# Contents

1. Introduction 1
2. Tournament/Competitions at Different Levels 3
4. Equipment Details 6
5. Fundamental Techniques & Teaching Stages 8
6. Sports Training: General and Specific 10
7. Rules and Regulations 13
8. Team Composition, Selection Method & Management 17
9. Scoring Pattern 19
10. Tactics 23
Introduction

Games played with curved sticks and a ball are known to mankind for the last several thousands of years. There are 4000-year-old drawings from Egypt. Hurling dates to before 1272BC. And there is a depiction from 500BC in Ancient Greece when the game was called "kerytezin" because it was played with a horn and a ball-like object. In Inner Mongolia, China, the Daur people have been playing Beikou (a game similar to modern field hockey) for about 1,000 years. There were hockey-like games throughout Europe during the middle Ages and the word 'hockey' was recorded in the Galway Statutes of 1527.

The modern game grew from English public schools in the early 19th century. The first club was formed in 1849 at Blackheath in south-east London, but the modern rules grew out of a version played by Middlesex cricket clubs for winter sport. Teddington Hockey Club formed the modern game by introducing the striking circle and changing the ball to a sphere from a rubber cube. The Hockey Association was founded in 1886. The first international tournament took place in 1895 (Ireland 3, Wales 0) and the International Rules Board was founded in 1900. Hockey was played at the Summer Olympics in 1908 and 1920. It was dropped in 1924, leading to the foundation of the Federation Internationale de Hockey (FIH) as an
international governing body by seven continental European nations, and hockey was introduced in 1928.

The game had been taken to India by British servicemen and the first club was formed in Calcutta in 1885. The Beighton Cup and the Aga Khan tournament commenced within ten years. Entering the Olympics in 1928, India won all five games without conceding a goal and won from 1932 until 1956 and then in 1964 and 1980. Pakistan won in 1960, 1968 and 1984.

In the early 1970s artificial turf began to be used. Synthetic pitches changed most aspects of hockey, gaining speed. New tactics and techniques such as the Indian dribble developed, followed by new rules. The switch over to synthetic surface ended Indian and Pakistani domination because artificial turf was too expensive-in comparison to the wealthier European countries - and since the 1970s Australia, The Netherlands and Germany have dominated at the Olympics.
Tournaments/Competitions
at Different Levels

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS
The biggest two field hockey tournaments are undoubtedly the Olympic Games
tournament, and the Hockey World Cup, which are held every 4 years. Hockey
tournaments are held at continental level after every four years. Apart from
this, there is the Champions Trophy held each year for the six top-ranked teams.
Field hockey has also been played at the Commonwealth Games since 1998. In
men-hockey, India has won eight times Olympic gold and Pakistan lifted World
Cup four times. In women-hockey, Australia has won three times Olympic gold
medals while The Netherlands has clinched the World Cup six times. Sultan
Azlan Shah Hockey Tournament held annually in Malaysia is becoming a
prominent Hockey Tournament where teams around the world participate.

NATIONAL LEVEL TOURNAMENTS
1. All India MCC Murugappa Gold Cup Hockey Tournament, Chennai[T.N.]
2. All India Gurmeet Memorial Hockey Tournament, Chandigarh [Punjab]
3. Indian Oil Surjit Hockey Tournament, Jalandhar[Punjab]
4. Nehru Hockey Tournament, Delhi
5. All India Chhatrapati Shivaji Hockey Tournament, Delhi
6. All India Aagha Khan Hockey Tournament, Mumbai[Maharashtra]
7. All India Bombay Gold Cup Hockey Tournament, Mumbai[Maharashtra]
8. All India Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey Tournament, Delhi
9. All India Lal Bahadur Shastri Hockey Tournament, Delhi
10. All India K D singh Babu Memorial Invitational Prize Money Hockey
    Tournament, Lucknow[U.P.]
11. All India Indira Gold Cup Hockey Tournament, Jammu [J & K]
12. All India Beighton Cup Hockey Tournament, Kolkata [W.B]
13. Senior National Hockey Tournament
14. Junior National Hockey Tournament
15. Sub-junior National Hockey Tournament

**Premier Hockey League:** The competition was first played in 2005 involving 5 teams. Premier Hockey league was initiated by Indian Hockey Federation (IHF) with active support from sports channel ESPN India. First season had two tiers - division 1 and division 2, but from 2007 season onwards division 2 was scrapped.

