

U7 SMGHL GAME STRUCTURE 2025-2026

RINK SETUP

- One set of barriers or two sets of barriers with space in between for spare players as a Skill Zone (Ice size for games is 100 x 60) – half ice
- Unused ice can be used as a skill zone
- Net size – 2x3, 3x4, 4x6. (ALL ARE ACCEPTABLE)

PLAYING RULES

- 4 vs. 4 format – plus player protecting the goal
- 3-minute warm-up
- **Two 21-minute halves**, 1-minute break between periods
- Shift length – **90 seconds** in duration with an automatic buzzer or whistle sounding to indicate players change. All players change on the buzzer
- The clock continues to run throughout the 21-minute half - Game does not stop; players change on the fly at buzzer/whistle.
- Both games are synchronized, officials work together to keep the games synchronized (if playing two games)
- If there are fewer than four players on the bench, the active player designated to stay out for the following shift must return to the bench area prior to continuing play
- There will be two face-offs during the game; The first face-off will start the game; the second face-off will start the second half.
- Incidental contact may happen, but body-checking is not permitted.
- No icing or offside

SHIFTS

- Player shifts are recommended to be **90 seconds** in length, a buzzer or whistle will sound to signal line changes.
- On the buzzer/whistle, players must relinquish control of the puck immediately and vacate the ice. The new players enter the ice immediately.
- Failure to immediately relinquish control of the puck or new players entering the ice surface prematurely may result in a penalty (see below) for the offending team.

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CHANGE OF POSSESSION

- when whistles lead to a change in puck possession, the official (or coach) will signal the attacking players to back off three metres. Once the attackers have moved back, play may resume as soon as the possession team has control of the puck.
- Goaltender freezes the puck – the official blows the whistle to indicate the attacking team backs off and defending team gets possession
- Puck shot out of play – the offending team backs off three metres and the official (or coach) gives the non-offending team a new puck.

PENALTIES

- Minor penalties are noted with the official briefly raising their arm to indicate a penalty will be assessed. At the conclusion of the shift, the official notifies the coach of the infraction and the number of the offending player.
- If the offending team controls the puck after the infraction, the official blows the whistle and calls for a change of possession; the non-offending team is given room to play the puck (three-meter cushion).
- The offending player will sit out the next shift, but the team will play even strength.
- Should an infraction occur, that would normally require a player to be ejected from the game (game misconduct, match penalty or gross misconduct), the player will be removed from the remainder of that game. Even under these circumstances, teams will not play shorthanded, and no game incident report will be required.