



LEARN TO SKATE CURRICULUM

INTRODUCTION

The focus and goal of the **Learn to Skate (L2S)** curriculums are designed to teach beginner hockey players the fundamentals of skating. Every association will have different needs, access to ice, a large variation in ages (4-10 years old) and number of players in their **L2S** sessions. If you have 5 or 60 new players, USA Hockey recommends that you use age and skill appropriate drills to teach the players how to skate and play hockey. It's important for these players to become comfortable on the ice, learn the basic hockey stance, stride, knee bend, use of edges and how to hold a stick before moving into a learn to play, 6U or 8U full hockey curriculum.

The **L2S1 Curriculum** consists of 4 practice plans for a total of 12 sessions and the **L2S2 Curriculum** consists of 4 practice plans plus two age appropriate FUN game days for a total of 14 sessions. USA Hockey recommends that each practice plan should be instructed 3 consecutive times before moving onto the next practice plan. Each practice consists of 6 different drills working on fundamental hockey skating skills. Most practice plans will have suggestions for advanced progression for those players who develop a little faster than others. Repetition and the appropriate progression for beginners are extremely important at this level. **Players should perform drills without a hockey stick during the L2S1 Curriculum, as this helps with the overall development of balance.**

Before the first practice have your coaches help these new players/families dress in all their hockey equipment. Spend 10 minutes off the ice in full gear teaching kids how to get up, stand in a hockey ready position, bend, touch toes, sit, squat, balance on one leg, etc. You will have kids sign up at various ages, athletic ability and confidence levels. Make sure you have some crates or skating walkers available for players who need that level of assistance. Assign a couple coaches to be in charge of these players.

L2S practice plan template: Based on a 60 minute ice slot.

Free Time: Let the players have the first five minutes of practice as FUN free play. Dump as many items from the bag of toys as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. Younger players may be intimidated and scared the first 2-3 practices. During the first 3 sessions coaches should interact with their assigned group during the first 5 minutes to keep them active and engaged from the start.

Length of Drills/Stations: 5 drills x 8 minutes ending with an agility exercise to change the drill. Depending on the number of L2S players in your program all 5 drills may be instructed in the same 3rd or 6th of the ice for the entire 40 minutes. Have water accessible in each station or area.

Coach to Player Ratio: Recruit coaches, parents and student coaches to help run these practice sessions. Create more stations according to the total number of players. The more adults per players the smoother your practice will run and the more confident and safe the players will feel. A good ratio is 1 coach to 5 players. Coaches need to bring a lot of praise and enthusiasm to the L2S practices to encourage the young players!



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Agility: Players perform an agility exercise 3-4 times before moving to the next activity. Examples: Drop to knees and get up, snow angles, superman, log rolls each direction, 2 foot jumps, etc. Select an agility exercise that the players can handle and progress from simple to complex over the length of the curriculum.

Games: Always play a ten minute game after completion of the 5 stations. Bubbles, Cut the Cake, Driving, Tag, Kick the Can, Red Light Green Light, Cops & Robbers, Clean Your Room, British Bulldog, Hand Ball Soccer, Score-O, etc.

Free Time: Let the players have the last five minutes of practice as FUN free play.

Tools:

- Toy Bag: Ringette rings, soccer balls, nerf balls, softballs, tennis ball, small cones, bubbles, etc.
- Permanent Ice Markers.
- Skating Aids: Crates stacked on top of each other zip tied together, chairs, or ice skating walkers made out of PVC piping or metal.

PVC piping can be purchased at any hardware store.

How to make PVC walker:

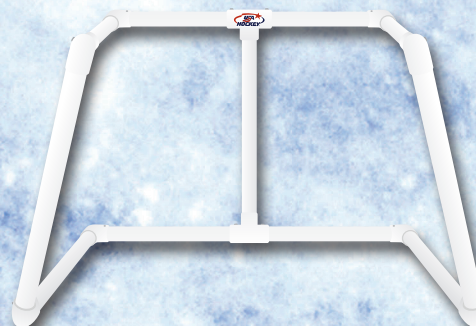
1 or 2 inch diameter, approximately 14 feet of piping needed.

Cut into:

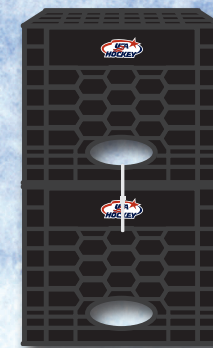
- 3: 22 inch pieces-2 Bottom Vertical and 1 Middle Pipe
- 2: 17 ¼ inch-Front Uprights
- 2: 15 inch- Bottom Horizontal
- 2: 8 inch-Top Vertical
- 2: 7.5 inch-Top Horizontal
- 8: 90 degree Elbows (4 on top & 4 on bottom)
- 2: Tee Connectors
- 22: Screws to reinforce each Elbow (2 each) and Tee Connectors (3 each)



METAL WALKER



PVC PIPE WALKER



MILK CRATES



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INTRODUCTION



Skates: The skates are the most important piece of gear. Make sure the skates fit right. The wrong fit will cause players frustration if too big and pain if too small.

To Properly Fit Skates:

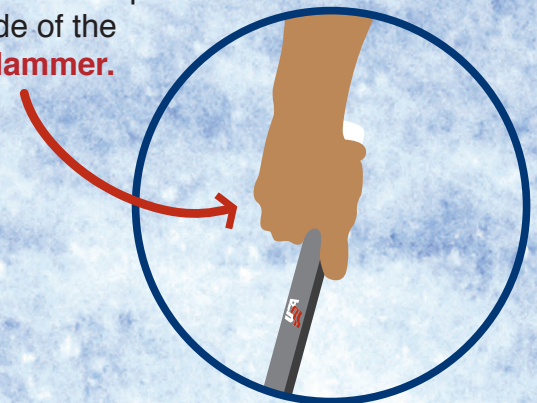
1. Remove the insole from the skate and have the player stand on it. Make sure the heel is properly aligned with the heel of the insole. The big toe should almost reach the front edge of the insole. There should not be more than a 1/4 inch of insole showing.

