



KMHA U9 Program  
2025/2026

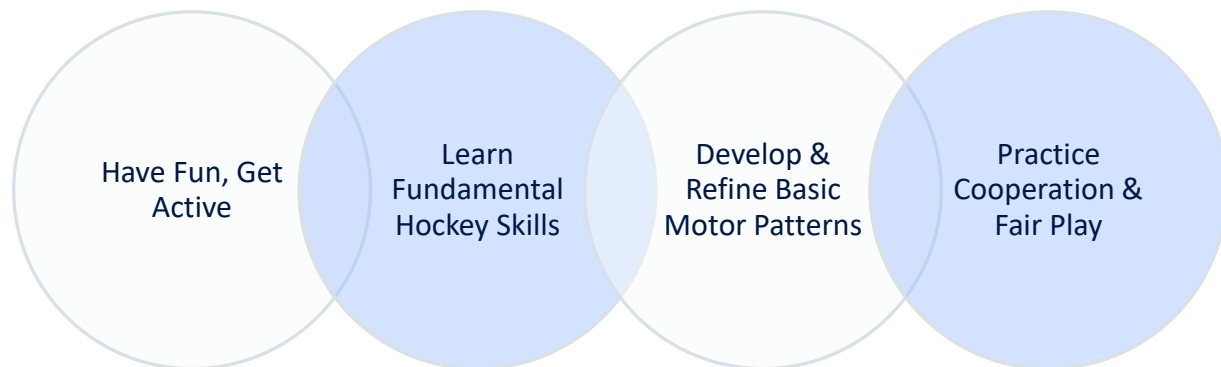
# U9 Program

U9 hockey is a key part of the foundation upon which the entire hockey experience is built. It is a crucial piece in building the skills of players at every level – players benefit from getting the ‘right start’ in the game.

**The first years of hockey need to be a positive experience. A fun and exciting start gives young players the opportunity to enjoy hockey for life.**

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

## Program Goals

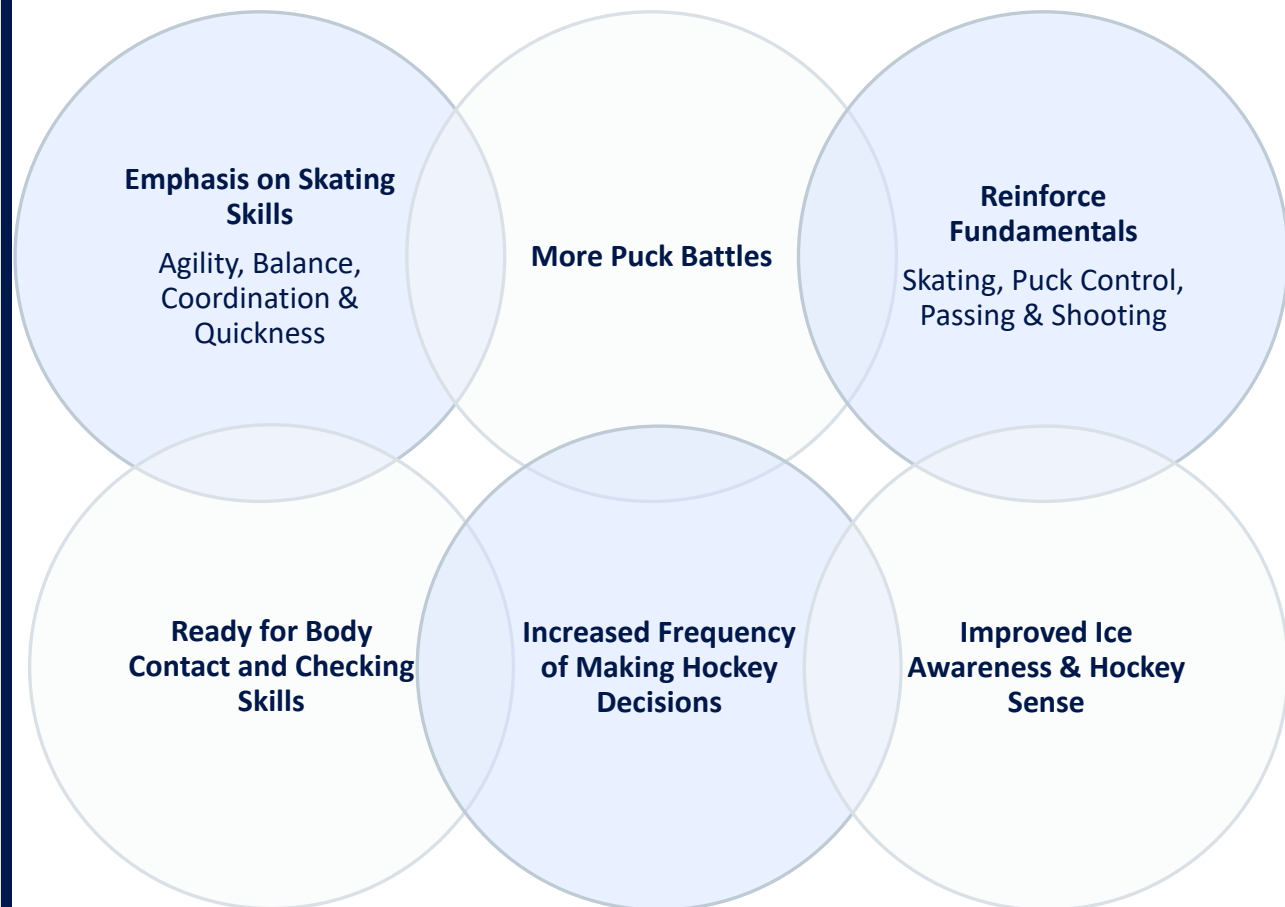
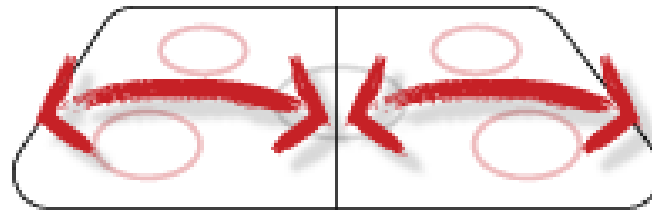


