



Spartacats Girls Hockey

12U Coach Playbook

Developing Complete Hockey Players. Growing Leaders on and Off the Ice.

Welcome to the Spartacats Way

Mission: Develop skilled, confident, and competitive hockey players while fostering character, teamwork, resilience, and a lifelong passion for the game.

- Good attitude
- Compete
- Teamwork
- Confidence
- Accountability
- Growth Mindset

The Spartacats Coach Promise

- Challenge every player appropriately.
- Teach effort, discipline, and respect.
- Develop hockey IQ through questions and game situations.
- Create a positive, competitive environment.
- Help every player leave the rink more confident.

Understanding 12U Players

- Players can process more detailed instruction.
- Balance skill repetition with game-like decisions.
- Encourage communication and leadership.
- Provide equal opportunities to gain experience and compete.

60-75 -Minute Practice Blueprint

- 10 min Body warm-up/skating and stick handling
- 10-15 min Edgework and speed
- 15-20 min Skill stations
- 15-20 min Small-area games / team concepts
- 8-10 min Competition
- 1 min Character Huddle

Season Roadmap

- Weeks 1-2: Speed & Edge Control & Transitions
- Weeks 3-4: Puck Control & Passing under Pressure
- Weeks 5-6: Shooting & Scoring
- Weeks 7-8: Angling & Body Position
 - **CHECK-IN ON SKILL PROGRESSION**
- Weeks 9-10: Defensive Concepts & Breakouts
- Weeks 11-12: Offensive Concepts & Transition Hockey
- Weeks 13-14: Special Situations: Faceoffs/Power Play/Penalty Kill strategies
- Weeks 15-16: Season Review
 - **CHECK-IN 2 ON SKILL PROGRESSION**
- Weeks 17-18: Decision Making: Hockey IQ Focus
- Weeks 19-20: Coaching Confidence & Celebrate team strengths

Weeks 1-2 | Skating Speed & Edge Control & Transitions

Objectives

Build explosive first-step speed, stronger edge control, and smooth forward/backward transitions while maintaining balance and game-ready posture.

Skating Progression

Quick-start acceleration (3-5 strides); inside/outside edge slaloms; crossover acceleration; Mohawk/open-hip turns; forward-to-backward and backward-to-forward transitions; transition races with puck retrieval.

Skill Stations

- 1) Acceleration to loose puck and escape turn.
- 2) Edge-control obstacle course with puck.
- 3) Transition, receive pass, attack the net.
- 4) Crossover around cone, shoot in stride.

Team Concept

Use skating to create time and space. Teach players to transition quickly from offense to defense and to support the puck with speed.

Small Area Game

2v2 transition game: on turnover, players must immediately change direction and attack the opposite net. Add a bonus point for a scoring chance created within five seconds of transition.

Competition

Blue-line acceleration races; edge-control relay; transition race to puck followed by a shot.

Coach's Corner

Watch knee bend, chest position, full stride recovery, and whether players keep their feet moving through transitions. Reinforce speed after the turn, not just into it.

Character Focus

Confidence - Commit to the move and recover quickly from mistakes.

Weeks 3-4 | Puck Control & Passing Under Pressure

Objectives

Improve puck control with the head up and develop accurate, well-timed passing while moving and under defensive pressure.

Skating Progression

Puck-carrying edgework; change-of-speed skating; tight turns with puck protection; lateral movement and escape turns while maintaining possession.

Skill Stations

- 1) Head-up stickhandling through traffic.
- 2) Give-and-go passing with movement.
- 3) Forehand/backhand passing through gates.
- 4) Puck-protection escape from a defender and pass to support.

Team Concept

Create passing options through support, communication, and spacing. Introduce passing ahead of teammates instead of directly at their skates.

Small Area Game

3v3 possession game requiring two completed passes before a shot. Progress to a defender applying immediate pressure to the puck carrier.

Competition

Passing-gate accuracy contest; keep-away tournament; partner passing race with movement.

Coach's Corner

Demand communication before the pass, a good target, soft hands on reception, and immediate movement after passing. Encourage players to scan before the puck arrives.

Character Focus

Communication - Help teammates before, during, and after receiving the puck.

Weeks 5-6 | Shooting and Scoring

Objectives

Develop quicker releases, shooting accuracy, shooting in stride, and multiple ways to finish around the net.

Skating Progression

Acceleration into shooting lanes; lateral cut-and-shoot movement; crossover entry to shot; stop/start net drives and rebound recovery.

