



PROGRAM [U8-U9]

The U8-U9 years are critical in the development of our players as they work towards more organized team play.

PROGRAM FORMAT:

In this program volunteer coaches are relied upon to provide the core of the program application. Players receive one practice and one game slot per week as well as a skill development session with a VMHA instructor every second week.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT:

Station based drills are highly encouraged to maximize reps and teaching to players. Reinforce fundamental hockey skills and continue to include a lot of competitive elements to keep the young learners engaged.

GAME PLAY:

In house game play starts in November utilizing the weekly game slots and organized games against other association starts in December. U8-U9 play half ice games and referees are invited out to help with the flow of play. VMHA recommends groups be divided by appropriate skill level for each side of the ice when playing games. Games are played with a two minute buzzer for changes so all players have the same opportunity to play. Offsides, zone face-offs, penalties and other

rules are not called but can be worked towards being called by the end of U9 as teams have an opportunity to play in house full ice 5 vs. 5 games at the end of the year. Teams are encouraged to participate in local tournaments if they are interested in more game play after the holiday break.

KEY SKILLS:

In addition to the skills from U6-7 players should leave the program with being exposed to the following hockey skills:

- Narrow wide puck handling fakes
- Turns with pucks
- Pivots and transitions
- Backwards crossovers
- Outside edge stops
- Puck protection
- Body position for checking
- Wrist shot
- Passing while moving

RESOURCES

[HOCKEY CANADA U9 CORE SKILLS](#) | [BOB MCKENZIE - OBSERVATIONS ON THE EVOLUTION OF COACHING](#) | [DR. JUSTIN DAVIS - DEBUNKING THE 10,000 HOUR RULE](#)