



## Basic Structure for 6U Mite Practices

The 6U Mite group consists of players ranging in age from 4 to 6 years old. USA Hockey recommends players take a basic learn to skate before implementing 6U practice plans. The Learn to Skate foundational program will provide the rudimentary skills needed for the 6U program. In the case of some smaller youth associations it may be necessary to group the Learn to Skate, 6U and the 8U players into practice sessions. This can still be done efficiently with proper planning and be very beneficial to all involved.

Skating is a primary skill for ice hockey and although players must continue to master skating technique throughout their career, there must be a special emphasis placed on the ABC elements of skating in the early years of development. Players at the Mite age have a harder time processing technical skills instruction and their bodies lack some of the fine motor control required. At this age large muscle groups and multiple joint movements should be incorporated into the practice sessions. Agility, balance and coordination (ABC's) on the ice surface are at the foundation of LTAD for 6U Mites.

Activity volume plays a significant role in development at the 6U age group. Little kids are doers so keep instruction short and activity high.

Practices have a preparatory phase followed by the main body of the practice. The main body of the practice session includes station work so that kids are developing their skills in an efficient manner. The recommended breakdown is with six stations so that there is enough variety to hold the interest of players at this age. Training should be structured so that a large part of the skill repetition is done in an entertaining format. Players at all levels must be mentally engaged in order to best acquire new skills. When skills repetition lacks an emotional element, children at this age quickly become bored. If the skills repetition is hidden in the form of a game, children are capable of extended periods of focused effort. Play is the key to emotional engagement in the skills repetition.

Young kids are comfortable with repetition and like familiarity in the drills that they are asked to perform. Similar drills are rotated down the progression from practice to practice. This give each practice a slightly different look and feel without changing too much. Every practice should be run twice in a row.

The basic 6U Mite practice structure is for a 60 minute hour block of ice as this is common across the country. If your local associating gets the 50 minutes (50 minutes of ice with the cost of a 10 minute ice cut included) out of their hour block of ice the practice sessions are easily modified by subtracting one station or shorting the to the game activity at the conclusion of practice.

- Maximum 6-8 kids per a station with 1-2 coaches.
- Warm-up or free play should last 5-6 minutes at the beginning or end of each practice.
- Station length maximum 6 minutes in duration due to short attention spans at this age.
- Make every station FUN, a game, competition, a race...
- No Whiteboards or Whistles used during stations.
- Get down on 1 knee- eye level to talk to the kids.
- Use an ice marker to draw relay routes on the ice.
- Bring lots of enthusiasm and energy to the ice - smile a lot.

- Complement each kid by name while they are in your station (5-6 minutes) at least once- lots of high fives and cheering encouraged.
- Keep explanations to 15-20 seconds max.
- Have players follow coach through obstacle courses or relays to learn the pattern.
- On Whistle for station change players perform agility assigned then have one coach deliver players to next station. Give kids water and start the next drill/game.

6U cross-ice jamboree operations refer to:

8U ADM Full Mite Guidebook

[http://www.usahockey.com/uploadedFiles/USAHockey/ADMKids/Content/8U\\_ADM\\_Full%20Guidebook.pdf](http://www.usahockey.com/uploadedFiles/USAHockey/ADMKids/Content/8U_ADM_Full%20Guidebook.pdf)

8U Implementation Guide

[http://www.usahockey.com/uploadedFiles/USAHockey/ADMKids/Content/USA120003\\_8U\\_ImplementationGuide-3.pdf](http://www.usahockey.com/uploadedFiles/USAHockey/ADMKids/Content/USA120003_8U_ImplementationGuide-3.pdf)



## CHARIOTS

**Chariots:** Partner up one player in front of another on blue line.

**Snow Plow Chariots:** Players hold the end of each stick in both hands. Front player pulls partner skating forward. The second player glides working on **Snow Plow Stops** (left foot 1 o'clock and right foot 11 o'clock). Allow front player to skate to blue line providing resistance by back player. Make sure players use both feet to stop. Switch roles coming back the other direction.

**Chariots On Knees:** Have back player sit on knees and front player pulls them to blue line and end with a **Snow Plow Stop**.

**Backwards Stop Chariots:** Partner up one player in front of another. Player holds the end of each stick in both hands. One player faces partner standing backwards. Player facing forward pushes partner backwards. After a few strides player being pushed tries to resist using **Backward V stop**. Position feet as if Duck Walking and lean forward using inside edges to v stop.





**Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes**

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

**Warm Up: 5 min- Sharks & Minnows**

Two players are designated as the sharks to start. The minnows must skate from side boards to side boards without being tagged. If they are tagged, they become sharks too.

**Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes**

On the whistle, players do 3 two foot jumps before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations.

**Station 1: ABC's - Wave Skating**

2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on skates, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up.

**Station 2: Activity - Freeze Tag**

Select one player to be the tagger. When a player gets tagged they must stand still (frozen) until a teammate touches them to become free again.

**Station 3: Stationary Passing**

Players partner up, stand 8-10' apart and pass back and forth. Work on proper technique, emphasize keeping the hands away from the body and sweeping the puck. Players should stand sideways so that they pass cross body.

