



## Checking Skills

# U15

## CANADIAN PLAYER PATHWAY



The drills in this practice plan are designed to give coaches some ideas on getting their players ready for Body Checking by incorporating the progressions of skating, angling, stick checks and body contact. There are 4 practice plans in this series that provide the checking skills required to give players the skills and confidence to apply these skills in a game in a safe manner.

The plan is based on 60 minutes so depending on the length of the ice time, the suggested time to run each drill can be adapted to fit the ice time. Where longer ice times are provided coaches can add drills / games of their own.



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**Checking Skills #1 – 60 Mins**

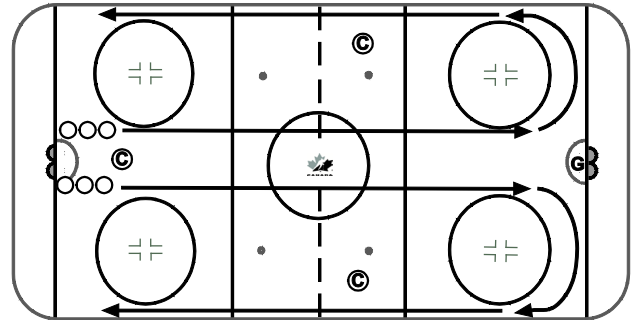
**Drill Name & Description**

**10 mins - Skating – Warm Up 1 - Forwards**

- Players line up in two lines on the hashmarks
- Both lines can go at the same time, or each line can alternate, skating down the middle to the far end and then back along the boards.
- Skills to be performed:
  - Inside edge glide
  - Heel skating (micro pushes)
  - 1 crossover each way
  - 2 crossovers each way

**Key Teaching Points**

- Technique is important in this warm-up to give the players lots of repetition on technical aspects of skating.



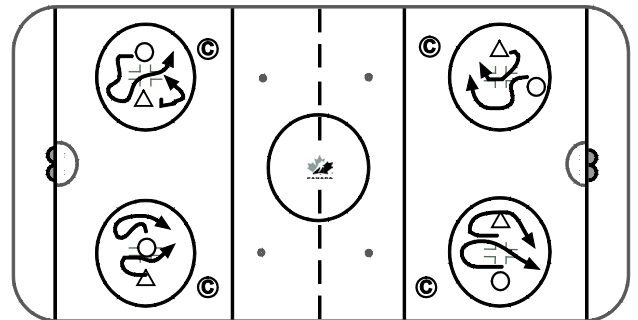
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Balance and Agility – Rabbit - Coyote**

- Players pass back and forth and can move anywhere. On the whistle, it becomes a game of keep away. When the coach blows the next whistle, whoever has the puck gets a point. Immediately start passing again and wait for the next whistle. Make it a best of 5 or 7

**Key Teaching Points**

- Offensive player protects the puck. Keep body between the puck and the checker. Use your body to shield the opponent
- Defensive player needs to close the gap, get stick on puck and body on body. Defensive player needs to “take his stick with him” and keep it on the ice.
- Coaches make sure players play penalty free



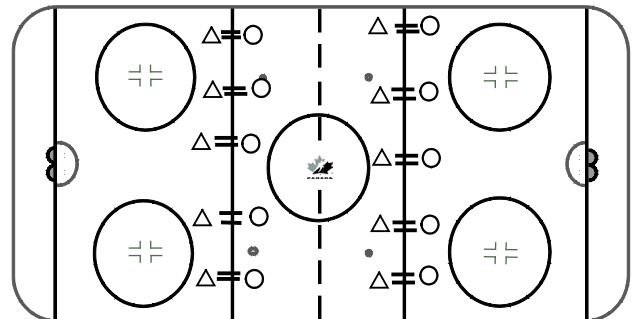
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Balance and Agility – Stick Battles #1**

- Players face each other and each one grabs the end of their partners' stick so they have both have a stick in each hand and each holding on to the same stick
- On the whistle players wrestle to throw their opponent off balance
- A player is considered off balance when a body part other than the skates touch the ice
- Push and pull – go for 15 – 20 seconds, then rest for 15 or 20 and repeat.

**Key Teaching Points**

- Solid and strong - wide stance
- Get low
- Use strong legs as the base





## Canadian Player Pathways U15 Checking Skills #1

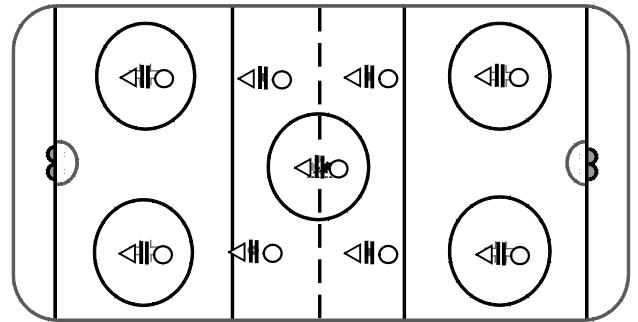
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Balance and Agility – Own the Dot #1

- Players position themselves at a faceoff dot and place a puck on the dot
- Players are positioned back to face
- On whistle player furthest from puck is trying to knock the puck off the dot, the player closest to the dot is trying to keep the puck on the dot.
- Must keep hands and stick down and play it “ clean “

#### Key Teaching Points

- Elbows down, stick on the ice
- Good low stable body position
- Drive with the legs



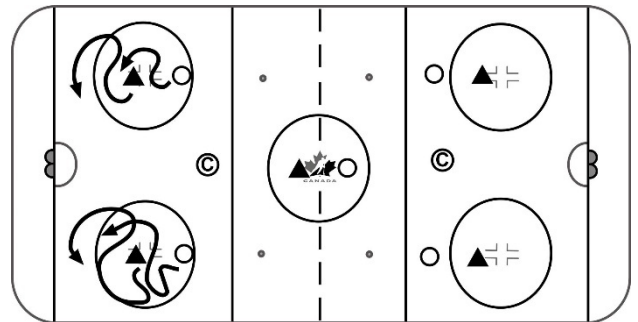
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Angling – Open Ice Contain

