



Basic Structure for 6U Mite Practices

The 6U Mite group consists of players ranging in age from 4 to 6 years old. USA Hockey recommends players take a basic learn to skate before implementing 6U practice plans. The Learn to Skate foundational program will provide the rudimentary skills needed for the 6U program. In the case of some smaller youth associations it may be necessary to group the Learn to Skate, 6U and the 8U players into practice sessions. This can still be done efficiently with proper planning and be very beneficial to all involved.

Skating is a primary skill for ice hockey and although players must continue to master skating technique throughout their career, there must be a special emphasis placed on the ABC elements of skating in the early years of development. Players at the Mite age have a harder time processing technical skills instruction and their bodies lack some of the fine motor control required. At this age large muscle groups and multiple joint movements should be incorporated into the practice sessions. Agility, balance and coordination (ABC's) on the ice surface are at the foundation of LTAD for 6U Mites.

Activity volume plays a significant role in development at the 6U age group. Little kids are doers so keep instruction short and activity high.

Practices have a preparatory phase followed by the main body of the practice. The main body of the practice session includes station work so that kids are developing their skills in an efficient manner. The recommended breakdown is with six stations so that there is enough variety to hold the interest of players at this age. Training should be structured so that a large part of the skill repetition is done in an entertaining format. Players at all levels must be mentally engaged in order to best acquire new skills. When skills repetition lacks an emotional element, children at this age quickly become bored. If the skills repetition is hidden in the form of a game, children are capable of extended periods of focused effort. Play is the key to emotional engagement in the skills repetition.

Young kids are comfortable with repetition and like familiarity in the drills that they are asked to perform. Similar drills are rotated down the progression from practice to practice. This give each practice a slightly different look and feel without changing too much. Every practice should be run twice in a row.

The basic 6U Mite practice structure is for a 60 minute hour block of ice as this is common across the country. If your local associating gets the 50 minutes (50 minutes of ice with the cost of a 10 minute ice cut included) out of their hour block of ice the practice sessions are easily modified by subtracting one station or shorting the to the game activity at the conclusion of practice.

- Maximum 6-8 kids per a station with 1-2 coaches.
- Warm-up or free play should last 5-6 minutes at the beginning or end of each practice.
- Station length maximum 6 minutes in duration due to short attention spans at this age.
- Make every station FUN, a game, competition, a race...
- No Whiteboards or Whistles used during stations.
- Get down on 1 knee- eye level to talk to the kids.
- Use an ice marker to draw relay routes on the ice.
- Bring lots of enthusiasm and energy to the ice - smile a lot.

- Complement each kid by name while they are in your station (5-6 minutes) at least once- lots of high fives and cheering encouraged.
- Keep explanations to 15-20 seconds max.
- Have players follow coach through obstacle courses or relays to learn the pattern.
- On Whistle for station change players perform agility assigned then have one coach deliver players to next station. Give kids water and start the next drill/game.

6U cross-ice jamboree operations refer to:

8U ADM Full Mite Guidebook

http://www.usahockey.com/uploadedFiles/USAHockey/ADMKids/Content/8U_ADM_Full%20Guidebook.pdf

8U Implementation Guide

http://www.usahockey.com/uploadedFiles/USAHockey/ADMKids/Content/USA120003_8U_ImplementationGuide-3.pdf



6U Practice: 1 & 2

Theme / Goals: Skill Development/Fun

Equipment Required / Set-up: Borders, cones, tires & ringette rings

Ice Time: 50 Minutes

Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Warm Up: 5 min- Sharks & Minnows

Two players are designated as the sharks to start. The minnows must skate from side boards to side boards without being tagged. If they are tagged, they become sharks too.

Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes

On the whistle, players do 3 two foot jumps before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations.

Station 1: ABC's - Wave Skating

2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on skates, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up.

Station 2: Activity - Freeze Tag

Select one player to be the tagger. When a player gets tagged they must stand still (frozen) until a teammate touches them to become free again.

Station 3: Stationary Passing

Players partner up, stand 8-10' apart and pass back and forth. Work on proper technique, emphasize keeping the hands away from the body and sweeping the puck. Players should stand sideways so that they pass cross body.

Station 4: Relay Race

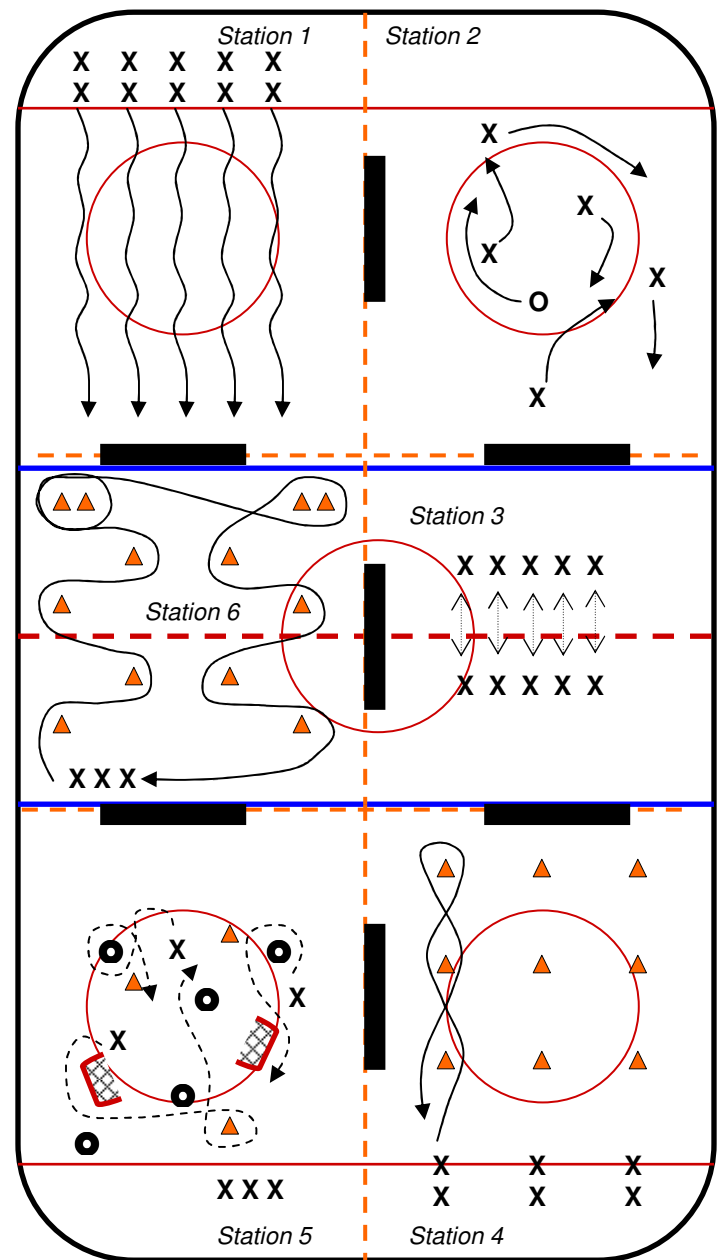
As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.