**Station 4: Relay Race**

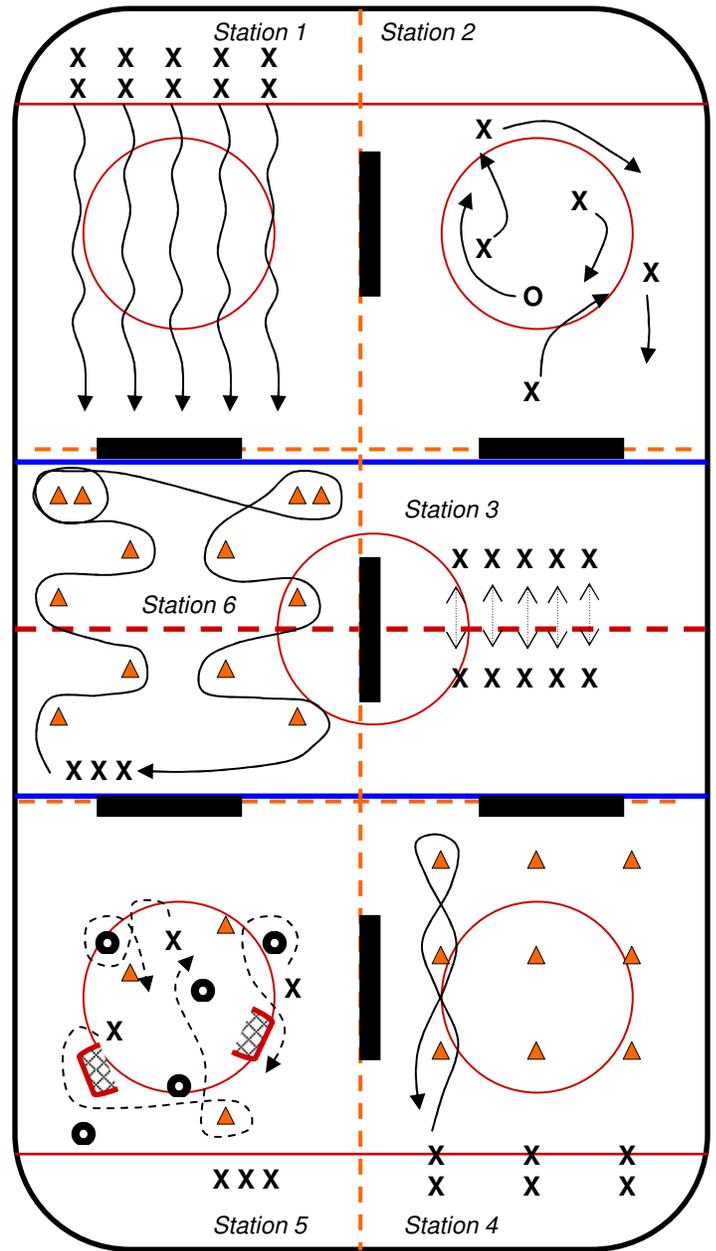
As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.

**Station 5: Chaos Puck-handling**

Players stickhandle skating around obstacles. All players are involved. Check to see that each player is holding their stick properly. Hands about shoulder width apart and top hand at the end of the stick partially held in the palm with the V between thumb and forefinger on top of the stick like you would hold a hammer. Use ringette rings instead of pucks.

**Station 6: Obstacle Course**

Players skate through the course with emphasis on turns and edges. Have players maintain good control of their stick by leading with the stick blade around each cone.



**Game: 2v2 Hit the Tire - 10 minutes**

Have the players stay and play in each of the six zones. Play 2v2 for 30 to 40 second shifts. Use one tire in each zone as the goal. Teams score by hitting the tire with the puck.



Equipment Required / Set-up: Borders, cones, tires, hockey balls, soccer balls

Ice Time: 50 Minutes

**Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes**

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

**Warm Up: Ball Tag – 5 Minutes**

Coaches throw soccer balls at players who attempt to dodge out of the way. If hit, the player must drop to their knees and get back up 3 times before they can rejoin the action.

**Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes**

On the whistle, players do 3 jumping jacks before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations

**Station 1: Obstacle Course**

Players skate through the course with an emphasis on getting up and falling down.

**Station 2: A,B,C's - Wave Skating**

2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on skates, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up, drop to single knee and up alternate knees.

**Station 3: Activity - Sharks & Minnows**

Two players are designated as the sharks to start. The minnows must skate from blue line to blue line without being tagged. If they are tagged, they become sharks too.

**Station 4: Stationary Shooting**

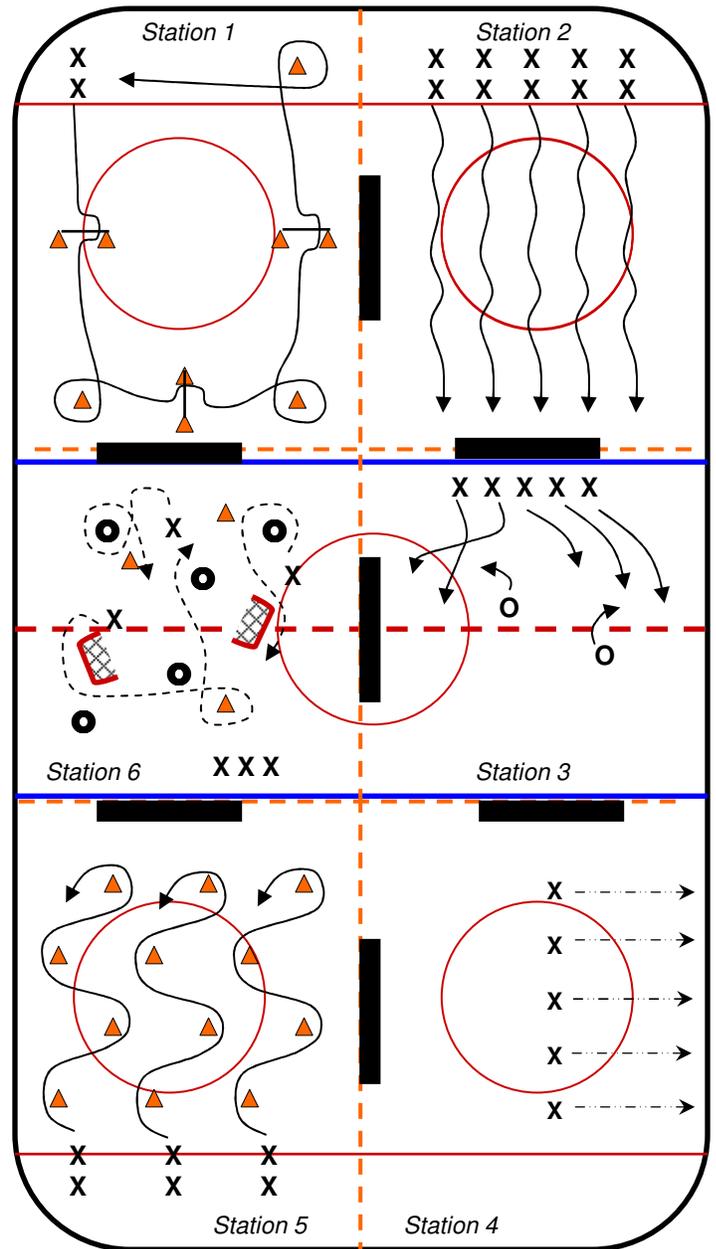
Player work on wrist shot technique shooting against the boards. Players should stand sideways to boards so that proper weight transfer is used. Start with puck behind back foot and sweep puck towards target.

