



U9 Development Program

2025 / 2026



U9 DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM INFORMATION



OMAHA ran a pilot program for a U9 Development league in 2023/2024. The purpose of this league is to provide a more competitive league for hockey players in the minor hockey associations. The league is continuing in 2025/2026, KMHA intends to enter two teams into this league. These teams will be required to travel within the Thompson/Okanagan for some of their league games.



This is an advanced level of U9 Hockey. Players must try out at this level, by doing evaluations. Once evaluations are completed, two equal teams will be made up with KMHA and the coaches forming the teams together.



The development teams will get two shared evening practices per week. The coaches will work together with KMHA to plan practices and work on the development of all players in the program.



Depending on numbers and ability, the plan is for each team to have 15 skaters and 1 full time goaltender. Goaltenders will be based on numbers and ability. We will play half-ice games for the first half of the season so the skaters will rotate into the second goaltender position.



Development teams can attend two away tournaments and will be a part of the home Nitro Blast tournament in March.



There is a \$50 fee to tryout for a U9 development team. If your player makes the team, there will be an additional fee of \$200 to cover the extra ice during the season.



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SEASON PLAN

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

PHASE 1

Sept 15 – Oct 31

Evaluations + Team Selections
Practice Only
No Games

PHASE 2

Nov 1 – Dec 15

Half Ice Games Start
2:1 Practice to Game Ratio

PHASE 3

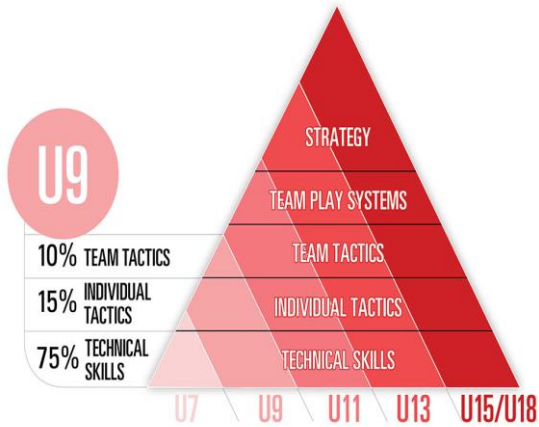
Dec 15 – Mar 15

Full Ice Games Begin
2:1 Practice to Game Ratio



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PRACTICE STRUCTURE



- Head coaches will work together to run the practices
- Practice Plans will be made by the head coaches with support from KMHA
- Both teams will share the ice for each practice
- Players to be divided by skill level mixing both teams together or within their team when splitting into groups
- 1 hour ice times
- 2 weekday practices per week

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

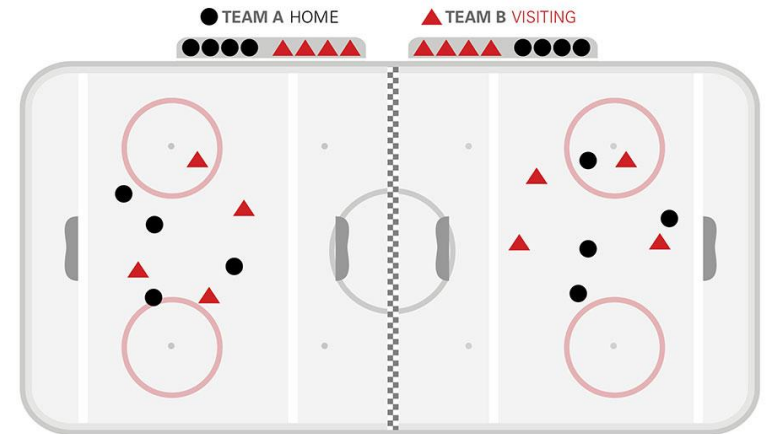


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HALF ICE GAME STRUCTURE

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.
- 90 second shift lengths to start, working to 60 seconds by mid season.
- 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.



TWO TEAMS – Two Half-Ice Games Model



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HALF ICE GAME STRUCTURE

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 issued with the official raising their arm to indicate a penalty and stopping play to assign the 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.
- Non offending team starts with the puck by their goal.



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FULL ICE GAME STRUCTURE

Full Ice Gameplay

- 5 v 5 introducing off-side and icing.
- Three periods run time.
- Two referees per game.
- Stoppage in play results in a faceoff.
- Shift lengths – 60 seconds or less. Purpose is to push players to play hard when on the ice. Shorter downtime on the bench.
- Players play all positions through the season – forward, defence, goaltender.
- 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 can play as a skater.
- Regulation sized nets for full ice games.

Penalties

- Minor penalties are issued with the official raising their arm to indicate a penalty. Stopping play when the offending team gains possession.
- 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 after the 1 minute penalty and skate directly to the bench without interfering in the play.