The 5 inaugural members of the new Premier Hockey League in 2005 were Bangalore Hi-Fliers, Chennai Veerans, Hyderabad Sultans, Maratha Warriors and Sher-e-Jalandhar.
MARKING

- 100 × 60 yard (91.4 m × 55 m) rectangular field.
- The goal is 7 feet (2.14 m) high and 12 feet (3.66 m) wide.
- The semi-circle is of 16 yards (14.63 m) from the goal known as the shooting circle (or D or arc)
- The dotted line is 5 yards (5 m) from the semi-circle
- The lines across the field are 25 yards (22.9 m) from each end-line and in the center of the field.
- The penalty spot or stroke mark is placed 7 yards (6.4 m) from the center of each goal.
Equipment Details

Hockey Sticks
The stick has a curved head, is rounded on one side and is flat on the left-hand side. The ball can only be touched with the flat side of the stick. The stick is made of hardwood with a minimum weight of 12 ounces and maximum weight of 28 ounces. Each player carries a "stick", normally a little over 90 cm (3 ft) long and traditionally made of wood but now often made with fiberglass, kevlar and carbon fiber composites, with a rounded handle flattened on the left side and with a hook at the bottom. Metal may not be used in hockey sticks. It was recently discovered that increasing the depth of the face bow made it easier to get high speeds from the drag flick and made the stroke easier to execute. At first, after this feature was introduced, the Hockey Rules Board placed a limit of 50 mm on the maximum depth of bow over the length of the stick but experience quickly demonstrated this to be excessive. New rules (2006) now limit this curve to less than 25 mm so as to limit the power with which the ball can be flicked.

Hockey ball
The ball, weighs between 5½ ounces and 5¾ ounces with a circumference of $8\frac{3}{16}$ inches to 9¼ inches. The hardwood sticks are 36-38 inches long. Players may strike the ball only with the flat side of the stick.

The Goals
Goal cages are 7 feet (2.14m) high, 12 feet (3.66m) wide and 4 feet (1.22m) deep.
General Player equipment
Many players wear mouth guards to protect teeth and gums from impacts from the ball or stick. Some local rules require their use. Many players also wear shin guards, and again these may be required equipment in some areas. Many players wear astro gloves: a padded glove which is designed to protect hands from abrasion from contact with the ground (especially that of sand-based astro pitches), and some even protect against impact from a ball or a stick. A few competitions require goggles to protect the eyes. Defenders may sometimes use short corner masks; these are designed to reduce the impact of a drag flick from short corners, though they do not provide guaranteed protection.

Goalkeeping equipment
A goalkeeper makes a goal save. Equipment worn here is typical gear for a goalkeeper.

The 2007 rulebook has seen major changes regarding goalkeepers. A fully-equipped goalkeeper must wear a helmet, leg guards and kickers. Usually he wears extensive additional protective equipment including chest guards, padded shorts, heavily padded hand protectors, groin protectors, neck guards, arm guards, and like all players, must carry a stick. A goalkeeper may not cross the 23 m line (although he may remove his helmet and take a penalty stroke at the other end of the field). However, if the goalkeeper elects to wear only a helmet (and a different colored shirt), he may cross the 23 m line if he has removed their helmet (and placed it safely off the field of play). If play returns to the circle without the goalkeeper having opportunity to replace the helmet, he still has 'goalkeeping privileges', that is, he is not limited to using his stick to play the ball while it is in the circle. The helmet must be worn while defending penalty corners and penalty strokes.

It is now also possible for teams to have a full eleven outfield players - and no goalkeeper at all. No player may wear a helmet or other goalkeeping equipment, nor will any player be able to play the ball other than with their stick. This may be used to offer a tactical advantage, or to allow for play to commence if no goalkeeper or kit is available.
Fundamental Techniques and Teaching Stages

1. **Rolling**: Rolling is an important skill of hockey. It has four main parts:
   - **Grip**: The ‘V’ shape formed by index finger and thumb of left hand will be placed on the top of the handle, pointing downward on the inner edge of hockey stick. The ‘V’ shape of index finger and thumb of right hand will be placed slightly above middle of stick and pointing downwards on the inner edge.
   - **Stance**: Knee slightly flexed and upper body is slightly bent from waist.
   - **Placement of ball**: The ball is placed on the side of the body towards right but slightly ahead of body.

2. **Execution and Follow through**: Gently push the ball ahead keeping the stick and ball in contact.