OR

2. Loosen the laces of the skate and insert foot pushing toes up against the toe bed. No more than one finger should fit between the player's heel and the heel of the skate.

Stick Length: The stick is the next most important piece of equipment after skates. Sticks need to be cut at the appropriate height for each player. Most kids have sticks that are too long. Have players stand in skates with stick on its end in front of player. Stick should be cut at chin level. It is important to buy the players a junior stick rather than an adult stick.

Hammer Grip: The top hand should hold the stick with a firm grip. Place the top hand so that the 'V' between the thumb and forefinger is on the top side of the stick and the shaft rests in the player's fingers like you would hold a **Hammer**.





L2S1 PLAN #1

STATION/DRILL 1: GETTING UP

8 MINUTES

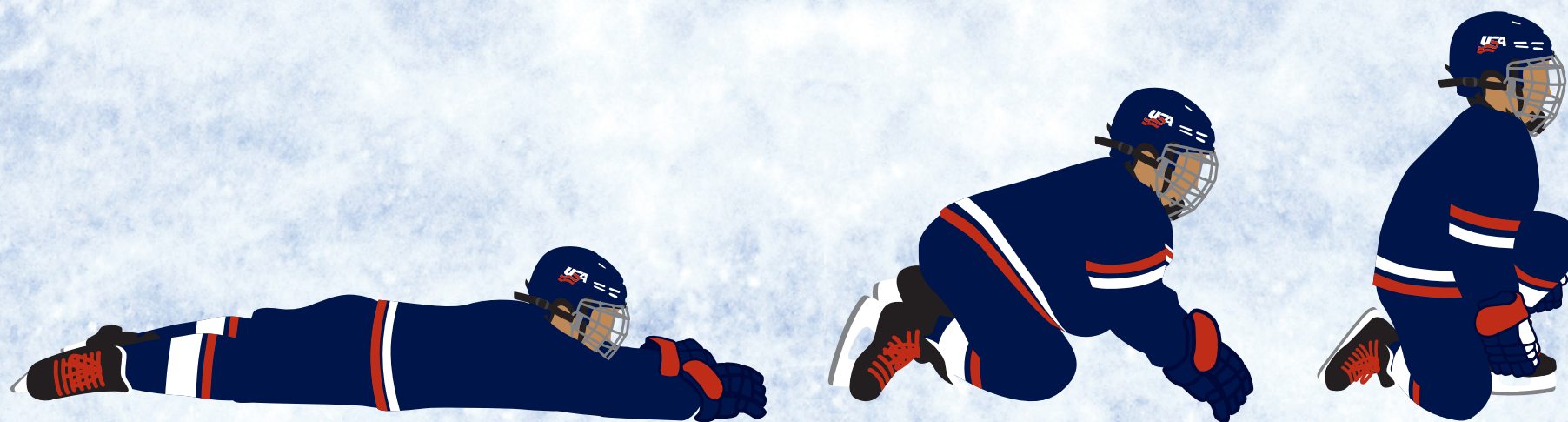
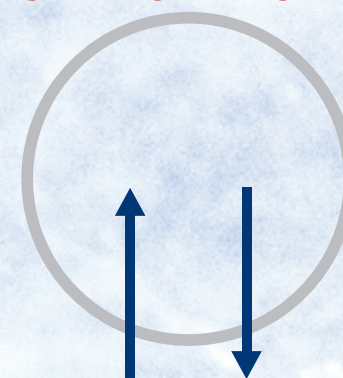
Players spread out in a small designated area on the ice.

Briefly demonstrate proper technique of **Getting Up**. Have players fall to stomach and get back up into the basic hockey stance. Lie on stomach, elbows on ice with two hands straight out in front of body like superman. Using hands move to kneeling position, place one skate on the ice and then stand up into a basic **Hockey Stance** (reference plan #1-drill 3).

Get on all fours like a dog and say “woof, woof.” Have players sit up on both knees like a begging dog. Place one skate on the ice and then stand up into a basic **Hockey Stance**.

Race: On coaches command players crawl like a dog (or seal or inch worm), log roll once each way and **Get Up**...first to designated finish line wins.

X O X O X O X O





STATION/DRILL 2: MARCHING, BENDING, SITTING & STANDING TALL

8 MINUTES

Have players perform stationary exercises that enhance balance.

Rag Doll: Bend over and touch toes with both hands.

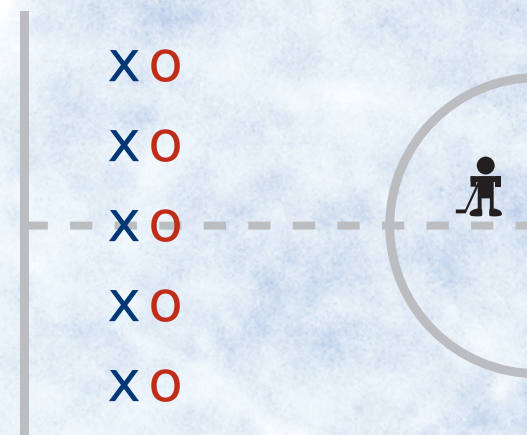
Frog: Sit low in wide stance with knees bent, butt down and hands between legs. Say "Ribbit."

