



# MITE 4 LEVEL GUIDE

## GOALS:

Prepare players for the transition to Squirt hockey by solidifying all fundamental skills, enhancing tactical awareness, and fostering a strong team concept. This level may be considered an "advanced Mite" or "Junior Squirt" group.

## RATIOS:

- **Player-to-Coach:** 5:1
- **Ice Use:** Mix of half-ice and occasional full-ice for drills. Games remain half-ice until approx. January 10th, then full ice.

## KEY SKILLS & DRILLS

### Skating Performance (40% of ice time):

- Max Speed & Agility: Full-speed sprints, quick pivots, complex cone drills.
- Skating with Puck: Maintaining speed and control while stickhandling.
- Backward Skating: Defensive backward skating, backward cross-overs for quick changes.
- Transitional Skating: Seamless transitions from forward to backward and vice versa.
- Explosive Stops & Starts: Quick stops and acceleration.

### Puck Skills (60% of ice time):

Puck Control under Pressure: Stickhandling in traffic, battling for pucks.

### Passing & Receiving:

- Advanced passing (bank passes, quick touch passes).
- One-touch passing.
- Receiving passes in tight spaces and while turning.

### Shooting:

- Quick release shots from various angles and situations.
- Slap shot introduction (very light, focus on technique, not power).
- Wrap-arounds, deflections.

Deception: Head fakes, body fakes, puck fakes.

Checking (Non-contact): Angling, body position to separate player from puck (no checking for possession).

## PRACTICE STRUCTURE

### 60-minute session example:

- Warm-up (10 min): High-intensity dynamic warm-up, puck control drills.
- Station 1: Advanced Skating & Speed: Drills focusing on speed, agility, and power with the puck.
- Station 2: Game Situations & Small-Area Concepts: 2-on-1, 3-on-2 drills, breakout drills, forecheck drills (simplified).
- Station 3: Offensive & Defensive Skills: Shooting, net-front play, defensive positioning, angling.
- Station 4: Half-Ice or 3/4-Ice Game: 3v3, 4v4 or 5v5 game. Full integration of learned skills and tactics. Coaches step back more, allowing players to make decisions. Introduce penalties for major infractions.

## GAME PLAY

- Transition to 3/4 ice and full-ice 5v5 games, three or four local tournaments.
- Full rules introduced and explained (offside, icing, minor penalties for safety).
- Emphasis on team systems (basic breakouts, defensive zone coverage).
- Coaches act more as facilitators, guiding players with strategic questions.
- Focus on continuous improvement, effort, and enjoyment.