**Station 5: Relay Race**

As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.

**Station 6: Chaos Puck-handling**

Players stickhandle skating around obstacles. All players are involved. Check to see that each player is holding their stick properly. Hands about shoulder width apart and top hand at the end of the stick partially held in the palm with the V between thumb and forefinger on to of the stick like you would hold a hammer. Use hockey balls instead of pucks.



**Game 3v3 Cross-Ice – 10 Minutes**

Play 3v3 (or 4v4) Cross-Ice in all 3 zones. Change groups every 45 to 60 seconds.



**Equipment Required / Set-up:** Borders, cones, tires, extra sticks **Ice Time:** 50 Minutes  
Soccer balls

**Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes**

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

**Warm Up: Safety Tag – 5 Minutes**

Using the whole ice surface, play tag with the coaches as the taggers and the players using the face-off circles as safety zones. On the whistle, players must move to a new circle without being tagged. If tagged, players must do three, 2 foot jumps before they can rejoin the action.

**Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes**

On the whistle, players stop, drop and roll, get up before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations.

**Station 1: Hockey Skill**

Chaos Puck-handling with obstacles and BLUE pucks

**Station 2: Obstacle Course**

Players skate through the obstacle course jumping over the hockey sticks.

**Station 3: ABC's - Wave Skating**

Skating forward without sticks, move the arms in large circles forward, arm circles backward, one arm forward and one arm backward. Superman dive, superman dive with log role to left, superman dive with log role to right.

**Station 4: Activity - Ball Tag**

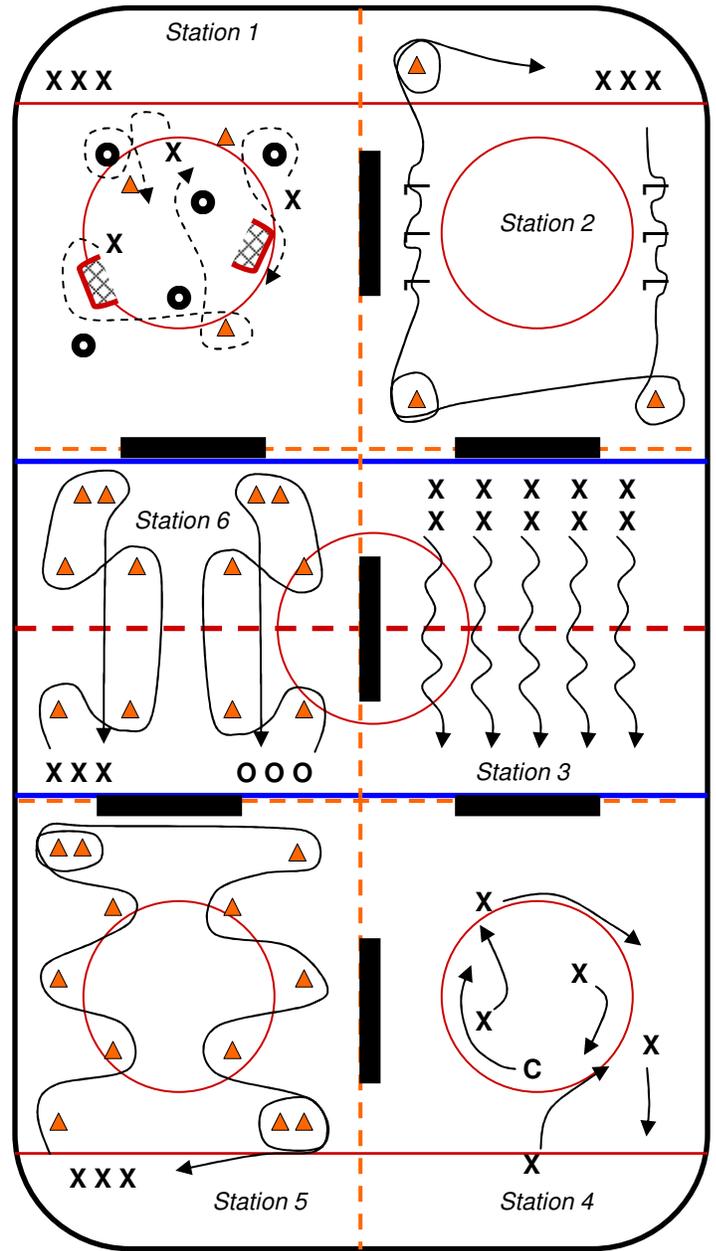
Coaches throw soccer balls at players who attempt to dodge out of the way. If hit, the player must drop to their knees and get back up 3 times before they can rejoin the action.