Reach for the Sky: Raise arms above the head, wave hands side to side then place hands on helmet.

Frankenstein: March alternating legs with arms held out in front of body.

Soldier: March in place swinging arms.

Advanced: Players race following coaches commands: marching, bending, sitting and standing tall. First player to boards wins.



RAG DOLL



FROG



REACH FOR THE SKY



FRANKENSTEIN



SOLDIER



STATION/DRILL 3: BASIC STANCE & WALKING

8 MINUTES

Part 1: *Demonstrate and have players perform **Hockey Stance**.*

Coaching Points: Skates are parallel and shoulder width apart. Toes are angled slightly out, knees bent, chest and head up, hands pretending they are holding a hockey stick. Standing in a **Hockey Stance** players bob up and down maintaining their balance.

Part 2: Duck Walk: Players walk like a duck staying in the basic **Hockey Stance** position.

Part 3: Rocking: Rock forward onto toes and backward onto heels with knees bent while standing stationary.

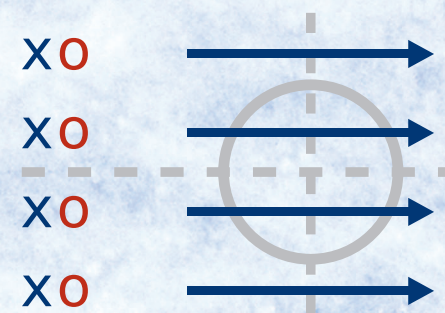
Race: Duck Walk forward to boards or blue line. 1st player to destination wins.



HOCKEY STANCE



DUCK WALK





L2S1 PLAN #1

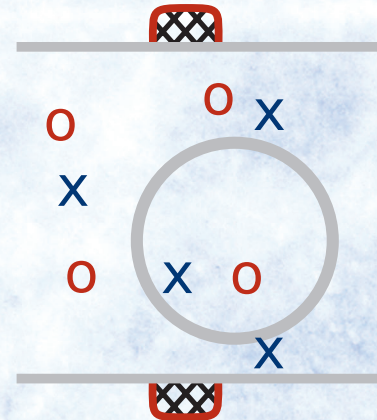
STATION/DRILL 4: BENDING & TWISTING

8 MINUTES

Divide players into two teams. Create two goals using nets or stacked tires.

Game: Time to Clean Your Room: Players pick up soccer balls, tennis balls, ringettes, pucks, softballs, stuffed animals, etc. and place them in designated goals within 2 minutes.

Team with most objects in goals wins. Repeat.





L2S1 PLAN #1

STATION/DRILL 5: AGILITY, BALANCE, COORDINATION (ABC's)

8 MINUTES

Simon Says: Players perform ABC's.

Stationary: March like Frankenstein, log roll, squat like a frog, rag doll, fall down and get up, kangaroo hop, hockey stance, hands in the air, dance...

Movement: Scurry like a mouse, take quick small steps or waddle like a penguin (arms out like wings) to destination.



LOG ROLL



FROG



FRANKENSTEIN



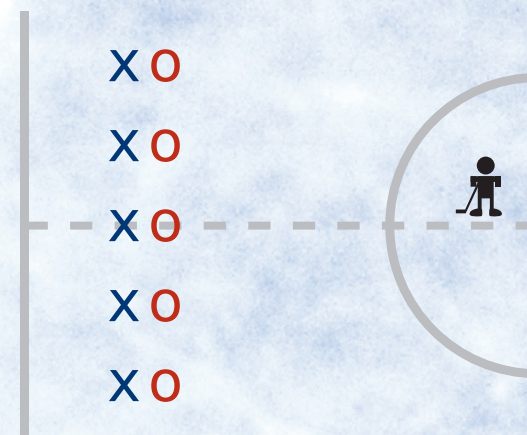
RAG DOLL



HOCKEY STANCE



KANGAROO HOP

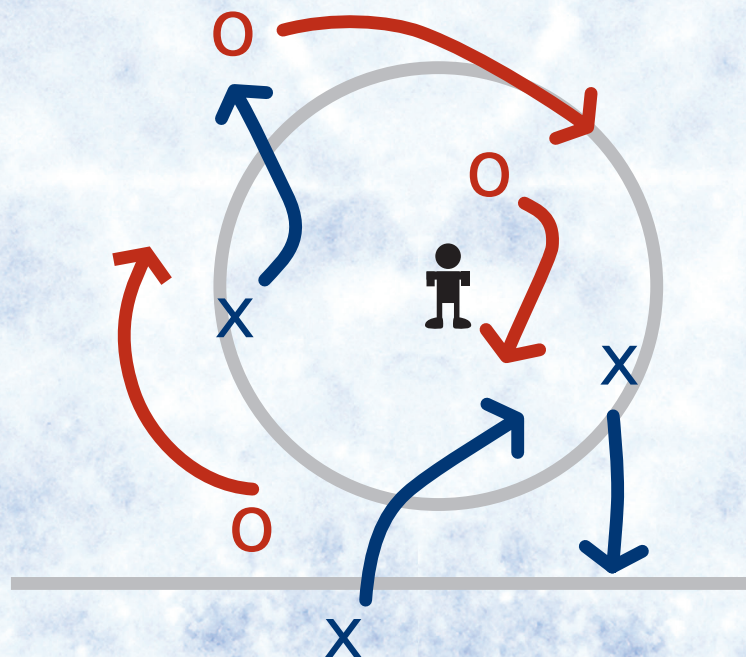


GAME: BUBBLES

10 MINUTES

Players spread out in a small designated area.