- Players in groups of 4 spread out around the ice – can use circles as contain zones to prevent collisions
- Defensive player starts skating backwards trying to elude forward who acts as forechecker. Quick, deceptive moves to try and lose the forechecker.
- Forechecker stay square, use stick to help contain

#### Key Teaching Points

- Quick Feet, deception, agility
- Both players need to read and react
- Turn into 1 on 1 for intensity and competition



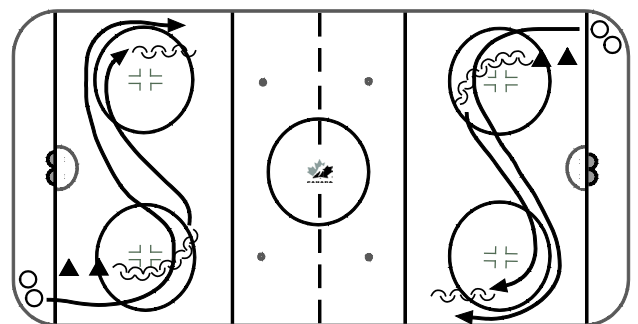
### Drill Name & Description

#### 10 mins - Angling – Circle Angling

- Key concept is for the defensive player to get and keep a tight gap on the offensive player
- Offensive player skates the circles and defensive player tries to stay a stick length away
- The drill then turns into a 1-1 drill back at the net

#### Key Teaching Points

- Defending player keeps a tight gap on the offensive player
- Defensive player keep shoulders square and tries to limit crossovers
- Defensive player tries to stay within one stick length
- Use proper form on transitions both backward to forward and forward to backward
- On the 1-1, defensive player takes inside ice and keeps the attack outside
- Stick on puck, body on body



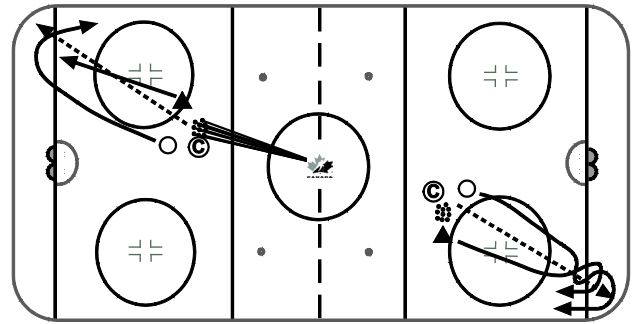
### Drill Name & Description

#### 10 mins - Angling – Puck Retrievals

- Start with pucks in the faceoff circle, 2 players start in circle.
- Coach dumps puck in corner and designates one player (player on inside of ice) to be the retriever and the other (player closest to boards) to put on passive forecheck pressure.
- Coach dumps puck so it bounces off the boards in the corner.
- Puck retriever has to take proper lane to puck - stick fake, head fake, and / or shoulder check going into the corner to retrieve puck
- Drill is designed to give players confidence in retrieving pucks and to learn the proper path to getting loose pucks when an opponent is near by

#### Key Teaching Points

- Get to puck first – first in first out
- Utilize fake to throw off forechecker (Scan / Shoulder Check)
- Can go either way, up boards or behind net



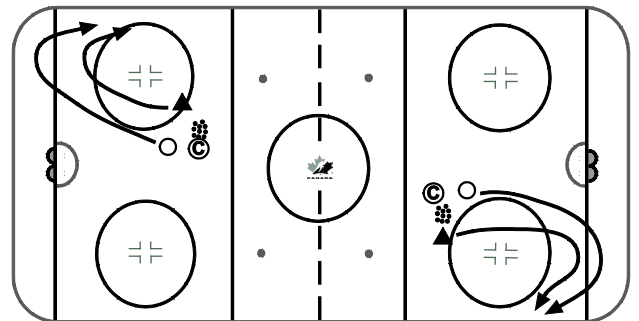
### Drill Name & Description

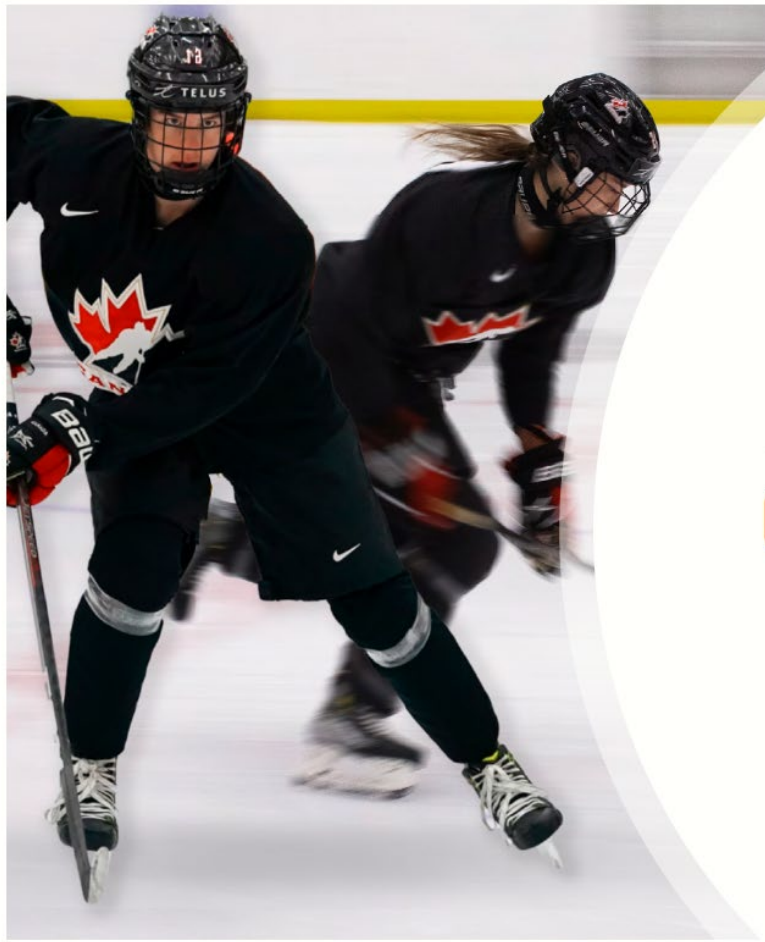
#### 10 mins - Angling – Corner Angling

- Pucks and players in faceoff circle.
- Coach dumps puck into corner, player on inside skates towards corner and retrieves puck.
- Player on outside, must take proper path and angle to force the puck carrier up the boards so the puck can be turned over
- Must match speed of offensive player, stick on stick (stick on puck) and be in a position so the puck carrier cannot turn back the other way

