

U7 2024/2025

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. When does the Under 7 (U7) season start?

The 2024/2025 season

U7-2 and U7-3 evaluations will be October 5th & 6th from 8:15am-11:15am on SMC Fountain ice, specifics on the groupings to follow.

2. What age can my child start U7? Are there different levels of hockey in U7?

The TASA U7-1 program is for first year players who have turned 4 years old by December 31st 2024. The U7-2 program is for players who have turned 5 years and 6 years old by December 31st 2024. The U7-2 teams will be balanced by age and evaluations.

3. What gear does my child require?

This link on Hockey Nova Scotia offers a great gear visual reference of what hockey gear is required for your player

<https://5647e90c-cdn.agilitycms.cloud/bauerequipment.jpg>

4. My player never skated before or has minimal skating experience. Will this be an issue?

No, this will NOT be an issue. As set forth by Hockey Canada Development Guidelines, the focus is to develop skating ability first. Do not get discouraged at first if you see your player struggle. You will be amazed at how quickly they grow.

5. How long is the season?

The season will be 20 weekends - 40 ice times.

6. Are practices held over the Christmas holidays?

No, practices are not held between Christmas and New Year's.

7. Can I help my child get their gear on?

Yes you can, we ask that this is limited to 1 parent/guardian per player as dressing rooms have limited space. Once your player is geared up we ask that you vacate the dressing rooms.

8. What happens when practice is canceled due to weather, tournaments, or other scheduled events?

TASA will ensure that the canceled practices are made up throughout the season or at the end of the season.

9. Are all practices held at the St. Margaret's Centre (SMC)?

TASA has ice rental contracts at several facilities throughout HRM; the U7 practices are typically held at SMC.

10. What day and time are the U7 practices?

Practice schedules can vary from year to year. Generally, practice days are Saturday and Sunday mornings and run for 1 hour **(50 minutes of ice time)**. Specific times will be listed post evaluations.

11. Will my player's practice times remain constant throughout the season?

Yes. Practices are at the same time each week. However, if makeup practices need to be added, they may be at a different time.

12. What is the format of a typical U7 practice?

They are station-based practices. Typically, there are four color groups on the ice at one time. The four groups rotate through four stations. Small scrimmages are incorporated later in the season.

13. Does TASA supply a jersey?

Yes. Each player is given a Tim Hortons-sponsored (Timbits) jersey and socks for the season. Players must be prepared to have their jerseys and socks for evaluations.

14. Do we get to keep the jersey?

Yes. Jerseys and socks are yours to keep.

15. Can we affix my player's last name onto the jersey with a name bar?

Yes, you can affix a name bar to the back of your player's jersey, but it cannot cover the Tim Hortons logo or the "STOP" sign (see below.)

16. My player has a friend who plays U7 as well. Can my player be placed in the same group as their friend?

Players are divided based on age and skating ability. Requests to keep friends or family members together may not be honored.

17. Do I have to remain at the rink while my player is on the ice for practice?

Yes. A parent/guardian must always be available during practices. Often, a player may need to use the washroom or have gear issues that require off-ice attention. Coaches will not leave the ice with a player for a washroom break. We ask that all parents/guardians be readily available.

18. Can I be on the player bench or open the door to talk to or assist my player?

No. Due to liability and insurance reasons, we ask all parents & spectators (non-registered coaching staff) not to go on the bench or open doors to the ice surface. It's tempting to step on the bench to help your player get a sip of water or to say hello, but this can disrupt the practice flow. The registered coaches are there to assist your player. Should the coaches require assistance from a player's parent, they will bring them off-ice and seek you out. The small children often want to go to their parents when they are on the ice if they feel uncertain. We want to encourage players to remain on the ice and go to their coaches if they need help. Water bottles should be placed on the bench, and coaches will help players with their water when needed.

19. Will my player play real hockey games in U7?

Small scrimmages will be incorporated into the practices, but these are limited. As set forth by Hockey Canada Development Guidelines, the focus is first developing a player's skating ability. The development progression then expands to include puck handling and individual skill development.

20. Can I register my child as a goalie?

No, all players will be registered as skaters and will be required to be dressed in player gear.

21. My player is excited to try goalie. Can they do that in U7?

The priority of the U7 program is to develop strong skaters. However, there will be opportunities to try goalie in the second half of the season. An expression of interest will be emailed before Christmas each season.

22. What extra costs are not covered by the registration fees?

Additional costs include Jamborees, photographs, potentially the cost of year-end scrimmages, and the mandatory HNS "Respect in Sport Parent Program" (details below).