# U9

## Half-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.

HALF-ICE



# U9 Half-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.

## HALF-ICE



**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.

# U9

## 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 three tiers to play with like-ability players for maximum growth**



**Can attend up to two out of town tournaments per season**

# U9 Team Structure

U9 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)



# U9 Season Plan

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

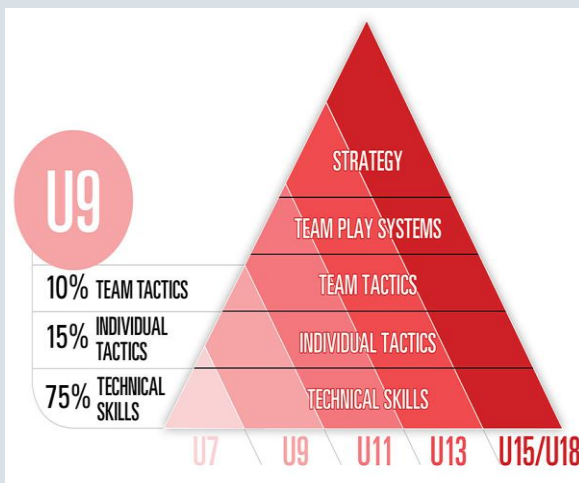


\*Full ice games at Orange division

# U9

## Practice Structure

- Head coaches are responsible for running the practices.
- Practice Plans will be made by the head coach with support from KMHA.
- 2 teams will share the ice for each practice.
- Players to be divided by skill level within their team.
- 1 hour ice times.



PRACTICE PLAN		
	TIME	DETAILS
Warm-up	10 Minutes	Group warm-up together
Skills Stations	40 Minutes	Each team runs 2 or 3 stations on their own side of the ice.
Group Activity	10 Minutes	Game or activity to end practice

# U9

## Half-Ice Gameplay

### Player Surface Set-up

The game play format used in U9 half-ice hockey is the Two-Team Game Play Model. This model is built on two teams playing one another in two halves. Each U9 team is divided into two units. Each team is required to dress two goaltenders, one for each half-ice game.

