



U9-U18 FAQs

Questions and Answers

Q: At what age can my child start playing organized hockey?

A: Hockey West Island offers organized hockey starting at the Timbits U7 level (formerly pre-novice) for children aged 4-6.

After finishing the Timbits U7 program, players move on to a two-year U9 program. Children who will be turning seven years old on or before December 31 of the current hockey season are considered U9 players. All U9 players begin playing half-ice at the start of U9 Year 1 and may transition to full-ice hockey near the end of U9 Year 2.

Q: My child can skate but has never played hockey before. Can they join a team?

A: HWI offers hockey instruction for all skill levels whether you have played for years or are just taking up the sport. We are always happy to welcome players new to the sport, and new players are common at all levels! Coaches and teammates will be happy to help them enjoy themselves as they learn the basics of the game, and grow from there. All team members take part equally in practices, games, tournaments, and team events.

Both Pointe-Claire and Dorval also offer learn-to-skate programs through their figure skating clubs and this is where many of our hockey players learned to skate.

Q: What are the minor hockey age categories, and how are they determined?

A: The minor hockey age categories are named for the age of the player at the start of the season, by birth year (not school year).

- Timbits U7 – for players six years of age or younger
- U9 – for players seven and eight years of age
- U11 – for players nine and 10 years of age
- U13 – for players 11 and 12 years of age
- U15 – for players 13 and 14 years of age
- U18 – for players 15, 16, and 17 years of age
- Junior – for players 18, 19 and 20 years of age
- Senior – for players 21 to 25 years of age



Players are placed into age categories according to what age they will be by **December 31 of the current calendar year.**

Q: What is hockey instruction like in U9 (Novice)?

A: Read more about the program at this Hockey Quebec resource available [HERE](#).

Q: What is the time commitment? How often are there practices?

A: Depending on the division in which your child is registered, the on-ice commitment can vary between 2-3 times/week for Single Letters, to 4-5 times/week for Double Letter players. Keep in mind that teams will have the opportunity to add additional practices as well as off-ice training and activities. Tournaments and other hockey events can also add to the season's ice-time commitment and are up to each individual team.

Q: Do teams attend tournaments?

A: Single Letter HWI teams are eligible for three tournaments in Quebec. All Single Letter HWI teams in the U9, U11, and U13 divisions are automatically entered in the HWI tournament, leaving two additional ones for them to select.

Q: Are there any extra fees?

A: PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION (TEAM FEES):

- In addition to the registration fee paid to Hockey West Island, once your child is placed on a team there are additional team fees that cover team events such as in-town and away tournaments, team photos, holiday or end-of-year parties, additional ice time, team merchandise, etc. These fees are determined jointly by the team coaches and manager and discussed and approved by the team parents. This parental contribution is MANDATORY. Fundraising through bake sales, raffles, and other events, and team sponsorships can greatly reduce the fees or provide teams with a larger budget for additional activities.
- Hockey West Island recommends that Single Letter team fees not exceed \$400.
- There is no parental contribution for players registered in the U7 division. Each team in U7 will receive an amount of \$100 at the end of the season to use as they wish. Should the team decide to do pictures, etc, each parent will pay at that time.



- When travelling to away games and/or tournaments, teams are responsible for their own travel costs, food, hotels, and tournament fees. It is up to the parents, the team manager, and the coaching staff on each individual team to determine how these expenses will be paid. Many teams organize fundraisers such as raffles, or sponsors to subsidize parents' travel and other associated costs. Each team is responsible for ensuring that its fundraising activities comply with local, provincial, and federal laws.

Q: I want to become a coach. What do I need to do?

A: Anyone who wishes to be involved with minor hockey teams **MUST** have completed the four prerequisites below (with extra courses for those who are head or assistant coaches).

1. Fill out the Coach/Manager/Helper application form here:
hockeywestisland.org/coaches/
2. Complete the [Respect in Sport online course](#).
3. All coaches, managers, and team volunteers (parents) **MUST** have undergone police. Bring two pieces of government ID to the front desk at Bob Birnie Arena and fill in the form with the office attendant. A paper receipt will be given and a copy must be emailed to the HWI Registrar ASAP. Once a police screening check is on file with Hockey West Island, it is considered current for 3 years.
4. Everyone involved in a minor hockey organization must register each season through the HCR system. This ensures that Hockey Canada Insurance covers members and they acknowledge having consented to the ethical codes and waivers. Specific registration fees have been created for staff on the HWI's platform in HCR. The registration cost is marked as \$0.

For coaching certification, visit Hockey Quebec or speak with the Director of Operations to discuss the courses you will need to take as well as other regulations. Verification of a coach's qualifications will be done through Hockey Canada's registration system (HCR).

Those interested in coaching **Double Letters** can contact HWI's Double Letters VP at hwi-vpdl@hockeywestisland.org