

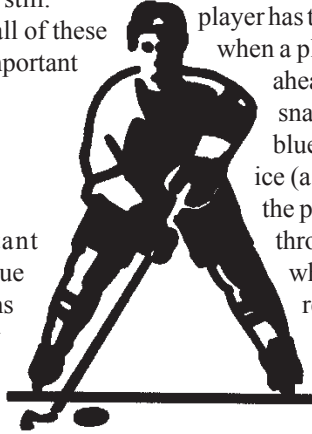
Snap Passing

When players are starting out in the game, they are taught to pass the puck using a “sweeping” motion, both on their forehand and backhand. This technique gives them the power and control that is needed until they are able to establish the strength and coordination to utilize a more advanced method of passing the puck. As they develop, players will need to be able to pass the puck harder, more quickly, more accurately, and in a number of different situations and positions, while moving and while standing still.

Snap passing can be used in all of these situations and the following are important components of the skill.

Arm and hand positioning

One of the most important components in this passing technique is that a player has his/her arms extended so the hands are away from the body. So often, younger or inexperienced players keep their hands close to their bodies and are unable to generate the leverage needed to move the puck effectively.



the blade of the stick is “closed” over the puck. As the player begins to move the puck, he/she moves his/her wrists so that the stick blade “opens” and then “closes” again over the puck as it is released, in effect, “snapping” the pass.

When to use it

The snap pass can only be used when the puck is on the forehand, so it can be used at any time a player has the puck in that position. It can be used when a player is moving the puck laterally and ahead to a teammate (a center at the red line snapping it to a winger approaching the blue line), in passing straight ahead up the ice (a defenseman moving up-ice snapping the puck straight ahead to a winger cutting through the neutral zone). It can be used when a player is standing still (a winger receiving a breakout pass at the hash mark on the boards and moving it to the center) and while and backward (a defenseman creating space while moving backward in the neutral zone, and either passing it to his/her partner across ice or to a forward up-ice).

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Puck positioning

In all areas of puckhandling, the puck should be controlled from the middle of the blade to the heel of the blade to allow for better control and so the puck is in a position to be moved quickly, either with a pass or shot. As the puck is “snapped” or released, it should spin from the heel of the blade and be released toward the toe of the blade. The spinning of the puck keeps it flat on the ice, so that it is not bouncing or wobbling, allowing for better control and puck speed.

Wrist movement/stick blade movement

To snap pass, a player needs to be able to have the strength and coordination to utilize his/her wrists to move the puck. To “snap” the puck the hands need to begin in a “cocked” position so that

Common problems

- **Starting the puck too close to the toe of the stick blade** (especially with many stick curves that “open” toward the toe) does not create the spinning of the puck, causing it to wobble and bounce. Also, the puck is not on the blade long enough to create any power or speed on the pass.
- **Not having the arms extended and hands away from the body** does not allow the stick blade to begin in a “closed” position with the wrists “cocked”. If the pass is begun with the stick blade “open” as it addresses the puck, what happens is the blade stays open and “scoops” or comes underneath the puck causing it to wobble and bounce with poor control.