

FIELD HOCKEY BASICS



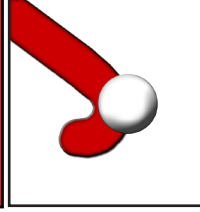
BY THE NUMBERS

11	Players per side (including goalkeeper)
2	Halves (4 quarters for international play)
30 or 35	Minutes each half (15 minute quarters for international play)
5 or 10	Minute halftime

STOPPING THE BALL (defensive)

Block Tackle - Player lowers the stick close to the ground and uses the length of the stick to block a ball's advance. Using the entire stick widens the area available to intercept or steal the ball and slows the offensive player's motion.	
Jab Tackle - Player jabs the stick toward the ball with left hand extended (flat side up), then quickly returns to both hands and regains a balanced position. This swift motion can disrupt the advance of the play and possibly cause a loss of possession.	
Reverse Tackle - Used when an offensive player is on a defender's weak (left) side, defensive player extends left arm out with stick inverted close to the ground to slow the play, block the ball's path and try to cause a loss of possession.	

STICK BASICS

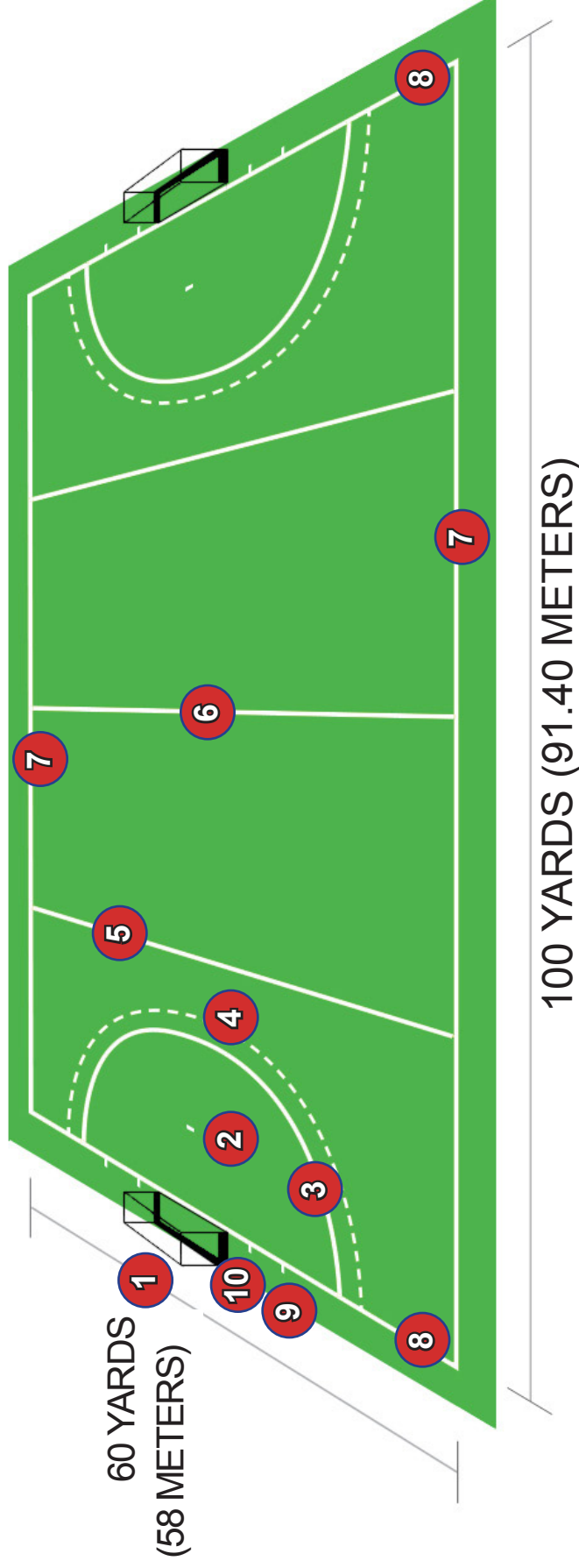


There is no such thing as a left-handed stick
Only push or hit with the flat side or edge of the stick
Only goalies can use their body to stop and move the ball
Good stick skills and passing are the keys to success!

