



U7 FAQ

Updated: September 2024

The U7 Development Program aligns with Hockey Canada's Seasonal Structure for U7 hockey programs and adheres to guidelines for the U7 Division outlined by Hockey Nova Scotia. For more information, please click here. <https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/hockey-programs/coaching/under-7/parents/introduction>

Every Association in Hockey Nova Scotia's jurisdiction may use different terminology and every program may look a little bit different. What is consistent is that young players have an opportunity to start and/or continue their development while having a positive and fun hockey experience.

Frequently Asked Questions

What does U7 stand for?

U7 stands for Under 7. It is the Division set out by Hockey Canada for the season for players who turn 4, 5 and 6 years old by December 31 of the current year. It replaces the division formerly known as IP (Initiation Program).

When does the U7 Season Start?

The U7 Season Start date is mid-October and will run for 20 weeks. Ten weeks prior to Christmas Break and ten weeks after Christmas Break ending mid March.

How will the teams be divided?

If there are enough children registered, there will be two groups at the U7 level. One in Richmond, and one in Port Hawkesbury. If there are not enough children registered, there will be one group.

Is there an advanced team like in U9?

No. This is not about creating advanced teams and labeling the groups as such. As Hockey Canada recommends, players will be grouped with 'likeability' players for maximum growth. Hockey Canada wants every Canadian youngster to have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from a program designed to meet their specific needs, one that ensures progressive skill development through well-delivered practice sessions and age-appropriate game play in an environment suited to their skill level.

Who are the Coaches?

At this age group, coaches are also parents. Various assistant coaches will balance out the ice times as well. We will strive for a 1:3 coach to player ratio as much as possible.

What are the qualifications for coaches?

Registered Coaches will have completed a Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector check, a Respect in Sport for Volunteers course, an online Intro to Coach course, and an online virtual or half day in-class Coaching Course (to be completed after the online portion). This applies to Assistant Coaches as well as Head Coaches. All Head Coaches must also do an online Safety Course.

Am I able to assist on the ice, but just with my child?

Parents that are comfortable on skates are asked to come out and assist the first couple weekends to assist as most skaters will be learning how to fall down and how to get back up. Your head coach will determine how many parent supports are required. By December 1st, any parent on the ice must meet all qualifications as an assistant coach. Any parent that wants to be an assistant coach are responsible to all the children on the ice. Coaches will be assigned to stations and provide instruction to all children, not just their own.

How much hockey experience do I need to help coach?

You do not need to have a high-level of hockey experience. You just need to be a strong skater, and have a helmet, gloves, and a stick. There are mandatory certifications that are required by Hockey Nova Scotia in order to be allowed on the ice for the duration of the season. Coaches interested in volunteering will be advised of the requirements and the timelines when they must be met.

Where are practices held?

Practices will be held at both Richmond Arena and Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre depending on the numbers registered at the U7 level. If enough for two groups, then Port Hawkesbury players will practice at the PHCC, Richmond players will practice at the Richmond Arena.

What are the practice times?

There are 2 practices each weekend on Saturday and Sunday. Times vary amongst the U7 teams and time slots are usually scheduled between 7am-11am. Ice times are NOT consistent.

What does a practice look like?

Practice Plans are created for each session and shared with all coaches. Coaches will have stations and children will cycle through them. There will be power skating components and large group activities along with small area station-based skill development stations. The focus is on developing the foundation for strong skaters while teaching the basics of hockey.

Will my child play hockey games in U7?

There will be small scrimmages incorporated into the practices at times. The main focus, as set forth by Hockey Canada Development Guidelines, is to develop the child's skating ability first. The development progression then expands to include puck handling and individual skill development. Teams can also participate in Jamborees throughout the season.

Will my child play full ice games?

No. Hockey Canada and Hockey Nova Scotia strongly disallow any full ice structured hockey games for this division. Any Association scrimmages or Jamborees will be half ice.

Can I be on the player bench or open the door if I need to talk to or assist my child?

No, all parents and spectators are asked to not be on the bench or open the doors to the ice. It may be tempting to step on the bench to help your child get a sip of water or to say hello, but this can be distracting and disrupt the flow of the practice. The coaches are there to assist your child. Should the coaches require assistance from a child's parent, they will bring them to one of the doors to the ice and seek you out.

