



U8 MD – 2024-25 Season

Resource Guide



Hockey Canada & Ontario Hockey Federation recommend tiering for U8 programming to meet the mandate set by the Ontario Hockey Federation for the 2019-20 Season.

It is recommended that Associations tier their top eighteen 7-year olds and place them onto a team. Those eighteen players would then be divided into skill-based lines; with like-skilled players from each team playing against each other. If an association plans to have two teams at the U8 level, they must be two evenly **BALANCED** teams.

Seasonal Structure

- ✓ Associations submit their Team registration by May 31st, 2024
- ✓ U8 MD League will be reviewed at the ALLIANCE Hockey Structure Meeting

1: Development Phase – September 5th, 2024 to October 17th, 2024

- Prep Phase: Starts September 3rd, MHA must offer 4 prep skates focused on skill development.
- Evaluation Phase: Starts as early as September 9th. Must offer all players 3 skates.
- Development Phase: September 26th to October 17th
- Locally scheduled exhibition matchups (4 maximum)

2: Regular Season Phase – October 17th, 2024 to March 31st, 2025

- League game play against other Associations begins.
- Matchups to be set by ALLIANCE Hockey & games scheduled by the local Association.
- Important that Coaches continue to focus on skill development during practice sessions.
- **No Games** to be scheduled during the **March Break** (March 7th to March 13th)
- Maximum **Four** Festivals/ Jamborees throughout the Regular Season Phase, this includes the Christmas Break

3: Year End Festival – April 11-13, 2025, Sarnia, ON

- Season-end Festival/Jamboree weekend
- Host Association Sarnia Hockey Association
- Try to have Season completed prior to March Break

U8 (Minor Novice) Divisions		
West	East/ Central	
London Bandits	Cambridge Hawks	Brantford 99ers
North London Nationals	Kitchener Jr Rangers Blue	Burlington Bulldogs Blue
Oakridge Aeros	Kitchener Jr Rangers White	Burlington Bulldogs White
Sarnia Jr Sting	Waterloo Wolves Black	Burlington Jr Raiders
West London Hawks	Waterloo Wolves Gold	Hamilton Huskies Red
Stratford Warriors	Woodstock Jr Navy Vets	Hamilton Huskies White



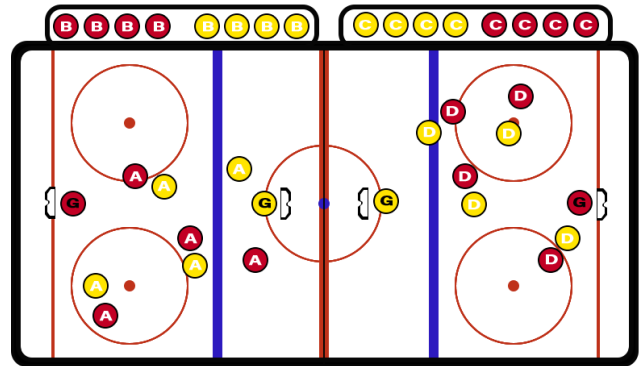
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League Games

Format

- Two teams play a game utilizing the two halves of the ice with each team of 18 participants divided into two groups of 9
- Each team is required to dress two goaltenders, one for each half-ice game
- A game will consist of two 22.5-minute periods with 60 or 90 second buzzers for lines to switch and a face-off to begin each period
- When the buzzer sounds to end the first period, the visiting team (2 groups of 9) will switch ends and benches (So, each group plays each other)
- Players will be on the ice every other shift = 50% of the time



Playing Rules – Half-Ice

- 4 vs. 4, plus one goaltender per group
- Each team is required to have two goaltenders, one for each half of the ice
- Teams (2 groups of 9) share the same bench
- Three-minute warm-up prior to the start of the 1st period
- On Ice: barriers set up across the centre red line, nets set up on the centre circle with centre circle as the goal line
- Game Length: 45-minutes total, two 22.5-minute periods
- Clock: run-time, no score is kept
- Net Size: Small Nets (4x3)
- Black Puck, 6 oz
- There will be two face-offs during the game; one to start the first period and one to start the second period
- Paint a dot in the centre of the half-ice game for a face-off (recommended)
- No offside or icing

Shifts

- Shift Length: 90-seconds shifts with the automatic buzzer to indicate the player change
- Players change on the fly
 - If there are fewer than four players on the bench, the active player designated to stay out for the following shift must tag up at the bench prior to continuing play
- At the buzzer, players must relinquish control of the puck immediately and vacate the ice. The new line of players enter the ice immediately



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Change of Possession

- On a Goaltender save or freeze, the official blows the whistle to indicate to the attacking team to back off and the defending team gets possession
- Puck shot out of play – the offending team backs off and the official gives the non-offending team a new puck.
- If the puck goes out of play, Referee drops a new puck (non-offending team starts play)
- On a goal, the team that scores backs off. Referee blows whistle and points to the goal, the defending team then gathers the puck and attacks

Penalties

- On a penalty, the referee raises their arm and blows their whistle signaling the change in puck possession. At the end of the shift, the referee informs the coach of the penalty called and the player it was assessed to. The offending player sits the next shift. Teams continue to play at even strength.

[Hockey Canada U9 Half-Ice Games Video](#)