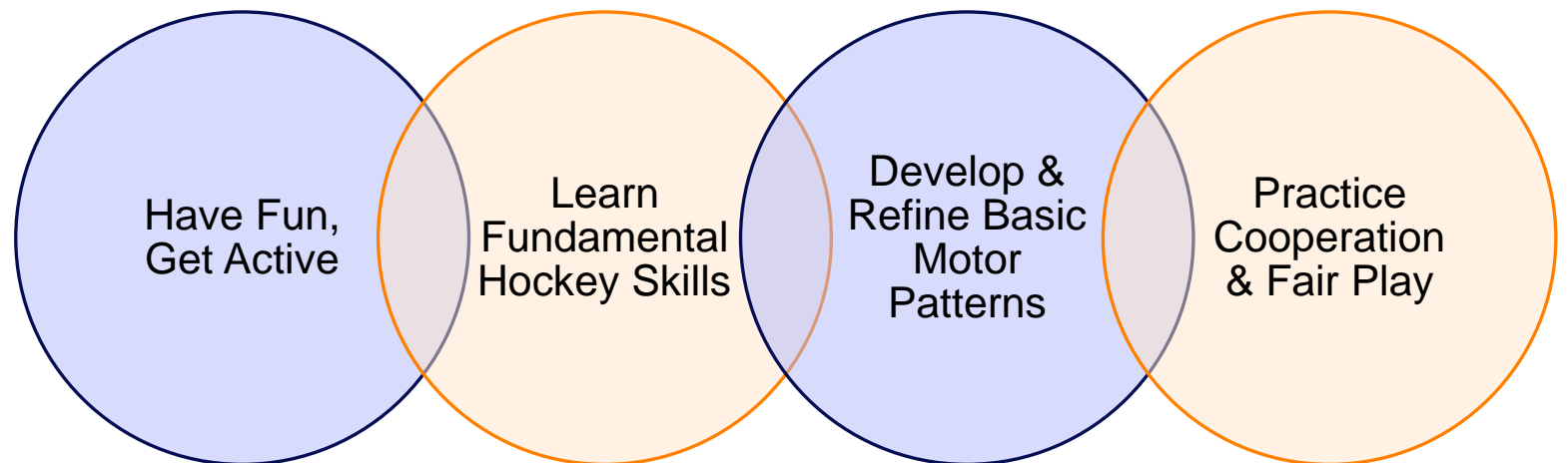
# U7 Program

Timbits U7 hockey serves as the foundation upon which the entire hockey experience is built. It is also an opportunity to build memories that will last long after the game ends. The special bonds and friendships that hockey helps create – for both players and parents – start with Timbits U7.



**Timbits U7 makes the first strides in the game a safe and positive experience, introducing first-timers to basic skills.**

**Kids become members of a team, develop self-confidence and experience personal achievement, all through fun and fair play.**





# U7 Program Details

- Players are part of a team and are expected to follow team rules.
- Players are to have respect for their teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, and parents.
- Players are to always try their best. Their teammates rely on them.
- Build the foundation of a strong work ethic by consistently participating in practices with a high level of activity.