Station 5: Chaos Puck-handling

Players stickhandle skating around obstacles. All players are involved. Check to see that each player is holding their stick properly. Hands about shoulder width apart and top hand at the end of the stick partially held in the palm with the V between thumb and forefinger on to of the stick like you would hold a hammer. Use ringette rings instead of pucks.

Station 6: Obstacle Course

Players skate through the course with emphasis on turns and edges. Have players maintain good control of their stick by leading with the stick blade around each cone.



Game: 2v2 Hit the Tire - 10 minutes

Have the players stay and play in each of the six zones. Play 2v2 for 30 to 40 second shifts. Use one tire in each zone as the goal. Teams score by hitting the tire with the puck.



6U Practice: 3 & 4

Theme / Goals: Skill Development/Fun

Equipment Required / Set-up: Borders, cones, tires, hockey balls, soccer balls

Ice Time: 50 Minutes

Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Warm Up: Ball Tag – 5 Minutes

Coaches throw soccer balls at players who attempt to dodge out of the way. If hit, the player must drop to their knees and get back up 3 times before they can rejoin the action.

Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes

On the whistle, players do 3 jumping jacks before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations

Station 1: Obstacle Course

Players skate through the course with an emphasis on getting up and falling down.

Station 2: A,B,C's - Wave Skating

2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on skates, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up, drop to single knee and up alternate knees.

Station 3: Activity - Sharks & Minnows

Two players are designated as the sharks to start. The minnows must skate from blue line to blue line without being tagged. If they are tagged, they become sharks too.

Station 4: Stationary Shooting

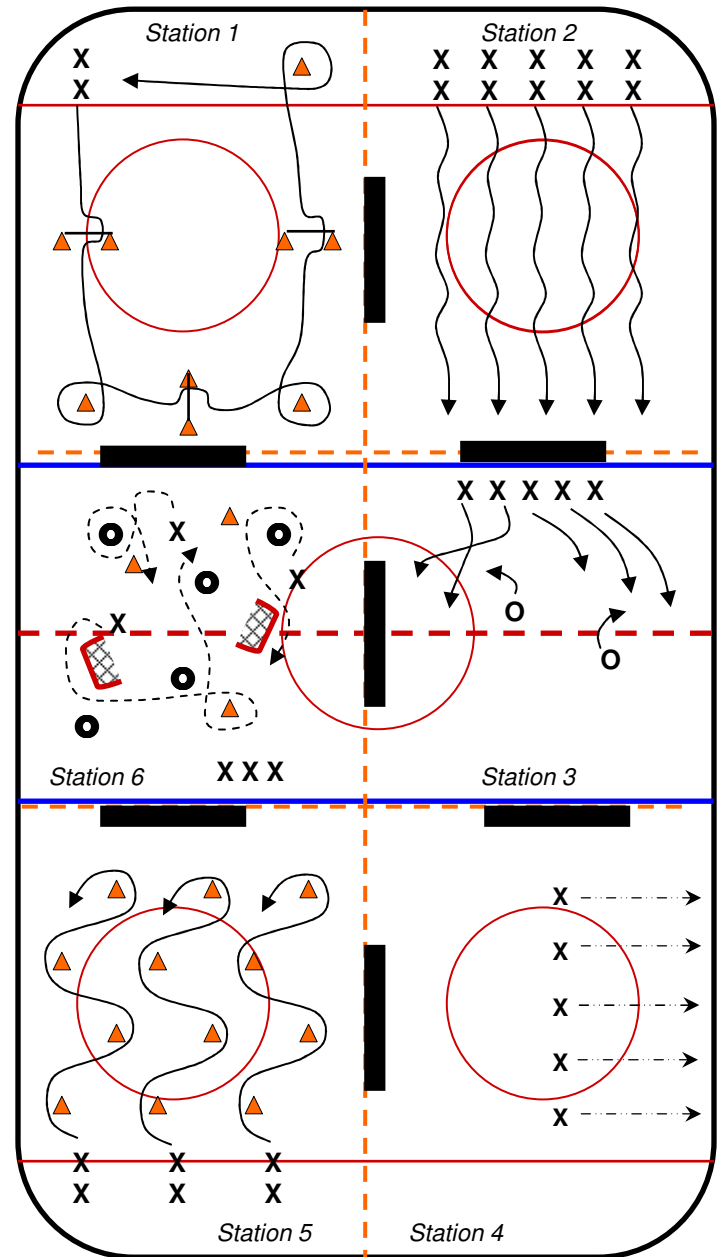
Player work on wrist shot technique shooting against the boards. Players should stand sideways to boards so that proper weight transfer is used. Start with puck behind back foot and sweep puck towards target.

Station 5: Relay Race

As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.

Station 6: Chaos Puck-handling

Players stickhandle skating around obstacles. All players are involved. Check to see that each player is holding their stick properly. Hands about shoulder width apart and top hand at the end of the stick partially held in the palm with the V between thumb and forefinger on to of the stick like you would hold a hammer. Use hockey balls instead of pucks.



Game 3v3 Cross-Ice – 10 Minutes

Play 3v3 (or 4v4) Cross-Ice in all 3 zones. Change groups every 45 to 60 seconds.



6U Practice: 5 & 6

Theme / Goals: Skill Development/Fun

Equipment Required / Set-up: Borders, cones, tires, extra sticks **Ice Time:** 50 Minutes
Soccer balls

Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Warm Up: Safety Tag – 5 Minutes

Using the whole ice surface, play tag with the coaches as the taggers and the players using the face-off circles as safety zones. On the whistle, players must move to a new circle without being tagged. If tagged, players must do three, 2 foot jumps before they can rejoin the action.

Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes

On the whistle, players stop, drop and roll, get up before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations.

Station 1: Hockey Skill

Chaos Puck-handling with obstacles and BLUE pucks

Station 2: Obstacle Course

Players skate through the obstacle course jumping over the hockey sticks.

Station 3: ABC's - Wave Skating

Skating forward without sticks, move the arms in large circles forward, arm circles backward, one arm forward and one arm backward. Superman dive, superman dive with log role to left, superman dive with log role to right.

Station 4: Activity - Ball Tag

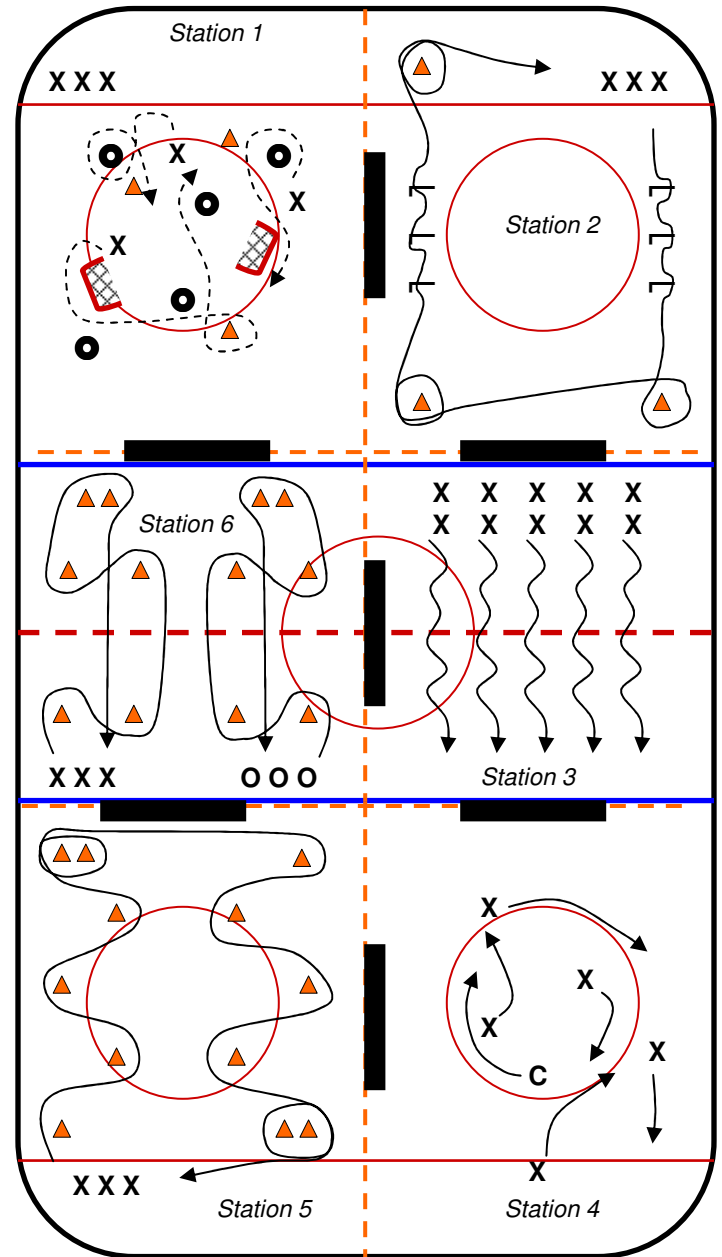
Coaches throw soccer balls at players who attempt to dodge out of the way. If hit, the player must drop to their knees and get back up 3 times before they can rejoin the action.

Station 5: Slalom Puck-handling

Players handle a BLUE puck through the designated course.

Station 6: Relay Race

As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.



Game: Keep Away – 10 minutes

Play 1 or 2 games of 1v1 or 2v2 keep away with a hockey ball in all 6 stations. Keep as many players involved as possible.



6U Practice: 7 & 8

Theme / Goals: Skill Development/Fun

Equipment Required / Set-up: Borders, cones, tires, hockey balls, rings **Ice Time:** 50 Minutes

Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Warm Up: Partner Tag – 5 Minutes

Players pair up and lock arms with their partner. Coaches try to tag the players. If tagged both players must do 3 spins before they can rejoin the action.

Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes

On the whistle, players do 3 two foot jumps before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations.

Station 1: Relay Race

As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle.

Station 2: Chaos Puck-handling (balls)

Players stickhandle hockey balls avoiding contact with the other skaters. All players are involved. Check to see that each player is holding their stick properly. Hands about shoulder width apart and top hand at the end of the stick partially held in the palm with the V between thumb and forefinger on to of the stick like you would hold a hammer.

Station 3: Obstacle Course

Players skate through the obstacle course with emphasis on turns and edges. Players carry ringette rings.

