

Reading the play to receive a pass

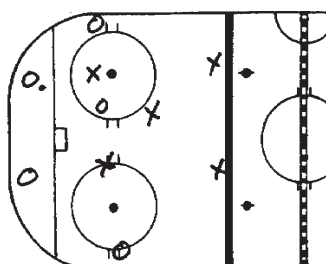
Once players have developed the necessary skills to be able to physically pass and receive the puck, they need to be taught where to be and when to be to receive a pass and continue on with the play. For a player in possession of the puck, learning to recognize when to make a pass and who to pass it to is very important. It is just as important for teammates without the puck to learn to be in a position to receive a pass from a teammate and to know what they are going to do with it at that point.

Reading the ice and moving in relation to the puck, the teammates, and the opposing team are very important and something that takes players a great deal of time for each player to learn. It can be taught by breaking down various game situations and developing drills to re-create them in practice so that the players are forced to make a choice in their movements with and without the puck. As time progresses, hopefully, more and more often it will be the right choice.

The following are some points of emphasis to instill in players so that they can interact with their teammates to be able to maintain possession of the puck and move it down the ice.

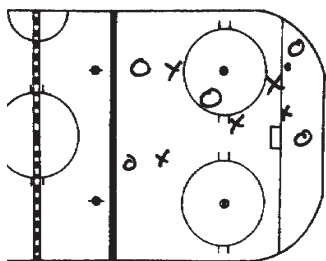
Be in Position - Support the Puck

Whenever a player is in possession of the puck, he should have at least two passing options, which means he should have two teammates who are available and have moved into positions to be able to receive a short 15 foot pass if the player chooses to pass it their way. These should be the "easy" passes, where they are direct and can be made tape-to-tape. It requires that the receiving players have a sense of where the puck is, where the opposing players are positioned, and where the open ice is so they can move to it.



**SUPPORT THE PUCK
- DEFENSIVE ZONE**

When Team O has the puck in the corner, the O left wing is in good puck-support position at the hash marks and his defensive partner is on the other side of the net.



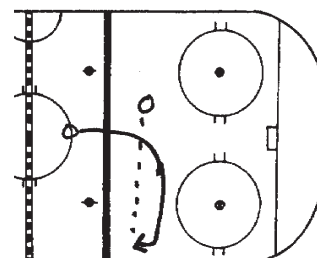
**SUPPORT THE PUCK
- OFFENSIVE ZONE**

When Team O has the puck in the offensive zone, one Team O forward is in good puck-support position in the slot area and another is in good position behind the net.

you, who you pass the puck quickly to, then move to get it back? Or do you have the space to skate with the puck until you are confronted by a defender, then can make the right choice to "beat" them, or pass the puck off to a teammate.

Using the Width of the Ice

Most often, the open ice is "lateral ice", meaning to the side of the puck carrier, and not necessarily up-ice. A common mistake many players make is to "go deep" when a teammate gets

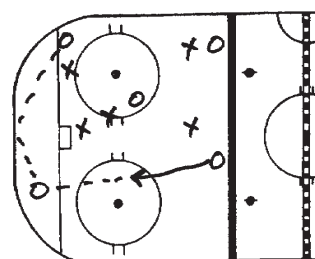


**SKATING Laterally TO BE
IN POSITION FOR A PASS**

the puck, which more often results in a broken pass and a turnover, than it does in a completion.

Better passes are more like "swing passes" in football, where a running back comes out of the backfield and receives a short, diagonal pass, which has a better chance of completion, and gives them more time and space to catch it and make a play before they are confronted by a defender. This type of pass requires that the receiver skates "laterally" across the ice, away from the puck carrier, with the stick on the ice and head turned to be watching the puck and ready for a pass at any time.

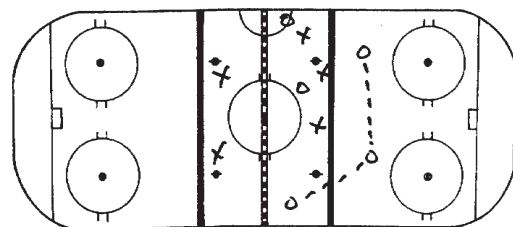
Another example of using the width of the ice is a defenseman making a pass across the ice to his partner to catch the opposing checkers out of position, allowing the partner the time and space to move it up



**USING THE WIDTH OF THE
ICE IN THE OFFENSIVE ZONE**

the ice himself, or to headman it to a teammate. In the offensive zone, when a forward is under pressure in one corner, he can pass the puck the width of the ice behind the net to a teammate on the other side.

This allows the teammate the time and space to make a play before being confronted by defenders.



**USING THE WIDTH OF THE ICE
IN THE DEFENSIVE OR NEUTRAL ZONE**

Know What You Are Going to Do

It's one thing to be available and to receive the pass. It is another thing to take advantage of the situation. Part of being available and in the right position is being in a spot where you can make a play once you get the puck. If you are going to be checked immediately, you probably should not have been passed to. More importantly, you should know what you are going to do before you get it. Is there a teammate "supporting"