



OMHA U9 PILOT

2025-26



PILOT OVERVIEW

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The pilot applies exclusively to U9 MD teams. All teams begin with an extended development phase with a focus on individual skills and tactics starting on September 2, 2025.

During this period, coaches will deliver a standardized development program, supported by provided Hockey Canada practice plans.

Half-ice gameplay is permitted during this phase.

Following this phase, U9 MD teams will be eligible to transition to full-ice programming on November 1, 2025.



PROGRAM GUIDELINES

- Must maintain a minimum 2:1 practice-to-game ratio, including jamboree and tournament games.
- Coaches will complete evaluations of players at start of development phase, November 1, before January 9th and at the end of the season.
- Teams must use Hockey Canada U9 Practice Plans.
- Teams must provide access to practice and game video.



OMHA ROLE AND SUPPORT

- **OMHA U9 Pilot Lead** – Michael Dundas
(michael.dundas@omha.net)
- Provide access to U9 Pilot Resources.
- Confirm Practice and Game schedules for all participating associations and teams by **October 15th**.
- Ensure a minimum 2:1 practice-to-game ratio is being maintained.
- Conduct a customer experience survey provided by the OHF.





PILOT RESOURCES

RESOURCES

Resource Page: help.omha.net/u9pilot

- U9 Skills Matrix
- U9 Pilot Player Evaluation – Ice Plan
- U9 Pilot Player Evaluation Tool
- Hockey Canada Network App – TUTORIAL
 - This tutorial directs the Head Coach through the process to gain access to the HC Network App.



EVALUATIONS

- Teams will complete Player Evaluations **four (4)** times during the season:
 1. October 1st – October 10th
 2. November 1st – November 10th
 3. January 1st – January 9th
 4. End of Season (after March 1st)
- Player Evaluation sheets will be submitted by e-mail to michael.dundas@omha.net after each evaluation window.



PRACTICE PLANS

- Each Head Coach will have access to the U9 Skills Matrix and Practice Plans through the Hockey Canada Network App.
- It is expected coaches utilize these plans as a framework for their practice sessions throughout the season.
- OHF will be reviewing activity levels of every user; it is important that coaches are active in the HC Network App.



PRACTICE & GAME VIDEO

- It is understood not every arena has LiveBarn or other video access.
- Associations/Teams that do not have this access within their facilities should plan to submit video to the OMHA U9 Pilot Lead every month:
 - 2 Practices
 - 2 Games
- Submission can be sent by e-mailing the original files or by uploading to a video service such as YouTube or Vimeo and sharing the link.





PROGRAMMING SUMMARY



U9 SEASONAL STRUCTURE

MONTHS	September-October	November-January	January-March
PHASE	*Development 60 Days	First Season Nov. 1 – Jan. 9	Second Season Jan. 10 – Mar. 1
VOLUME	2:1 Practice to Game	2:1 Practice to Game	2:1 Practice to Game

* Extended Development Phase with focus on individual skills and tactics. Half-ice gameplay permitted.



AFFILIATION

AGE BY DEC. 31	DIVISION	CATEGORY	PLAY IN A HIGHER DIVISION?	MAY AFFILIATE?
8	U9	HL; LL	If deemed able by ability using parameters identified by the Association.	YES Only during full ice play
8	U9	MD	If deemed able by ability using parameters identified by the Association	YES Only during full ice play

- Affiliation will only be permitted from a team playing full-ice to another team playing full-ice.
- Affiliation could occur at the recreational level (Houseleague/local league) to a team participating in the U9 Pilot after Jan. 10th.





GAME PLAY GUIDELINES

U9 – DEVELOPMENT PHASE

SEPTEMBER 2 – OCTOBER 31

TEAM FORMAT:	Two-Team Model	GAME FORMAT:	4-v-4 plus Goaltenders
GAME LENGTH:	Determined by League	OFFICIALS:	1 or 2 Officials
WARM UP:	3 Minutes	SCORE KEPT:	No
PUCKS:	Blue/Black pucks		
PENALTIES:	• Referee puts arm up to signal penalty call. • Once the offending team has the puck, whistle is blown. • Referee explains to the coach what the penalty was and who received it. • Offending player goes to bench and misses next shift. • Teams play full strength.		



U9 – FIRST SEASON

NOVEMBER 1 – JANUARY 9

GAME LENGTH:	Determined by League	GAME FORMAT:	5-v-5 plus Goaltenders
WARM UP:	3 Minutes	OFFICIALS:	2 Official System
PUCKS:	Black pucks	SCORE KEPT:	Yes
PENALTIES:	• Penalty is assessed • Player goes to the players bench and is ineligible to return until one-minute of playing time has passed. • Teams play even strength • Penalty is recorded, one-minute on penalty clock, player can be placed back in rotation after one-minute has been served.		



U9 – SECOND SEASON

JANUARY 10 – END OF SEASON

GAME LENGTH:	Determined by League	GAME FORMAT:	5-v-5 plus Goaltenders
WARM UP:	3 minutes	OFFICIALS:	2 Official System
PUCKS:	Black pucks	SCORE KEPT:	Yes
PENALTIES:	• Regular full-ice game play rules will be in effect. • Including Power Play/Penalty Kill.		





FAQs

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- Can Exhibition Games played during the Development Phase be full-ice?
 - No
- How many Exhibition Games can be played during the Development Phase?
 - Must maintain a 2:1 practice to game ratio.
- What is the affiliation process for U9 MD teams and U9 MD players?
 - Affiliation will be permitted for players and teams when game structure is the same.



FAQs

- Are we allowed to keep score during the Nov. 1 to January 9 phase?
 - Yes.
- Do we use Game Sheet Inc. (GSI) for full ice games starting November 1st?
 - Yes, GSI must be used for ALL full ice games.
- What does the End of Season Phase look like after March 1st?
 - Individual leagues will determine their End of Season structure.





Hockey is fun.