Two ice times per week



One weekend and one weekday ice time per week



1 hour ice times



14-16 players per team



Divided into two tiers to play with like-ability players for maximum growth



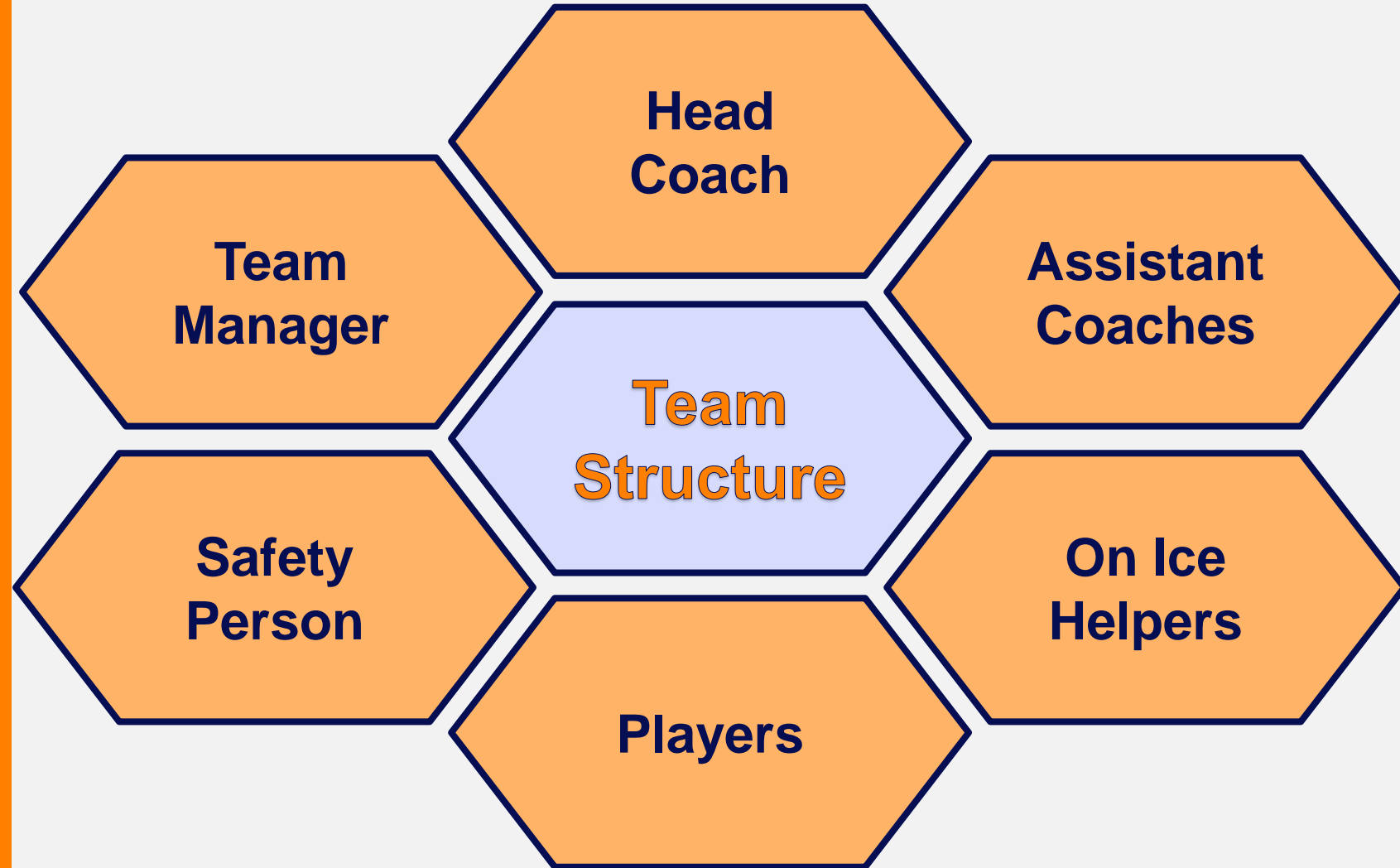
Can attend one out of town tournament per season



# Team Structure

U7 will follow a team model with all players on a team. Each team will require many volunteers, including the following.

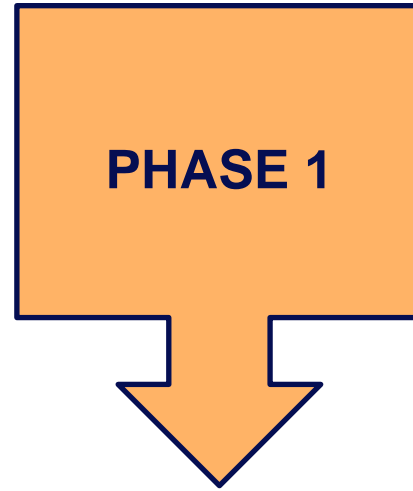
- Head Coach (1)
- Assistant Coaches (2)
- Team Manager (1)
- On ice helpers (2+)
- Safety Person (1)





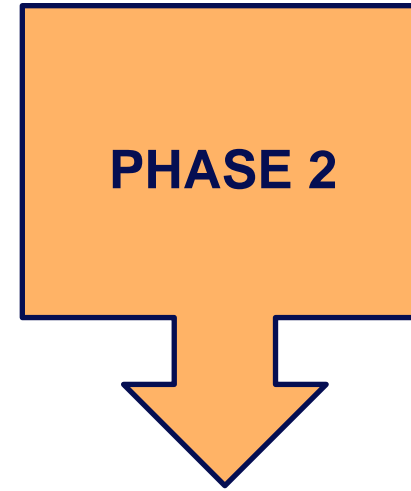
# U7 Season

The season will be split into three phases emphasizing skill development, being part of a team and having fun.



