



CANMORE MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

INTRO TO HOCKEY PROGRAMS

Programs Overview

The U7 and U9 divisions fall under the Intro to Hockey Model. In these divisions, scores are not recorded, and no winners are declared, as the focus is on enjoyment and development. The main objective is to provide beginners with a positive initial experience in hockey. By nurturing a love for the game from the start, we aim to inspire a lifelong passion for playing or engaging with hockey. For additional details on the **Intro to Hockey Model**, please [click here](#).

U7 (Under-7)

The U7 Program teaches young players the basics of hockey in a fun and active way. Core skills emphasized include skating, balance, puck handling, passing, and shooting. While prior skating experience is not required, we recommend that children try on their [equipment](#) several times at home to become comfortable before hitting the ice.

The program is open to players born in 2020, 2021 and 2022, and is divided into Junior U7 and Senior U7 based on a combination of age and skill level:

- Junior U7: Focuses on the basics - skating, balance, and passing.
- Senior U7: Builds on Junior U7 skills with added emphasis on puck handling and shooting.

Note: Player movement between Junior and Senior U7 may occur based on individual skill development and not by birth year.

- Practices: Two half-ice practices per week (typically Friday/Sunday)
- Games: Depending on the team's preferences, there could be up to 10 exhibition games.
- Travel: Dependent on team preference. Close options include, Banff, Minî Thnî, and Cochrane

U9 (Under-9)

The U9 Program supports continued growth in physical literacy, fitness, and core hockey skills, all within a fun and encouraging atmosphere.

Open to players born in 2018 and 2019, U9 teams are typically grouped by:

- Minor (2019)
- Major (2018)

Note: Mixed (2018/2019) teams can occur based on individual skill development.

U9 Program Options:

Both options follow the Intro to Hockey Model, featuring half-ice games that focus on skill development - no scorekeeping, icings, or penalties.

RHL (Rockies Hockey League)

- **Practices:** Two half-ice practices per week (days vary, often right after school)
- **Games:** One half-ice game per weekend, organized with the [Rockies Hockey League](#) (RHL) featuring teams from Banff and Cochrane. Often games are early on a Saturday morning.
- **Skills:** One weekly morning skills session

CAHL (Central Alberta Hockey League)

- **Practices:** Two half-ice practices per week (days vary, often right after school)
- **Games:** Up to two games per weekend - higher travel commitment to communities such as Olds, Didsbury, Carstairs etc. - Normally **not** Cochrane
- **Skills:** One weekly morning skills session
- Competitive REP League with tiered teams allowing players to compete at similar skill levels
- Additional fee if rostered to a CAHL team (\$180)

GENERAL INFORMATION

All players must register in the correct age division.

Evaluations

- **U9 Players**

- **Prep Skates:** U9 players will have four free sessions before evaluations to build confidence and introduce new concepts. No separate registration required. The Prep Skate schedule will be posted online and sent by email.
- U9 players need to attend all evaluation sessions beginning in mid-September with the goal of grouping players by similar skill to support development.

- **U7 players**

- Do not participate in formal evaluations.
- Balanced teams will be formed based on observations during early practices.
- Additional details for U7 families will be shared before the season begins.

CMHA follows a fair, transparent, and unbiased [Evaluation Procedure](#), which will be published online prior to September 1, 2026.

Season Schedule

- **U9 Program:** Season begins in September 2026
- **U7 Program:** Season begins in early to mid October 2026
- **Season End:** All Intro to Hockey programs conclude in March 2027
- **Home Tournaments:** Every Intro to Hockey team will have a home tournament during the season.
- **Practice Schedules:** Released at the end of September (after teams and ice finalized)
- **Important Note:** Schedules are approximate and may change due to holidays, facility closures, other user groups, or Eagles Junior A home games