3. **Dribbling**:
   - **Grip**: The ‘V’ shape formed by index finger and thumb of left hand will be placed on the inner edge of top of the handle of the hockey stick pointing downward and the right hand holds the stick slightly above the middle of the stick.
   - **Stance**: Knees slightly flexed, feet apart according to your shoulder width with upper body bending forward from waist.
   - **Placement of ball**: Place the ball in front of the right leg about 8 to 12 inches away.
   - **Execution and follow through**: Tap the ball from plain surface of middle of the blade towards left, pushing the stick by left hand in the air and tapping the ball from the reverse stick in front of the left foot towards right. The tapping movement from right to left and from left to right is repeated.

4. **Push Pass**: Push is most important skill in hockey. Its value lies in its accuracy over both short and intermediate distance.
• **Grip:** - The grip is essentially the same as for the dribble and the grip should be tight. V shape formed by index finger and thumb of right hand shall be on the inner edge pointing downward. Index finger of the right hand points downward for better control.

• **Stance:** - Assuming a sideward stance, place the ball in front of left foot in such a way so that left shoulder is facing towards target. Bend forward from the waist and flex the knees.

• **Placement of the ball:** - Ball should be positioned in line with right shoulder.

• **Execution and Follow through:** - Push the ball forward towards the target by the double action i.e. left hand pushing the stick backward and right hand pushing the stick forward. Ensure that the ball moves along with the ground. Keep the stick as close to the ground as possible in the follow through.

5. **Stopping**

• **Grip:** - Left hand should be placed on the handle of the hockey stick and right hand should be approximately near the middle part of the stick.

• **Stance/Body Position:** - Body should be facing the direction of the ball, knees should be flexed and body should slightly bend forward.

• **Execution and Follow-through:** - While the ball is coming towards you bring the stick forward in the line of the ball and place it on the ground making sure that stick is slightly inclined forward from the top. Ensure that right hand grip is loose during contact of the stick and ball so as to absorb the shock. In case the ball deflects, make sure to control the ball.

6. **Hitting**

• **Grip:** - Hold the stick by left hand either at the top of the stick or by leaving 1 to 3 inches from the top of the stick as per the convenience. Right hand holds the stick immediately below the left hand making sure that no gap exists between both hands.

• **Body Position:** - Assume a sideward stance so that left shoulder pointing towards the target. Keep the left foot forward; slightly bend the knees 9 to 12 inches.

• **Placement of the ball:** - Keep the ball in front of left foot toe.

• **Execution and Follow through:**
  1. **Back Lift:** - Left arm close to body, bring the stick back, in level with the shoulder.
  2. **Contact:** - Swing the stick down towards the ball, so that middle part of the blade of the stick comes in contact with the middle part of the ball. Grip should be kept firm at the contact with the ball.
  3. **Transfer of Body Weight:** - While bringing the stick down shift the body weight from right to left foot. Heel of right foot rises from the ground or comes forward in order to maintain balance.
GENERAL EXERCISE

PURPOSE:
General exercises are given for the improvement of general physical co-ordination, skills, general tactical efficiency etc.
- Normally these exercises are given during preparatory period.
- For recovery & relaxation
- The exercises which must be given for the training of a hockey player are as follows:
  - Cross country, swimming, gymnastic, playing different ball games.

SPECIAL EXERCISE

PURPOSE:
These are given either in preparatory period or competition period.
- Improvement of specific motor abilities such as strength, speed, power, endurance etc.
- Technical skills, tactical efficiency.
- Maintenance of fitness, technical and tactical aspect.
- Development of psychic factors

For the hockey players we must give following special exercises:
- Specific condition exercises.
- Minor games with hockey & balls.
- Technical and Tactical aspects.
COMPETITION EXERCISE

PURPOSE:
- Achievement of top form.
- Improvement and stabilization of high specific psychic and motor abilities.
- Perfection of tactical efficiency.

Competition exercises to be given to hockey players are as follows:
- Competition game to be played on a bigger or smaller field.
- Playing with less number of players.
- Playing against more number of players.