Station 4: ABC's - Wave Skating

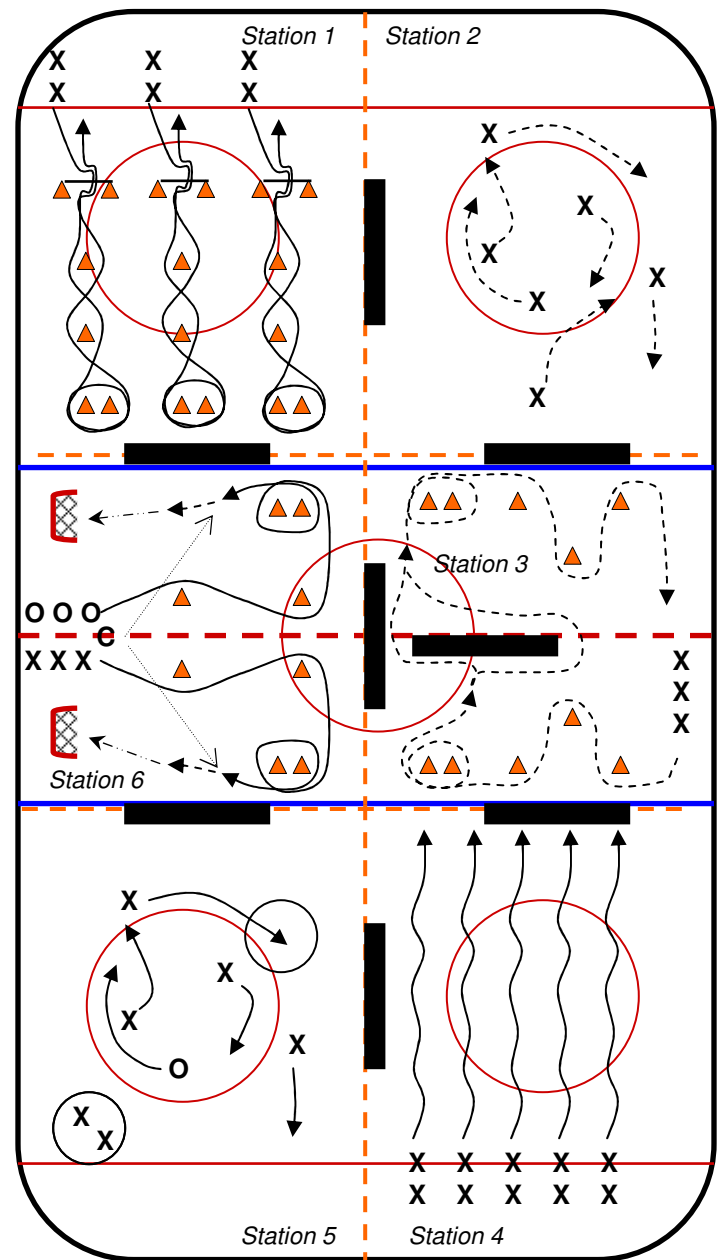
2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on skates, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up, drop to single knee and up alternate knees. Drop to knees 360 degree spin and get up.

Station 5: Activity - Safety Tag

Play tag with the coaches as the taggers and the players using the marked-off circles as safety zones. On the whistle, players must move to a new circle without being tagged. If tagged, players must do three, 2 foot jumps before they can rejoin the action.

Station 6: Receiving Passes & Shooting

Players skate through the course, receive pass from coach and take a shot on goal. Keep players moving.



Game 3v3 Cross-Ice – 10 Minutes

Play 3v3 (or 4v4) Cross-Ice in all 3 zones. Change groups every 45 to 60 seconds.



6U Practice: 9 & 10

Theme / Goals: Skill Development/Fun

Equipment Required / Set-up: Borders, cones, rings, softballs, tires

Ice Time: 50 Minutes

Free Puck Time: 5 Minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Warm Up: Follow the leader – 5 Minutes

Break up into groups with a coach starting as the leader. Players can then take turns being the leader. Do what the leader does, encourage creativity.

Stations: 6 Stations x 5 minutes

On the whistle, players do 3 two foot jumps before changing stations. Be sure to give each player water after changing stations.

Station 1: Slalom Puckhandling

Players stickhandle through the course and finish off with a shot on goal.

Station 2: Chaos Puck-handling (rings)

Players stickhandle using ringette rings avoiding contact with the other skaters. All players are involved.

Station 3: Obstacle Course

Players dribble a softball through the course (no sticks) using their feet. Emphasis is on agility and coordination.

Station 4: Relay Race - Speed

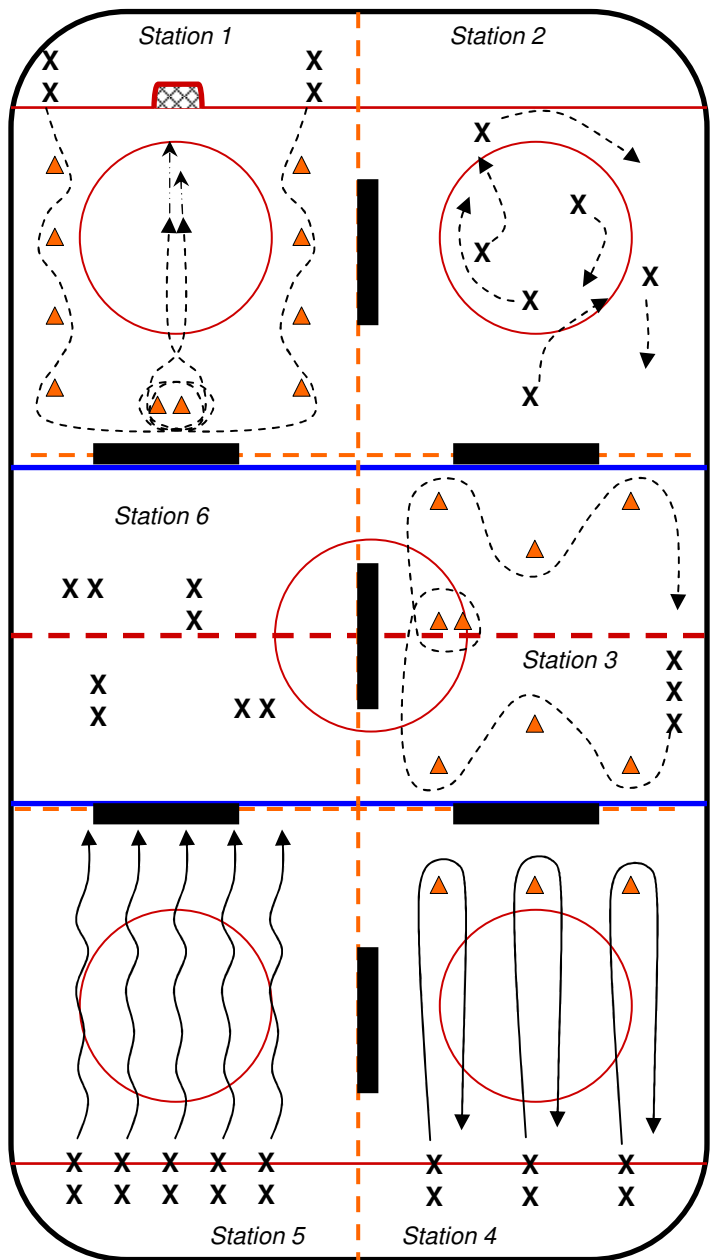
As shown in diagram or create your own. Emphasis is on speed.

Station 5: ABC's - Wave Skating

Skating forward without sticks, move the arms in large circles forward, arm circles backward, one arm forward and one arm backward. Superman dive, superman dive with log role to left, superman dive with log role to right.