#### Key Teaching Points

- Control Skate, take proper pathway
- Stick on Puck, force puck carrier into poor position so puck can be taken away
- Scan / Shoulder Check





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## CANADIAN PLAYER PATHWAY



The drills in this practice plan are designed to give coaches some ideas on getting their players ready for Body Checking by incorporating the progressions of skating, angling, stick checks and body contact. There are 4 practice plans in this series that provide the checking skills required to give players the skills and confidence to apply these skills in a game in a safe manner.

The plan is based on 60 minutes so depending on the length of the ice time, the suggested time to run each drill can be adapted to fit the ice time. Where longer ice times are provided coaches can add drills / games of their own.



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**Checking Skills #2 – 60 Mins**

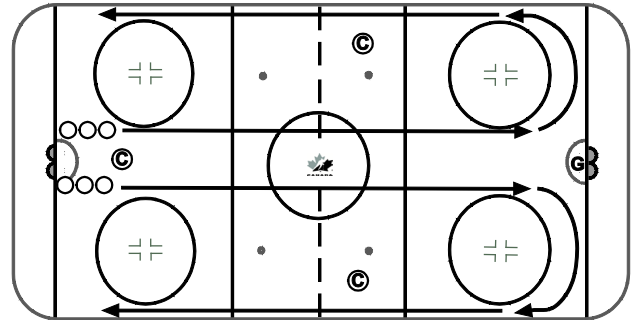
**Drill Name & Description**

**10 mins - Skating – Warm Up 1 - Forwards**

- Players line up in two lines on the hashmarks
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- Skills to be performed:
  - Inside edge glide
  - Heel skating (micro pushes)
  - 1 crossover each way
  - 2 crossovers each way

**Key Teaching Points**

- Technique is important in this warm-up to give the players lots of repetition on technical aspects of skating.



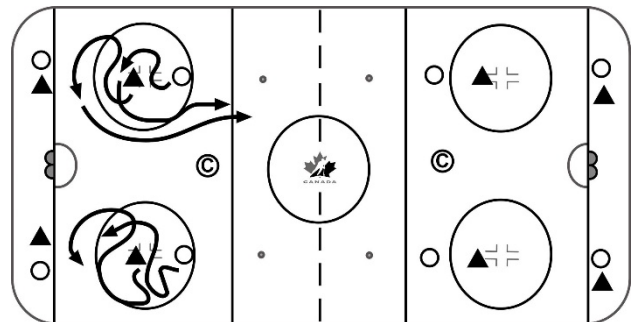
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Balance and Agility - Evasive Skating**

- Players line up facing each other inside blue line
- Defensive player starts skating backwards trying to elude forward who acts as forechecker. Quick, deceptive moves to try and lose the forechecker. Start with no puck.
- Forechecker tries to contain, angle and react, and use stick position to steer defenseman.
- Add puck, defender must skate out of zone, If Offensive player gets puck then try to score

**Key Teaching Points**

- Quick Feet, deception, agility
- Both players need to read and react
- Turn into 1 on 1 for intensity and competition



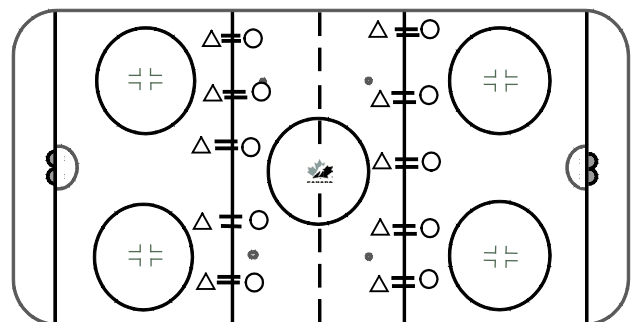
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Balance and Agility – Stick Battles #2**

- Use one stick placed horizontally between two players and they both place both hands on the stick shaft
- On the whistle each player tries to push or pull their opponent off balance.
- Push and pull – go for 15 – 20 seconds, then rest for 15 or 20 and repeat.

**Key Teaching Points**

- Wide and low
- Drive with legs





## Canadian Player Pathways U15 Checking Skills #2

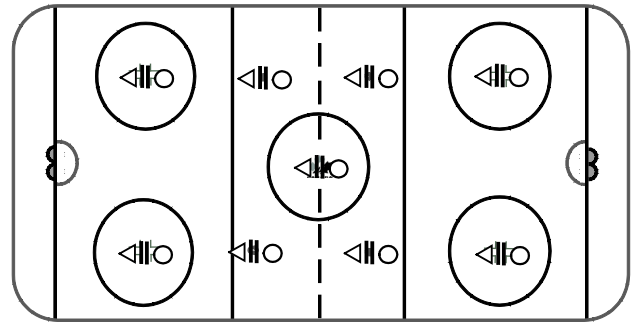
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Balance and Agility – Own the Dot #2

- Players position themselves at a faceoff dot and place a puck on the dot
- Players are positioned face to face
- On whistle, player furthest from puck is trying to knock the puck off the dot; the player closest to the dot is trying to keep the puck on the dot.
- Must keep hands and stick down and play it “ clean “

#### Key Teaching Points

- Elbows down, stick on the ice
- Good low stable body position
- Drive with the legs