LEAD UP GAMES

1: Counting Fingers
Players are divided in pairs who are assigned numbers as one and two. Each pair is given a ball. Number one stand about 25 yards away from Number two as indicated below. All number ones take a ball.

```
X   x
X   x
X   x
X   x
X   x
```

On the signal, all number one, shall dribble (European or Indian style) towards their partners. While they are dribbling, all numbers two, shall raise their right arm up and point fingers. Number one, shall look up and speak the number as indicated by the partner. All number one, shall speak at least thrice the number of finger raised by their partner. The partner i.e. number two, too shall change the number of finger pointed by them. The ball may be passed to number two, and number one, shall go back to their original place. Now number two, shall dribble and speak the number of finger raised by their partner.

Suggestions:-
- Ball must remain in control while dribbling up.
- Partners may provide feedback about the response given.
- Speed may be increased gradually.
2: Dribbling in pairs
Players are divided in pairs. They shall stand facing in same direction about 1 meter away. Each partner of a pair has a hockey stick and a ball. On signal, the partner standing in front dribble the ball in a zigzag way changing the speed whereas the other partner follows his/her partner and tries to maintain the same gap. On a whistle, partner change their roles i.e. the partner who was following becomes the initiator and the earlier initiator becomes the follower.

3: Side to Side Dribble
This game is similar to Dribbling in pairs except partners of a pair stand facing each other at a distance of about 1 meter. The movement to be performed is dribbling sideways by one of the partners whereas the other partner tries to remain in front. The aim is to shake off the partner. After some time on the signal of change, the roles of partners are reversed.

4: King/Queen of the Circle/Square
All players are with stick and ball. They are made to stand in a circle or any marked area keeping sufficient distance among them. On a signal, the players start dribbling making sure that the ball is in complete control. Simultaneously, they start to push the other player’s ball out of the circle. The moment player’s ball goes out of circle he/she is declared out of the game. The last person remaining in the circle with the ball is declared King (Boys) or Queen (Girls).

5: Dragon Tail
All players will make a dragon or a long line without sticks and ball by holding the waist of person in front. The front person spreads his arms sideways. One player who has the stick and ball standing in front of dragon will try to touch the last person (tail of dragon) while dribbling, keeping the ball in control. The dragon is permitted to move sideways, but no player who has formed the dragon may leave the waist of person standing in front.

6: L...O...N...D...O...N - LONDON
In this game all the players except the demer are given a hockey stick and a ball and are made to stand on the 23 meter line. The demer stands without stick and the ball, inside the goal cage facing away from the rest of the players. The demer will pronounce L...O...N...D...O...N-London loudly and the players with the ball can dribble forward. The moment LONDON spoken all the players along with their balls must be in stationary position. The aim of the game is to reach the goal cage first with the ball. Anyone who is looked moving the ball or out of control of the ball is sent back to the starting position to start fresh. The first person reaching the goal cage is winner.

7: Hitting the Target
Players are divided in pairs and are made to stand in the circle facing each other about 10 meters from the target (cone). Each pair is given a ball. On signal, they try to push the ball with the aim of knocking the cone. A score may be kept and the pair knocking the cone shall be the winner.
Rules and Regulations

The Field of Play

The Game

- Two Halves, 35 minutes each in collegiate and international play;
- 11 players per side, including the goalkeeper;
- The back and side of the cages are 18 inches high;
- Two umpires on the field officiate the match. An additional umpire may sit at the scorer’s table;
- The ball must be passed or dribbled down the field with the flat side of the stick;
- A goal is scored when an attacker strikes the ball into the goal from within the striking circle;
- Players may not shield the ball using their body or stick. All players must have an equal chance to play the ball.

The Equipment

- The Field
  The field, or pitch, is 100 yards long and 60 yards wide (91.40m x 55.0m) divided by a center line and a 25-yard line on each side of the field. A striking circle is marked 16 yards (14.63m) away from each goal post. Although the game is often played on grass, all official international matches are played on watered down artificial turf.

- The Stick
  The stick has a curved head, is rounded on one side and is flat on the left-hand side. The ball can only be touched with the flat side of the stick.

[13]
The stick is made of hardwood with a minimum weight of 12 ounces and maximum weight of 28 ounces.

- **The Ball**
  The ball weighs between 5⅜ ounces and 5⅞ ounces with a circumference of 8⅞/₁₆ inches to 9¼ inches. The hardwood sticks are 36-38 inches long. Players may strike the ball only with the flat side of the stick.

- **The Goals**
  Goal cages are 7 feet (2.14m) high, 12 feet (3.66m) wide and 4 feet (1.22m) deep.