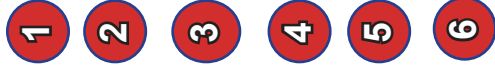
MOVING THE BALL (offensive)

Push - This skill is executed with player's hands apart. The head of the stick stays in contact with the ball as it is pushed and there is no backswing. This allows for good control, quick movement, and is used for accurate passing or shooting.	
Hit - A powerful motion where the stick is brought down swiftly from a back swing and strikes the ball with a long follow through. The hit is fast and favored for sending the ball long distances or for making a hard shot on goal.	
Lift, Flick, Aerial - A skill in which the ball stays in contact with the head of the stick as it is lifted into the air. There is no back swing. Lifts are used primarily to raise the ball over long distances or as hard shots on goal.	
Forehand Sweep - Commonly used on turf or a smooth playing surface, player lowers stick parallel to ground and sweeps the ball in a circular motion. A sweep allows for more power than a push, making it effective for quick yet long hard passes and shots.	
Reverse Sweep - Player uses the same motion as the forehand sweep with the ball starting on players left side. Player uses a different grip and must use the side of the stick with the flat side up. This is an effective motion for passing and shooting.	
Drag Flick - Considered a push, this specialty skill is used by advanced players as a variant to the straight shot or hit on a penalty corner. It can be as powerful as a hit yet requires no back swing, making it especially deceptive. It's an important skill to develop for high level competition.	

THE FIELD



Field hockey is played on a rectangular field called a **pitch** or **field**. Though traditionally played on grass or turf, the game can be played on any flat surface, even a beach. Indoor Field Hockey is played on a smaller hard surface with different rules.



- 1 Goals** - goals are 7' high, 12" wide and 4' deep. In addition to nets, goals have an 18" board lining the bottom inside sides and back.
- 2 Stroke mark** - dash centered in front of each goal, 7 yards from the goal line marking the position where a penalty stroke is taken.
- 3 Scoring circle** - solid semi-circle surrounding the goal 16 yards from the goal center. Only balls hit or deflected into the goal within this circle are a score. Defensive fouls within the scoring circle result in a penalty corner.
- 4 5-yard mark** - a dash-lined semi-circle 5 yards outside the scoring circle. Penalty corners end when the ball crosses the 5-yard mark.
- 5 25-yard line** - intentional or repeated fouls from this line to the near end line result in a penalty corner.
- 6 Center line** - solid line that divides field in half. The ball is taken from the middle of this line at the beginning of each half and after a goal.



- 7 Sideline** - boundaries along the length of the field marking the end of the field of play. If a ball is hit out, the opposing team brings it in with a pass or self-start. Players feet can be outside of sideline as long as the ball is inside or on the line.
- 8 End line** - boundaries along the width of the field. Offensive hits that cross this line result in defense getting the ball at 16 yards. Defensive hits that cross this line result in either a long corner or penalty corner if deemed intentional.
- 9 Corner mark** - short dashes 11 yards (10 meters) from the edge of each goal cage that mark the place from which penalty corners may be inserted.
- 10 Defender mark** - short dash 5.5 yards (5 meters) from the edge of each goal marking the the closest position which a defender may stand to the inserter on a penalty corner.

PLAYER POSITIONING



SAMPLE FORMATION (3-3-3-1)



FORMATIONS

Although player positions have defined primary responsibilities, field hockey is a fluid game and players have flexibility to traverse the field. Defenders can be viable scoring threats, midfielders help defend and score goals, and forwards fall back to aid the defense. Teamwork and communication is critical and more important than positions or formations.