Can I drop my child off?

No, a parent/guardian must be available at all times for every practice. Coaches will not leave the ice for washroom breaks and must adhere to Hockey Canada's 'Two-deep policy'. Parents must be immediately available to respond to children if required.

Are there any extra costs not covered by the registration fees?

Yes, there may be optional extra costs that are not covered. Photographs, name bars, Jamborees, and any extra team building activities would be an extra cost to the parent/guardian. In the past, some teams have also purchased group seats to Cape Breton Eagles games.

Do we have to fundraise?

Players registered in the program are required to sell SRMHA weekly 50/50 tickets. Money raised will go towards subsidising yearly costs to keep registration fees maintainable for all families. [Click here for more information.](#) \$0.40 of the total tickets sold will go back directly to the player selling the ticket to offset future registration costs. U7 Teams may also sell 50/50 tickets during their Jamboree to raise funds for their year end party.

My child has never skated before or has very limited skating experience. Will this be an issue?

No. many of the children at the U7 level are skating for the first time.

My child is very excited to play goalie. Is that available?

Once children in the U7 have developed a basic skating foundation they are able to try the goaltender position. The goal of the program is to develop strong skaters first and develop basic hockey skills and offer some exposure to the position.

What is a “Jamboree”?

A “Jamboree” is a non-competitive tournament where children play teams from other associations. There is no score kept, and no specific positions are played. Goalies are generally not part of the Jamboree. It is a fun event where the kids play between two to three short games in a day. The Jamboree usually includes other activities and players receive a medal or other small award.

Will Strait Richmond have a Jamboree?

SRMHA usually holds an annual Jamboree usually taking place in March.

How many Jamborees is my child able to attend?

There is a limit set by Hockey Nova Scotia of four Jamborees during a season. Once your child has played in four Jamborees, he/she is not allowed to participate in any more for the rest of the season.

I’m interested in volunteering, but not as a coach? Is there any other way I can help?

SRMHA is a volunteer run organization, and we can always use additional help off ice. Each team will require a Team Manager to manage many of the off ice requirements. Team Managers do things such as distributing and collecting the jerseys, organizing team events, team photos, signing teams up for Jamborees, communication, collection of optional fees, etc.

All volunteers must go through a certification process. This process includes a Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector check, and a Respect in Sport for Volunteers course.

What is the Respect in Sport for Parents Program?

One parent of every player beginning hockey must complete the online Respect in Sport for Parents program. It is mandatory as per Hockey Nova Scotia and costs \$12 + tax. If you have completed the program for an older sibling, you don’t have to do it again but your new U7 player must be added to your Respect in Sport account.

My child has a medical condition. What is the best way to inform the Head Coach?

Every child must have a medical form filled out and given to your Team Manager at the start of the year. These forms will be kept with the Head Coach/Team Manager and brought to each practice. As well, because a parent must remain in the arena during the practice, someone will

always be present who is aware of the condition as well. Knowledge of a potential severe allergic reaction or other medical condition while on the ice may help the coaches recognize this and allow them to notify the parents present in the arena.

Do I need a jersey?

Players will be provided jerseys and socks for the season. Both will need to be returned once the season wraps up.

Can I affix my child's last name onto the jersey with a name bar?

Yes, you are welcome to affix a name bar to the back of your child's jersey, but it cannot be glued or ironed on as we need to return the jerseys. It can only be sewn on to the jersey, and it cannot cover the Tim Horton's logo or the "STOP" sign.

Why is there a "STOP" sign on my child's jersey?

The Safety Towards Other Players (STOP) program teaches players about the dangers of checking from behind, as well as other valuable safety rules and sportsmanship. The STOP patch is the focal point of the program. It is on the back of the jersey and is a reminder to the players to STOP when they see this sign and avoid a dangerous check from behind.

Do I need to buy hockey Gear or is that supplied?

You will have to purchase your own hockey gear.
Please see the image below for required gear.



10 Helmet Combo

8 Neck Guard

6 Shoulder Pads

9 Hockey Jersey
(not shown)

7 Elbow Pads

1 Jock/Jill Short

11 Gloves

12 Stick

4 Pants

3 Hockey Socks
(not shown)

2 Shin Pads

5 Skates