Coaches skate around blowing bubbles while players chase after the bubbles stomping or catching them. Player will fall down and work on getting up. Players will also work on walking, marching, reaching, standing tall, jumping, bobbing, bending, etc.





STATION/DRILL 1: ABC's

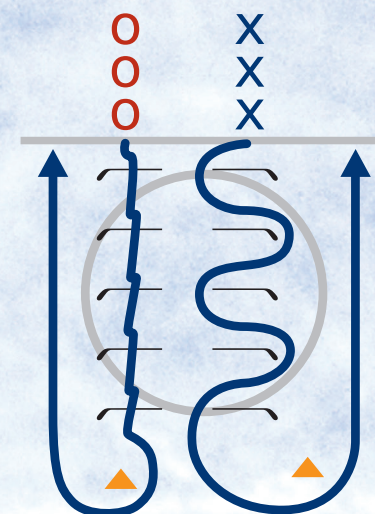
8 MINUTES

Walking Over Obstacles: Place sticks on the ice or use your ice marker to draw lines in a ladder pattern. Have players perform the following agility skating skills either over or around the sticks/lines, skate/walk around cone and return back to the line.

After performing each drill 2x have players race through the course.

1. Walk forward over each stick
2. Touch ice with hand between each stick
3. Walk around the sticks in an S formation

* If you have 6-10 players set up two lines!





STATION/DRILL 2: MARCH WITH 2 FOOT GLIDE

8 MINUTES

Divide your players into group 1 and group 2.

Players **March** forward 4-6 steps to generate momentum, bend knees and **2 Foot Glide**, gliding as far possible on the both skates.

Coaching Points: Make sure players swing arms when marching and have arms bent at 90 degrees for balance while gliding. While gliding toes are pointed forward with knees bent, weight distributed equally, and head and chest up.

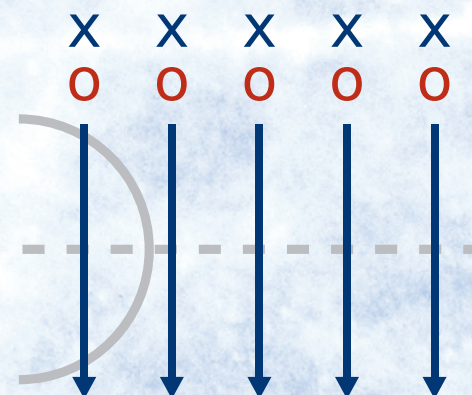
Game: Who can **March** and **Glide** the furthest.



MARCH



GLIDE





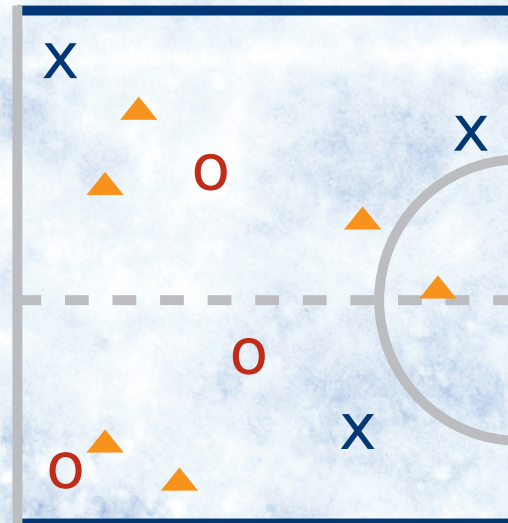
L2S1 PLAN #2

STATION/DRILL 3: ABC's

8 MINUTES

Hand Ball Soccer: Use soccer balls. Divide players into two teams. Make three goals with cones. Start with three balls in play and add more if you have more than six players. One ball per every two players.

Player dribbles ball by pushing ball on ice with hands.
Players score by dribbling the ball through two cones.
No goaltending and you can't score on the same goal twice in a row.





STATION/DRILL 4: WALKING, MARCHING, & SKATING

8 MINUTES

What Time is it Mr(s). Wolf?:

Players line up on boards or goal line. One player stands 20-30 feet in front of the players.

Designate one player to be the wolf.

Mr. Wolf stands with their back towards the other players.

The players then ask in unison "What time is it Mr. Wolf?"

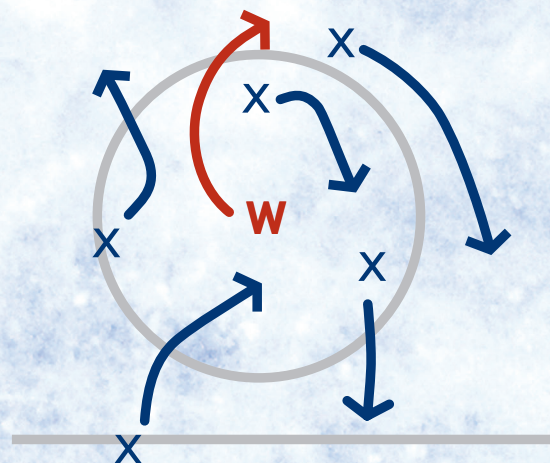
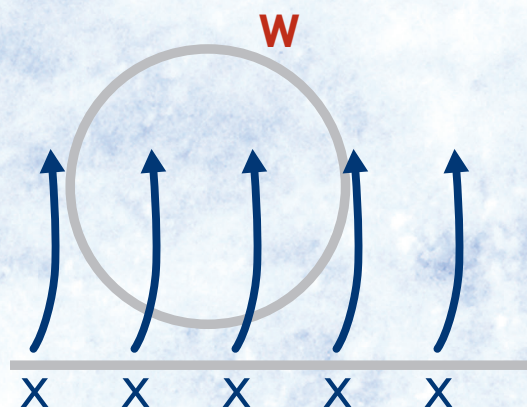
Mr. Wolf then answers with a time - such as "It's 7 o'clock".

