

# CIRCUIT TRAINING

Youth hockey coaches face many obstacles in trying to create a program that is truly developmental in scope. Maybe the biggest of all obstacles is the lack of adequate ice time.

One excellent way to work on individual skill development and maximize your ice usage is to use on-ice training circuits.

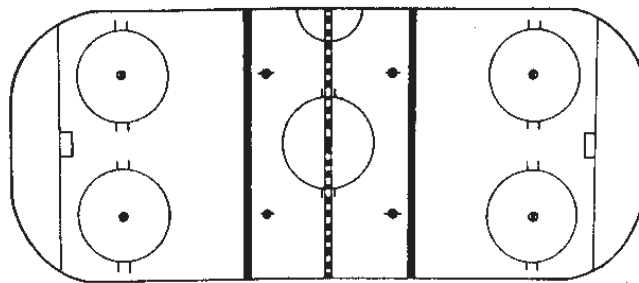
Here's how it works. Let's assume that you have 16 players on your team. Therefore, you would design a circuit that includes 8 stations (2 players per station). If your focus is on puck skills, keep in mind the number of goalies that you have so that you can incorporate shooting stations with them.

Pair your players in a way that will encourage good work habits (i.e. a lazy player with one of your hardest workers, etc.). When one player is working, the other is resting (unless the drill calls for both players to work at the same time. In this case, they will rest at the same time too).

Spread out the 8 stations throughout the ice. After each player goes at a station, everyone would rotate in a clockwise manner, until every player had the opportunity to work at each station. You may use various work/rest ratios. We recommend that you relate this to a typical game, in which a player would have an average shift time of approximately 40 seconds.

Player one would start on the whistle. He would work the entire 40 seconds -- going as hard as possible -- until the whistle is blown, after which player two would begin to work and player one would rest. At the conclusion of the second 40-second period, the coach should blow a double-whistle, indicating that all players should rotate stations.

The following is a sample circuit which is designed to focus on skating & agility exercises:



**1. Jump the Stick** - player would lie his stick on the ice and would jump it as many times as possible on one foot (jumping from his left and landing on his left). Players should do this approximately 15 times, then change feet, so that they can work on both feet during the 40-second period.

**2. Figure "8" Around Stick** - player would lie his stick on the ice and would skate a figure "8" around the stick, jumping over the middle of the stick as necessary.

**3. Forward & Backward Pivoting** - player would skate to the far cone, pivot and come back towards the near cone backward, continuing up ice and doing the same thing around all the cones. When he reaches the other side, he would turn around and do the same thing coming back.

**4. Center Circle with Pivot** - player should face the same direction at all times. As he skates around the circle, he would pivot from forward to backward and from backward to forward in a manner in which he would never turn his back to focus point.

**5. Quick-Start Shuttle** - line up 5 or 6 pucks on the blue line. Players always start opposite the pucks, beginning at the red line. Player will skate to the puck, stop (always stop facing the same direction so they are working on stopping/starting both ways), pick up the puck in his hand and carry it to the red line. The player will set it down at the red line and proceed in the same manner until all 6 pucks have been moved from the blue line to the red line. On the next whistle, the second player will begin at the blue line (since all the pucks are now positioned at the red line).

**6. Side Hops/Kariocha** - players would always face the boards. Between the cones, the player would side hop down and back, then kariocha down and back, then side hop down and back, etc. Player needs to move their feet as quickly as possible.

**7. Partner Pull** - one player would pull his partner from goal line to goal line and back. The player being pulled should be positioned on his knees, sitting on his heels, and would be pulled by holding on to their sticks with each hand.

**8. Figure "8" with a Pivot** - Player needs to face one direction the entire time, moving around the cones in a figure "8" manner in which he is pivoting from backward to forward and forward to backward while never turning his back to a focus point. Excellent for lateral movement.

Remember that there are literally countless drills that can be incorporated into a circuit like this. Be creative and incorporate drills based on the objectives that you would like to achieve. In future issues of *Chalk Talk* we will include more drills and training circuits for you.