



IHL Handbook

Introduction

Welcome to Full Stride's Instructional Hockey League (IHL) program. This program is the next step for those who participated in the Adult Learn to Play Hockey program. Participation in that program, however, is not required to join the IHL. No prior experience is necessary. Many participants have little, if any, skating experience. The goal of the IHL program is to introduce and/or continue the basic skills of hockey in a fun, and encouraging environment.

Full Stride Contact Information

For questions and general information, please use the following:

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Sessions

The IHL is offered once a year. It typically begins the second week of January, and ends in March. The class meets once a week every Sunday afternoon from 4:10pm to 5:40pm at Cairns Arena.

The Program

Participants in the IHL program will continue learning the basics of playing hockey. Each session of ice is broken up into a warm-up period, a skill of the day, and then ends with games. Participants will practice forward and backward skating, stopping, edge control and balance, stickhandling and puck control, shooting, passing, and more. The program will also introduce team-play concepts such as breakouts, defensive zone coverage, along with the basic rules of the game. At the conclusion of the IHL, participants will be ready to enter the adult leagues in the Beginner division.

Registration

Registration for the IHL is complete once the registration/waiver form is filled out, and once Full Stride receives full payment. The registration form can be found at the IHL page on our website, www.fullstride.com.

Payment & Refund Policy

The fee is \$250 per session. Full Stride must receive full payment to complete the registration process. There is a no-refund policy for any missed days, unless canceled by Full Stride.

Time & Arrival

Make sure you arrive about 20 or 30 minutes prior to the start time. This will give you plenty of time to dress and be ready to be on the ice at 4:10.

Skates

Skates are available to rent at the rink for a small fee. Buying Skates are the most important piece of equipment. Here are a few things to consider when purchasing skates:

1. Buy skates that fit properly.
2. A skater continually flexes their toes and uses muscles on the bottom of their feet to keep balanced. A skater will work much harder trying to keep balanced in skates that are too big and too loose. Their feet will become sore and cramped quickly. Skates typically run 1 or 2 full sizes smaller than regular shoe sizes.
3. We recommend buying a higher end used pair of skates rather than a lower end pair that are brand-new. As Laura Stamm puts it, "buying cheap skates is a poor investment."
4. Buy skates with proper ankle support. If the skater's feet are pronated inward, the skates are either too big, too loose, and/or the skate has poor ankle support. The skater should be able to stand in their skates with their ankles straight. If ankles are pronated inward, the skater will not be able to get onto their edges properly.
5. One brand of skate (i.e. Bauer or CCM) is not better than the other. Proper sizing, ankle support, and comfort should be considered over anything else.
6. Foot soreness and a couple blisters can't be avoided. A new skater is using new muscles. Breaking in new skates will create a few blisters. But there should not be any pain. If the skater is constantly in pain, the skates are probably an improper fit.
7. Buy the best skates you can afford that fit properly. This will make the learning process much more enjoyable.

Helmets

All participants must wear a hockey helmet with a full cage or a half shield.

Sticks

How do you know if you're a left handed shooter or a right handed shooter? Being a lefty doesn't mean that you are left hand dominant and vice-versa. One simple test to figure out if you're a lefty or a righty is to pick up a snow shovel or a broom. What hand is on top? If you're right hand is on top, you are probably a left handed shooter. If your left hand is on top, that means you're probably a right handed shooter. But in the end, go with what is comfortable.

Make sure your stick is cut to a proper length. A stick that is too long will hinder your puck handling. Standing with skates on, the stick should come up to your chin. Without skates on, it should come up to your nose. As your skills progress, you may come to like a shorter or longer stick. But, in general, the stick should come up to your chin with skates on. The shop where you buy your stick will usually cut your stick to length if you ask. Otherwise, you can use a hacksaw at home.

Elbow Pads & Shin Pads



Investing in a pair of elbow pads and a pair of shin pads is highly recommended. Elbow pads will help when you fall and help protect your forearms. Hockey shin pads have a hard plastic shell over the shins and the knee-cap. Your legs will take a beating from sticks and pucks if you don't have a pair of shin pads.

Pants or Breezers



Hockey pants, or Breezers as mid-westerners call them, help protect your thighs, tailbone, hips, and kidneys. Inside there are hard plastic pads to help protect those areas. There are adult hockey players who do not wear these, but we recommend them. Players learning how to skate can expect to fall a lot. The tailbone pad alone is worth the investment for a new hockey player.

Hockey Gloves



Hockey gloves protect your hands and wrists. The top of the glove should be at the start of your forearm and should meet up with your elbow pads. This will give you full protection of the forearm.

Shoulder Pads



Like Breezers, there are some adult hockey players who choose not to wear shoulder pads. Even if you're playing in a non-checking league like Full Stride, shoulder pads help protect the chest and upper arms from sticks and pucks and those times you might run into the boards.

Hockey Socks



Hockey socks go over your shin pads. Some people wear a pair of sweatpants instead of buying hockey socks. That is fine, as long as you have something that covers the backs of your legs. Socks also help when you fall. The hard plastic on the shin pads is slippery on the ice. If you don't have any fabric over your shin pads, it can be very difficult to get back to your feet after you fall.