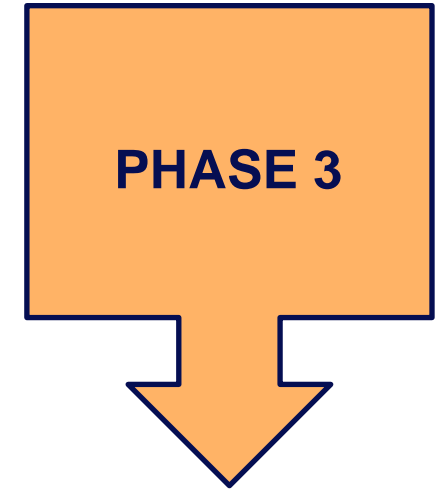
**Sept 15 – Oct 31**

**No Games  
Practice Only**



**Nov 1 – Dec 31**

**Cross Ice Games Start  
1:1 Practice to Game Ratio**



**Jan 1 – Mar 15**

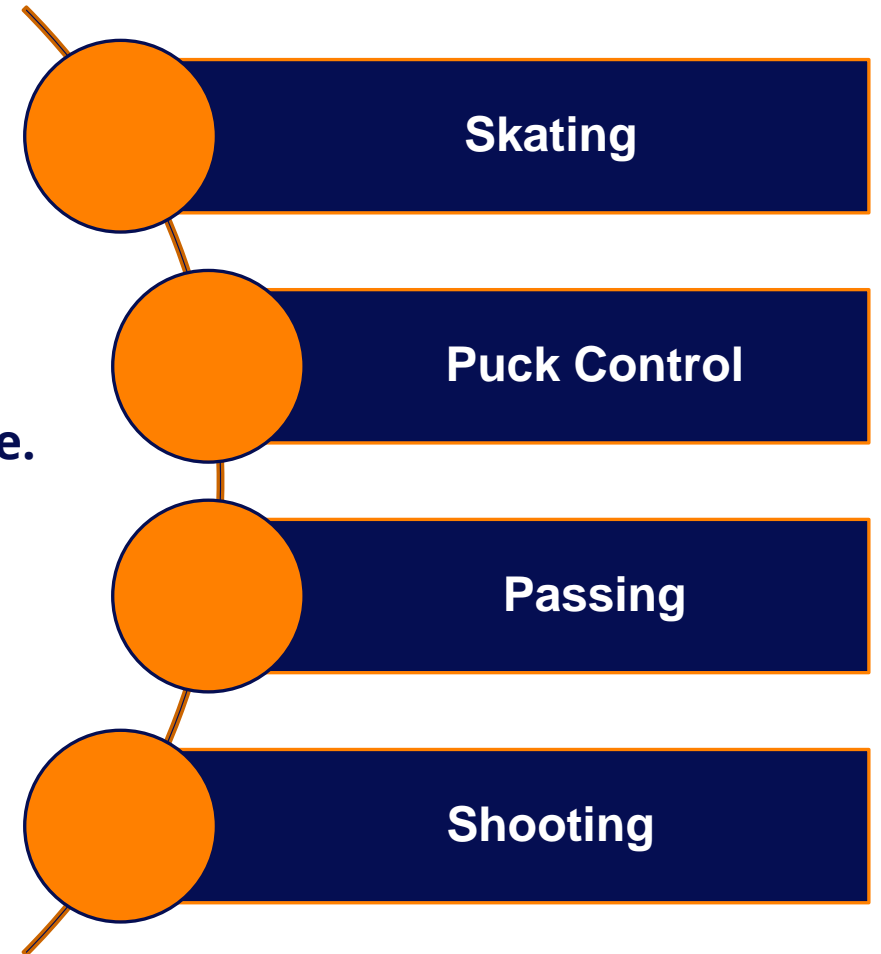
**Tournaments Allowed  
1:1 Practice to Game Ratio**



# U7 Program

The U7 program is a structured, learn-to-play hockey program designed to introduce beginners to the game's basic skills. It enables participants to become contributing members of a team effort, develop self-confidence, and experience a sense of personal achievement.