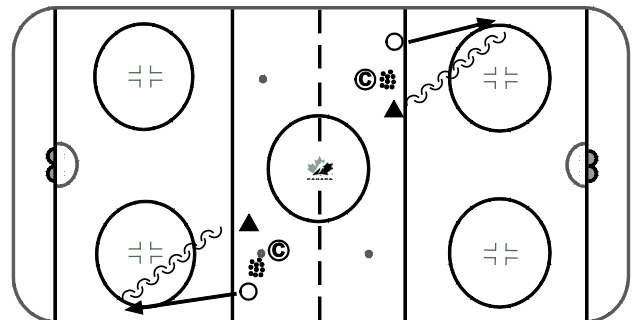
### Drill Name & Description

#### 7 mins - Angling – 1 on 1 Angling

- Players line up in two lines outside the blue line. Player on boards has puck and is on offence, player in middle of ice is on defence.
- On whistle, offensive player starts skating forwards, defensive player starts skating backwards. Defensive player angles offensive player into boards so he can take the puck.
- Defensive player has to take away time and space and must properly time pivot to turn to the outside to face the offensive player.

#### Key Teaching Points

- Use drill to teach both offence and defence tactics
- Defending player must control skate and gradually take away time and space
- Most important aspect is the angle and the timing – if those are right, the defensive player can simply take the puck



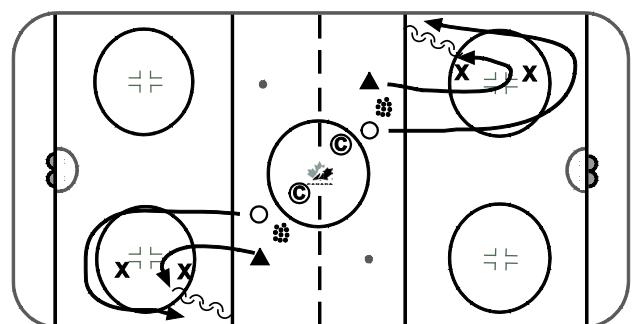
### Drill Name & Description

#### 8 mins - Angling – Open Ice Angling

- Place 2 pylons in the zone as shown, players in two lines at the blue line
- Offensive player skates towards own end with puck, defensive player skates a path inside. Offensive player skates around bottom pylon and turns towards boards to then skate up ice and out of the zone. Defensive player skates towards top pylon, pivots to the boards and then skates backwards to angle the offensive player towards the boards to try and keep the puck in.

#### Key Teaching Points

- Use drill to teach both offence and defence tactics
- Proper timing and body position by defensive player
- Keep inside shoulder lined up with outside shoulder of offensive player, stick on puck





## Canadian Player Pathways U15 Checking Skills #2

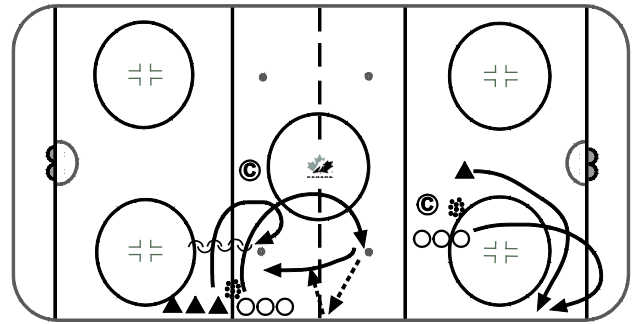
### Drill Name & Description

#### 10 mins - Stick Checks – Stick on Puck

- Pucks and players in faceoff circle.
- Coach dumps puck into corner, player on inside skates towards corner and retrieves puck.
- Player on outside, must take proper path and angle to force the puck carrier up the boards so the puck can be turned over
- Must match speed of offensive player, stick on stick (stick on puck) and be in a position so the puck carrier cannot turn back the other way
- Move to neutral zone
- Offensive player skates into neutral zone with puck, passes if boards to self to enter zone
- Defensive player must mirror pattern and angle and get stick on puck. (can skate forward entire way or pivot and play going backwards to get stick on puck)

#### Key Teaching Points

- Control Skate, take proper pathway
- Stick on Puck, force puck carrier into poor position so puck can be taken away







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**Checking Skills #3 – 60 Mins**

**Drill Name & Description**

**10 mins - Passing Warm Up**

**1) Rabbit / Coyote**

- Players grab a partner and spread out across half of the ice.
- One puck between two players.

**Progressions:**

1. Forehand pass – on 1st whistle pass, 2<sup>nd</sup> whistle play keep away 1 on 1. Player with puck on whistle protects it
2. Backhand pass - on 1st whistle pass, 2<sup>nd</sup> whistle play keep away 1 on 1. Player with puck on whistle protects it
3. 1 touch forehand pass - on 1st whistle pass, 2<sup>nd</sup> whistle play keep away 1 on 1. Player with puck on whistle protects it

-2 – 3 reps on each sequence

**2) Skating / Passing Warm Up**

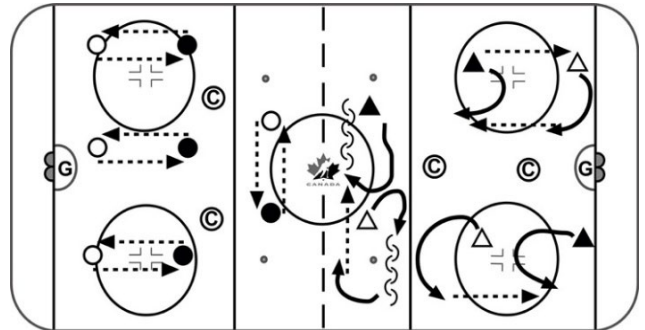
**(Head up, Move Feet, Keep Puck Loaded)**

- Defenseman will pass with a partner.
- Players can go anywhere but the key is when you receive a pass you need to get your head up to see the ice, move your feet and get it loaded which means be ready to pass the puck preferably on your forehand.
- Coaches whistle will control the pace.

