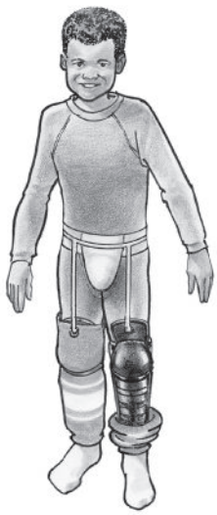
UNDERGARMENTS

Choose an undergarment arrangement that will be cool and comfortable under your equipment. This will avoid irritation of the skin (from the equipment). Underwear will absorb moisture from your skin.



What players wear under their equipment is a personal choice. A number of material combinations exist for underwear, from 100% cotton to cotton/polyester and other blends of material.

Always wear a SINGLE PAIR of socks in your skates. As with underwear, a variety of material blends are available. Choose a blend that offers you comfort, warmth and moisture-absorbing abilities.

For all underwear and socks, 50/50 cotton/polyester blends provide maximum ventilation and comfort.

HELPFUL HINTS

Always ensure underwear and socks are dry and clean to avoid chafing from your equipment and to maintain hygiene.

Avoid wrinkles in your socks when tightening your skates!

Carry an extra set of undergarments on tournament days or when you play more than once in a day.

ATHLETIC SUPPORTS

FITTING

Two types of athletic supports are available – a jock/jill strap or boxer-shorts style. Each type incorporates a plastic protective cup.

The jock strap (for males), jill strap (for females) and boxers are fitted according to the individual player's waist size. It is important that a player chooses an appropriately-sized protective cup and strap or boxers for effective shock absorption.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

If the jock or jill strap tears in any way it should be repaired or replaced. One common area of breakdown is where the straps meet the protective cup. Should these straps detach, the protective cup can be pushed out of position.

HELPFUL HINTS

The jock/jill strap should fit like a pair of briefs, not so loose that the protective cup moves around, but not so tight to restrict movement or chafe. The boxer-shorts style must fit snugly, but not be restrictive, to ensure the cup does not move out of place.

SHIN PADS

FITTING

Shin pads are generally measured in junior (8" to 13") or senior (14" to 17") sizes. Ensure that the cap of the shin pad is centered on the kneecap. The calf padding should wrap around the lower leg to offer maximum protection to this area of the leg. Also, the protective padding above the plastic kneecap should overlap approximately 2" with the bottom of the hockey pants. With the skate open, the player should ensure that the shin pad rests 1" above the foot when the foot is fully flexed up and does not inhibit movement of the foot in any way. It is now recommended that the skate tongue be positioned behind the shin pad for added protection.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

A shin pad that is too short can leave exposed areas between the top of the skate and the bottom of the shin pad. A shin pad that is too long may cause discomfort and restrict movement in the ankle and knee areas. The flexible portion of the shin pad (the padded portion between the knee guard and shin guard) should allow maximum movement. However, since this is the least protected area on the shin pad, ensure that it properly covers the knee and shin. Cracked shin pads must be replaced immediately.

HELPFUL HINTS

Buying Velcro straps to fasten shin pads to the legs is much less expensive in the long run than using tape. Remember to check the length of the straps with the shin pads on, to ensure a proper fit.

PANTS

FITTING

Hockey pants are generally sized either according to waist size or in group sizing (S, M, L, XL, XXL). Measure the waist to get the required pant size.

Pants should be fitted with shin pads in place to ensure the bottom of the pant leg reaches the top of the kneecap and covers approximately 2" of the shin pad's top padding.

For female players, fit the hips first then check the position of the leg and kidney pads to ensure they cover these areas adequately.

The correct positioning of rib, hip, thigh and kidney padding is important to ensure protection of these areas. The padding around the waist of the pants should cover the kidney area (halfway between the hips and underarm). The padding on the rear of the pants should extend far enough to completely cover the bottom end of the tail bone. Thigh padding (plastic shell) and hip padding must fit over the appropriate areas to offer maximum protection.