**Extra Time/Overtime**

- In international play, in classification rounds or games that require a winner to advance to the next round, if the score is tied after regulation, extra time of two, 7½-minute periods is played. The game is ended when one team scores a goal. If the score remains tied after overtime, penalty strokes may be used to determine the winner. In penalty stroke competition, each team selects five players to take alternating penalty strokes against the opposing goalkeeper.

**Fouls**

A player may not

- shield or obstruct the ball from an opponent with the body or stick. All players must have an equal chance to gain control of the ball as it is dribbled or passed down the field.
- play the ball with the rounded side of the stick.
- interfere in the game without a stick.
- charge, hit, shove or trip an opponent.
- play the ball in a potentially dangerous way.
- use the foot or leg to support the stick in order to resist an opponent.
- raise the stick in a dangerous or intimidating manner while approaching, attempting to play or stop the ball.
- advance the ball by any means other than with the stick.
- stop or deflect the ball in the air or on the ground with any part of the body.
- hit, hook, hold or interfere with an opponents stick.

**Free Hit**

- A free hit is awarded to the non-offending side following an infraction and are usually taken at the spot the foul occurs.
- No player of the opposing team may be within 5 m of the ball when hit.
- The ball must be stationary and the striker must push or hit it. The hitter may not replay the ball until another player has touched it.
- If the infraction is committed by a defender within the shooting circle, the attacking team is awarded a penalty corner.
Penalty Corner

- In a penalty corner, the ball is placed on the goal line at least 10 m from the nearest goal post. One attacking player hits the ball to a teammate just outside the striking circle line. A goal cannot be scored until the ball has traveled outside the circle. A shot on goal may be attempted once the ball is played back into the circle. All attackers must be outside the circle before the hit is taken. On defense, a maximum of five defenders may be behind the goal line while the remaining defenders must be positioned beyond the center line.

- If the first shot at goal is a hit (as opposed to a push, flick or scoop), the ball must cross the goal-line, at a height of not more than 460 mm (18 inches - the height of the backboard) before any deflection, for a goal to be scored.

- A penalty corner is awarded for the following offenses:
  - Any breach of the rule by a defender within the circle that would have resulted in a free hit to the attacking team if the breach had occurred outside the circle;
  - Any intentional breach of the rule by the defenders outside the circle but within the 23m line.
  - An intentional hit over the goal line by a defender from any part of the field. A penalty stroke is one offensive player seven yards in front of the goal vs. goalkeeper on the goal line, with all other players beyond the 25 m line.
  - A penalty stroke is awarded for any intentional breach by the defenders in the circle or for an unintentional breach by the defenders which prevent a sure goal.

Penalty Stroke

- A penalty stroke is a confrontation between offensive players seven yards in front of the goal vs. a goalkeeper on the goal line. All other players must stand behind the 23 m line. The goalkeeper must stand with both feet on the goal line and may not move either foot until the ball has been played. The offensive player may push, flick or scoop the ball from the penalty spot. A penalty stroke is awarded for any intentional breach by the defenders in the circle or for an unintentional breach by the defenders which prevent a sure goal.

16-Yard Hits

- When the attacking team plays the ball over the backline, the defense receives a 16-yard hit. The free hit is taken 16 yards from the spot where the ball crossed the backline.
The Push-In/Hit-In

- A push-in or hit-in is awarded to the opposition if a player hits the ball wholly over the sideline. All other opponents and their sticks must be at least 5 m away from the spot where the ball is put into play.

Offenses and Misconduct

For rough or dangerous play, misconduct or any intentional offense, the umpire may

- Caution the offending player
- Warn the offending player with a green card
- Temporarily suspend the offending player for a minimum of 5 minutes with a yellow card
- Permanently suspend the offending player with a red card.
There are no fixed positions (even a goalkeeper is not required under the 2007 rules), but most teams arrange themselves (in a similar way to football teams) into fullbacks (defense), midfielders (halfback) and forwards (front line). Many teams include a single sweeper. The rules do not specify a minimum number of players for a match to take place, but most competitions have some local ruling on this, with seven players being a common minimum.

One player from each team may be designated the goalkeeper. Goalkeepers must wear a suitable helmet with full face mask and are also permitted to wear protective padding, including large leg guards, kickers and gloves. Although goalkeepers may block or deflect the ball with any part of their bodies, and propel the ball with their feet (and from 2007 any other part of their equipment in a "goal-saving action"), they must always carry a stick. The goalkeeper is permitted to play the ball with his stick above the height of the shoulder in her/his own defensive circle.