Station 6: Activity - Partner Tag

Players pair up and lock arms with their partner. Coaches try to tag the players. If tagged both players must do 3 spins before they can rejoin the action.



Game: 2v2 Hit the Tire – 10 Minutes

Play 2v2 (or 1v1 depending upon numbers) in each of the six zones. Use one tire as the goal playing for 40 second shifts. Try to have players involved every other shift.



6U Practice: 11 & 12

Theme/Goals: Fun/Skill development:

Equipment: Borders, Nets, Cones, Ringettes, Tires & Toy Bag

Ice Time: 60 minutes

Warm Up: 6 minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, nerf balls, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes

On the whistle, players drop stick and step over fwd & bkwd 4 times before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

Stations 1: ABC's - Wave Skating

2 foot glide & pump arms like your running, push puck with hands, kick puck with skates, run on toes, run backwards on toes

Station 2: Activity - Walking over obstacles

Place player's sticks on the ice in a ladder pattern. Have them perform the following agility skating skills either over or around the sticks skate around cones and back to line. Do each skill 2 times

1. Walk forward over each stick
2. Walk laterally over each stick
3. Walk around the sticks in an S formation

Station 3: Relay Race

As shown or create your own. Variation: 360 around each obstacle, use borders, tires or cones to jump over.

Station 4: Two Foot Stopping

Draw player's favorite # on the ice. Have players scrape off marker by turning right heel out and right toe in, pushing skate down and out towards angling the blade towards one o'clock. Repeat with left skate towards 11 o'clock.

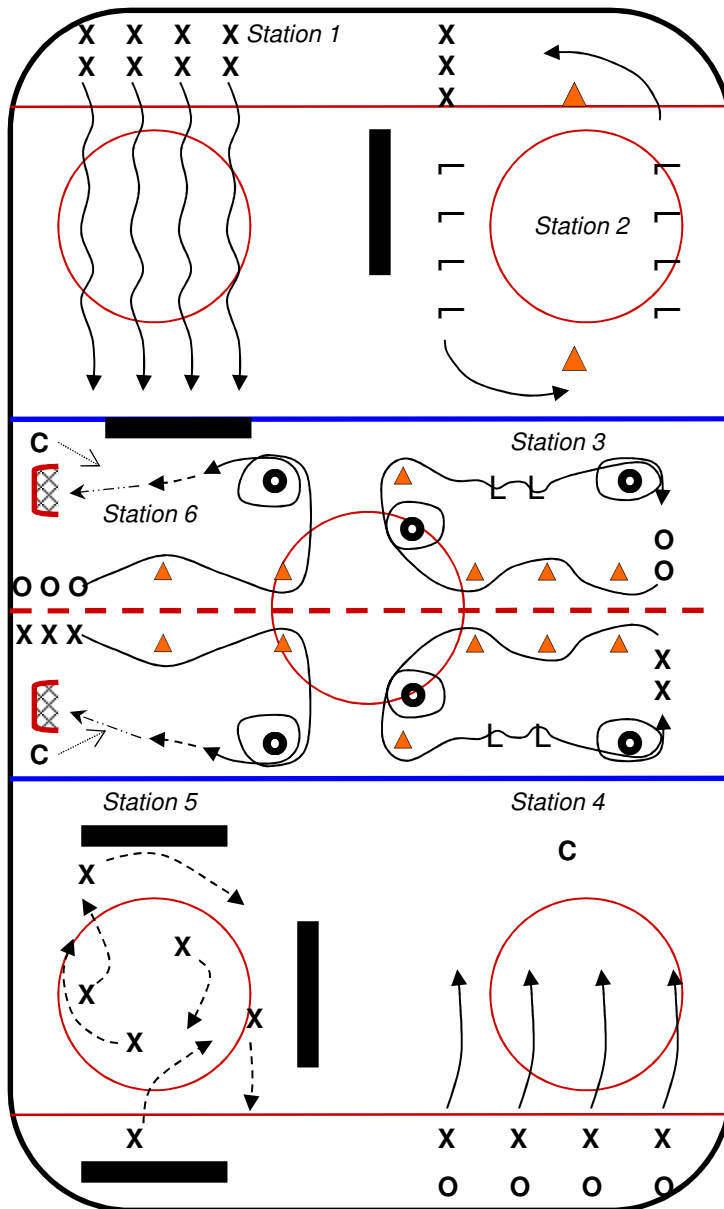
Players skate up ice and on coaches command stop facing boards. Repeat back to goal line working on stopping the other direction.

Station 5: Chaos Puck-handling (rings)

Players stickhandle using ringette rings avoiding contact with the other skaters. All players are involved. On coaches command players do a 360 spin keeping ring with them.

Station 6: Receiving Passes & Shooting

Players skate through the course, receive pass from coach and take a shot on goal. Keep players moving. Have players change sides every rotation.



Competitive Game: 9 Minutes

3 v 3 Hand Ball

Set up 3 cross ice games. Players try to score by pushing a soccer ball on the ice with their hands- players are not allowed to kick the ball.

FUN Game: 9 Minutes

Scoro

All the pucks are in the center ice circle. Divide players into 2 teams. Each team starts on their goal line. On whistle each team try to get as many pucks as they can onto their own net. Players are allowed to steal puck from the other team and out of the opponents net. Team with the most pucks after 3 minutes wins- repeat



6U Practice: 13 & 14

Theme/Goals: Fun/Skill development:

Equipment: Borders, Nets, Cones, Tires & Toy Bag

Ice Time: 60 minutes

Warm Up: 6 minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, nerf balls, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes

On the whistle, players drop stick and step over laterally 4 times before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

Stations 1: ABC's - Wave Skating ABC's with Pucks

2 foot glide, 2 foot glide with butt to heels, run on heels fwd & bkwd, glide & 2 foot jump, drop to knees & get up, drop to single knee and up alternate knees.

Station 2: Activity – Superman Race

Players race around course. Players superman dive between cones, skate around tires, step over borders and stop at blue line. Have players try to cover all the orange on the cone by building a pile of snow.

Station 3: Stationary Passing

Players partner up, stand 8-10' apart and pass back and forth using forehand & backhand. Work on proper technique, emphasize keeping the hands away from the body and sweeping the puck. Players should stand sideways so that they pass cross body.