**Progressions:**

1. Forehand Pass
2. Backhand Pass
3. Receive pass – Escape to backhand
4. Receive pass – Escape to backhand – slide stop

-2 - 3 reps on each sequence



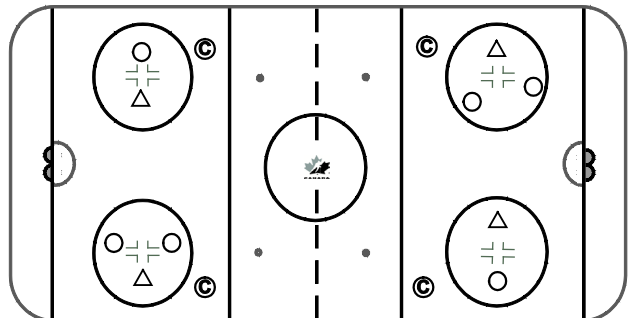
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Stick Checks – Stationary Poke Check**

- Players in circle facing each other – offensive player stickhandles puck, defensive player is in front and ready to poke check puck
- Player remains in a strong ready position stance
- Tuck elbow with top hand only on the stick
- Perform a quick extension of the arm and the stick straight out when the puck carrier is in the range of the check
- Maintain the ready balanced position at all times

**Key Teaching Points**

- Stay balanced and off toes of skates
- Time poke check when puck is moving from the side to the front





## Canadian Player Pathways U15 Checking Skills #3

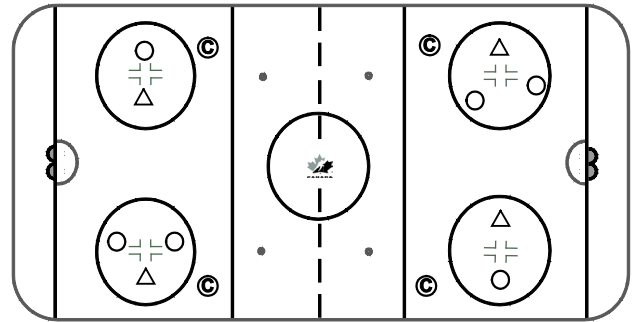
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Stick Checks – Stationary Sweep Check

- Players in circle facing each other – offensive player stickhandles puck, defensive player is in front and ready to sweep check puck
- Top hand on the stick, the shaft of the blade lays flat on the ice
- Sweeping motion of the stick to the side to knock the puck off the offensive players' stick

#### Key Teaching Points

- Stay balanced and off toes of skates
- Time sweep check when puck is moving from side to side



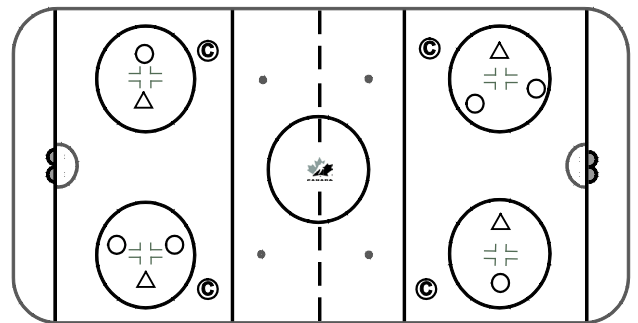
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Stick Checks – Stationary Stick Lift

- Players in circle standing next to each other – offensive player has puck, defensive player is to the side
- Lift the opponent's stick on the shaft near the heel of the stick enough to retrieve the puck
- After lifting the stick move body in front of the opponent to protect the puck and maintain control

#### Key Teaching Points

- Lift stick near bottom of shaft
- Take away hands of opponent after the stick lift
- Move in front of body to protect puck



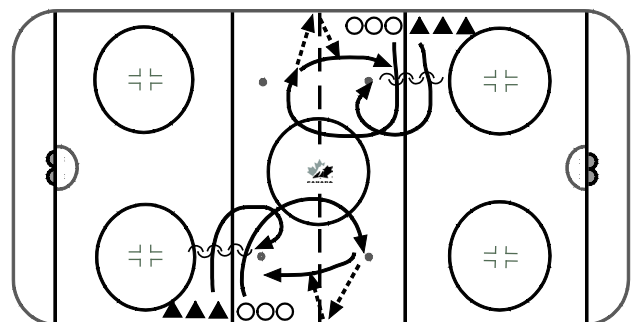
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Stick Checks – Moving Poke Check

- Players start on boards in neutral zone
- Offensive player skates into middle of ice, turns and bounces puck off boards and then picks it up to attack Defender 1 on 1.
- Defender mirrors offensive players' path and transitions to play 1 on 1
- When offensive player gets puck into range, defender extends stick and poke checks the puck off the stick.

#### Key Teaching Points

- Mirror offensive player, stay square
- Keep a tight gap
- Stay on balls of feet, don't lunge





## Canadian Player Pathways U15 Checking Skills #3

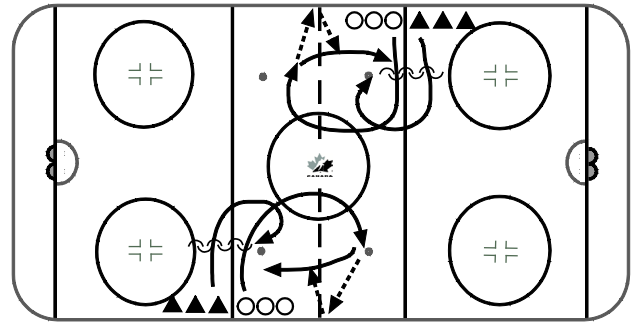
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Stick Checks – Moving Sweep Check

- Players start on boards in neutral zone
- Offensive player skates into middle of ice, turns and bounces puck off boards and then picks it up to attack Defender 1 on 1.
- Defender mirrors offensive players' path and transitions to play 1 on 1
- When offensive player gets puck into range, defender sweeps stick to the side to knock the puck off the stick.

