



ONTARIO HOCKEY FEDERATION
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A PROUD BRANCH OF



RESOURCES

This brochure describes techniques which are outlined in detail in Hockey Canada's "Teaching Checking: A Progressive Approach". The "Teaching Checking" document contains specific drills to help players master the skills mentioned in this brochure and is available online.

For more information and checking resources visit www.ohf.on.ca.

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Member Partners:



CHECKING

A PROGRESSIVE APPROACH



A reference guide for teaching the techniques of checking



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OVERVIEW OF CHECKING

Checking is a critical skill in the game of hockey that when performed properly can create quality scoring opportunities or help a team regain control of the puck. The skill of checking includes techniques other than body checking and it does not begin at a certain age or age group; it can be taught at any time.

The transition to body checking can be very uncomfortable for young players but if coaches are able to effectively put the building blocks in place, players will be able to make a smoother transition.

Checking is a four-step progression and while the fourth step, Body Checking, does not occur until PeeWee, the first three steps teach skills that build a strong foundation and help a player's confidence when the transition to body checking occurs.

NCCP CHECKING PROGRESSION MODEL

1. POSITIONING AND ANGLING

2. STICK CHECKS

3. BODY CONTACT

4. BODY CHECKING



TEACHING CHECKING SKILLS

TEACHING SEQUENCE

A suggested sequence for teaching the checking progression model is as follows:

1. Explain the skill
 - Name and describe the skill
 - Tell why it's important and when it's used
2. Show how it is done by demonstrating
3. Give time to practice and get everyone involved
4. Tell them how they are doing
 - Give individual feedback

COMMUNICATION

- Communicating with players is key
- Ensure that each player understands the skill being taught
- Ask questions to make sure players understand and know what is expected of them
- Give players an opportunity to speak or ask questions

GIVING FEEDBACK

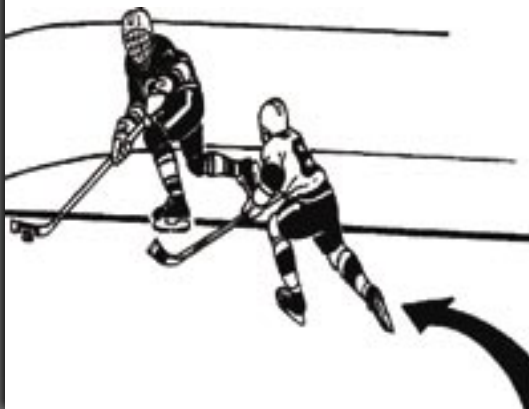
- Give the "good" picture
- Be positive
- Be specific
- Be patient

POSITIONING & ANGLING

Angling is the ability to force the opponent to go in the direction that a player wants. This normally would be towards the boards or to the outside.

KEY POINTS FOR COACHES TO CONSIDER

- Players should remain between the puck carrier and the pass receiver, gradually reducing the puck carrier's space
- Players should skate parallel to the opponent or in an arc or circular movement but not in a straight line toward the opponent
- Players should skate slightly behind the opponent thus not allowing the opponent to turn up ice to the inside of them
- Players need to learn to adjust their speed based on their opponent's speed
- A player's stick should always be in position to intercept a pass and as a decoy to force the opposition to the desired direction



STICK CHECKS



Stick checking may be considered the second line of defense as angling forces the opposition to a position where contact can be made with the stick.

When a player stick checks, the player must maintain control of both his/her stick and the opponent's stick and the action must be used to play the puck.

EFFECTIVE USES OF STICK CHECKS

- Delay the advancement of the opposition
- Force a loss of puck control by the opposition
- Control the puck or gain possession for a teammate

PRIMARY TYPES OF STICK CHECKS

- Poke Check
- Sweep Check
- Tap Check
- Lift Check
- Press Check



BODY CONTACT

Body contact is used to gain separation when a player positions their body between the puck and the puck carrier.

Body contact, by definition, must result only from the **active movement of the puck carrier.**

KEY TEACHING POINTS

- Reinforce angling/positioning skills as well as further enhancing the required skating skills
- Emphasize and further enhance the concept of controlling and the containing of the opponent
- Inversely enhance the offensive player's puck handling and puck protection skills
- Allow for teaching, stressing and reinforcing puck carrier/opponent safety tactics and the mature attitudes of respect
- Provide fun and enjoyment while learning in a competitive but safe environment



BODY CHECKING

A body check can be defined as body contact primarily caused by the movement of the checker. That movement can be in a direction different than that of the puck carrier. The checker uses their body for the purpose of stopping the attacking progress of the puck carrier and/or to separate the carrier from the puck.

The skills needed for body checking are the effective mastery of the first three steps in the checking progression. The checker must be a strong skater with particularly good balance on their skates.



DANGER ZONE

The danger zone is when a player stands 2-4 feet from the boards as this makes him/her extremely vulnerable. Coaches should encourage players to keep moving and stay close to the boards.