**SELECTION METHOD**

The goal of this project is to develop an "optimal player selection strategy" from a common playoff hockey pool. The challenge is to make the strategy applicable in real time. Most selection methods rely on the draftee's hockey knowledge. Our selection strategy was created by applying appropriate statistical models to regular season data and introducing a reasonable optimality criterion. A simulated draft is performed in order to test our selection method.

**INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT**

Analysis must be done for both on and off the ball skills.
TECHNICAL ABILITY

- How does he control the ball?
- What are his favourite passes?
- How does he beat a player?
- What stick and body feint does he use?
- How does he close down or tackle?
- Are there weakness and predictable moves in this area that can be used to our advantage?

FITNESS

- Speed and endurance.
- How quickly he can turn (agility), power.

TEMPERAMENT

How does he react to various forms of pressure?

- Tight marking.
- Closing down.
- Lack of possession.
- Team performing poorly.

MANAGEMENT

The major objective of team management, and of the management team, is to create a working environment that will enable both coach and players to maximize their potential.

MEMBERS

The management team at senior international level will ideally be made up to cover the following roles. The following may be the members of the team management:-

1. TEAM MANAGER
2. ASSISTANT MANAGER
3. COACH
4. ASSISTANT COACH
5. DOCTOR
6. PHYSIOTHERAPIST
7. VIDEO TECHNICIAN
8. PHYSIOLOGIST
9. SPORTS PSYCHOLOGIST
10. NUTRITIONIST
Scoring Pattern

PLAYER LIST

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**MATCH REPORT**

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Coach  
Team Manager  
Umpire  
Judge  
Technical Officer

[20]
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X=Scored  
O=Not Scored  

Sequence of the Listed Player Approved  
Team Manager __________________  
Team Manager __________________

Sudden Death  
May exceed 10 strokes

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X=Scored  
O=Not Scored  

Final Result
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<th>Judge</th>
<th>Teams Colour</th>
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Umpire Manager | Organizing Secretary

Remarks:

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APPOINTMENT SHEET
The basic tactic in hockey, as in football (soccer) and rugby and many other team games is to outnumber the opponent in a particular area of the field at a moment in time. When in possession of the ball this temporary numerical superiority can be used to pass the ball around opponents so that they cannot effect a tackle because they cannot get within playing reach of the ball and to further use this numerical advantage to gain time and create clear space for making scoring shots on the opponent's goal. When not in possession of the ball numerical superiority is used to isolate and channel an opponent in possession and 'mark out' any passing options so that an interception or a tackle may be made to gain possession. Highly skillful players can sometimes get the better of more than one opponent and retain the ball and successfully pass or shoot but this tends to use more energy than quick early passing.

The main methods by which the ball is moved around the field by players are a) passing b) pushing the ball and running with it controlled to the front or right of the body and 3) "dribbling"; where the player controls the ball with the stick and moves in various directions with it to elude opponents. To make a pass the ball may be propelled with a pushing stroke, where the player uses their wrists to push the stick head through the ball while the stick head is in contact with it; the "flick" or "scoop", similar to the push but with a additional arm and leg and rotational actions to lift the ball off the ground; and the "hit", where a swing at ball is taken and contact with it is often made very forcefully, causing the ball to be propelled at velocities in excess of 70mph. In order to produce a powerful hit, usually for travel over long distances or shooting at the goal, the stick is raised higher and swung with maximum power at the ball, a stroke sometimes known as a "drive".

Tackles are made by placing the stick into the path of the ball or playing the stick head or shaft directly at the ball. To increase the effectiveness of the tackle, players
will often place the entire stick close to the ground horizontally, thus representing a wider barrier. To avoid the tackle, the ball carrier will either pass the ball to a teammate using any of the push, flick, or hit strokes, or attempt to maneuver or “drag” the ball around the tackle, trying to deceive the tackler.

In recent years, the penalty corner has gained importance as a goal scoring opportunity. Particularly with the technical development of the drag flick. Tactics at penalty corners to set up time for a shot with a drag flick or a hit shot at the goal involve various complex plays, including multiple passes before a deflections towards the goal is made but the most common method of shooting is the direct flick or hit at the goal.