Station 4: Relay Race w/ Ringette

Line with 2 players starts with Ringette. On coaches command race to fair cone and deliver ring to teammate...first team to cross goal line wins. Variation: player must execute one 360 turn before they pass off the ring.

Station 5: Transition Skating

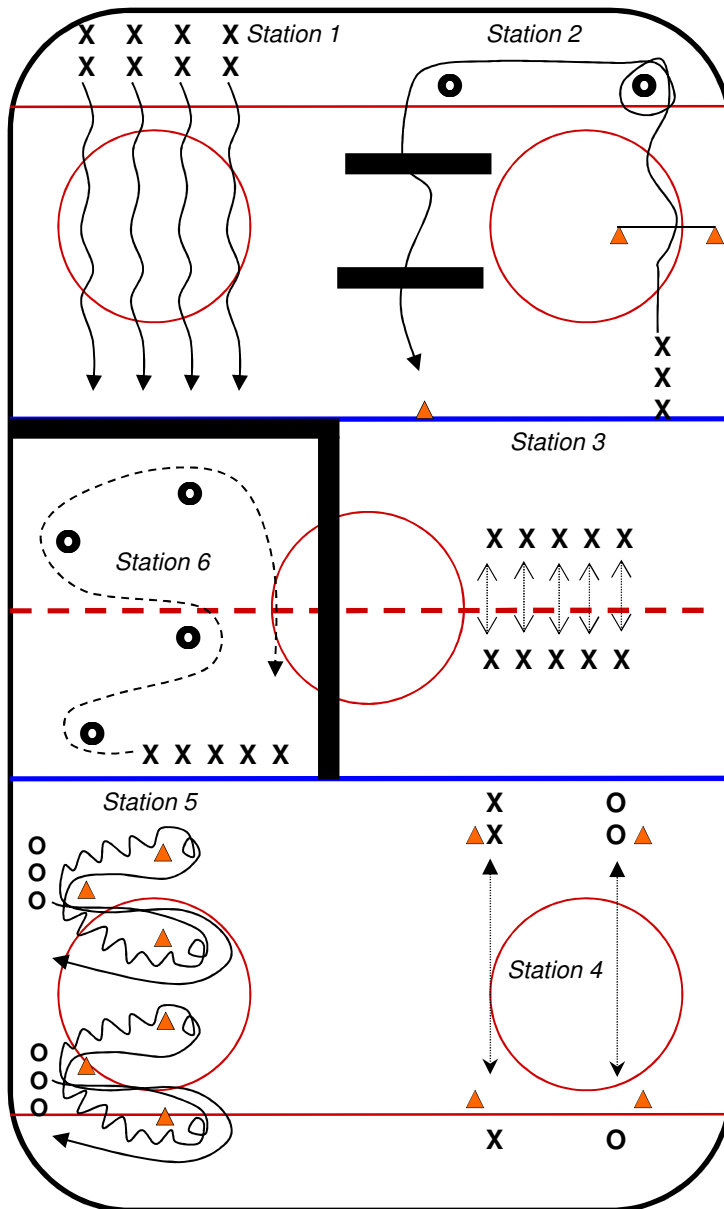
Players skate forwards to backwards to forwards around the cones. Begin by teaching the players s to stop at the cone to shift to backwards skating.

Station 6: Obstacle Course

Players push soccer ball around S shaped course using hands only. Players dribble ball with feet back to starting position.

FUN Game: Ball Tag: 9 Minutes

Players start on goal line and try to skate to far goal line without being tagged by coaches throwing nerf balls (or gloves) at players who attempt to dodge out of the way. If hit, the player must drop to their knees and get back up 3 times before they can rejoin the action.



Competitive Game: 9 Minutes

Cross Ice Hockey

Play 3v3 Cross-Ice with blue puck in both end zones. Create a fun zone in the neutral zone. All balls, ringettes, tires, bumpers, extra nets, cones, etc. are thrown into this zone. Instead of having players rest while others are playing cross ice they are in the FUN ZONE skating/shooting around the chaos. Every 90 seconds players switch zones.



6U Practice: 15 & 16

Theme/Goals: Fun/Skill development:

Equipment: Borders, nets, cones, tires & toy bag **Ice Time: 60 minutes**

Warm Up: 6 minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, nerf balls, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes

On the whistle, players do 3 hops on each foot before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

Stations 1: ABC's - Wave Skating

Swivel, slalom, standing partner push (make sure front player is in basic hockey stance), bkwd C-cuts, ride the broom

Station 2: Activity – Simon Says

High knees, log roll, march, squat, lateral step-overs, touch your toes, fall down & get up, jumps, drop stick pick it up, hockey goal celebration, hands in the air, dance, high fives with teammates....

Station 3: Shuttle Passing

Players skate around cone with pucks, pass the puck to next player in line & skates to starting point. Next player in line receives puck & continues drill. Have players focus on tape to tape passes.