The players then take that many steps towards Mr. Wolf.

At any time Mr. Wolf can answer "Desert Time!"

When the wolf answers "Desert Time" Mr. Wolf turns around, chases and tags as many players as possible. When tagged, players help the wolf tag the rest of the players. The last player to not be tagged wins and becomes the new wolf.

Make sure each player gets a turn to be the wolf.





STATION/DRILL 5: LATERAL MOVEMENT

8 MINUTES

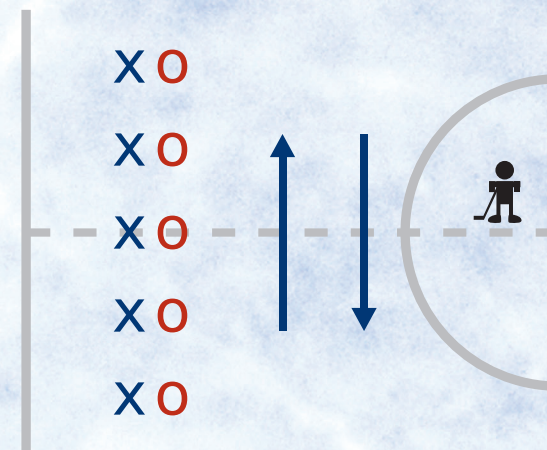
'Simon Says' with **Lateral Movement**. Divide players into 2 groups.

Stand like a **Flamingo** (1 leg). Stand in a **Basic Hockey Stance** with belly button and toes facing coach, hands pretending to hold a hockey stick on the ice. Wide stance with hands out for balance and **Lateral Step** left 4 times.

Lateral Step right 4 times.

Add in **Log Rolls** (reference 1-5), drop to knee, **Getting Up** (reference 1-1), **Kangaroo Hop** (reference 1-5), looking up, down, over each shoulder, alternating dropping one knee then the other in between **Lateral Movements**.

Race: Have players step laterally from goal line to blue line or blue line to blue line.



FLAMINGO



HOCKEY STANCE



STANDING



LATERAL MOVEMENT



L2S1 PLAN #2

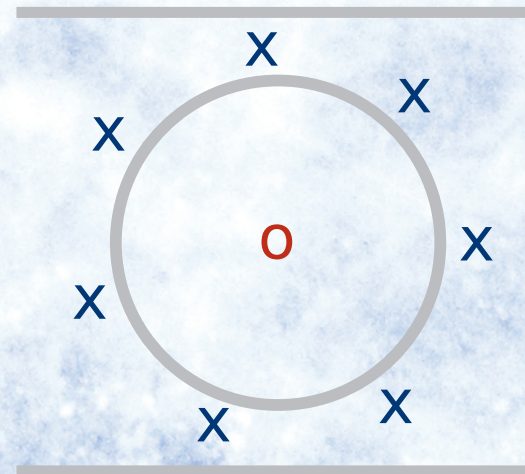
GAME: CUT THE CAKE

10 MINUTES

Players make a circle while one player stands in the middle of the circle.

Cut the Cake: Player in the middle of the circle hold hands together straight out in front of body. Players on the outside of the circle say in unison “John, John (player’s name) cut the cake, make pieces nice and big.” With arms extended John skates between two players. The two players each do a 360 degree turn and the first player to complete the turn becomes the next cake cutter.

Before you start the next round have all players complete one 360 degree turn each direction.





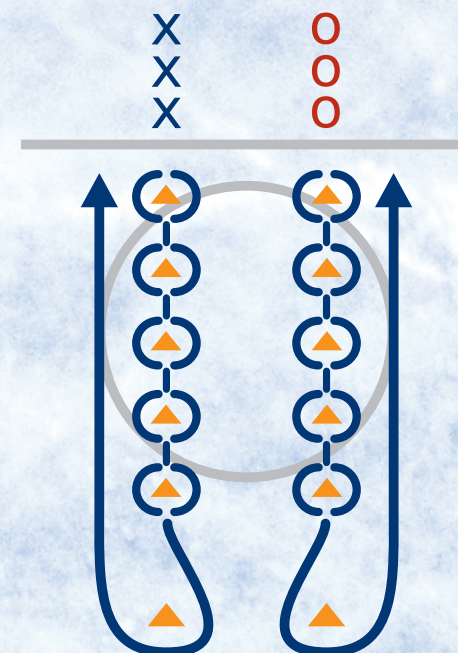
L2S1 PLAN #3

STATION/DRILL 1: INSIDE EDGES

8 MINUTES

Swizzles: Put heels together to form a V position. Using **Inside Edges**, push toes outward, then toes inward making toes touch. Make the shape of a **Fish**. Repeat creating **Fishes** forward from goal line to blue line.

Create **Fishes** around 5 small cones, skate hard around 6th cone and return to line.





STATION/DRILL 2: T-PUSH WITH 2 FOOT GLIDE

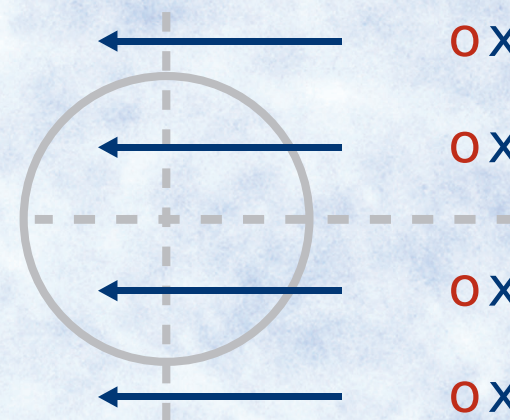
8 MINUTES

Divide your players into group 1 and group 2.

