

Floor Hockey



Team sports are always popular with SO athletes and floor hockey is no exception. It is an exciting sport where contact is frequent and chances to score can develop very quickly. Successful teams have excellent pass and receiving skills, can shoot with speed and accuracy and have developed defensive and offensive strategies. During a game, players cover relatively small distances on the floor and some sprints are needed, but in general players walk and jog to stay in the play.

Moving forward with the ring is an easy skill to acquire, all that is needed is to put the stick inside the ring and move. Protecting the ring and looking ahead for teammates to pass to is also easily learned, and this makes floor hockey an SO sport favorite. After a few practices it is already possible to play games.

Although moving with the ring is much easier than running with a soccer ball or dribbling with a basketball, other floor hockey skills are harder to learn. Shooting (forehand) in the nets top corner, receiving fast rings, staying strong while in ring possession, goaltending and taking face offs are all 20-hour program skills to acquire.

Strength plays a big part in successful floor hockey teams. Face off, speed of shots, control of the ring and body position all require strength, and this is why good floor hockey teams have large and strong players. It is difficult to build strength during floor hockey practices. Building strength requires specific exercise often using weights. Other important physical elements such as speed, agility, flexibility and endurance must also be addressed. Most SO floor hockey programs only practice once a week, and this makes development of physical elements impossible. Additional sessions are required; Club Fit, fitness centers, and home exercises are necessary for improvement.

Our experience with floor hockey suggests that passing and receiving should be learned together first, followed by shooting, ring control and face offs. Goaltenders must also learn these same skills.

Practice is the only way to learn.

Skills required are listed in the floor hockey basic skill (next page). These sheets can be used as a guide, and when all skills are marked “yes”, players are ready for more advanced intermediate skills.

Guidelines for using the skill sheet for floor hockey

1. Playing floor hockey starts with passing and receiving.
2. When these are acquired (it can take more than 20 hours of practice and lots of home practice) shooting skills are started.
3. Follow each step of the skill sheet (one at a time) until all basic skills are acquired. Progress will be directly related to the amount of focused practice time.

Floor Hockey Basic Skills

Basic Skills: Passing and receiving YES NO Comments

Sub Skills		
Passing 10m apart 10/10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stationary Receiving 10m apart 10/10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moving 5m apart 10/10 Receiving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moving 5m apart 10/10 Passing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Basic Skills: Shooting YES NO Comments
From face-off distance

Sub Skills		
Wrist shot low 4/5 on goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wrist shot raised 4/5 on goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moving wrist shot raised 3/5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Backhand low 4/5 on goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Backhand raised 4/5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Basic Skill: Ring Control YES NO Comments

Sub Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spin left and right moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Face Off basic motion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strong pressure on stick (Moving through with 2 players Trying to take ring away) 4/5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**When athletes achieve all "YES", they have acquired basic skills.
Expectations are critical to skill acquisition**

20-hour acquisition

Skill Breakdown: Examples of priority elements to focus on during practice

Spend time on each one until acquired

1. Passing and Receiving: Ring position – Hand position on sticks - Head up – Arm position - Body facing pass direction - Backswing - Stepping into the pass – Follow through
Receiving – Eye – Body direction – Ring catching – Strong stance

(80% accuracy on all parts of nets, from face off distance)

2. Shooting: Hand placement – Backswing – Steps –Release (wrist and backhand) angle –Speed – Follow through



3. Ring Control: Grip –hand position – Spins (left and right)- One hand spins
4. Face Off: Eye on the ring – Listen for the whistle – Body position high vs. low - 2 hands on the stick – Sweeping motion
5. Goaltending: Body position – Being big – Angle stop – Catching – Stopping

Practice one skill at a time until it is acquired, starting with passing and receiving. Some of these skills might require less than 20-hour while others like raised shots will be longer.

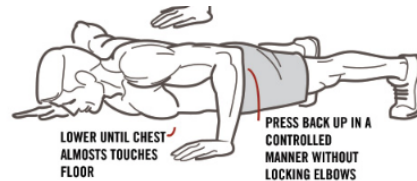
Home training for floor hockey: Shooting (45 minutes)
(80% accuracy on all parts of nets, from face off distance)
(15' = 15 minutes)

Warm up 15'

- Run 10'
- 4 Acceleration 20m

Skill Practice 15 minutes (need a stick and ring)

- 15 low shots forehand to a target
- 15 low shots backhand
- 15 raised shots forehand
- 15 raised shots backhand



Strength exercises 10 minutes

- 15 push ups
- 20 sit ups
- 15 lunges (each legs)
- 1' plank

Cool down 5' (easy jogging)

SO Floor Hockey practice example: (1 hour)

Focus SO skill training (Passing/Receiving)

Warm Up 10 minutes (run, stretching)

Teaching Skills 45 minutes

(SO athletes are visual learners, so always use a demonstration and generic players if possible. Slow down the demonstration when introducing a new skill and use hands to guide movements when necessary. You can also use technology to show skills)

Pass/Receive: (repeat 3 to 5 times) 20 minutes

Changing Expectations in Special Olympics

1. 5' Pass and receive with 2 players (non moving)
2. 5' Pass and receive with 2 players moving
3. 5' Backhand passes
4. 5' 4 corners pass drill (4 players form a square and pass to each others)

Game **scrimmage** **15** **minutes**

Pass/Receive: 15'

2 on 1 pass and receive – shoot on goal

3 (forwards) on 2 (defenses), power play pass and receive (at least 5 passes)

Cool down 5 minutes

Conclusion:

Strength, speed and shooting are the most crucial individual elements when playing floor hockey. Fast and strong players are difficult to stop and defenders will need equal strength to stop strong players unless tactics such as “double team” can be used. Acquiring strength, speed and ring skills are key to success.

Using the skill sheet is an excellent way to learn basic floor hockey skills and encourage athletes to practice as often as possible. Home practices are necessary to improve individual shots and ring control, and most importantly to acquire strength, speed, agility, endurance and flexibility needed to succeed in floor hockey.

Time in gymnasiums should be spent on specific floor hockey skills and team play. This is why it is so important to use Club Fit and home sessions to develop physical elements such as strength, instead of taking skill acquisition and tactical time from practices to do so.

Lesson Plan
Basic Skill Acquisition Program
(weekly or monthly)

Sport _____ Athlete Name: _____

Program Expectations

1- Weekly Practice (attend all practices)

Day (S) _____ Time _____

Location _____

“What the group is working on”:

2- Club Fit 100% attendance (Including Functional Testing exercises)

Day _____ Time _____

Location _____

“What you need to concentrate on”:

3- Basic Skill Development Homework (4 times per week - 1 hour per day)

Skill _____

“Individual Home Practice Objectives”