Station 4: Relay Race

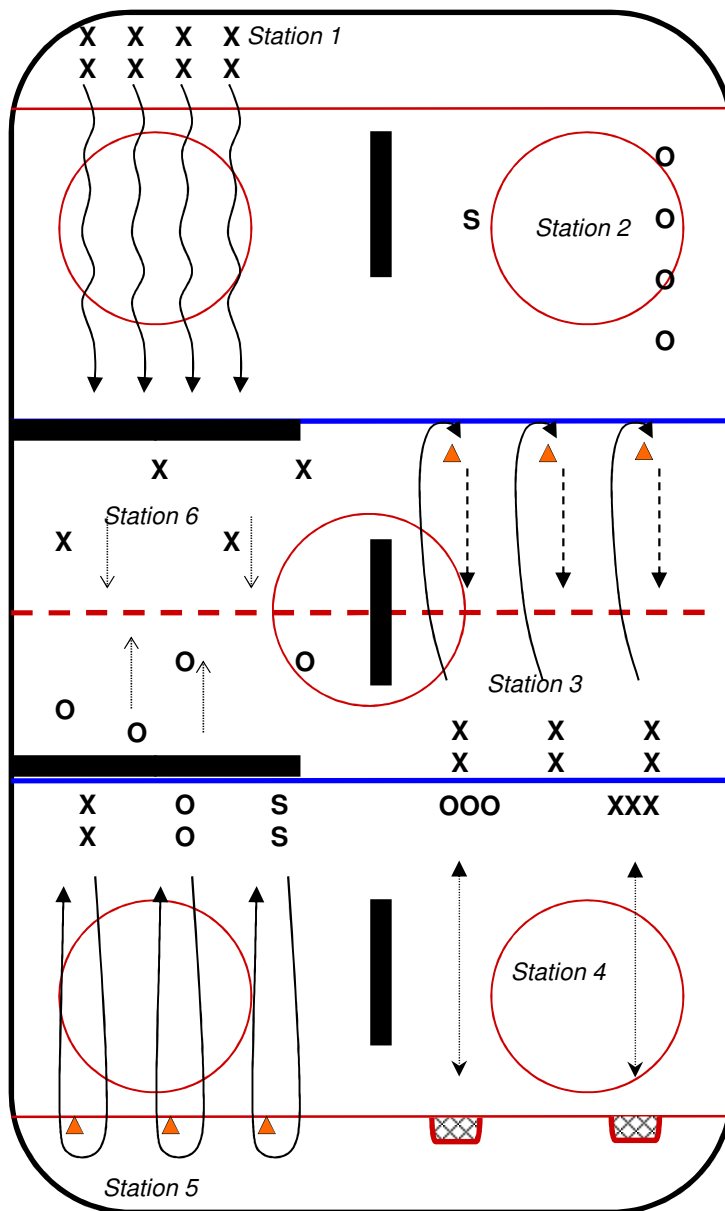
Player starts with puck, skate to goal and shoot. Players must execute on superman dive before they score. After they score they pull the puck out of the net and race back to hand off puck to next player...first team to finish wins...repeat.

Station 5: Puck-handling Shuttle Race

Players stickhandle puck around cone. When they get around cone they have to bring the puck back to their teammate carrying the puck using top hand only. Work on open ice one hand carry.

Station 6: Scatter ball

All Players have a tennis ball. Divide the players into 2 teams. Each team must stay on their designated half of the ice. For 30 seconds players shoot tennis balls to the other team's side of the ice. Team with the least number of balls on their side when time runs out wins. Repeat several times.



Competitive Game: 9 Minutes

Play 3v3 Cross-Ice with blue puck in both end zones. Create a fun zone in the neutral zone. All balls, tires, ringettes, nets, cones, etc. are thrown into this zone. Instead of having players rest they are in the fun zone skating/shooting. Every 90 sec. players switch zones.

FUN Game: 9 Minutes

Musical Pucks

Players skate around 1 end zone with a puck. On command "change" players leave their puck to find another puck. After a few rotations take 1 puck away. The player without a puck must fall to knees and get up 3 times before they can rejoin the game.



6U Practice: 17 & 18

Equipment: Borders, nets, cones, tires & toy bag

Theme/Goals: Fun/Skill development:

Ice Time: 60 minutes

Warm Up: 6 minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. (ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, nerf balls, tennis balls, etc.) Coaches set up stations.

Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes

On the whistle, players balance stick on butt end, 360 spin catch it before it falls. 2 times each way before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

Station 1: ABC's - Circle Skating

Left foot scooting around circle clockwise, right foot scooting counter clockwise, cross-over both directions. Keep stick to inside circle to help players lean and trust their edge.

Station 2: Activity – Ring Around the Rosie

Half the players skate clockwise around the tires while the other half skate counter clockwise around the nets. On coaches command players stop and skate the other direction. Players need to keep their heads up so they don't run into each other. Halfway through have players switch objects they are skating around.

Station 3: Stationary Passing

Players pass puck back and forth to each other as they skate up the ice. Players make one pass between each cone. Encourage tape to tape passes. Make sure they work on both forehand and backhand passes.

Station 4: Relay Race

Player dive under stick, sprint to tire stop and race back to line and high 5 (tag) teammate to go...working on stopping and transition.

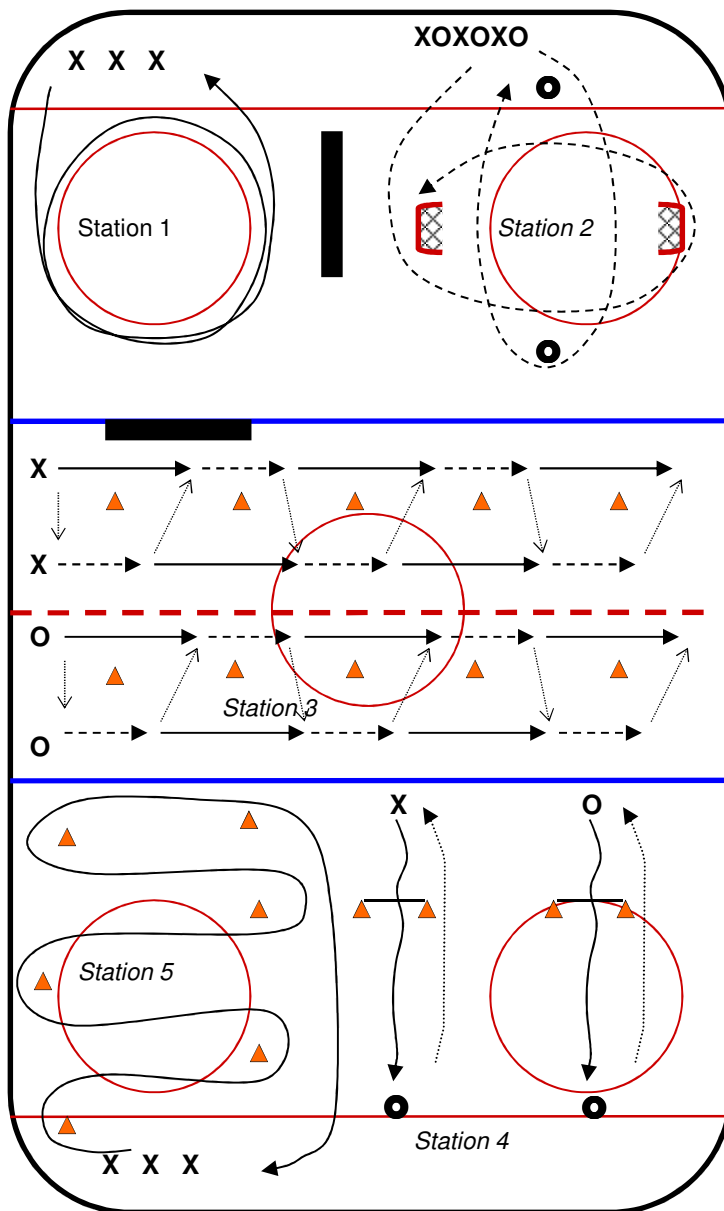
Station 5: S- Puck-handling

Players weave through cones in an S formation. Encourage players to stickhandle using forehand and backhand side of the blade.

