



5TMSL 2025 HOCKEY RULEBOOK

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

- All players must wear a helmet with a full cage, gloves, and a team jersey.
 - If a player does not have their jersey, the league may provide an extra. If no extra is available, the player cannot play.
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TEAM REQUIREMENTS & FORFEIT POLICY

- Each team must have at least five players, including a goalie, ready to play no later than eight minutes after the scheduled game time.
 - Failure to meet this minimum will result in an automatic forfeit.
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GAME STRUCTURE

- Each game consists of three 12-minute periods with a running clock, except for injuries or penalties.
 - The games will be played 4 on 4, plus a goalie.
 - The clock stops for all whistles in the final minute of each period.
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OVERTIME & SHOOTOUTS

- If a game is tied at the end of regulation, a 3-minute sudden death overtime period (3-on-3) will be played.
 - The clock stops for all whistles in the final minute of overtime.
 - If still tied, a three-round shootout will take place.
 - If still tied after three rounds, the game will proceed to a sudden-death shootout.
 - In the playoffs, overtime will be 5 minutes and will be played 4 on 4. If still tied, the game will move on to a three-round shootout. If still tied after three rounds, the game will proceed to a sudden-death shootout.
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TIMEOUTS

- Each team receives one 20-second timeout and one 60-second timeout per game.
 - Timeouts cannot be taken in the same period.
 - Unused timeouts carry over to overtime if necessary.
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SWITCHING SIDES

- Teams will switch attacking sides for the second period but will keep the same benches.
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SUBSTITUTIONS

- Players may substitute at any time during live play, provided the exiting player is within five feet of the bench before the new player enters.
 - If players substitute during live play in the second period, when team benches are positioned on the offensive side, the incoming player must enter from the middle and touch the half-court line. Failure to do so will result in an offside call if the ball is brought into the zone.
 - Neither player may touch the ball while both are on the court within the five-foot substitution area, or a minor penalty for delay of game will be called.
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PLAYING TIME RULES

- To ensure fair playing time, the following guidelines apply:
 - All players must play in every period for at least one minute (unless injured).
 - No player can play an entire period; each player must sit for at least one minute per period.
 - Every player must sit for at least five minutes per game. Penalty minutes count toward this total.
- Regular Season: Referees will monitor for clear violations, but enforcement will primarily rely on coaches and the honor system. While it may be difficult to track every player's minutes, coaches are expected to do their best.
- Playoffs: Staff will track individual player minutes and work with coaches to ensure compliance.

Note - There will be no retroactive penalties for earlier playing time violations. However, if a player has not yet sat for the required five minutes by the end of regulation, they will be required to sit the remaining balance during the final minutes of the game.

Example - if a player has only sat for one minute throughout the game, they must sit the final four minutes of regulation. Should the game go to overtime, they will be eligible to play.

Adjustment for Smaller Rosters:

If a team has 7 or fewer players present (including the goalie), the rules change:

- Each player must play at least two minutes in each period.
- The total sit requirement is reduced to three minutes per game.

Obviously, if a team has exactly five players, all players will play the entire game.

OFFSIDES RULE

- Players must make an effort to return to the defensive zone once the ball is controlled in the opponent's zone.
 - Referees will raise a hand to signal when players need to return to the defensive zone. As long as players attempt to return, offsides will not be called.
 - **Editor's Note:** This was a difficult decision. While real offsides is how the game is traditionally played—especially at the high school level—we opted for this approach to accommodate first-time hockey players. We're open to revisiting this rule based on player and coach feedback.
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HIGH STICKING

- Batting the ball above shoulder height with a stick is not allowed. However, play will continue unless the ball is immediately touched by a teammate, an opposing goalie "on goal," or enters the opposing goal (such a goal will be disallowed).
 - If the offending team gains a territorial advantage, the ensuing faceoff will take place where the high stick occurred.
 - If the offending team suffers a territorial disadvantage, the faceoff will occur where play is stopped in their defensive zone.
 - If a player bats the ball into his own goal via a high stick, the goal will be allowed.
 - Any contact with an opponent above the shoulders using a stick is prohibited and results in a minor penalty. If it causes an injury, even if not intentional, it will result in a major.
 - Accidental contact above the shoulders is allowed only if it not intentional and occurs as part of a normal windup or follow-through of a shooting motion.
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PENALTIES

- **Minor penalty:** 1-minute penalty
- **Major penalty:** 2-minute penalty

Note - During a minor penalty, there is no substituting by either team while the clock is running.

Checking

Body checking and cross-checking are not allowed.

High-Sticking

Any contact with another player above the shoulders caused by a stick will result in a minor penalty for high-sticking. If it causes an injury, even if not intentional, it will result in a major.

Tripping

A tripping penalty is called when a player or goalie causes an opponent to fall — intentionally or unintentionally — through the use of their stick, body, or any other action.

There are two exceptions:

1. If a player steps on a stationary stick and falls, the referee may determine the contact was incidental and choose not to call a penalty.
2. If a player dives to block a shot and makes unintentional contact that causes the opponent to fall after the shot has been taken, no tripping penalty will be assessed.

Slashing

Slashing occurs when a player swings their stick at an opponent in a way that goes beyond normal play. This includes any forceful chop on an opponent's stick.

Roughing

Any use of unnecessary physical force or roughness against an opponent will result in a roughing penalty.

Delay of Game

A delay of game penalty is assessed at the referee's discretion for deliberate actions that disrupt the flow of play, such as:

- Taking too long to substitute
- Holding the ball against the wall
- Deliberately shooting the ball out of play

Goalie Penalties

A goalie does not serve penalties directly. Instead, another player, designated by the coach, will serve the penalty on their behalf.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

A minor penalty that can be called on a coach or a player for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Throwing the Stick

If a player throws their stick or any object to interfere with the ball or a play, they will receive a minor or major penalty. If it's on a breakaway, the referee can assess a penalty shot.

Penalty Shots

A penalty shot may be awarded in the following situations:

1. A defender commits a penalty from behind during a breakaway, when the player has a clear opportunity to score with no defenders between them and the goal.
2. A defensive player covers the ball while it's in the crease.
3. An illegal substitution occurs during a breakaway.

During a penalty shot, the goalie must remain in the crease until the shooter makes contact with the ball.

It would be impossible to cover every potential situation in this rulebook. If you have a question about a specific rule or scenario, please contact the league for clarification.