

Honing Your Hockey Skills

Hockey season is upon us once again and kids are getting ready to hit the ice.

For many kids it has been a while since they have been on the ice and it's time to sharpen their skills. We have terrific hockey programs in and around Montreal and parents fill the arenas supporting and cheering on their kids.

In this edition I will share information on pre-season drills and exercises that will help improve performance on the ice. The following drills can be done alone or with a team.

Soft Turn Touch Stick Handling

Using only the hands and wrists, bring the puck from backhand to forehand without the using arms.

Wide Dribble Drill:

Goal: Helps expand reach and produce quick hands

Place 10 pucks or cones in 2 rows, staggered 7-10 feet apart, keep the arms away from the body, using a ball or puck, reach wide, going around the cones and dribble down the line.

Figure 8:

Goal: To improve bottom hand slide, helps to expand reach, teaches how to cup the blade

Place two pucks 1-2 feet apart, cup the puck/ball on fore and back hand of the stick, make a figure 8 around the pucks.

Quick Hand:

Goal: To improve hand speed and wrist action

Place 10 pucks 1-2 feet apart in a straight line, with feet on either side of pucks your puck/ball down the line.

Yoyo Drill:

Goal: Teaches how to use the toe and heel of blade and improves reach expansion.

Using heel of blade, push the puck/ball away and pull it back using the toe of blade. Try this in front then to the side.

As the season approaches, sport specific exercises are needed to transfer to on-ice performance. Remember, the core is the powerhouse of the body and every movement should be initiated from the core.

Plank on Elbows and Toes:

The plank exercise ranked number 10 in the ACE study and is a great way to build endurance in both the abs and back, as well as stabilizer muscles. To do it right:

1. Lie face down on mat resting on the forearms, palms flat on the floor.
2. Push off the floor, raising up onto toes and resting on the elbows.
3. Keep your back flat, in a straight line from head to heels.
4. Tilt your pelvis and contract your abdominals to prevent your rear end from sticking up in the air.
5. Hold for 20 to 60 seconds. Repeat 2-3 times.



Explosive movement is synonymous with hockey. To build up endurance and speed plyometrics are recommended. Box jumps are a popular plyometric exercise that promotes fast and powerful movements. The box jump is a plyometric leg exercise where you jump from the floor onto a 1 to 2 foot high box. This exercise is good for your vertical leap.

All the components mentioned above you will help improve hockey skills. For best results be sure to practice regularly. Have a great hockey season and good luck!

For more information on drills or athletic conditioning, feel free to contact me at fitbodybyphyl@gmail.com

Phyllis Frost / FIT BODY BY PHYL