If the pants have a belt, the belt should be positioned just above the hip bone with the pants on and allow for a snug adjustment without falling off the player's hips.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

Traditional hockey pants are the most common hockey pants, which feature padding built into the pants. Purchase pants with as much padding as possible. Ensure all necessary padding is in place and protecting the appropriate areas in a full range of motion for the player. If any pads, such as the thigh pad, crack they should be replaced immediately as they are no longer effective. Tearing that occurs in the outer shell of the pants should be repaired immediately as this can effect the protective quality. The inside of the pants should also be inspected for tearing, with repairs made as necessary.

HELPFUL HINTS

Players should have a good range of motion while wearing pants. A good measure is to have the player fully squat with pants (and shin pads) on. If the player can comfortably squat and the padding remains in position, then the pants fit properly.

SKATES

FITTING

Skates usually fit a ½ size smaller than street shoes. When fitting skates, wear the same socks that will be worn when skating.

Ensure that there are no wrinkles in the sock when placing the foot into the boot.

Loosen the laces so that the foot can easily slip into the boot and then slide the foot forward to press the ends of the toes against the front of the skate. With the foot in this position, you should be able to place one finger between the boot and the heel of the foot.

Prior to lacing up skates, kick the heel into the boot's heel by banging the skate against the floor. Lace the boot with the first three eyelets snug, the next 3-4 eyelets loose (to prevent constriction of this area) and the last 2-4 eyelets very snug to maximize energy transfer to the boot.

Once the skates are laced up, there should be approximately 1 ½" to 2" between the eyelets. If they are farther apart, a narrower boot is necessary. If the eyelets are closer, then a wider boot is required. Different skate brands are designed for either narrow or wide feet. A variety of widths are available.

Next, walk in both skates for 10 to 15 minutes to ensure a comfortable fit. Remove the skates and check the feet for red areas or pressure points, which are signs of an improperly fitted skate. Note that all skates will generally require a break-in period. Any irregularities of the feet, such as bone spurs, may also affect the fit of the boot.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

Skate tongues should be worn behind the shin pads to fully protect the lower shin. Never wrap laces around the ankles as this can inhibit circulation and irritate the Achilles tendon. If the hard shell in the toes becomes cracked, the skates should not be worn as this could result in serious injury. Skates should be replaced if this occurs.

HELPFUL HINTS

Never buy skates too big to grow into as this can seriously inhibit proper skating development.

Remove insoles for more effective skate drying.

SHOULDER PADS

FITTING

It's important that the shoulder pads completely cover the shoulders, upper back, chest and upper arms to just above the elbow area.

The protective caps should be positioned on the top of the shoulders and the arm pads should extend to meet the elbow pads.

It is recommended that the back of the shoulder pads should overlap slightly with the pants.

The upper arm pads should fit securely around the bicep and tricep muscle areas.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

The plastic cups are designed to protect the shoulder and disperse any force over a large area through the full range of motion.

Check all straps and Velcro fasteners around the arms and mid-body to ensure they are intact and do not cause discomfort. Adjust length as necessary.

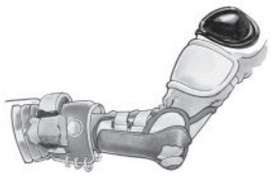
HELPFUL HINTS

A player should have good range of motion while wearing shoulder pads.

To test range of motion, have the player lift arms slightly above shoulder height. In this position, ensure that the pads do not dig into the neck area.

ELBOW PADS

FITTING



Most introductory and intermediate-quality elbow pads can be used on either elbow. Note that some elbow pads are made specifically for left and right arms. Ensure pads are on the appropriate arms.

Place the donut inside the elbow pad on the point of the elbow. Snugly fasten all the straps on the elbow pad so that it does not slide when the arm is fully extended.

The top of the elbow pad should meet the bottom of the shoulder pads' arm pad and extend down the forearm to where the top of the glove starts. The forearm padding should wrap around the entire forearm to offer maximum protection.

The elbow pad should not restrict movement of the elbow. With the elbow pads on, test the range of motion by bending the arm at the elbow and watching for any constriction or restriction of movement. If you wear short-cuff gloves, ensure that your elbow pads are long enough to meet the cuff of the glove.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

Ensure that the elbow pad contains a donut pad or pocket where the point of the elbow rests. The elbow pad should have a plastic cup which protects the elbow point. Several models may have this plastic shell on the exterior of the pad or it may form an integral part of the pad. Generally this cup is removable.