#### Key Teaching Points

- Mirror offensive player, stay square
- Keep a tight gap
- Sweep stick to side to knock puck off stick



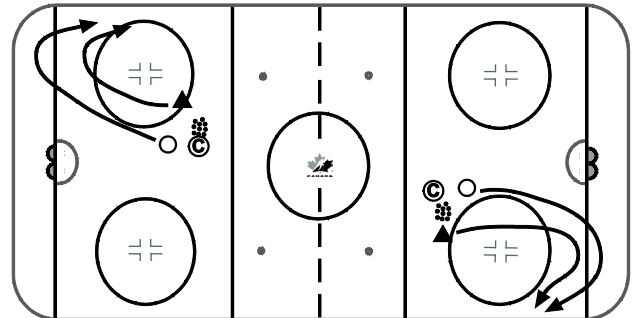
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Stick Checks – Moving Stick Lift

- Pucks and players in faceoff circle.
- Coach dumps puck into corner, player on inside skates towards corner and retrieves puck.
- Player on outside, must take proper path and angle to force the puck carrier up the boards
- Must match speed of offensive player, perform stick lift to take puck away

#### Key Teaching Points

- Control Skate, take proper pathway
- Stick on Puck, force puck carrier into poor position so a stick lift can be done





## Canadian Player Pathways U15 Checking Skills #3

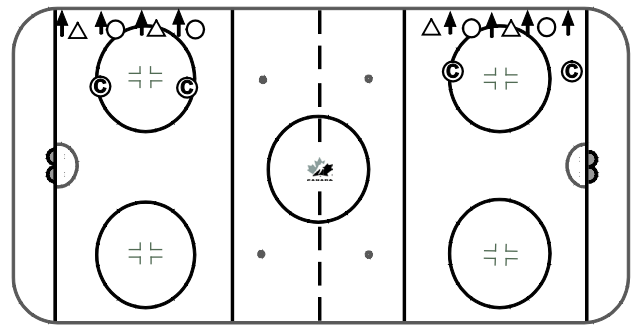
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Contact Confidence – Wall Bump – Stationary

- Players are stationary standing parallel to the boards
- Players should be close to the boards so that the skate nearest the boards is almost touching the boards.
- Players should be in proper hockey stance, knees bent, shoulders over knees over toes with feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart
- On coaches signal players should make contact with the boards – knee / hip / shoulder all make contact at the same time
- Knees stay bent; arms stay low, stick on ice as player makes contact with the boards.
- Repeat several times and perform on both sides

#### Key Teaching Points

- Keep knees bent, push up and in towards the boards to make contact
- Keep elbow down and close to side when contacting the boards so the shoulder is the main point of contact



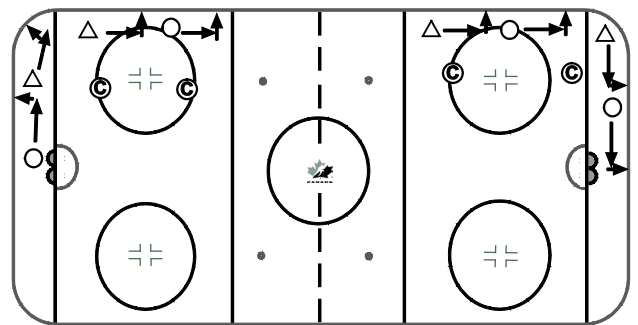
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Contact Confidence – Wall Bump – Moving

- Players start stationary near the boards, on coach's signal; players skate 3 strides then bump the boards, take 3 more strides and do it again. Can be done anywhere around the rink, make sure to go both ways so players get a chance to bump the boards using both shoulders
- Players should be close to the boards so that the skate nearest the boards is almost touching the boards.
- Players should be in proper hockey stance, knees bent, shoulders over knees over toes with feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart
- After 3 strides have been made players should make contact with the boards – knee / hip / shoulder all make contact at the same time
- Knees stay bent; arms stay low, stick on ice as player makes contact with the boards.
- Perform on both sides

#### Key Teaching Points

- Keep knees bent, push up and in towards the boards to make contact
- Keep elbow down and close to side when contacting the boards so the shoulder is the main point of contact



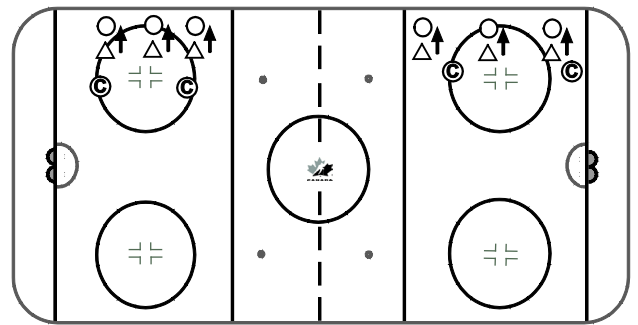
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Contact Confidence – Partner Wall Bump – Stationary**

- Players are lined up with a partner standing side by side and parallel to the boards
- Inside player should be close to the boards so that the skate nearest the boards is almost touching the boards. Outside player should be close enough so that the skates are almost touching
- Players should be in proper hockey stance, knees bent, shoulders over knees over toes with feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart
- On coaches signal, outside player should initiate contact with the inside player – with the shoulder being the principle point of contact. Player on inside should also push “up and out” to meet the contact.
- Knees stay bent, arms stay low, stick on ice as player makes contact with partner
- Repeat several times and perform on both sides

**Key Teaching Points**

- Keep knees bent, outside player pushes up and in towards the player on the inside to make contact
- Keep elbows down and close to the side when contact is made so the shoulder is the main point of contact



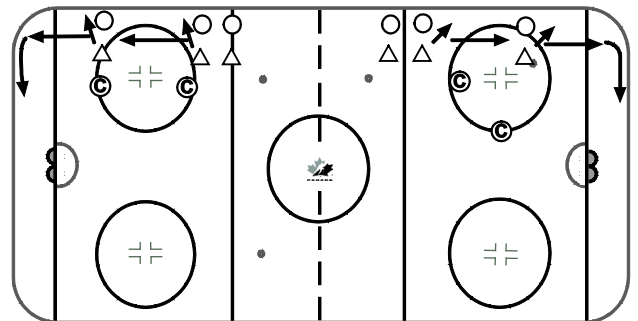
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Contact Confidence – Partner Wall Bump – Moving**

