

Instructions for Getting Dressed for Hockey

The correct equipment is necessary for proper performance, safety and fun while playing hockey. Below are some step-by-step instructions for dressing for hockey:

- 1) **Base layer-** Choose a comfortable and flexible base layer that is worn between the skin and hockey equipment. Avoid clothing that is bulky or that will bunch up as it will impede the skater's movement. Leggings or thin pajama pants can be used for players wanting more skin coverage. Some players prefer shorts that have a built-in jock holder and Velcro straps that they can attach their hockey socks to. If these shorts are used a garter belt is not necessary to hold up hockey socks. For skate socks (worn on feet) choose light weight socks that won't slide down or bunch up in the skate.
- 2) **Shin pads-** Shin pads are specific to the left or right side, so be sure to check the inside of the pad to determine which is which. Place the shin pad over the shin and knee cap. The knee should fit in the center of the knee cup. Fasten the Velcro straps around the leg and secure. If you are struggling with which size shin pad to buy, shin pads are sized in inches. To find your size, put on your skates and lace them up. Sit on a chair or bench with feet flat on the floor and knees bent at a 90-degree angle. Measure the distance from the top of the skate boot to the center of your knee cap. Round up to the nearest inch and this should give you the proper size. There should not be a gap between the tongue of the skate and the bottom of the shin pad when the skater is standing.
- 3) **Hockey socks-** Pull the hockey socks up and over the shin guards. The tight end of the hockey sock should be at the bottom, closer to the foot. Bring the sock all the way up and pin it to the garter belt straps in the front and back of the leg. If a skater is wearing shorts with Velcro tabs in place of a garter belt, pull the Velcro tabs on the front and back of the leg open and secure socks on the front and the back.
- 4) **Hockey Pants/Breezers-** Step into hockey pants. Pull up all the way and use the lacing and belt to secure pants at the waist. Hockey pants should be snug at the waist and not the hips. When standing, the bottom of the breezers should fall about halfway down the kneecap of your shin guards. This overlap helps to protect the skater's leg.
- 5) **Skates-** While sitting, slip your foot into the boot of the skate. Kick your heel on the ground a few times to make sure that the foot is all the way back in the skate. Tighten the laces from the toe of the skate up to the tongue so that the skates are snug but comfortable. Double knot the laces so they do not become untied while skating.
- 6) **Shoulder pads-** Slide the shoulder pads over the head. Secure both chest straps. Then secure both bicep straps.
- 7) **Elbow pads-** Elbow pads are specific to the left or right side so be sure to look at the inside of the pad to determine which is which. Slide each arm into elbow pads. The bend of the elbow should rest comfortably in the cup of the elbow pad. Use the straps to secure the pads. Elbow pads should extend from the lower bicep to the top of the gloves.

8) Jersey- Pull the jersey over your head so it sits on top of the shoulder and elbow pads. When purchasing a practice jersey, make sure it is big enough to accommodate the bulky equipment worn underneath it. If not, the jersey will feel tight and impede the skater's movement.

9) Helmet- Place the helmet over the head. Helmets should not be so large as to wiggle but also not so small as to squeeze the head. A snug but comfortable fit is what you are looking for. Secure the two straps on either side of the head. Then secure the chin strap. The skater's chin should rest comfortably against the chin cup.

10) Gloves- Place the gloves on each hand. A hockey glove fits when your fingers reach close to the ends without touching them, the cuff meets or slightly overlaps your elbow pad, your palm sits flat on the shaft with no bunching, and your wrist bends freely in every direction.

11) Hockey Stick- Your hockey stick should be at chin level when standing in your skates. Skaters can tape the knob of the stick to make it easier to hold.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to GFYHA. We would be happy to help!