Razor Scooter: Have players perform **T-Push & Two Foot Glide** exercises pretending they are riding a scooter on the ice. Place the left skate behind the right skate, forming a "T". Bend knees, push down and out with the left skate, gliding as far possible on the both skates. Repeat pushing with right skate. Arms are out pretending to hold onto handlebars.

Coaching Points: Front foot points straight, weight is on back leg to start, push hard with back leg, knees bent, weight transfers to front leg, head and chest up, and recover skate close to ice.

Game: Who can push and glide the furthest. Give players 3 attempts and then switch legs.





STATION/DRILL 3: FORWARD STRIDE/SKATING

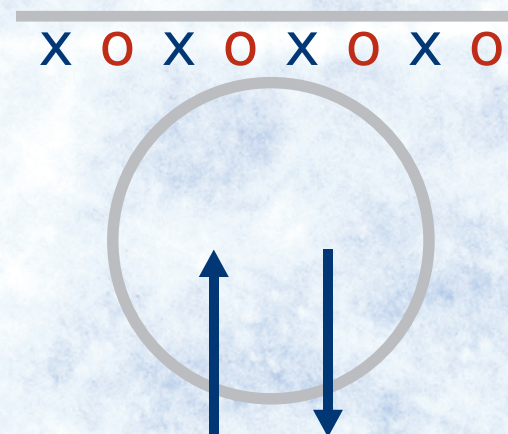
8 MINUTES

Coaching Points: Begin in a **Hockey Stance**, knees bent with head and chest up. With weight on right leg turn left foot out slightly to the side, push down and to the side pressing the inside edge blade into the ice. Extend leg completely. Recover back leg to front leg aligning the knees back into a **Hockey Stance**.

Push with left foot to blue line then right foot to goal line x2.

Alternating feet to blue line and back goal line x2.

End with follow the leader (coach).





STATION/DRILL 4: STOPPING

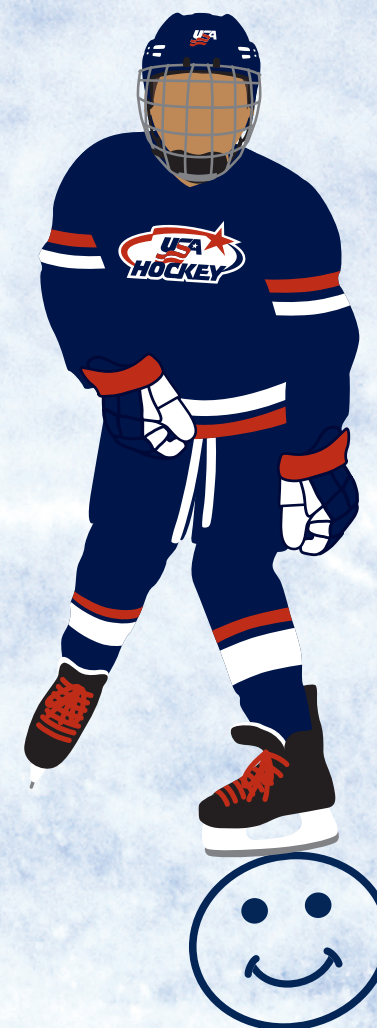
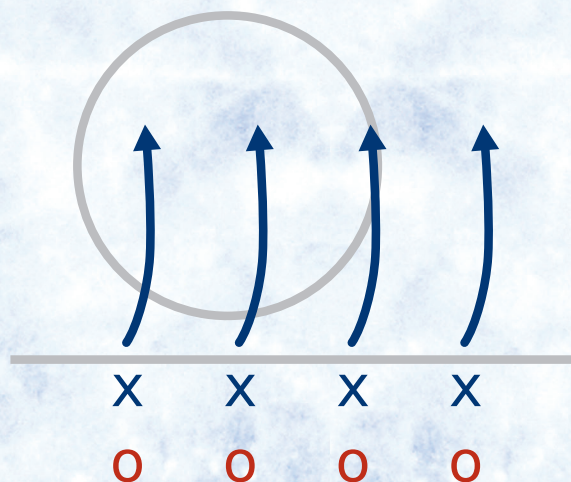
8 MINUTES

1 Foot Snow Plow Part 1: Draw a smiley face for each player on the ice. Have players scrape off drawing with the inside edge of the skate blade by turning right heel out and right toe in, pushing skate down and out towards 1 o'clock using inside edge. Repeat with left skate pushing forward towards 11 o'clock. Do this 2 times with each skate. Players may hold onto boards while performing drill.

Part 2: Have players take 4 strides or march forward 4 steps and two foot glide towards blue line. Turn right toe in and right heel out, push down and out with the right skate to stop.

Keep weight on the ball of foot to stop. Keep knees bent, and the back straight, and head and chest up.

Repeat and return using left skate.





STATION/DRILL 5: EDGES

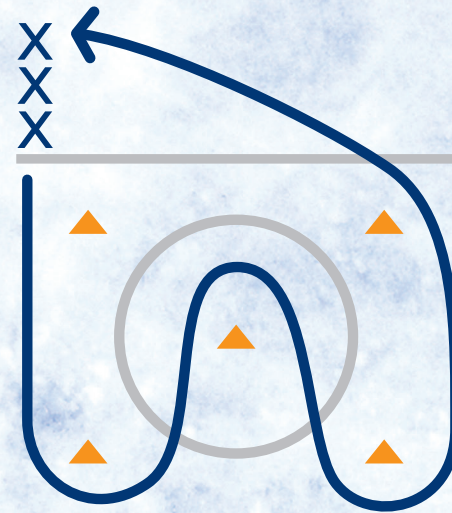
8 MINUTES

Two Foot Glide Turns: *Players take a few strides to gain momentum then work on **Glide Turns** up the ice around cones.*

Coaching Points:

- Bend knees
- Skates are shoulder width apart
- Head and shoulders initiate the turn by leaning in toward cone
- Lead with inside skate - make sure they **do not** drag toe around cone
- When player reaches cone they turn toes, belly button and head towards next cone and skate to the next cone.