- Players are lined up with a partner standing side by side and parallel to the boards. Players skate 3 strides then bump take 3 more strides and do it again. Can be done anywhere around the rink, make sure to go both ways so players get a chance to bump using both shoulders
- Inside player should be close to the boards so that the skate nearest the boards is almost touching the boards. Outside player should be close enough so that the skates are almost touching
- Players should be in proper hockey stance, knees bent, shoulders over knees over toes with feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart
- On coaches signal, outside player should initiate contact with the inside player – with the shoulder being the principle point of contact. Player on inside should also push “up and out” to meet the contact.
- Knees stay bent, arms stay low, stick on ice as player makes contact with partner
- Perform going in both directions and have players change positions to practice both roles from both sides

**Key Teaching Points**

- Keep knees bent, outside player pushes up and in towards the player on the inside to make contact
- Keep elbows down and close to the side when contact is made so the shoulder is the main point of contact





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**Checking Skills #4 – 60 Mins**

**Drill Name & Description**

**10 mins - Passing Warm Up**

**1) Rabbit / Coyote**

- Players grab a partner and spread out across half of the ice.
- One puck between two players.

**Progressions:**

1. Forehand pass – on 1st whistle pass, 2<sup>nd</sup> whistle play keep away 1 on 1. Player with puck on whistle protects it
2. Backhand pass - on 1st whistle pass, 2<sup>nd</sup> whistle play keep away 1 on 1. Player with puck on whistle protects it
3. 1 touch forehand pass - on 1st whistle pass, 2<sup>nd</sup> whistle play keep away 1 on 1. Player with puck on whistle protects it

-2 – 3 reps on each sequence

**2) Skating / Passing Warm Up**

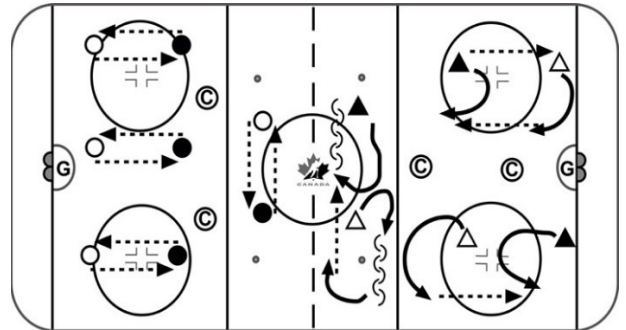
**(Head up, Move Feet, Keep Puck Loaded)**

- Defenseman will pass with a partner.
- Players can go anywhere but the key is when you receive a pass you need to get your head up to see the ice, move your feet and get it loaded which means be ready to pass the puck preferably on your forehand.
- Coaches whistle will control the pace.

**Progressions:**

1. Forehand Pass
2. Backhand Pass
3. Receive pass – Escape to backhand
4. Receive pass – Escape to backhand – slide stop

-2 - 3 reps on each sequence



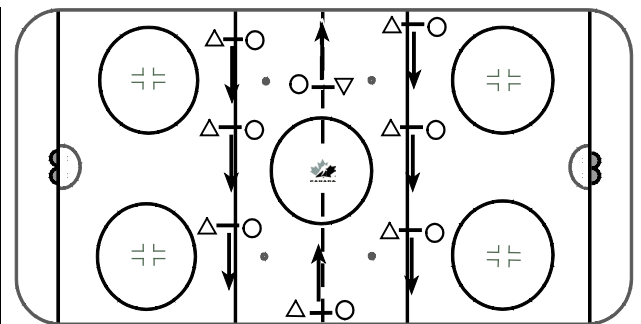
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Contact Confidence – Partner Bump Open Ice**

- Players line up side by side in pairs along blue line
- Pairs move across ice bumping each other with shoulders
- Take 3 strides each and bump
- Make sure to lead with shoulders and not the head

**Key Teaching Points**

- Low, wide, strong position
- Initiate the bump with drive from the legs



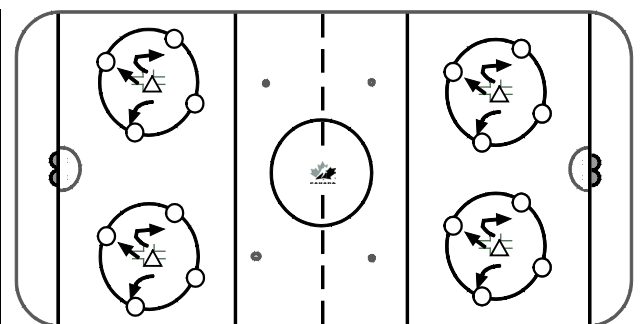
**Drill Name & Description**

**5 mins - Contact Confidence – Circle Bump**

- Place 4 - 5 players around the outside of the circle with inside foot on the circle and shoulder facing the centre dot
- One player on the dot in the middle of the circle
- On coaches signal, player in middle skates towards any of the players on the outside and tries to bump them off the circle using only the shoulder
- Both players must stay low and use shoulders to absorb hit.
- After player in middle hits each of the players on the outside, change players.

