



U7 Program (U7) Hockey Cross-Ice Guidelines

Rationale:

To build on the changes brought in at the U7 Program level with regards to the sizing of ice space, equipment and other areas for the youth hockey development structure. Hockey NB has mandated that ALL U7 Program hockey games beginning in the 2017/18 season, are to be played in a cross-ice or half-ice setup. The smaller ice surface will support more competitive, fun and overall better development for our youth hockey players.

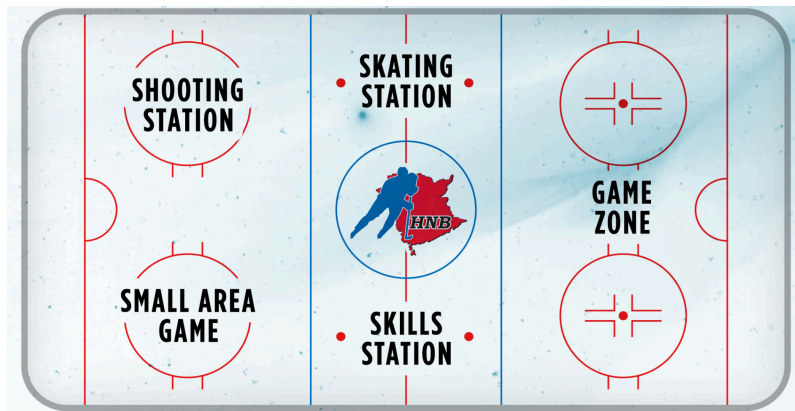
The intent of this package is to cover off areas with regards to the implementation of the Cross-Ice program for **U7 Program Hockey**.

It is strongly suggested that Associations have a fall meeting to discuss the following Guidelines with the coaches and volunteers.

Hockey Canada Cross-ice hockey benefit video [CLICK HERE](#)

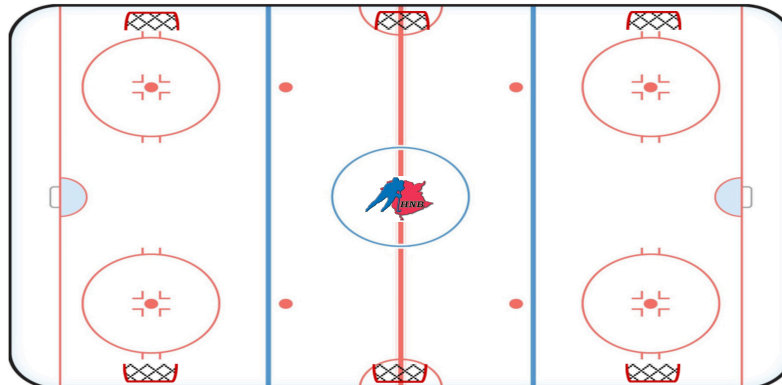
Video Message on U7 from Hockey Canada CEO, Tom Renney [CLICK HERE](#)

What is the ideal U7 set-up for practice?



What is the U7 ice set-up for games?

All games at the U7 level will be played in a cross-ice set up. At the U7 Level no games shall be played prior to December 15 with a maximum number of 20 games being played during the season. (As per Hockey New Brunswick Minor Operations Manual)



More ice set up options on Page. 5

What pucks should be used blue pucks, black pucks?

- For U7 Blue 4oz pucks will be used for all practices and games.

How do we keep score?

- NO Score, NO Standings, NO Stats at the U7 Level.

How long should periods, shift lengths be?

- For one-hour time slots, you can play 2 x 18-25 minute periods (3-minute shift lengths).
- In our model on page one, during a one hour practice you can have a rotation game zone with multiple skills stations.

Benches:

Teams may have to share bench(es).

What about the officials, do we need them?

- There is no requirement for officials at the U7 Level. Coaches can manage bench and on-ice players.

What about off-sides, icings?

- For cross-ice hockey there are no off-sides or icings, just let the kids play! The players will have ample time to learn these rulings at the later stage (Atom).

What do we do after a goal (face-offs?)

- There will be no face-offs at the U7 Level. Coaches will put pucks back in play. The reason behind having fewer face-offs is to keep the players moving and maximize the puck touches while on the ice.

What size nets should we use?