At the highest level, hockey is a fast-moving, highly skilled sport, with players using fast moves with the stick, quick accurate passing, and hard hits, in attempts to keep possession and move the ball towards the goal. Tackling with physical contact and otherwise physically obstructing players is not permitted, some of the tactics used resemble football (soccer), but with greater ball speed.

With the 2009 changes to the rules regarding free hits in the attacking 23m area, the common tactic of hitting the ball hard into the circle was forbidden. Although at higher levels this was considered tactically risky and low-percentage at creating scoring opportunities, it was used with some effect to 'win' penalty corners by forcing the ball onto a defender's foot or to deflect high (and dangerously) off a defender's stick. The FIH felt it was a dangerous practice that could easily lead to raised deflections and injuries in the circle, which is often crowded at a free-hit situation, and outlawed it.

**Man to Man Marking**

This style of defensive play requires that the players take responsibility for an individual opponent. This is a tight marking situation that can leave the defensive team vulnerable to a penetrating pass because players, rather than the spaces, are marked. On the other hand, the direct opponent will immediately challenge the offensive player for possession on the receiving end of the pass. This defender needs to back his ability to read the play, anticipate that move and make an effective challenge at the right moment.

Space might be available for the offensive team to move into, but usually in this defensive mode there is a spare player in deep defence to clean up the spillage after a challenge for possession. This player will not have a player to mark as such; rather, his role is to read the play, call the play, make interceptions and tidy up if a ball spills loose.

The spare defensive player (the sweeper) is in good position to call the other defensive players into line or into better position to mark closely his immediate player, because he will not be distracted by the movement of an immediate opponent. That is not to say that such an opponent will not arrive on the scene, but the sweeper (initially without the responsibility of an immediate opponent) is in good position to pick up the spare player in the attacking circle. Another defensive player might then assume the sweeping role. In most instances the
sweeper marks the dangerous space in the centre of the circle taking the line from the player in possession to the goal, or if the ball is further upfield, the sweeper marks the more central and dangerous position on the field. When you are marking man-to-man, get goal side and inside your player.

The principle of marking man to man is that your positioning usually requires you to be on the defensive goal side of your immediate opponent and inside the field relative to that player’s positioning. This means that you will be positioned between your defensive goal (the attacker’s goal) and your opponent, while at the same time positioning yourself so that your opponent is closer to the sideline than you are--you are ‘goal side and inside’ your opponent. You also have good vision of the ball as it approaches and the player you are marking simultaneously.

The other option is to mark from in front of your opposition player. With the introduction of the ‘no off side’ rule, this is an increasingly common marking alternative. You can mark 50 to 60 metres (about 55 to 66 yards) in front of your opponent in the right situation, which means that you are not eliminated from attacking opportunities, but you will rely heavily on the players behind you to call your line.

**Formations**

Formations provide structure to a hockey team on the pitch. They help players understand and share the defensive and attacking responsibilities. Although higher level teams may select from a wide range of formations, teams containing inexperienced players or teams which see frequent changes to their players are likely to select from a more limited range of formations such as 4-3-3, 5-3-2 and 4-4-2. (The numbers refer to the number of players arrayed across the pitch, starting in front of the goalkeeper with the defenders, then midfield and then attack.) The 2-3-5 formation, used predominantly in Australia from relatively lowly interschool to professional interstate competitions, provides common language for many players and helps explain why "centre half" is often a name used for a player in the centre of a defence with 4 or 5 players.

One important difference in modern hockey is the absence of an offside rule. This allows attackers (often a lone attacker) to play well up the pitch, stretching the opponents’ defence and using the large spaces to be found there. To counter this, defences usually keep a matching number of defenders near those attackers. This can frequently lead to formations such as 1-4-4-1 which is an adaptation of 5-4-1.

**Conduct of Tournament/Competition**

**Tie breaking**

Conditions for breaking ties are not laid down in the rules of hockey. In many competitions (such as regular competition, or in tournaments such as the Olympics), a tied result stands and the overall competition standings adjusted
accordingly. Where tie-breaking is required, many associations will follow the procedure laid down in FIH tournament regulations which mandate 7.5 minutes each way of "golden goal" or "sudden death" extra time (i.e. the game ends as soon as one team scores). If scores are still level, then the game will be decided with penalty strokes.

Other competitions may use alternative means of breaking a tie, for example, an extended period of golden goal extra time with a progressive reduction in the number of players each team can have on the field (usually termed "drop-offs"); if no goal is scored at the end of such extra time periods, again a result would be achieved using penalty strokes.