

HELPFUL HOCKEY TIPS

FOR NEW PLAYERS & FAMILIES



A guide for new players and families to Merrill Youth Hockey

Helpful Hockey Tips for New Players & Families

Hockey Age Levels & Names

- 8U (Mite): 4-8 years old

Mite players are divided into Red, Blue, and White teams based on age, experience, skill level, and registration numbers. Team assignments are made by MYHA and may vary from season to season. Please check with your coach to confirm your child's team placement.

Game schedules will vary between the Red, Blue, and White teams. Your coach or team manager will communicate your team's game and tournament schedule throughout the season.

- 10U (Squirt): 9-10 years old
- 12U (Peewee): 11-12 years old
- 14U (Bantam): 13-14 years old
- 15 + (Midget / Highschool): 15-18 years old

Players typically progress through Learn to Skate/Learn to Play, 6U (Mini-Mites), 8U (Mites), 10U (Squirts), 12U (Peewees), and 14U (Bantams). After completing Bantams, players may continue their hockey career with the Merrill High School hockey program.

Equipment



How to Dress for Hockey

1. Put on your jock or jill, compression shorts or pants, a compression shirt or long-sleeve shirt, and tall athletic socks. These items should be worn directly against the body.
2. Put on your shin guards, then your hockey socks, securing them to your compression shorts or pants if using Velcro tabs. Next, put on your hockey pants (breezers).
3. Put on your shoulder pads, then your elbow pads, and finally your jersey.
4. Put on your skates.
5. Put on your neck guard.
6. Put in your mouthguard (if required), then put on your helmet.

Equipment Care

After each practice and game, all hockey equipment should be removed from the hockey bag to dry and air out. Properly drying equipment helps reduce odors and extends the life of the gear.

Throughout the season, breezers, shoulder pads, elbow pads, and shin guards can be soaked in warm water with Dawn® dish soap to help keep them clean. Hockey equipment sprays and deodorizers are also available and can help reduce odors in both the equipment and the hockey bag.

Parent Tip: Establish a routine of unpacking and drying equipment after every ice session. This will help keep gear fresher and make it last longer.

Skate Sharpening

- As a general rule, skates should be sharpened every 15 to 20 hours of ice time, including practices and games.
- If your child complains about slipping, difficulty stopping, or poor edge control, it may be time for a sharpening.

Local Hockey Equipment & Skate Sharpening Options

1. Goal Line Sports (Schofield, WI)

- Full-service hockey shop.
- Carries hockey equipment, tape, laces, apparel, and accessories.
- Offers professional skate sharpening.

2. Dunham's Sports (Rib Mountain, WI)

- Carries a limited selection of hockey equipment and accessories.

3. Merrill Youth Hockey Association

- MYHA offers skate sharpening opportunities throughout the season.
- Details on sharpening schedules, locations, and procedures will be communicated by your coach, team manager, or the MYHA Equipment Manager.
- Merrill Youth Hockey Association also offers a selection of hockey accessories for purchase through the concession stand, including hockey tape, skate laces, stick wax, mouthguards, neck guards, and other limited hockey supplies. These items provide a convenient option for replacing forgotten, damaged, or worn equipment during practices, games, and tournaments. Availability may vary throughout the season.

Rink Information for Parents

1. **Dress warmly.** Spectator areas are typically between 45°F and 65°F. Bring a warm jacket, hat, gloves, and a blanket to stay comfortable.
2. **Arrive 30 minutes to 1 hour before practices and games** to allow plenty of time for your child to get dressed and prepared. Your coach or team manager will communicate specific arrival times for games, tournaments, and special events.
3. **Double-check your child's hockey bag before leaving home.** Pack extra tape, mouthguards, skate laces, water bottles, and any other essentials. Be sure to bring both light and dark jerseys to every game.
4. **Leave the coaching to the coaches.** Encourage your child from the stands, but avoid yelling instructions during games and practices.

Resources in the Organization

Board Members / Officers

Jason Rominski – President (Term expires 2028)
Dan Schaupp – Vice President (Term expires 2027)
Melissa Weckwerth – Secretary (Term expires 2028)
Amy Canne – Treasurer (Term expires 2027)
Travis Dalsky
Courtney Leist
Joe Weckwerth
John Canne
Ryan Taylor
Sierra Smith
Matt Smith
Rob Klug
Shane Herdt
Adam Donner

Special Functions

Robin Hanson – Registrar
Stacy Hagenbucher – Game Scheduler
Bryan Schroder – Referee Scheduler
Joe Weckwerth – Safety Officer
Adam Donner – Webmaster
Dana Klug – DIBs Manager
Jason & Tanya Wyland – Concessions Managers
Darcy Dalsky – Fundraising Chair
Shawn Hagenbucher – Equipment Manager
Ryan Taylor – Recruiting Co-Chair
Nicole Cimino – Apparel Coordinator
Jennifer McKinney – Culture Education Liaison
Jeremy Imhoff – Hockey Director

Conduct

Youth hockey is about developing skills, building character, having fun, and fostering a lifelong love of the game. Everyone plays a role in creating a positive experience for players, families, coaches, and officials. All participants and spectators are expected to adhere to the Merrill Youth Hockey Association's official Code of Conduct, which is available on the MYHA website