Competitive Game: 9 minutes

Cross Ice Hockey

Play 3v3 or 4v4 Cross-Ice with blue puck in all three zones. Try to utilize the player numbers so players are active every other shift.



FUN Game: Skating: 9 minutes

Shark Attack

Sail the Seas: skate as fast as you can

Captain on Board: players stop facing coach and salute them

Man Overboard: players dive on their belly and get right back up

Hoist the Flag: players lie on back with 1 leg in the air

About Face: players turn towards boards and continue skating in other direction

Shark Attack: players must get to a face off dot before being tagged by a coach, only 2, 3, 4 or 5 players per a dot depending on the # of kids. Make sure you have less dots than kids- musical chair idea. Players must have their stick touching the face off dot.



6U Practice: 19 & 20

Equipment: Borders, nets, cones, tires & toy bag

Theme/Goals: Fun/Skill development:

Ice Time: 60 minutes

Warm Up: 6 minutes

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment. Coaches set up stations.

Stations: 6 Stations x 6 minutes

On the whistle, players pass stick thru legs in a figure 8 pattern 3 times before changing stations. Be sure to give players water after changing stations.

Stations 1: ABC's - Wave Skating

Pivot both directions, partner up for standing chariots, kneeling chariots-lead player hold stick blades down while back player holds the butt end of the sticks, Partner push v-stops -front player is backwards while back player skates forward push partner...player skating backwards works on v stops.

Station 2: Activity- Time to Clean Your Room

Set sticks aside, divide players into 2 teams. Create 2 goals using nets or stacked tires. Players pick up soccer balls, tennis balls, ringettes, pucks, softballs, stuffed animals, etc. and place them in designated goals within 60-90 seconds. The team with the most goals wins...repeats

Station 3: Stationary Passing

Players partner up, stand 8-10' apart and pass back and forth. Work on proper technique; emphasize keeping the hands away from the body and sweeping the puck. Players should stand sideways so that they pass cross body. 1st Players to make 6 complete passes tape to tape wins. Work on forehand & backhand passes.

Station 4: Relay Race

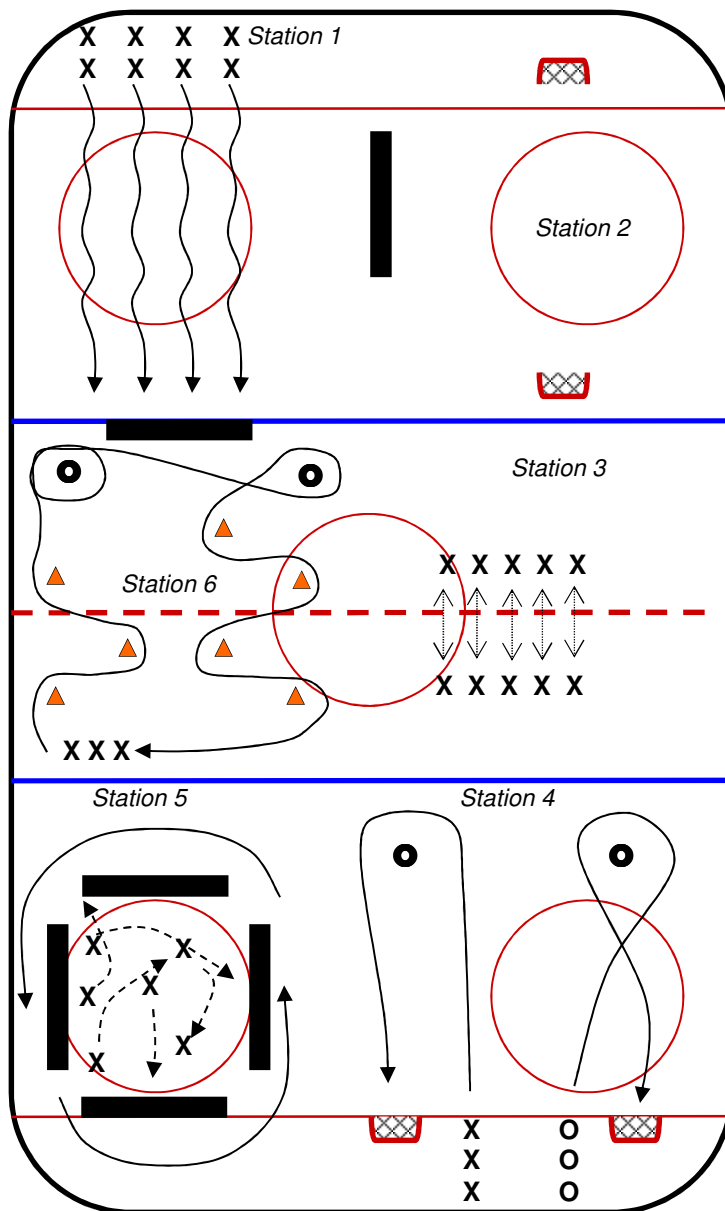
Players race around tires with puck and shoot on net. Must score before next player in line leaves. First follow pattern A the tires and then pattern B.

Station 5: Chaos Puck-handling

Players stickhandle blue pucks inside borders avoiding contact with the other skaters. On coaches command players leave pucks & chase coach around outside of all 3 borders- after 2 laps continue stickhandling inside borders. Change direction on coaches command. All players are involved.

Station 6: Obstacle Course

Players skate through course with emphasis on turns and edges. Have players maintain good control of their stick by leading with the stick blade around each cone.



Competitive Game: Cross Ice - 9 minutes

Play 3v3 or 4v4 Cross-Ice with blue puck in all three zones. Try to utilize the player numbers so players are active every other shift.

FUN Game: 9 Minutes

Scoro

All the pucks are in the center ice circle. Divide players into 2 teams. Each team starts on their goal line. On whistle each team try to get as many pucks as they can onto their own net. Players are allowed to steal puck from the other team and out of the opponents net. Team with the most pucks after 3 minutes wins- repeat