**Station 5: Slalom Puck-handling**

Players handle a BLUE puck through the designated course.

**Station 6: Relay Race**

As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.



**Game: Keep Away – 10 minutes**

Play 1 or 2 games of 1v1 or 2v2 keep away with a hockey ball in all 6 stations. Keep as many players involved as possible.



Equipment Required / Set-up: Borders, cones, tires, hockey balls, rings Ice Time: 50 Minutes

**Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes**

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

**Warm Up: Partner Tag – 5 Minutes**

Players pair up and lock arms with their partner. Coaches try to tag the players. If tagged both players must do 3 spins before they can rejoin the action.

**Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes**

On the whistle, players do 3 two foot jumps before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations.

**Station 1: Relay Race**

As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.

**Station 2: Chaos Puck-handling (balls)**

Players stickhandle hockey balls avoiding contact with the other skaters. All players are involved. Check to see that each player is holding their stick properly. Hands about shoulder width apart and top hand at the end of the stick partially held in the palm with the V between thumb and forefinger on top of the stick like you would hold a hammer.

**Station 3: Obstacle Course**

Players skate through the obstacle course with emphasis on turns and edges. Players carry ringette rings.

**Station 4: ABC's - Wave Skating**

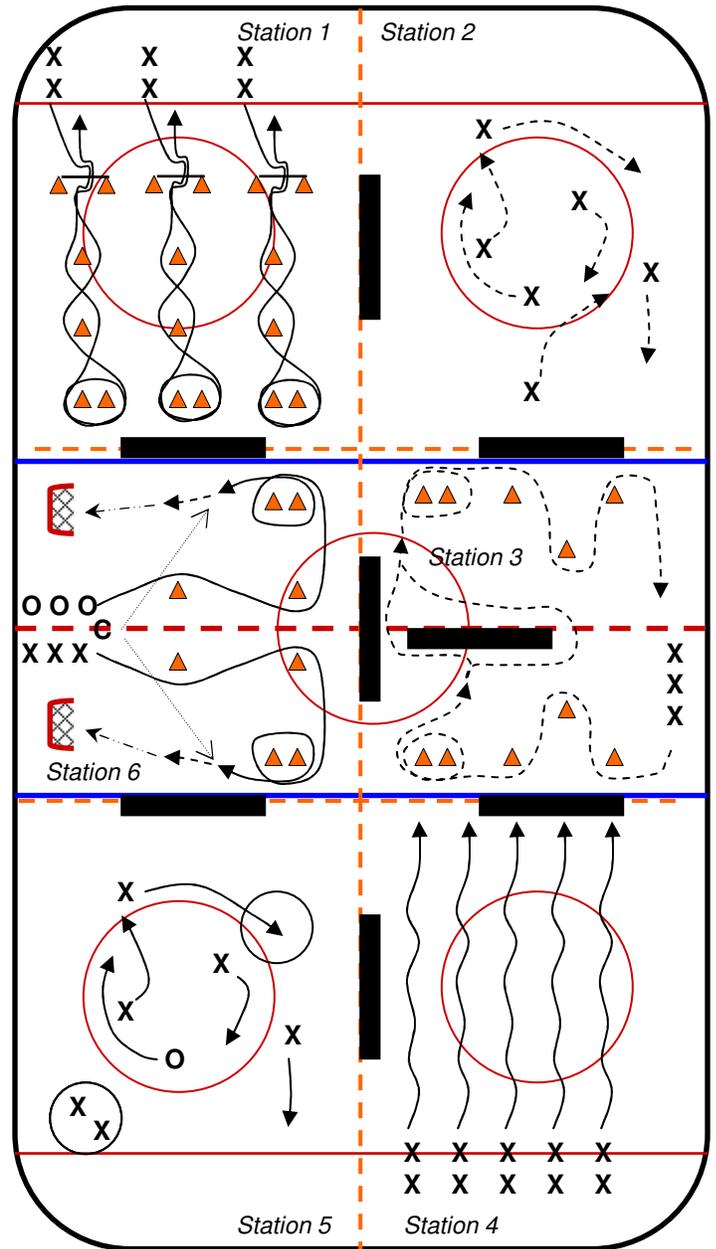
2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on skates, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up, drop to single knee and up alternate knees. Drop to knees 360 degree spin and get up.

**Station 5: Activity - Safety Tag**

Play tag with the coaches as the taggers and the players using the marked-off circles as safety zones. On the whistle, players must move to a new circle without being tagged. If tagged, players must do three, 2 foot jumps before they can rejoin the action.

**Station 6: Receiving Passes & Shooting**

Players skate through the course, receive pass from coach and take a shot on goal. Keep players moving.



**Game 3v3 Cross-Ice – 10 Minutes**

Play 3v3 (or 4v4) Cross-Ice in all 3 zones. Change groups every 45 to 60 seconds.



Equipment Required / Set-up: Borders, cones, sticks

Ice Time: 50 Minutes

**Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes**

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

**Warm Up: Puck-handling – 5 Minutes**

Players skate around the rink handling a puck. On whistle they jump into nearest circle and stick-handle, exit on next whistle.

**Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes**

On the whistle, players do 3 two foot jumps before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations

**Station 1: Follow the Leader**

Begin with the coach as the leader. Players can then take turns being the leader. Do what the leader does, encourage creativity.

**Station 2: Slalom Puckhandling**

Skate with puck through the course, give and go with coach before shooting on goal.

**Station 3: Relay Race**

As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.

