



Basic Tips to Help Improve Your Passing

It's important to work on passing in practice — take your time and work on the fundamentals of good passing (giving and receiving) so that it becomes second nature to you come game time. Here are some tips that can help:

Tip #1

Accuracy is the key to an effective pass. Keep your head up and look at your intended target. The root cause of many bad passes is a player not looking up to spot their mark before attempting a pass.

Tip #2

Never slap at the puck. The puck should roll off the blade from the heel to toe in a sweeping motion as you transfer your weight from your back foot to front foot. As the puck leaves your stick, make sure to follow through and point the toe of your stick at the intended target.

Tip #3

Be aware of your own positioning on the ice when attempting a pass. Blind cross-ice passes that lead to turnovers are the leading cause of grey hairs among hockey coaches. Getting your head up to spot safe, smart passing options will greatly improve your odds of not only completing your pass but winning the game too.

Tip #4

A flip or saucer pass is most effective when you have a man between you and your intended target. A good saucer pass floats approximately 8 to 10 inches off the ice and lands flat close to the blade of a teammate's stick. You don't want to pass the puck too high where it can't be controlled by your teammate or too low where it's easily intercepted by your opponent.

Tip #5

When receiving a pass, turn the blade slightly toward the ice to form a pocket. Keep the angle of the blade so it takes the puck squarely. Don't hold the stick too tightly when you are receiving a hard pass or the puck will "explode" off your stick. Instead, position your blade near your front foot and try to counter-pressure the puck with just enough force to stop it dead in its tracks.

20 PASSES:

- Most practices have 4 to 6 "Energy Laps" or "Skill Laps". In the time it takes to get around the rink, a player could execute 20 passes instead. You can give each player an extra 80 or more reps of passes per practice simply by replacing your laps between drills with passing. Instead of skating, instruct your players to find a partner and complete 20 passes before they can proceed to the next drill
- Do both! Have players take a puck and pair up for your energy laps, completing 20 passes within one trip around the ice
- Start your practice with stationary passing — this allows your coaches time to demonstrate proper technique and error correct