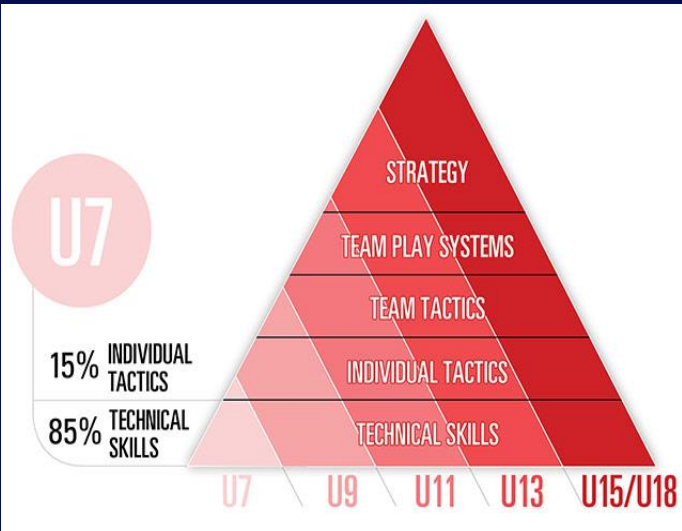
- **Skills introduced and refined one step at a time.**
- **Focus on fun and skill development.**





# U7 Practice Structure

- Practice Plans to be provided by KMHA to all U7 coaches for the season
- Skating station for all U7 practices to be led by skating coach Nina Hrycewich
- Head coaches, assistant coaches, on ice helpers will run the rest of the stations
- Head coaches are responsible for running the practices
- Players to be divided by skill level within the entire group
- 1 hour ice times



|                        | PRACTICE PLAN |  |
|------------------------|---------------|--|
|                        | TIME          | DETAILS                                |
| <b>Warm-up</b>         | 10 Minutes    | Group warm-up together                 |
| <b>Skills Stations</b> | 40 Minutes    | 4–6 stations run by coaches & helpers  |
| <b>Group Activity</b>  | 10 Minutes    | Group game or activity to end practice |

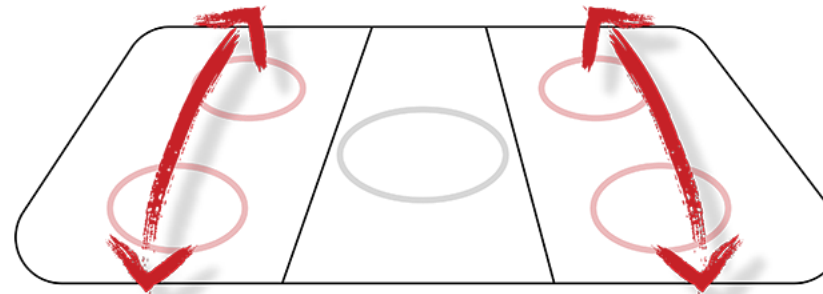


# U7 Gameplay Cross Ice Games

Small spaces mean more engagement in the play and more activity. Players are closer to the play at all times and have more opportunity for puck touches. Regardless of the skill level or the ability of each player, opportunities to be engaged in the play are doubled when the playing area is smaller. NHL research has illustrated that all skill areas of the game increased substantially when players played in small spaces more suited to their age.



## CROSS-ICE



### Emphasis on Skating Skills

Agility, Balance, Coordination & Quickness

### More Puck Battles

### Reinforce Fundamentals

Skating, Puck Control, Passing & Shooting

### Introduce Checking Skills

### Increased Frequency of Making Hockey Decisions

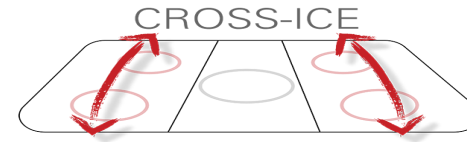
### Improved Ice Awareness & Hockey Sense





# Cross Ice Games

Dividing the playing surface is a decision that has been made in consultation with experts in athlete development. It is important to understand the benefits of cross-ice hockey and why Hockey Canada has a national policy ensuring all Timbits U7 hockey is played in smaller, modified spaces.



**2 X**

**Puck Touches**

- Players are closer to the play and can touch the puck more often, meaning more opportunities to be engaged offensively are doubled.

**6 X**

**Shot Attempts**

- Players are closer to the puck at all times and the puck is put towards the net much more often.

**3 X**

**Shots on Goal**

- Players are much closer to the net, skate shorter distances and have increased opportunity to create offence.

**2 X**

**Pass Attempts**

- Players pass and attempt to pass the puck more often – with and without the puck, they are closer to the game.

**5 X**

**Passes Received**

- When passes are shorter, accuracy improves and players have more success receiving the pass.