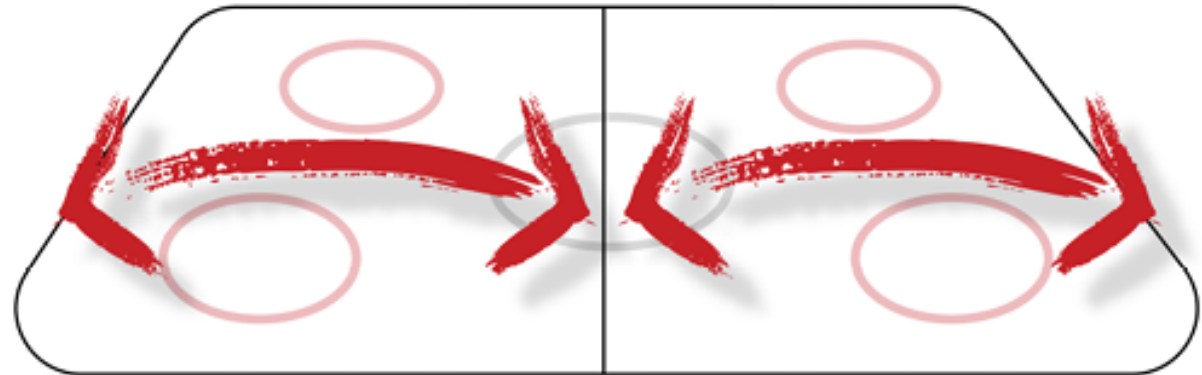
Half-ice (4-on-4)  
*Full-ice games permitted January 15 or later if Member allows*

Continuous play

No offside/  
no icing

Timed buzzer  
or whistle for  
line changes

Players  
change on  
the fly

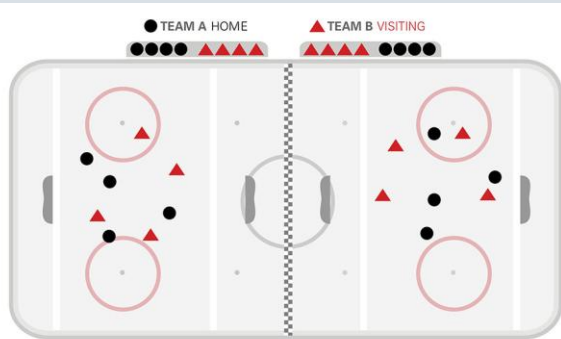


No score or standings kept

Goaltenders wear full  
goaltending equipment

# U9

## Half-Ice Gameplay



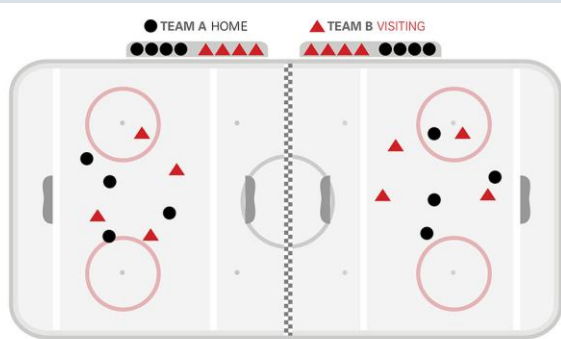
TWO TEAMS – Two Half-Ice Games Model

### Game Set-up and Flow

- Each game will be played 4v4.
- Two periods, run time. The score clock can be used to keep time for both games simultaneously. No score is kept.
- One referee per game.
- Each team will be divided into two units of players, each with a goaltender. Divide players into two groups based on skill level so the stronger players are playing against each other.
- Each team has two goaltenders, one for each half of the ice.
- Shift lengths must not exceed 2 minutes.  
White 75 seconds, Orange 90 seconds, Blue 120 seconds.
- Teams will share the player's benches, with each team using the gate closest to their net.
- Two face-offs during the game. One to start the game, and one to start the second half.
- No off-sides, no icing.
- Coaches can be on the ice with skates to help direct their team to begin the season.

# U9

## Half-Ice Gameplay



TWO TEAMS – Two Half-Ice Games Model

### CHANGE OF POSSESSION

- Goaltender freezes the puck – Puck shot out of play – Goal is scored.
- Continuous play – the official will blow their whistle and signal the attacking players to back off three metres. Once the attackers have moved back, play may resume as soon as the possession team has control of the puck.
- The goal is to keep the game moving with limited stoppages.

### SHIFTS/LINE CHANGES

- Buzzer or whistle will sound to signal the players to change.
- When the buzzer/whistle sounds, players must relinquish control of the puck immediately and skate towards the bench. 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.