The next player goes when first player reaches a cone. Make sure to perform drill in both directions.





GAME: DRIVING

8 MINUTES

Players line up on goal line or along the boards. This game reviews all skills introduced to the players throughout the first three practice plans. Simplify this game by slowly adding in different skills. Be creative but adhere to the level of the players.

March to the parking lot, fasten your seat belt and **T-Push** onto the highway. **Two Foot Glide** through the tunnel and **Dip** under the bridge. **Forward Stride** 4 times, lean and **Glide Turn** on the twisty road. **Snow Plow Stop** at the stop light. Oh no detour, **Backward Swizzle** and **Kangaroo Hop** forward onto the highway. **Swizzle** forward around the pot holes. If the players fall down they have a flat tire. Be creative and work on marching, dips, turns, stopping, swizzle, gliding, falling and getting up.



MARCHING



T-PUSH



2 FOOT GLIDE



DIP



FORWARD STRIDE



SNOW PLOW STOP



SWIZZLE



KANGAROO HOP



L2S1 PLAN #4

STATION/DRILL 1: AGILITY, BALANCE, COORDINATION (ABC's)

8 MINUTES

Simon Says: Players perform ABC's.

Stationary: March like Frankenstein, log roll, squat like a frog, rag doll, fall down and get up, kangaroo hop, hockey stance, hands in the air, dance...

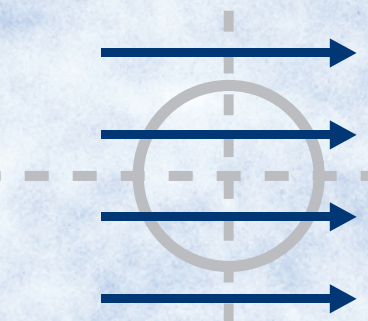
Movement: Scurry like a mouse, taking quick small steps or waddle like a penguin (arms out like wings) to destination. Perform arm circles forward and backwards while moving.

X O

X O

X O

X O



LOG ROLL



FROG



FRANKENSTEIN



RAG DOLL



HOCKEY STANCE



KANGAROO HOP



STATION/DRILL 2: T-PUSH WITH 2 FOOT GLIDE & SCOOTING

8 MINUTES

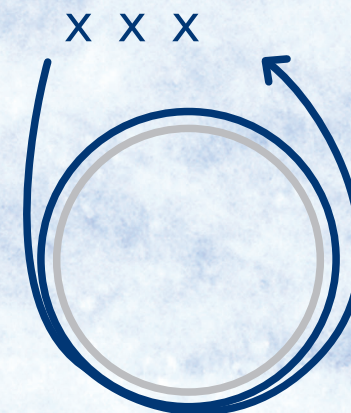
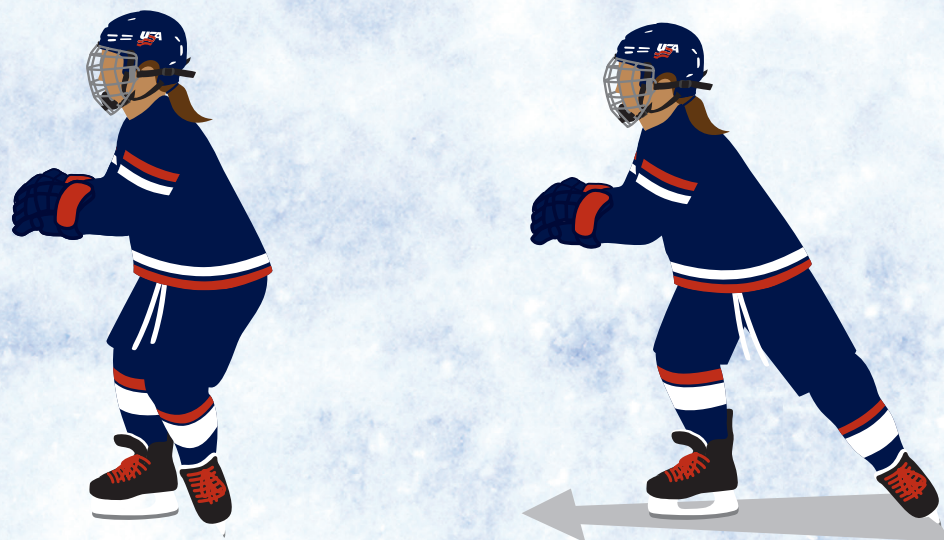
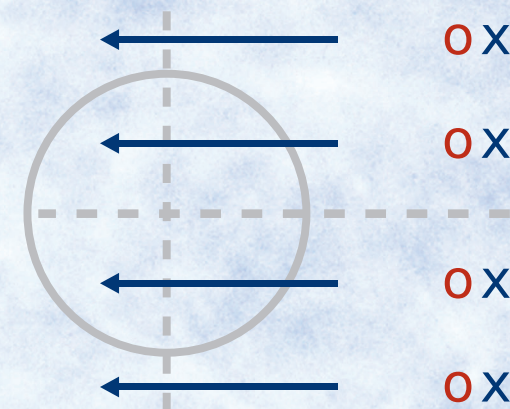
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Part 1: Razor Scooter: Have players perform **T-Push & Two Foot Glide** exercises pretending they are riding a scooter on the ice. Place the left skate behind the right skate, forming a "T". Bend knees, push down and out with the left skate, gliding as far possible on the both skates. Repeat pushing with right skate. Arms are out pretending to hold onto handlebars.