**Station 4: Chaos Puck-handling**

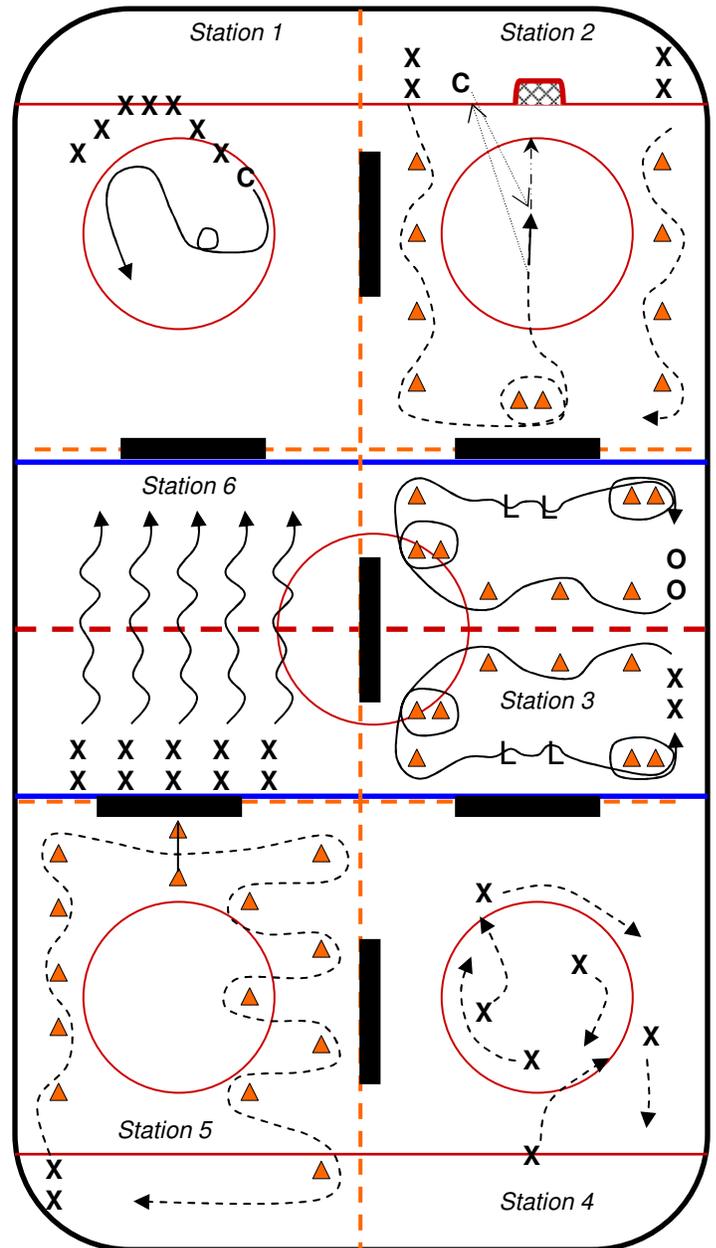
Players stickhandle blue pucks avoiding contact with the other skaters. All players are involved.

**Station 5: Obstacle Course**

Players skate through the obstacle course with emphasis on turns and edges. Players carry blue puck.

**Station 6: ABC's with Pucks**

2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on skates, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up, drop to single knee and up alternate knees.



**Game: Cross Ice Hockey – 10 Minutes**

Play 3v3 or 4v4 Cross-Ice with blue puck in all three zones. Try to utilize the player numbers so that the players participate every other shift.



**Warm Up: 6 minutes**

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, nerf balls, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

**Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes**

On the whistle, players drop stick and step over laterally 4 times before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

**Stations 1: ABC's - Wave Skating  
ABC's with Pucks**

2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on heels fwd & bkwd, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up, drop to single knee and up alternate knees.

**Station 2: Activity – Superman Race**

Players race around course. Players superman dive between cones, skate around tires, step over borders and stop at blue line. Have players try to cover all the orange on the cone by building a pile of snow.

**Station 3: Stationary Passing**

Players partner up, stand 8-10' apart and pass back and forth using forehand & backhand. Work on proper technique, emphasize keeping the hands away from the body and sweeping the puck. Players should stand sideways so that they pass cross body.

**Station 4: Relay Race w/ Ringette**

Line with 2 players starts with Ringette. On coaches command race to fair cone and deliver ring to teammate...first team to cross goal line wins. Variation: player must execute one 360 turn before they pass off the ring.

**Station 5: Transition Skating**

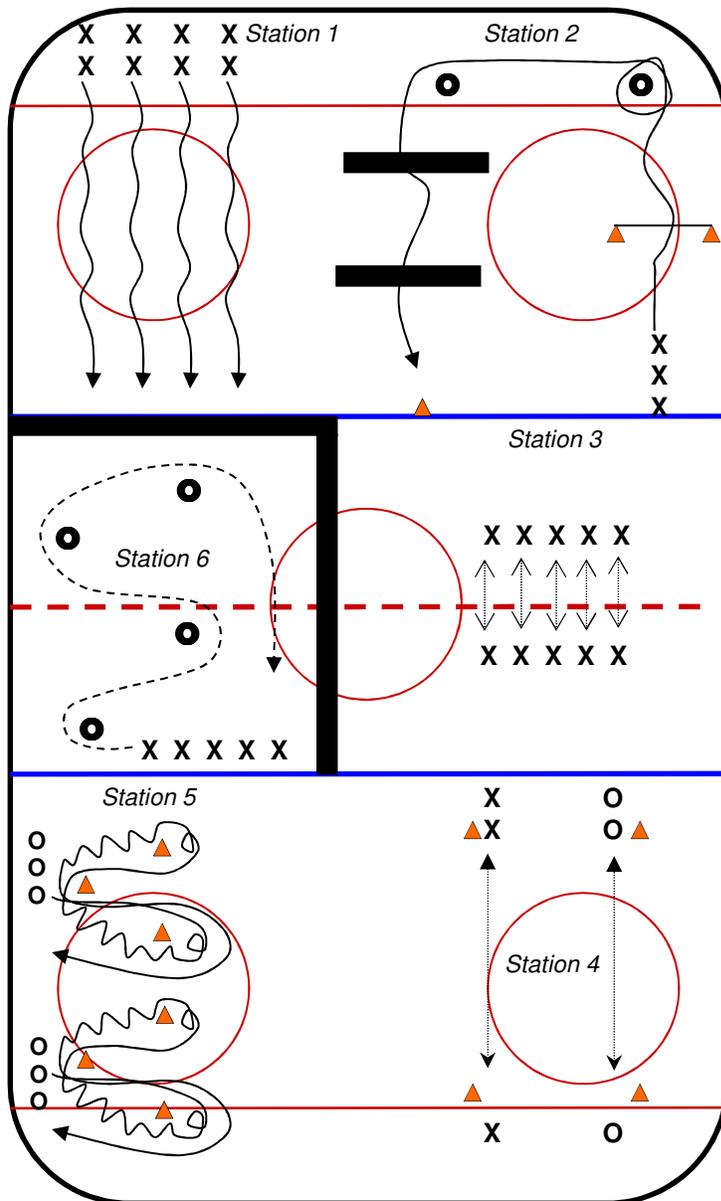
Players skate forwards to backwards to forwards around the cones. Begin by teaching the players s to stop at the cone to shift to backwards skating.

**Station 6: Obstacle Course**

Players push soccer ball around S shaped course using hands only. Players dribble ball with feet back to starting position.

**FUN Game: Ball Tag: 9 Minutes**

Players start on goal line and try to skate to far goal line without being tagged by coaches throwing nerf balls (or gloves) at players who attempt to dodge out of the way. If hit, the player must drop to their knees and get back up 3 times before they can rejoin the action.



**Competitive Game: 9 Minutes  
Cross Ice Hockey**

Play 3v3 Cross-Ice with blue puck in both end zones. Create a fun zone in the neutral zone. All balls, ringettes, tires, bumpers, extra nets, cones, etc. are thrown into this zone. Instead of having players rest while others are playing cross ice they are in the FUN ZONE skating/shooting around the chaos. Every 90 seconds players switch zones.



Equipment: Borders, nets, cones, tires & toy bag Ice Time: 60 minutes

**Warm Up: 6 minutes**

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, nerf balls, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

**Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes**

On the whistle, players do 3 hops on each foot before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

**Stations 1: ABC's - Wave Skating**

Swivel, slalom, standing partner push (make sure front player is in basic hockey stance), bkwd C-cuts, ride the broom

**Station 2: Activity – Simon Says**

High knees, log roll, march, squat, lateral step-overs, touch your toes, fall down & get up, jumps, drop stick pick it up, hockey goal celebration, hands in the air, dance, high fives with teammates....

**Station 3: Shuttle Passing**

Players skate around cone with pucks, pass the puck to next player in line & skates to starting point. Next player in line receives puck & continues drill. Have players focus on tape to tape passes.

**Station 4: Relay Race**

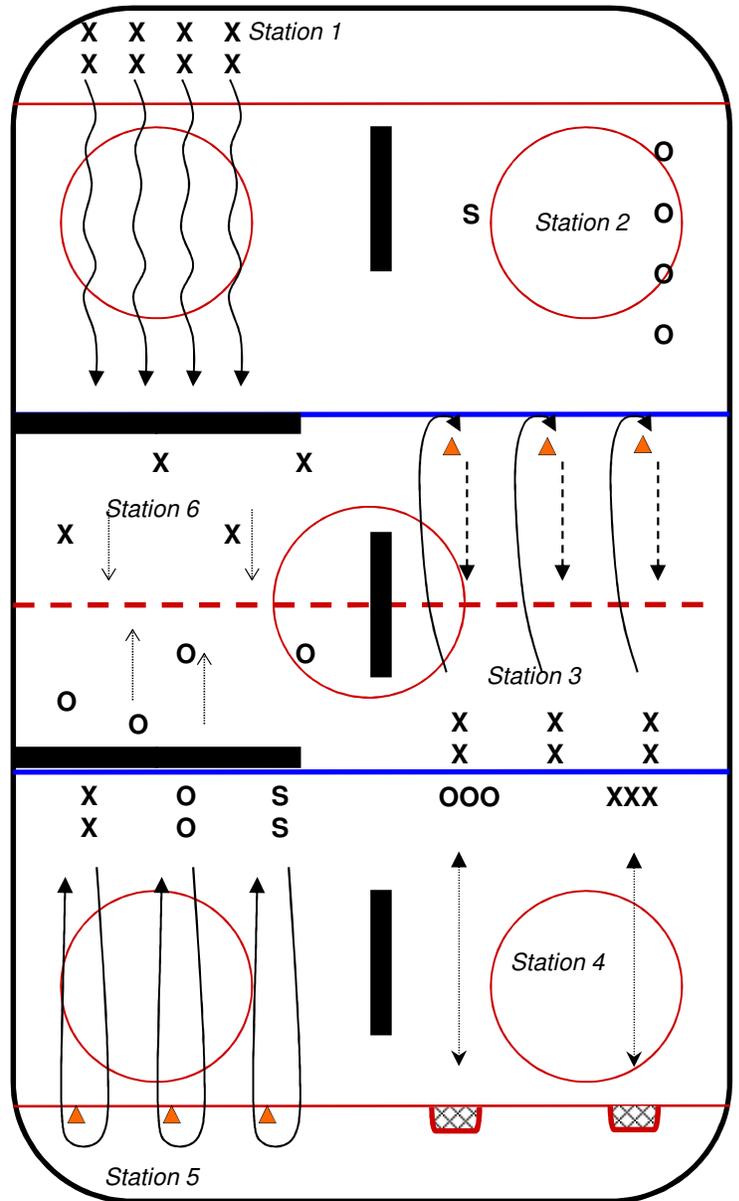
Player starts with puck, skate to goal and shoot. Players must execute on superman dive before they score. After they score they pull the puck out of the net and race back to hand off puck to next player...first team to finish wins...repeat.

**Station 5: Puck-handling Shuttle Race**

Players stickhandle puck around cone. When they get around cone they have to bring the puck back to their teammate carrying the puck using top hand only. Work on open ice one hand carry.

**Station 6: Scatter ball**

All Players have a tennis ball. Divide the players into 2 teams. Each team must stay on their designated half of the ice. For 30 seconds players shoot tennis balls to the other team's side of the ice. Team with the least number of balls on their side when time runs out wins. Repeat several times.



**Competitive Game: 9 Minutes**

Play 3v3 Cross-Ice with blue puck in both end zones. Create a fun zone in the neutral zone. All balls, tires, ringettes, nets, cones, etc. are thrown into this zone. Instead of having players rest they are in the fun zone skating/shooting. Every 90 sec. players switch zones.

**FUN Game: 9 Minutes**

**Musical Pucks**

Players skate around 1 end zone with a puck. On command "change" players leave their puck to find another puck. After a few rotations take 1 puck away. The player without a puck must fall to knees and get up 3 times before they can rejoin the game.



## 6U Practice: 17 & 18

**Equipment:** Borders, nets, cones, tires & toy bag

**Theme/Goals:** Fun/Skill development:

**Ice Time: 60 minutes**

### Warm Up: 6 minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, nerf balls, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

### Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes

On the whistle, players balance stick on butt end, 360 spin catch it before it falls. 2 times each way before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

### Station 1: ABC's - Circle Skating

Left foot scooting around circle clockwise, right foot scooting counter clockwise, cross-over both directions. Keep stick to inside circle to help players lean and trust their edge.

### Station 2: Activity – Ring Around the Rosie

Half the players skate clockwise around the tires while the other half skate counter clockwise around the nets. On coaches command players stop and skate the other direction. Players need to keep their heads up so they don't run into each other. Halfway through have players switch objects they are skating around.

### Station 3: Stationary Passing

Players pass puck back and forth to each other as they skate up the ice. Players make one pass between each cone. Encourage tape to tape passes. Make sure they work on both forehand and backhand passes.

### Station 4: Relay Race

Player dive under stick, sprint to tire stop and race back to line and high 5 (tag) teammate to go...working on stopping and transition.

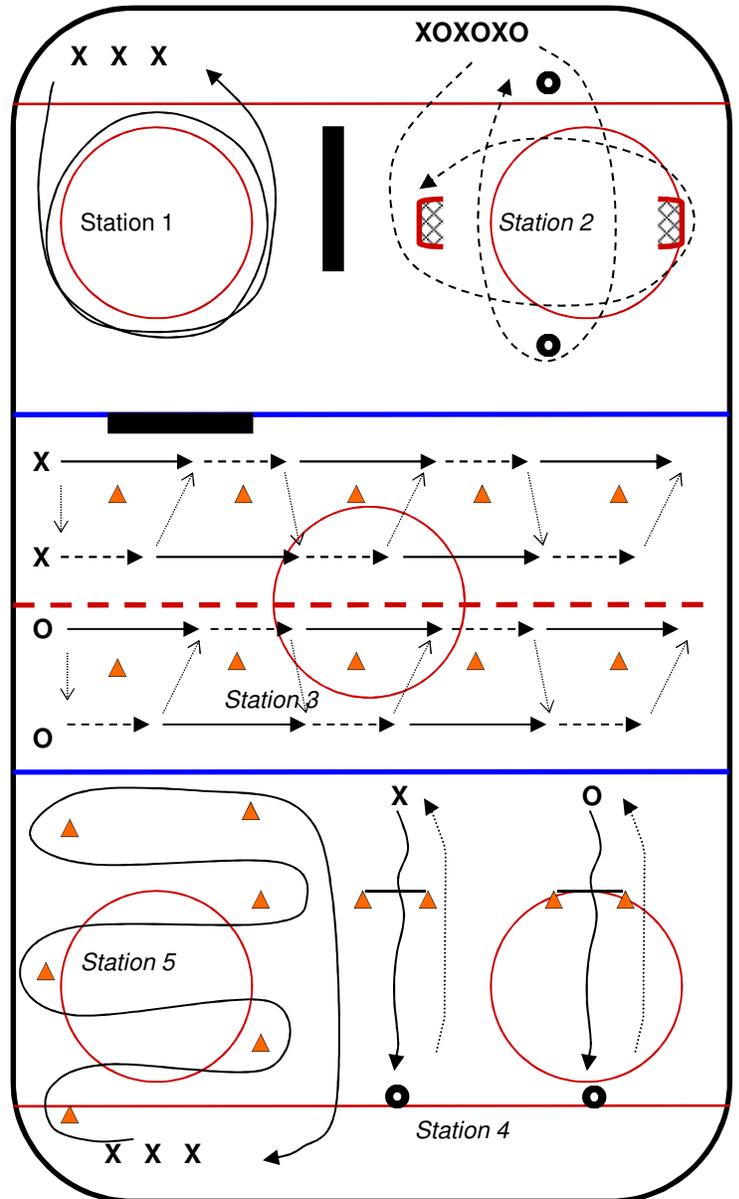
### Station 5: S- Puck-handling

Players weave through cones in an S formation. Encourage players to stickhandle using forehand and backhand side of the blade.

### Competitive Game: 9 minutes

#### Cross Ice Hockey

Play 3v3 or 4v4 Cross-Ice with blue puck in all three zones. Try to utilize the player numbers so players are active every other shift.



### FUN Game: Skating: 9 minutes

#### Shark Attack

**Sail the Seas:** skate as fast as you can

**Captain on Board:** players stop facing coach and salute them

**Man Overboard:** players dive on their belly and get right back up

**Hoist the Flag:** players lie on back with 1 leg in the air

**About Face:** players turn towards boards and continue skating in other direction

**Shark Attack:** players must get to a face off dot before being tagged by a coach, only 2, 3, 4 or 5 players per a dot depending on the # of kids. Make sure you have less dots than kids- musical chair idea. Players must have their stick touching the face off dot.



Equipment: Borders, nets, cones, tires & toy bag

Ice Time: 60 minutes

**Warm Up: 6 minutes**

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. Coaches set up stations.

**Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes**

On the whistle, players pass stick thru legs in a figure 8 pattern 3 times before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

**Stations 1: ABC's - Wave Skating**

Pivot both directions, partner up for standing chariots, kneeling chariots-lead player hold stick blades down while back player holds the butt end of the sticks, Partner push v-stops -front player is backwards while back player skates forward push partner...player skating backwards works on v stops.

**Station 2: Activity- Time to Clean Your Room**

Set sticks aside, divide players into 2 teams. Create 2 goals using nets or stacked tires. Players pick up soccer balls, tennis balls, ringettes, pucks, softballs, stuffed animals, etc. and place them in designated goals within 60-90 seconds. The team with the most goals wins...repeats

**Station 3: Stationary Passing**

Players partner up, stand 8-10' apart and pass back and forth. Work on proper technique; emphasize keeping the hands away from the body and sweeping the puck. Players should stand sideways so that they pass cross body. 1<sup>st</sup> Players to make 6 complete passes tape to tape wins. Work on forehand & backhand passes.

**Station 4: Relay Race**

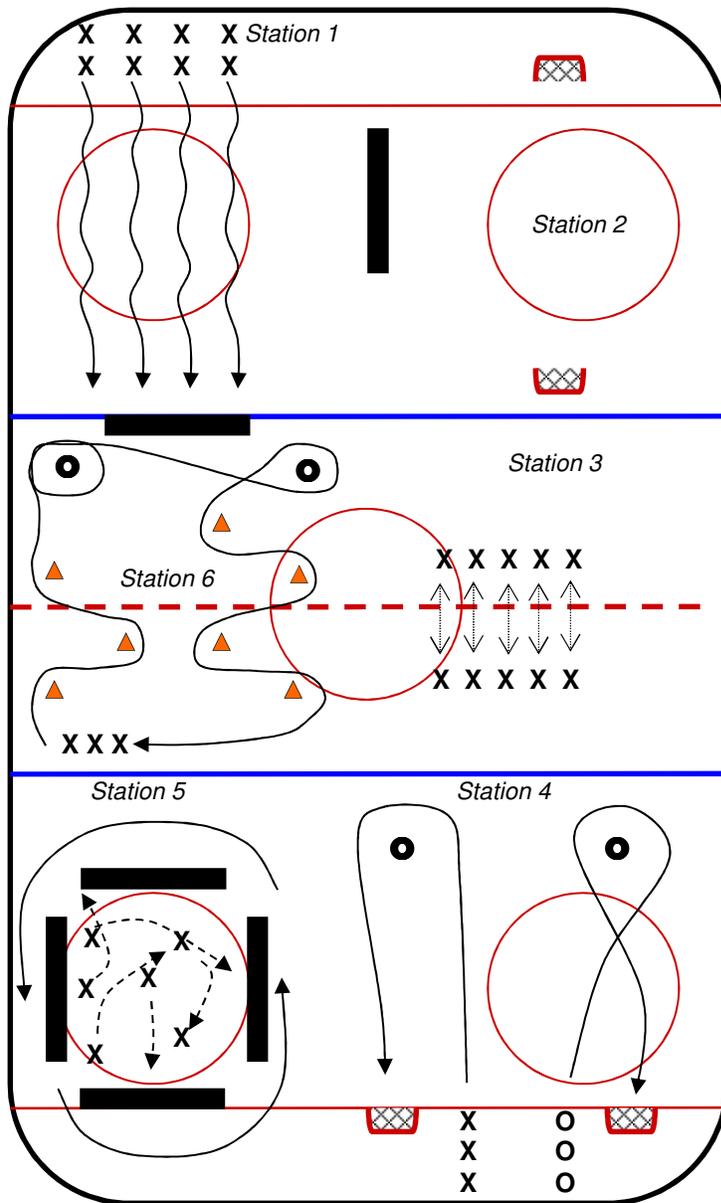
Players race around tires with puck and shoot on net. Must score before next player in line leaves. First follow pattern A the tires and then pattern B.

**Station 5: Chaos Puck-handling**

Players stickhandle blue pucks inside boarders avoiding contact with the other skaters. On coaches command players leave pucks & chase coach around outside of all 3 boarders- after 2 laps continue stickhandling inside boarders. Change direction on coaches command. All players are involved.

**Station 6: Obstacle Course**

Players skate through course with emphasis on turns and edges. Have players maintain good control of their stick by leading with the stick blade around each cone.



**Competitive Game: Cross Ice - 9 minutes**

Play 3v3 or 4v4 Cross-Ice with blue puck in all three zones. Try to utilize the player numbers so players are active every other shift.

**FUN Game: 9 Minutes**

**Scoro**

All the pucks are in the center ice circle. Divide players into 2 teams. Each team starts on their goal line. On whistle each team try to get as many pucks as they can onto their own net. Players are allowed to steel puck from the other team and out of the opponents net. Team with the most pucks after 3 minutes wins- repeat