Skill Stations

- 1) Wrist/snap shots for corners.
- 2) Shoot in stride off both feet.
- 3) Catch-and-release from a pass.
- 4) Net-front rebounds, tips, and quick second chances.

Team Concept

Attack scoring areas with purpose. Teach one player to drive the net while teammates create a passing or rebound option.

Small Area Game

2v2 below the tops of the circles with points for rebounds and second-chance goals. Require players to move after their first shot.

Competition

Five-puck accuracy challenge; rapid-release contest; rebound scoring race.

Coach's Corner

Prioritize release speed and shot selection over simply shooting harder. Ask players where the goalie and defenders are before they choose the finish.

Character Focus

Accountability - Finish every rep and compete for the rebound.

Weeks 7-8 | Angling and Body Position

Objectives

Teach players to control an opponent's route, establish inside position, protect the middle of the ice, and win puck battles with legal body contact.

Skating Progression

Mirror skating; controlled approach angles; backward-to-forward pivots; shoulder checks before contact; balance and edgework through light pressure.

Skill Stations

- 1) Angle puck carrier toward boards.
- 2) Inside-position race to loose puck.
- 3) Puck protection along wall.
- 4) 1v1 corner battle emphasizing stick and body position.

Team Concept

Defend from the inside out. Guide opponents toward low-danger areas instead of chasing the puck.

Small Area Game

1v1 and 2v2 corner battles with a coach-designated exit gate. Defender earns possession by angling the attacker away from the middle.

Competition

Inside-position puck race; corner battle tournament; angling challenge where defenders score for forcing a controlled turnover.

Coach's Corner

Teach approach speed, stick position, hips and shoulders. The goal is not a big collision. It is separating the opponent from the puck and gaining possession.

Character Focus

Courage - Compete physically, legally, and with control.

******This is a good point in the season to evaluate each player's grasp of the fundamentals and discuss goals and ways to help the player's focus on the areas of improvement for the remainder of the season.***

Weeks 9-10 | Defensive Concepts & Breakouts

Objectives

Improve defensive-zone awareness, puck retrievals, first-pass execution, winger support, and clean exits from the defensive zone.

Skating Progression

Backward mobility; gap-control skating; shoulder-check puck retrievals; escape turns behind the net; transition from retrieval into first pass.

Skill Stations

- 1) Defense retrieval and wheel/reverse.
- 2) D-to-D pass and outlet.
- 3) Winger wall breakout reception.
- 4) Center support through the middle.

Team Concept

Introduce simple breakout responsibilities: defense retrieves with information, wings provide wall options, center supports underneath, and all players move together out of the zone.

Small Area Game

3v3 defensive-zone breakout game. Defending team must complete an outlet and skate/pass through a designated exit before attacking.

Competition

Breakout execution race; D-to-wing passing accuracy; 2v2 retrieval-to-exit challenge.

Coach's Corner

Make shoulder checks and communication non-negotiable. Avoid teaching players to throw the puck blindly up the boards. Possession is the objective.

Character Focus

Respect - Communicate, trust roles, and support teammates under pressure.

Weeks 11-12 | Offensive Concepts & Transition Hockey

Objectives

Create offense through quick transition, width, support, puck movement, and attacking open ice before the defense can organize.

Skating Progression

Transition acceleration; middle-lane drives; wide-lane speed; cutbacks and delays; joining the rush from behind the play.

Skill Stations

- 1) 2v1 rush decisions.
- 2) Drive-wide and middle-lane attack.
- 3) Drop/pass-and-fill transition drill.
- 4) Regroup and attack with speed.

Team Concept

Teach puck support in three lanes, attacking with numbers, and recognizing when to drive, delay, pass, or take available ice.

Small Area Game

Continuous 2v2 or 3v2 transition game. New attackers enter immediately after a turnover or shot to force fast recognition and backchecking.

Competition

Odd-player rush tournament; transition scoring race; three-lane attack challenge.

Coach's Corner

Freeze fewer reps and ask more questions: Where is the open ice? Who has numbers? What did the defender give you? Let players learn to read the play.

Character Focus

Creativity - Recognize options and have the confidence to make a play.

Weeks 13-14 | Special Situations: Face Off Options, Power Play & Penalty Kill Strategies

Objectives

Give players simple, repeatable plans for faceoffs, power play puck movement, penalty-kill pressure, and special-situation awareness.