23. What is a "Jamboree"?

A "Jamboree" is a non-competitive tournament where the children play teams from other associations. There is no score kept, and no specific positions played. It is a fun event where the kids play two to four short games daily. The Jamboree usually includes other activities and culminates with a medal for the kids.

24. Are the costs of Jamborees included in my player's registration fees?

There is a cost to enter a Jamboree; your registration does not cover that fee. The average price per player is \$50 per Jamboree. The only exception is the annual Moosehead Jamboree at the Metro Centre, sponsored by Tim Hortons. This Jamboree is complementary to specific birth years. Information will be shared about which birth year as more information is available.

25. Can I enter my player in as many Jamborees as I want, or is there a limit?

There is a limit (set by HNS) of three Jamborees during a season. Once your player has played three Jamborees, they are no longer eligible to play in that season.

26. Will there be photographs taken of my players and their group?

Yes, TASA coordinates a photographer each year to take pictures of all U7 players. Registration fees do not cover this cost, and participation is optional.

27. I wish to Coach my player in U7. How do I apply?

A coaching application is on the TASA website. Once you complete the application, the VP of U7 will be notified of your information. Coaches selected to assist will be provided opportunities to take the necessary training after the start of the season.

28. I would like to assist on ice but prefer to coach only my player's group. Is that possible?

Coach volunteers are assigned to the same ice time as their players, but they must coach all players on the ice. Staying solely with your player's "team" is not permitted. A coach is assigned one station for each practice and remains with the station as the players rotate through the stations.

29. What qualifications do I need to be an on-ice assistant?

You must be a strong skater with a helmet, gloves, and a stick, you must also be a patient communicator with the children. These are mandatory certifications required by Hockey Nova Scotia and Background checks. Selected coaches will be advised of the requirements and the timelines to obtain them.

30. I have submitted a coaching application. Doesn't that mean I am guaranteed to be an on-ice assistant?

We have a limited number of assistant coaches allowed for each group. Every coach applicant may not be accepted for the season.

31. When filling out my player's registration form, I selected the option asking to be a volunteer coach. Does this guarantee me spot-on ice with my child?

No. A coach application form must be filled out to be considered for a coaching position. Once the coaching applications are received, they will be accepted based on the number of coaching positions available.

32. I am interested in volunteering, but not on the ice. Is there any other way I can offer my help?

TASA is volunteer-run, and we can always use additional help off-ice. U7 takes a lot of off-ice management to be successful. Please contact VP U7 to offer your assistance.

33. Is the St. Margaret's Centre run by TASA?

No, they are separate entities. TASA is one of several user groups that have ice rental contracts at SMC. Other groups include HSM Ringette, SMB Skate Club, etc.

34. Does TASA have control over ice cancellations at SMC?

No, ice cancellations are determined by SMC. For weather cancellations, TASA practices run if the SMC remains open and likewise will be canceled if SMC is closed due to weather.

35. Is there a player's assistance fund through TASA?

TASA is pleased to offer player funding through The Victor T. Shea Player Fund. For more information on the fund and application process, see:

<https://www.tasa.ca/l/43/TASA-/pages/2485/Victor-T-Shea-Player-Assistance-Fund>

36. What is the Respect in Sport Parent Program?

Effective with the 2012-2013 hockey season, ALL PARENTS of U7 and U9 aged players must take the "Respect in Sport Parent Program" at their cost. Further information can be found under the Risk Management tab on the Hockey Nova Scotia webpage (www.hockeynovascotia.ca).

Additional questions can be directed to the Hockey Nova Scotia office by phone at (902) 454-9400

37. Why is there a “STOP” sign on my player's jersey?

The Safety Towards Other Player (STOP) Program teaches participants about the dangers of checking from behind, other safety tips, and values such as sportsmanship. The STOP Patch is the focal point of the program. It is a three-inch-wide patch applied to the back of the jersey, centered just above the numbers and below the name patch. It reminds players to STOP when they see the patch to avoid a dangerous check from behind. In 1996, Kevin Stubbington of the Windsor Minor Hockey Association developed the Safety Towards Other Players (STOP) Program to raise awareness of the dangers of checking from behind in hockey. Since 1999, over 700,000 patches have been distributed. (Source – STOP Program Website).

38. My player has an allergy; should I inform his Lead Coach?

Because a parent must remain in the arena during the practice, it is unnecessary to notify coaches of any player's allergies. However, if a parent wishes to inform the Lead Coach of a severe allergy, this may be done in person before or after a practice. Knowledge of a potentially severe allergic reaction while on the ice may help the coaches recognize one and allow them to notify the parents present in the arena.

39. Who do I contact with questions regarding U7?

Steve Connick is the U7 VP. He can be contacted at under7vp@tasa.ca