# U7 Gameplay

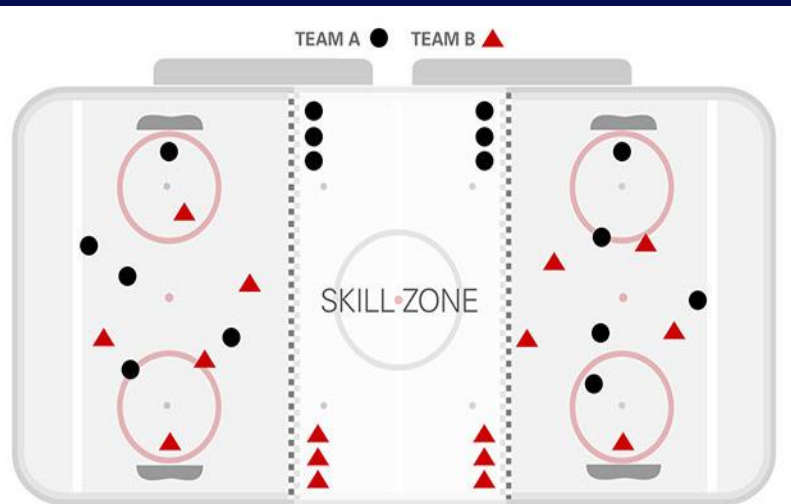


## GAME PLAY OVERVIEW

- Games will be played 4v4.
- Two face-offs during the game. One to start the game, and one to start the second half.
- No off-sides, no icing.
- The main score clock is used as the time keeping device for both games simultaneously.
- Coaches on the ice with skates.

## LINE SELECTION

- Coaches are to split their mini teams into A and B rosters to ensure like abilities play together.
- It is the expectation that the players will change each game between A and B, and that the same players are not always playing together. A select few top and bottom players may remain on A and B rosters throughout most of the year, however, the majority of the players (in the middle) should rotate through rosters frequently.



TWO TEAMS – Two Cross-Ice Games Model with Skill Zone

## SHIFTS/LINE CHANGES

- Shifts will be 2 minutes in length. Buzzer will sound to signal to players to change.
- Resting players will take a knee on the blueline while they await their next shift
- When the buzzer/whistle sounds, players must relinquish control of the puck immediately and skate towards the blue line. Resting players immediately skate to the live puck.

## Tag Up Rule:

- If there are fewer than 4 players on the bench, the active player designated to stay out for the following shift must tag up at the bench prior to racing to the play the loose puck.

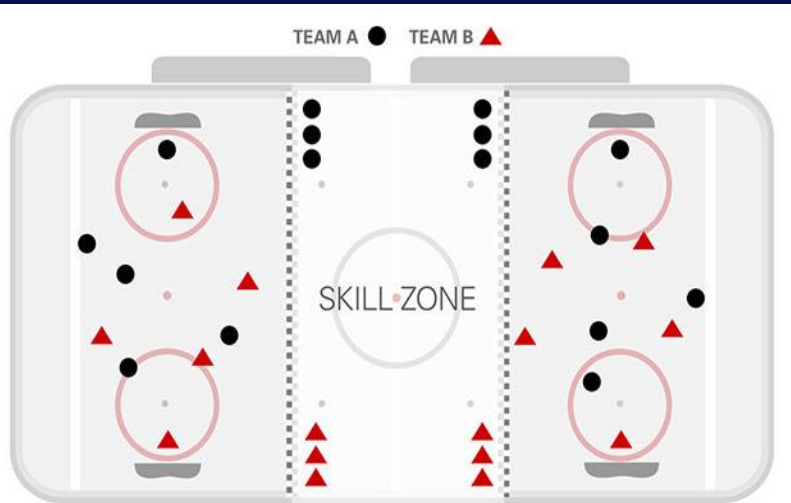


# U7 Gameplay



## DEVELOPMENTAL ZONE

- The 'Developmental Zone' has been added to allow opportunities to provide individual instruction and attention to players. Players and coaches will use the zone to varying levels. Some players will simply enjoy kneeling, taking a rest, drinking some water, and cheering on their teammates, while others may require some individual coaching.
- The 'Developmental Zone' is designed for coaches to look for and address 'coachable moments' in games.



TWO TEAMS – Two Cross-Ice Games Model with Skill Zone

## CHANGE OF POSSESSION

- Goaltender freezes the puck – Puck shot out of play – Goal is scored.
- Coach signals to the attacking team to back off 3 meters and defending team gets possession.
- The goal is to keep the game moving with limited stoppages.

## OFFICIALS / PENALTIES

- Coaches are the officials.
- Penalties are to be called only for teaching purposes. If excessive, coaches can agree to have infracting player miss for their next shift. Play will continue at even strength.