Part 2: Repeat push-recovery cycle (**Scouting**) as fast as possible-switch legs when they reach the side boards.

Advanced: Have players **Scoot** around a circle keeping inside leg on ice at all times. Outside leg does the work while inside leg remains on the ice. Stay low and keep the glide leg knee bent. Change directions and repeat.

Have players try to catch the player in front of them. Change direction and repeat.





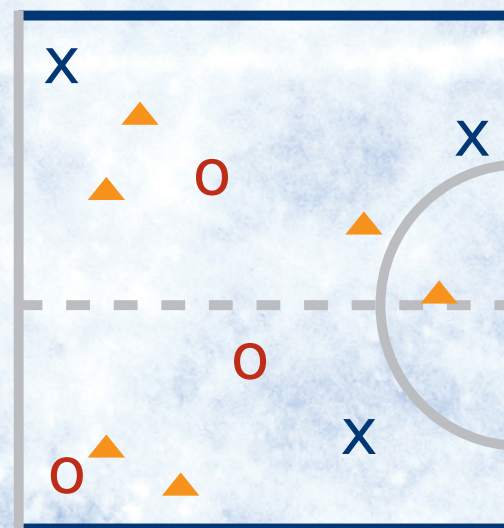
L2S1 PLAN #4

STATION/DRILL 3: ABC's

8 MINUTES

Hand Ball Soccer: Use soccer balls or tennis balls. Divide players into two teams. Make three goals with cones. Start with three balls in play and add more if you have more than six players. One ball per every two players.

Player dribbles ball by pushing ball on ice with hands.
Players score by dribbling the ball through two cones.
No goaltending and you can't score on the same goal twice in a row.





STATION/DRILL 4: INSIDE EDGES

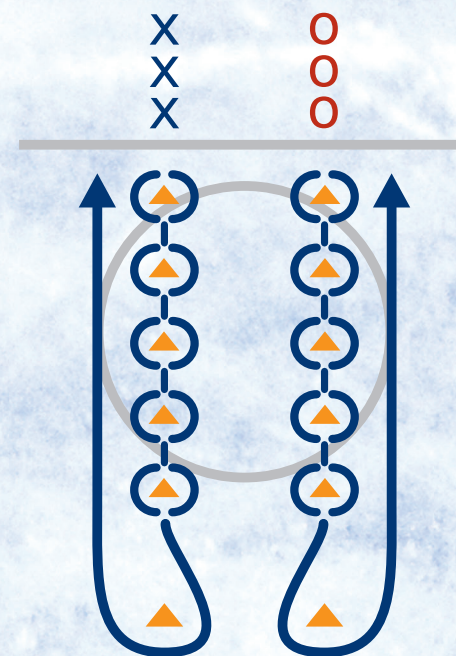
8 MINUTES

Swizzles: Put heels together to form a V position. Using **Inside Edges**, push toes outward, then toes inward making toes touch. Make the shape of a **Fish**. Repeat creating **Fishes** forward from goal line to blue line.

Perform **Fishes** backwards. Starts with toes together using **Inside Edges** move heels outward, then inward until heels touch. Repeat creating **Fishes** backward from goal line to blue line.

Rocking Horse: Perform one **Fish** forward then one **Fish** backwards.

Create **Fishes** around 5 small cones, skate hard around cone and return to line. Repeat.





STATION/DRILL 5: FORWARD STRIDE & STOPPING

8 MINUTES

Coaching Points: Begin in a **Hockey Stance**, knees bent with head and chest up. With weight on right leg turn left foot out slightly to the side, push down and to the side pressing the inside edge blade into the ice. Extend leg completely. Recover back leg to front leg aligning the knees back into a **Hockey Stance**.

Forward Stride alternating legs to blue line ending with a right foot **Snow Plow Stop**.

Forward Stride back to goal line ending with a left foot **Snow Plow Stop**.

Repeat.

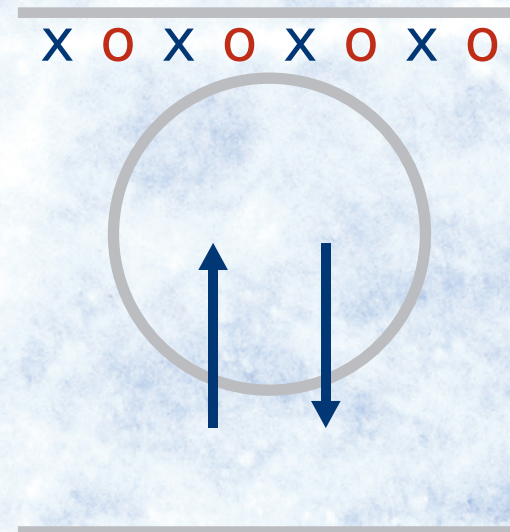
End with follow the leader (coach).



FORWARD STRIDE



SNOW PLOW STOP





GAME: RED LIGHT GREEN LIGHT

10 MINUTES

Players start on side boards.

Players skate towards center ice where the policeman (coach) is holding a red painted puck and a green painted puck. Coach can also use a crossing guard sign.

If coach holds up a red painted puck player must stop moving - working on **Snow Plow Stops**. Return to side boards and start again.

If player is caught moving on a **Red Light** they must return to start. First player to policeman (coach) is the winner.