A coach often sets formations based on the skill and strength of the players or the opposing team. Any formation is acceptable, and all positions are important. A coach may opt to play four forwards (potentially a 4-3-3 formation with 4 forwards, 3 midfielders and 3 defenders), a 3-4-3 with 3 forwards, 4 midfielders, 3 backs, or even a 3-3-3-1 with a defensive "sweeper." In some situations, it is allowed for a team to pull a goalie and play with an extra player, such as when a team is down a goal at the end of a game.

POSITIONS

	Forwards (Attackers or Strikers) Offensive position whose primary responsibility is to advance play toward the goal and to convert the opportunities created with fellow players into goals.
	Midfielders (Middies) Both an offensive and defensive position who acts as an initial line of defense as well as advances the ball to the forwards and the opposing side of the field.
	Defenders (Backs) Defensive position whose primary responsibility is to protect the goalkeeper, prevent opposing forwards from getting into scoring position and to advance the ball to the midfielders and forwards.
	Sweeper (Cover or Back) Some formations include one player who traditionally is positioned either behind or in front of the defensive line and whose primary goal is defense.
	Goalkeeper (Goalie) Defensive position whose primary responsibility is to prevent opponents from scoring and to coordinate defenders in the defense of the goal.

FOULS AND UMPIRE SIGNALS



GOAL SCORED



16 YARD HIT



BACK OF STICK



STICK OBSTRUCTION



OBSTRUCTION



THIRD PARTY OBSTRUCTION



DANGER



PENALTY CORNER



HIGH PENALTY CORNER HIT



PENALTY STROKE



FREE HIT



FOOT

PENALTY CARDS

Field hockey uses a three card system for player warnings and suspensions for deliberately dangerous play, unsportsmanlike behavior and repeated violations.

GREEN



Player must leave the field for 2 minutes and the team plays short (no replacement).

YELLOW



Player leaves for at least 5 minutes (at the discretion of the official) and the team plays short.

RED



Player leaves the game and cannot be replaced. They may be suspended for subsequent games.

GOAL SCORED - signaled when the ball entirely crosses the goal line as a result of a hit or deflection by an offensive or defensive player within the scoring circle.

16 YARD HIT - A free hit awarded to the defense when ball goes out the end line after last being touched by an offensive player.

BACK OF STICK - called any time a player touches the ball with the back (rounded) side of the stick.

STICK OBSTRUCTION - called when a player hits or obstructs an opposing player's stick with their own when they are making a play on the ball. This can be called on an offensive or defensive player.

OBSTRUCTION - called when a player possessing the ball uses their body to prevent an opposing player from making a play. The player with the ball cannot stop their motion or push back and opposing player must be actively trying to get the ball.

THIRD PARTY OBSTRUCTION - signaled when a player intentionally or unintentionally uses their body to block an opposing player from access to player possessing the ball.

DANGER - a broad rule that encompasses any action or situation in which a player puts other players in danger of injury. For example tripping, wild swings or similar actions. Intentional acts could result in a card and/or a penalty stroke.

PENALTY CORNER - a scoring opportunity awarded to the offensive team when the defense commits a foul within the scoring circle, or an intentional foul within the 25 yard line.

HIGH CORNER PENALTY HIT - on the initial hit of a penalty corner, the ball must cross the goal line no higher than 18" for a goal to be scored.

PENALTY STROKE - awarded when a defensive player commits a penalty to prevent a goal, or commits an intentional foul in the circle. The ball is placed on the 7 yard mark and the offensive team selects a player to take the free shot against the goalie.

FREE HIT - awarded when a foul is committed outside of the scoring circle (unless intentional within the 25-yd line). Opposing players must stay at least 5 yards away until the ball is hit or the player touches the ball once (self-starts).

FOOT - the most common penalty, called when the ball hits a player's foot causing an advantage for their team. If there is no advantage, the umpire may choose to hold their whistle and play on.