- Recommended for U7 – 2 x 3 – 3 x 4 or smaller.
- If you don't have the smaller nets, try flipping net over using bottom size.
- Use regular size nets if no other option is available.

What coaching levels do you require for U7?

- Coaches are required to have Coach Level 1 or Coach Level 2 Trained to assist at the IP level.
- Beginning in the 2018-19 season it will be mandatory for all Coaches at the U7/U9 level to have Coach Level 1.
- [CLICK HERE](#) for the HNB coaching requirements.

Should there be full time goaltenders?

- For U7, no full time goalies.
- When using the smaller nets 2 x 3, goaltenders are not necessary.

What if we don't have the boards, dividers?

- If you don't have the dividers or boards, use coaches to put puck(s) back into play. Use pylon to divide the zones.

Should games still be 5 vs. 5?

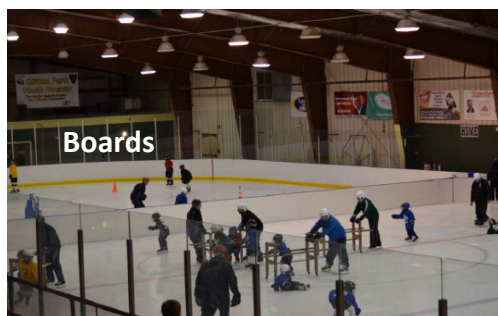
- Improvise! Try 4 on 4, 3 on 3. Depending on the numbers available. Whatever keeps the players moving and engaged. Cater to your needs!
- If for example you have 15 players, could split into two games, with buffer zone.
- Games can have multiple pucks to keep more players involved therefore getting more puck touches for all players of all skill levels.

How much do smaller nets cost?

Prices will range on shipping costs, how many you're ordering (Starting at \$500). More information on Page. 4

How much do foam dividers cost?

Prices will range on shipping and quantity ordered. Standard foam divider set will start at \$2100.00. With foam dividers there is an option to have screen windows added to the divider this would allow the potential to put sponsor logos on the divider. This can help drive the cost down for the purchaser.



How much do the boards cost?

Custom boards with cart to easily transport and store, can start at \$6500. With boards, you can put sponsor logos on, to help drive costs down for the purchaser.

Where can I purchase small nets, boards, foam dividers?

Cover-tech
Woodstock, NB
506-325-8206

Paula Sealey (Nets, boards, & foam dividers)
Arena Services
Athletica Sport Systems
519-747-1856 ext. 234

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the IP/U9 Information Handout

[CLICK HERE](#) Hockey USA Analytics Video

[CLICK HERE](#) Hockey USA Big Ice Video

Benefits of Cross Ice/Half Ice Hockey?

- **Cross-ice vs. Full-ice: Puck Touches 2X More, Pass Attempts 2X More, Shot Attempts 5X More, Passes Received 6X MORE!**
- More children get a chance to play hockey.
- Hockey IQ, or understanding the principles of the game, is being developed at a young age.
- More children will experience a feeling of success when playing hockey.
- The same exciting and fun environment as in a “real” game is created.
- Both more and less gifted children will benefit from close/tight action on the ice.
- Children are excited and motivated to continue playing hockey.
- Hockey will be more appealing and rewarding to a wider range of children and their parents.
- Group sizes become smaller which means learning and teaching will become more effective.

- The close feeling of belonging to a team will motivate a child to participate with even greater enthusiasm.
- More repetition/frequency in drills in one ice session.
- More frequent line changes in the game means more ice time for each player.
- Children remain active between their shifts with various activities in the neutral zone.
- The feeling of being an important part of the action increases because of the small size of the rink.
- The children have more energy with which they can improve their skills when they are skating 85 feet across the ice surface as opposed to the 200-foot length of the ice surface.
- Playing on a smaller surface allows for more puck contact resulting in improved puck control skills.
- Decision-making skills are enhanced as more decisions must be made more frequently at a higher tempo.
- Individual technical skills develop more quickly.
- Scoring skills are enhanced since the players have more shooting opportunities and the child sized goal nets challenge the players to shoot more accurate.
- More repetition for goalkeeper's which improves reading of the game and reaction to changing game situations becomes more effective.
- The game is full of continuously changing situations.
- The speed in playing situations increases, which will require quicker mental and physical reactions by the players this is because there are no unnecessary breaks in the game.

More options for ice set ups:

