

Player Development Benchmarks

Where players should be at the end of the season

LTS –

Skating Skills

- Transition from parents and be able to stay on the ice for entire session
- Basic Skating Stance – knees bent, head up
- Getting up from the ice without help
- Skating forward with speed using both feet to push off, with knees bent, head up, and pumping arms straight forward and back
- Gliding on 1 or 2 feet
- Making turns
- Stopping at least one way
- Keep head up when going into boards

LTP –

Skating Skills

- Forward skating – lengthening stride with knees bent, head up, and low center of gravity, using 1 or 2 hands on the stick with hands in proper position
- Skating backward
- At least trying to stop both ways
- Making turns while gliding, glide on 1 foot
- Keep head up when going into boards

Hockey Skills

- Passing by sliding the puck – not slapping at it
- Making a good target to receive a pass
- Stickhandling using both sides of stick and pushing puck with one hand on stick
- Stickhandling through cones trying to use backhand when turning to that side
- Shooting the puck by sliding it, not flipping it. Correct shooting stance with puck off back foot
- Willingness to battle for the puck
- Willingness to possess and carry puck during game play

Mites –

Skating Skills

- Forward skating – lengthening stride with knees bent, head up, and low center of gravity, full leg extension, snapping toe at end of stride,
- Making forward to backward and backward to forward transitions, facing both ways
- Skating backward making C-cuts with each foot
- Stopping both left and right, starting to work on stopping with both feet at the same time
- Transitions – Skating forward, stopping to go backwards the other direction in one fluid motion with a crossover. Skating backward, stopping with V stop to go forward in other direction
- Turning using outside edges only, and turning using both feet actively (not dragging inside skate)

- Making figure eights with outside edges only
- Using inside edges to create speed moving forward
- Forward crossovers (using outside edges correctly and pushing off using both feet, not just inside edge), introduce backwards crossovers
- Keep head up when going into boards

Hockey Skills

- Passing by sliding the puck flat and level – not slapping at it or bouncing it
- Making a good target, catching passes softly and catching errant passes
- Using feet to control puck
- Stickhandling through cones using backhand when turning to that side
- Narrow stickhandling, wide stickhandling, wide to one side
- Stickhandling while skating backwards, self passing off boards
- Shooting the puck by sliding it, not flipping it. Correct shooting stance with puck off back foot. Shooting for power and accuracy. Backhand shooting
- Age appropriate body contact (being comfortable with contact, understanding it is part of the game, using body to win puck battles, no checking or retaliation)
- Winning puck battles with correct body position, strong hands (hands on hands, stick on stick),

Game Skills

- Hustling at all times on ice
- Focus on passing puck to make plays
- Taking away opponent's time and space
- Moving to open space to support teammate with puck, triangle offense
- Willingness to possess and carry puck and make plays with a purpose during game play
- Play all positions

Squirts –

Skating Skills

- Forward skating – lengthening stride, using proper technique, snapping toe at end of stride
- Stopping with both feet at the same time, stopping with just the outside edge (1 foot), both directions
- Turning using outside edges only, and turning using both feet actively
- Making figure eights with outside edges only, working on inside edges
- Making transitions all ways and as quickly as possible
- Forward and backward crossovers (using outside edges correctly and pushing off using both feet, not just inside edge)

Hockey Skills

- Passing by sliding the puck with rotation to keep it flat and level – not slapping or bouncing it
- Making a good target, catching passes softly and catching errant passes
- Passing while in motion, moving to open space to support teammate with puck
- Stickhandling while making transitions, side to side, front to back, toe drags, being creative with puck, protecting puck with body

- Shooting the puck by sliding it, not flipping it. Shooting for power and accuracy. Backhand shooting
- Age appropriate body contact (being comfortable with contact, understanding it is part of the game, using body and angles to win puck battles, no checking or retaliation)
- Winning puck battles with correct body position, strong hands

Game Skills

- Hustling at all times on ice
- Focus on passing puck to make plays
- Taking away opponent's time and space
- Moving to get open without the puck, support teammates
- Basic strategies for moving the puck – headman, D to D, give and go, pass to quiet area
- Making short passes and simple plays, triangle offense
- Communicating with teammates during game play
- Play all positions, developing “hockey players” rather than forwards or defensemen at this age

PeeWees –

Skating Skills

- Focus on skating with power, deep knee bends, full extension, playing low, head up
- Maintaining balance at all times
- Stopping with both feet at the same time, stopping with just the outside edge (the under foot), both directions
- Turning and transitioning using any edge, forward and backward
- Forward and backward crossovers (using outside edges correctly and pushing off using both feet)

Hockey Skills

- Passing by sliding the puck with rotation to keep it flat and level – not slapping or bouncing it
- Making a good target, catching passes softly and catching errant passes
- Passing while in motion, moving to open space to support teammate with puck
- Creative stickhandling, protecting puck with body
- Age appropriate body contact with the understanding that checking will be the following year. Protecting the body from hits, playing low, keeping feet moving through contact
- Shooting the puck by flexing the stick and letting it recoil, working on snap and slap shots with same principle

Game Skills

- Hustling at all times on ice
- Focus on passing puck to make plays
- Taking away opponent's time and space
- Moving to get open without the puck, support teammates
- More advanced puck control strategies – breakouts, regroupings, cycling
- Making short passes and simple plays
- Learning responsibilities of specific position
- Offensive zone triangle, 3rd forward high

Bantams/Midgets –

Skating Skills

- Focus on skating with power, deep knee bends, full extension, playing low with head up, not exposing yourself to big hits
- Keep feet moving through contact, and keep speed up into contact
- Continue to work on skating fundamentals

Hockey Skills

- Passing by sliding the puck with rotation to keep it flat and level – not slapping or bouncing it
- Body contact with the intent of getting and controlling puck for yourself, proper body position and leverage
- Controlling opponent along boards
- Stickhandling to protect puck with body
- Shooting the puck by flexing the stick and letting it recoil, snap and slap shots with same principle

Game Skills

- Focus on passing puck, taking away opponents time and space, hustling at all times on ice
- Moving to get open without the puck, support teammates
- Making short passes and simple plays
- All players playing with a defensive mindset first
- Offensive zone triangle, 3rd forward high
- More advanced hockey systems, working as part of a team