

GET BETTER

Shoot on the fly

A quick release is one of the biggest advantages a shooter has on a goaltender. Shoot the puck before the goalie thinks you are going to, and before he has a chance to set up, and the chances of scoring greatly increase.

Any hesitation, or any tip-off that you are going to shoot, and the advantage is lost, as the goaltender will be prepared to make the save. Surprise him and your chances of scoring, either on the initial shot, or on the rebound, increase greatly.

Show shot - Often, goaltenders are tipped off that a player is not going to shoot, but instead is looking to pass or carry it in deeper to deke, simply because the puck carrier is carrying the puck in a position where he couldn't shoot, even if he wanted to. When skating toward the net, the puck should be carried on the forehead, in a position where it could be shot, passed, or even carried in deeper to deke.

Shoot in stride - If a puck carrier has to "get set" to shoot, he loses his advantage on the goaltender. Shooting the puck while in stride gives the goaltender no indication that a shot is coming. However, it is a difficult skill to master as it involves coordinating leg movement (striding) with arm movement (shooting) and it takes some work. Many players worry that they cannot shoot the puck hard enough while in stride because they can't use their legs to get more power on the shot. But two factors work to their advantage. One is that they already have some speed because they are moving, as opposed to stopping or standing still, so that speed is transferred to the shot. Secondly, the shot doesn't have to be as hard, and probably won't be because you can't use your legs, but it doesn't need to be, because it surprises the goaltender.

Stationary practice - Stand stationary and shooting the puck using just your upper body (arms). Do not move your feet at all. Feet should be shoulder width apart, knees bent, and toes of the skates facing the target. Players will want to "turn sideways" in order to utilize their legs, but don't do it. To get any velocity on the shot, the puck should be on the forehead, beside the player's skates, not out in front of their body. To get any leverage on the shot, your top hand needs to be out



PHOTO BY TOM TURRILL/MICHIGAN HOCKEY

Getting your shot off quickly without getting your feet set can surprise a goalie and improve your chances of scoring.

in front, away from your body, arm extended. As you sweep or push through with your bottom hand, you should be pulling toward them with the top hand, utilizing your wrists to snap the puck.

Moving shooting - Once you get the feel for shooting without using your legs at all, the next step is to set a puck in a position where you can "glide into it" and shoot it. Take 3-4 strides, then glide for 5-6 feet, shooting the puck while on the move, utilizing the arms and upper body only. Once you get the hang of that, then carry the puck for the 3-4 strides, glide for 5-6 feet, position the puck to shoot it, then release it.

Shooting while striding - Once you get the feel for shooting while moving, the next step is shooting while striding. Use the same progression, but don't coast or glide while shooting. Take 3-4 strides and shoot while in stride. This is the most difficult part as it requires coordinating upper body movement (arms) with lower body movement (legs) and will take plenty of practice.

Source: suburbanhockey.com - Coaches Club

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