Skating Progression

Explosive faceoff starts; short-area acceleration to loose pucks; lateral penalty-kill movement; power-play exchanges and rotation skating.

Skill Stations

- 1) Faceoff technique and winger responsibilities.
- 2) Power-play pass-shot-rebound sequence.
- 3) Penalty-kill stick-lane and pressure drill.
- 4) 2v1 net-front special-teams battle.

Team Concept

Build simple special-teams habits: possession first on the power play, sticks and lanes on the penalty kill, and clear assignments on faceoffs.

Small Area Game

3v2 or 4v3 special-teams game in a reduced zone. Rotate players through power-play and penalty-kill roles.

Competition

Faceoff tournament; power-play five-pass scoring challenge; penalty-kill clear-and-change race.

Coach's Corner

Keep systems simple enough that players can execute them at game speed. Teach principles and responsibilities rather than memorizing complicated patterns.

Character Focus

Team First - Accept a role and execute it for the group.

Weeks 15-16 | Season Review #2 – Assess Goals set at week 8

Objectives

Measure progress against the goals established at the midseason check-in and reinforce the individual and team skills that still need attention.

Skating Progression

Re-test acceleration, edge control, transitions, and puck-carrying skills used earlier in the season. Compare execution and consistency rather than only race times.

Skill Stations

- 1) Individual skill benchmark circuit.
- 2) Passing-under-pressure review.
- 3) Shooting/scoring benchmark.
- 4) Angling or breakout decision station based on team needs.

Team Concept

Review the team's strongest and weakest concepts from games. Revisit breakout, defensive-zone, transition, or offensive-support habits based on observed needs.

Small Area Game

Multi-skill 3v3 game with coaches tracking specific behaviors such as support, communication, puck protection, defensive positioning, and transition effort.

Competition

Repeat selected early-season challenges and allow players to compare their own progress. Reward improvement and execution, not only the top score.

Coach's Corner

Use this block as an actual assessment. Give each player one strength to keep building and one specific goal for the final part of the season.

Character Focus

Leadership - Take ownership of personal improvement and help raise the standard for teammates.

Weeks 17-18 | Decision Making: Hockey IQ Focus

Objectives

Improve scanning, anticipation, puck-support decisions, and the ability to choose quickly between skating, passing, shooting, protecting, or defending.

Skating Progression

Reaction skating with visual cues; change-of-direction reads; retrievals with shoulder checks; transition skating based on coach or teammate signals.

Skill Stations

- 1) Scan-before-receive passing.
- 2) 2v1 read-and-react.
- 3) Puck retrieval with multiple outlet options.
- 4) Attack-or-delay decision station.

Team Concept

Teach players to identify time, space, pressure, support, and numerical advantage before making a decision.

Small Area Game

Continuous 3v3 with changing conditions: coach calls new scoring nets, adds a support player, or changes possession to force rapid adaptation.

Competition

Decision-point challenge where correct reads earn points; 2v1 tournament; possession game with bonus points for creating an advantage before scoring.

Coach's Corner

Do not give players every answer. Ask what they saw and what other option was available. Hockey IQ grows when players learn to recognize cues themselves.

Character Focus

Resilience - Make the next decision confidently, even after a mistake.

Weeks 19-20 | Coaching Confidence & Celebrate team strengths

Objectives

Reinforce the team's strongest habits, build confidence heading into the end of the season, and let players demonstrate growth through competitive, game-like practices.

Skating Progression

Player-selected favorite skating challenges; high-tempo speed and transition review; relay formats combining edges, puck control, and finishing.

Skill Stations

- 1) Team-favorite skill station.
- 2) Player-led passing or shooting station.
- 3) Competitive puck battle.
- 4) Game-situation stations built around team strengths.

Team Concept

Review the team's identity: how we want to compete, communicate, support the puck, defend, and respond when games become difficult.

Small Area Game

Tournament-style 2v2 and 3v3 games using several formats from the season. Encourage players to identify and apply the concepts they have learned.

Competition

Team skills combine; player-vs-coach challenge; small-area championship; season-best relay.

Coach's Corner

Shift some ownership to the players. Ask them to explain concepts, lead a station, recognize teammates' growth, and identify what the team does well.

Character Focus

Love the Game - Compete hard, enjoy teammates, and recognize how much the group has grown.

Hey Coach!

At 12U, players begin discovering the type of teammate and competitor they want to become. Every practice is an opportunity to build confidence, hockey sense, and character. Thank you for investing in the future of **Spartacats Girls Hockey**.