**Key Teaching Points**

- Low, wide, strong position
- Initiate the bump with drive from the legs







## Canadian Player Pathways U15 Checking Skills #4

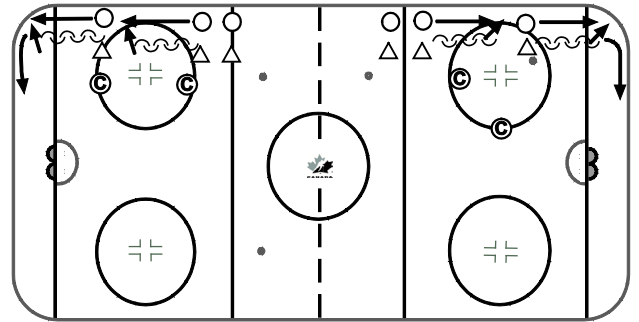
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Contact Confidence – Partner Wall Bump – Reverse

- Players are lined up with a partner – one facing forward, the other facing backward. Outside shoulder of forward facing player should be in line with inside shoulder of backward facing player. Players each skate 3 strides then bump take 3 more strides and do it again. Can be done anywhere around the rink, make sure to go both ways so players get a chance to practice both roles
- Forward facing player should be close to the boards to absorb the contact. Backward facing player will move up and in to put the shoulder into the chest of the oncoming player
- Players should be in proper hockey stance, knees bent, shoulders over knees over toes with feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart
- On coaches signal, outside player should initiate contact with the inside player – with the shoulder being the principle point of contact. Player on inside should be close to the boards to absorb the contact
- Knees stay bent, arms stay low, stick on ice as player makes contact
- Perform going in both directions and have players change positions to practice both roles from both sides

#### Key Teaching Points

- Keep knees bent, outside player pushes up and in towards the player on the inside to make contact
- Keep elbows down and close to the side when contact is made so the shoulder is the main point of contact



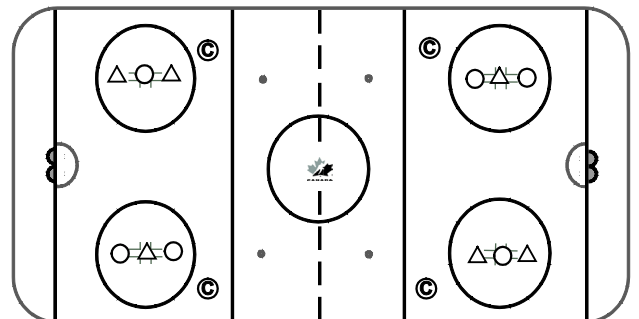
### Drill Name & Description

#### 5 mins - Contact Confidence – Stationary Bump

- Place 3 players in a circle all facing the same way and in their hockey stance
- Player in middle has to be ready to absorb the contact by staying in a balanced hockey stance and ready for the contact.
- Players on the outside alternate bumping the player in the middle
- Player in middle can initiate contact with players on the outside.
- 3 – 5 bumps from each player then change positions

#### Key Teaching Points

- Make sure players stay low, with elbow in, stick on ice and lead with shoulder not head
- Rotate players through all 3 positions





## Canadian Player Pathways U15 Checking Skills #4

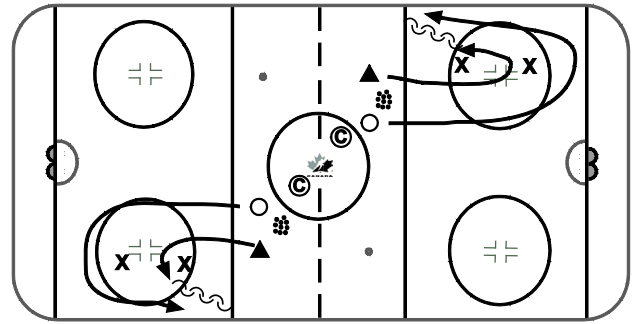
### Drill Name & Description

#### 10 mins - Contact Confidence – Receiving a Body Check

- Place two pylons as shown on the ice
- One player skates forward with the puck down below the low pylon, turns towards the boards and skates up ice with the puck towards the blue line, the other player skates forward below the high pylon then pivots and skates backward
- Player now skating backwards angles off the puck carrier and makes contact along the boards.
- Player skating forwards practices getting into position to receive the body check. Close to boards, knees bent arms and stick down using the boards to absorb the contact

#### Key Teaching Points

- Keep knees bent, outside player pushes up and in towards the player on the inside to make contact
- Keep elbows down and close to the side when contact is made so the shoulder is the main point of contact



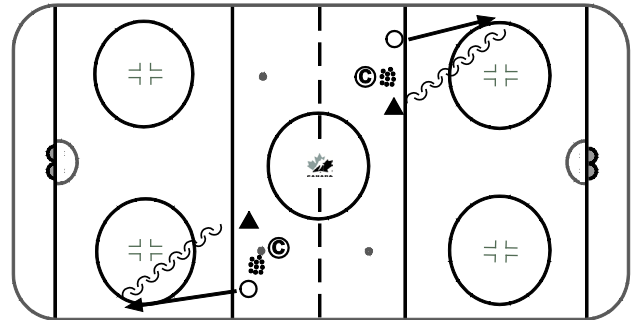
### Drill Name & Description

#### 10 mins - Body Checking – Giving / Receiving 1

- Players line up along boards as shown
- Player near boards has a puck and skates forwards into the zone. Player skating backwards has to angle off the puck carrier and deliver a body check to the puck carrier.
- Player skating forwards practices getting into position to receive the body check. Close to boards, knees bent arms and stick down using the boards to absorb the contact
- Player delivering the body check must keep knees bent, arms down and stick on ice – after contact is made, defensive player should look to find the puck and be ready to go on offence

#### Key Teaching Points

- Keep knees bent, outside player pushes up and in towards the player on the inside to make contact
- Keep elbows down and close to the side when contact is made so the shoulder is the main point of contact



### Drill Name & Description

#### 10 mins - Body Checking – Giving / Receiving 2

- Place two pylons as shown on the ice
- One player skates fwd with the puck down below the low pylon, turns towards the boards and skates up ice with the puck towards the blue line, the other player skates fwd below the high pylon then pivots and skates bwd
- Player now skating backwards angles off the puck carrier and makes contact along the boards.
- Player skating forwards practices getting into position to receive the body check. Close to boards, knees bent arms and stick down using the boards to absorb the contact

#### Key Teaching Points

- Keep knees bent, outside player pushes up and in towards the player on the inside to make contact
- Keep elbows down and close to the side when contact is made so the shoulder is the main point of contact

