



U11 Player Pathway



Effective 2020-21

The U11 Player Pathway is supported by the Hockey Canada Long-Term Player Development Model. This framework provides the guiding principles for age appropriate and skill specific programming for all players in Hockey Canada's youth hockey system.

The U11 Player Pathway must be followed for the current season.

The U11 Player Pathway provides an environment that helps all players at the U11 age level (9 and 10 years old) to realize their full potential. Hockey Canada strongly believes that the needs of the player should be at the forefront of the programming.

The U11 Player Pathway delivers numerous benefits to participants and their families. The benefits include:

- creating a positive experience during evaluations with planned pre-evaluation ice sessions;
- avoiding evaluations the first week of school; and
- allowing all U11 players to play actively for 100% of the season.

FAIR AND EQUAL ICE TIME is a key principle of the U11 Player Pathway. Fair and equal ice time is designed to ensure that all players get the same opportunity to contribute to the outcome of games, regardless of skill or ability.

- A coach's responsibility is to develop all players to contribute.
- Shortening the bench is not permitted.
- All players should receive as close to equal ice time as possible, including opportunities on special teams (powerplay and penalty killing).
- All skaters should rotate through all positions to ensure each player can try each position. (LW/C/RW/LD/RD)
- Full-time goaltenders are allowed. If a team has two goalies, they should rotate for equal playing time, and the goalie not playing should be allowed to play out as a skater **as per the LMHA Policy (Hockey Calgary)**. In Calgary, players must be approved as a Hybrid Goalie in order to play both as a skater and as a goaltender.

1. Preparation Phase (Not permitted prior to August 30)

Every U11 player must be provided with a minimum of four ice sessions prior to formal tryouts starting.

- a. Opportunity for first-year U11 players to become familiar with the rule changes and larger ice surface.
- b. A player's first experience in the new hockey season should not be a formal tryout – this gives all players the opportunity to get back on the ice in a more 'player-friendly' environment.
- c. Help level playing field; not all players go to hockey schools or prep camps prior to the start of the season.
- d. Ice sessions should be a minimum of 60 minutes. It is up to the Club to determine the number of players on the ice and the structure of the ice time.
 - i. Recommendation:
 1. 30-45 kids on the ice
 2. Mix of station-based skills, drills designed to transition players to the full-ice game, and scrimmage
 - a. Full-ice transitional drills should address offsides, icings, positional play, faceoff set up, etc. Note: these drills do not need to be 'full ice' drills and should focus on concepts while keeping players active

2. Team Selection Phase (Not permitted prior to Tryout Phase)

Tryouts must be a minimum of three formal ice sessions. Recommendation is one skills session, one small-area games session, and one scrimmage game session.

- a. Players should be selected for teams based on overall skill and not by position.
- b. Talent ID is about keeping kids around long enough to see what they can really do.

3. Development Phase (October 1 – beginning of Seeding Round or after team formation phase)



Every team must have a period of development time following team selection and prior to the regular season starting. Skills before tactics, tactics before systems.

- a. Exhibition games can take place during this phase to finalize team selection
 - i. Clubs are permitted to move players between teams during this time for the purpose of creating meaningful competition during the Regular Season
- b. Priority should be on skill development; however, teams may participate in tournaments during this period

4. Seeding/Regular Season Phase (Mid-October to End of February)

This refers to the period from the first seeding/regular season game to the start of the playoffs.

- a. Seeding round will take place prior to Christmas (*No Tournament Windows*)
- b. Regular season (League play) will take place following the Seeding Round

5. Playoff Phase (End of February to end of March)

Playoffs must be tournament-style format versus elimination rounds.

- a. Can take place over multiple weekends and does not have to be in one location.
- b. The goal is to have more teams playing meaningful games longer into March.
- c. Current Hockey Calgary format approved and will continue for the season

6. Off-Season Phase (April to August)

This refers to the period of time from the end of the playoffs to the start of the next Preparation Phase.

- a. No player evaluations or formal games are permitted.
- b. Clubs may choose to run development initiatives in April and May, or conditioning initiatives in August. It must be optional for players to attend.
- c. Multisport activities are recommended during this phase.

NOTE: Game and Tournament Maximums

- **45 Game Maximum** (excluding Playoffs, Provincials, and *****EMHW*****) **(Essentially same as previous limit)**
 - 4-11 Exhibition Games
 - 18 Seeding/League games
 - *****EMHW***** - The first game in EMHW is a Regular Season game and will count towards the total
 - 12-16 Tournament games
- **4 Tournament Maximum - max 2 tournaments can be out-of-town******
 - EMHW and Provincials do not count towards the total
 - 'Out-of-Town' is defined as any rink outside of the Hockey Calgary Boundaries and thus requiring a travel permit. The reason for this limit is to help reduce the incremental costs associated with traveling to tournaments (hotels, food, gas, etc.)
 - ******Teams are permitted to exceed the out-of-town tournament max with the approval of their Club – criteria to be determined by the Club**
- **Tournament Windows (7-9 window opportunities)**
 - Team Formation to start of Seeding Round (3 windows)
 - Regular Season to early December (2 windows)
 - Tournament window during Regular Season (1 window)
 - Mid-December to early January (1 window)
 - March following Playoff participation (2 windows)

All games and tournaments played during the above phases count towards the total

Hockey Canada recommends a total of 40-45 games maximum including playoff and tournament play. Click to view the Hockey Canada [U11 Hockey Seasonal Structure](#).