### Penalties

- Minor penalties are noted, with the official raising their arm to indicate a penalty.
- The penalized player will return to their bench and miss the rest of the shift.
- If the infraction happens at the end of their shift, the player will miss their next shift.
- Teams will not play shorthanded. The penalized player is replaced with a new player.

# U9

## Full-Ice Gameplay

All players should have the same opportunity to contribute, regardless of skill or ability. A coach's responsibility is to develop all players. Shortening of the bench 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.

### Full Ice Gameplay

- 5v5 introducing off-side and icing.
- Two periods run time. No score is kept.
- Two referees per game.
- Stoppage in play results in a faceoff.
- Shift lengths – 90 seconds.
- All players play all of the positions – forward, defence, goaltender.
- All players get a chance to start games and play in end of game situations.
- Full time goaltenders are allowed.
- If multiple “full time” goaltenders, they will share the net equally. If they are not a goaltender for a game, they should be allowed to play as a skater.
- Small net are recommended.

### Penalties

- Minor penalties are noted, with the official raising their arm to indicate a penalty.
- The penalized player will go to the penalty box to serve a 1 min penalty.
- Teams will not play shorthanded. The penalized player is replaced with a new player.
- The penalized player will come out of the box at a whistle near the 1 minute mark.

# U9 SKATING

## Balance

- ☐ Basic stance
- ☐ Balance on one foot
- ☐ Gliding fwd, one skate
- ☐ Gliding bkwd, one skate
- ☐ Standing Crossovers
- ☐ Lateral Crossovers

## Forward Skating

- ☐ Inside edge glide
- ☐ Outside edge glide
- ☐ Slalom
- ☐ C-cuts single leg
- ☐ C-cuts alternating
- ☐ Forward striding

## Starting & Stopping

- ☐ Front v-start
- ☐ Crossover start
- ☐ Backward c-cut start
- ☐ Outside edge stop
- ☐ Inside edge stop
- ☐ Two-foot parallel stop
- ☐ Backward stop

## Backwards Skating

- ☐ C-cuts single leg
- ☐ C-cuts alternating
- ☐ Gliding on two skates
- ☐ Gliding on one skate
- ☐ Crossover reach
- ☐ Backwards Stride

---

## Turns

- ☐ Outside edge turns
- ☐ Inside edge turns
- ☐ Two foot tight turns
- ☐ Pivots – both directions
- ☐ Crossovers – forward & backward
- ☐ Heel to heel turns
- ☐ Backwards turns
- ☐ Punch turn introduction

# U9 SKILLS

## Passing

- ☐ Stationary forehand pass
- ☐ Moving forehand pass
- ☐ Stationary backhand pass
- ☐ Moving backhand pass
- ☐ Stationary bank pass
- ☐ Moving bank pass to self
- ☐ Receiving a pass forehand
- ☐ Receiving a pass backhand
- ☐ Receiving a pass in the skates
- ☐ Sauce pass forehand\*

## Puck Control

- ☐ Stationary: narrow, wide, side
- ☐ Moving: narrow, wide, side
- ☐ Stationary toe drag
- ☐ Moving toe drag
- ☐ Open ice carry
- ☐ Turns using forehand
- ☐ Turns using backhand
- ☐ Backwards puck drag
- ☐ Backwards side
- ☐ Body Fake
- ☐ Stick Fake
- ☐ Dekes
- ☐ Puck protection

## Shooting

- ☐ Forehand - sweep shot
- ☐ Forehand - wrist shot
- ☐ Backhand - sweep shot
- ☐ Backhand – flip shot
- ☐ Shoot in motion
- ☐ Forehand – snap intro\*

## Checking

- ☐ Angling
- ☐ Stick on puck
- ☐ Stick lift
- ☐ Poke check
- ☐ Remove stick and hands

\*Advanced

# U9 TACTICS

## Offensive Tactics

- ☐ Puck Support
- ☐ Give and Go
- ☐ Escape moves
- ☐ Puck protection
- ☐ 1 on 1 tactics
- ☐ Deflections
- ☐ Forecheck

## Defensive Tactics

- ☐ Puck pursuit
- ☐ Backcheck
- ☐ Body positioning
- ☐ Gap Control
- ☐ 1 on 1 tactics

## Team Tactics

- ☐ Basic positioning
- ☐ Faceoffs
- ☐ Finding open space
- ☐ Basic D-zone
- ☐ Defend the middle of the ice
- ☐ Basic attack - triangle