Slash guards are rigid plastic pads which protect the forearm area. The slash guard should be on the outside of the elbow pad.

HELPFUL HINTS

Frequently test the donut pad by pressing down with your fingers. If any cracks appear, or if the padding is hard or brittle, the pad must be replaced to avoid potential injury.

GLOVES

FITTING

Ideal gloves are lightweight, flexible and offer maximum movement. Gloves are made from a variety of materials, including leather and Kevlar. While leather gloves are more durable, they take longer to dry and are heavier to wear.

Gloves should fit like loose winter gloves over the fingers. The top of the glove should extend up the forearm to the bottom of the elbow pad to ensure full protection of the forearm area.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

Ensure that the padding on the back of the glove and the hard shell components are of sufficient quality to protect your hand and wrist area, which can be tested by pressing the back of the glove with the fingers. The compression should not be felt inside the glove. If the glove has laces in the cuffs, leave them in and do them up. Never remove the laces. Laces prevent tearing of the side gussets of the glove.

HELPFUL HINTS

Whenever testing a pair of gloves, use a hockey stick to stickhandle on the spot for a few minutes. The gloves should offer freedom of movement in a variety of positions without chafing or restricting movement.

HELMETS

FITTING

Helmets must be Canadian Standards Association (CSA) certified. All CSA-certified hockey helmets will have a sticker indicating this approval. These stickers must remain on the equipment and be visible during play.

Helmets are generally measured in junior or senior sizing and may be found in head sizes of 6 ½" to 7 ¾". They may also be found in group sizes (S, M, L, XL). Choose a size that fits snugly on the head, yet allows room for adjustments for final fitting.

Using the adjusting mechanism (which differs from model to model), adjust the helmet to fit so that when shaking the head from side to side and back and forth, the helmet does not move and does not cause discomfort.

The front of the helmet should fall just above the eyebrows. Select a size of helmet that provides these elements for a good fit.

Adjust the chin strap so that it is snug to the chin in order to provide proper protection. The chin strap is not properly fastened if it hangs down. If the chin strap is too loose it could cause the helmet to fall off on impact.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

Ear guards are a standard component on most helmets. The ear guards protect the ears from impact injuries. If you purchase a helmet with ear guards, they must be left on to maintain CSA certification. Any helmet with a break or crack in the outer shell must be replaced.

MAINTENANCE

Regularly check the helmet to ensure screws are in place and secure.

Only use manufacturer-approved replacement parts on helmets.

Helmets should never be painted or have stickers affixed to them as this may weaken the structure and voids the CSA certification.

Any alterations such as: drilling extra holes, removing side straps, clamps or chin cup, will void the CSA certification.

Always air dry the helmet after all on-ice sessions.

HELPFUL HINTS

Occasionally check the inside padding of the helmet by pressing the thumb into the padding. If the padding retains its original shape, the helmet maintains its protective quality. If the padding breaks or cracks, the helmet needs to be replaced. Occasionally check the front visor screws to ensure they have not rusted in place.

FACIAL PROTECTORS

Hockey Canada requires all minor hockey players to wear CSA-approved full facial protectors, properly attached to CSA-approved hockey helmets.

Full facial protectors come in three (3) varieties: wire cage or high-impact polycarbonate shield (commonly referred to as a visor) or a combination of the two. There are six (6) types of protectors:

Type 1: Players older than 10 years of age (other than goaltenders); recognized by a WHITE CSA sticker.

Type 2: Players 10 years of age and under (other than goaltenders); recognized by an ORANGE CSA sticker.

Type 3 or Type C: Goaltenders of all age categories; recognized by a BLUE CSA sticker.

Type 4: Players in the Major Junior age category and older; recognized by a YELLOW CSA sticker.

Type 5 or Type A: Same as type 1, the only difference being the penetration requirements of the CSA Standard; recognized by a GREEN sticker.

Type 6 or Type B: Same as type 2, the only difference being the penetration requirements of the CSA Standard; recognized by a RED sticker.

FITTING

The facial shield or cage must be compatible with the helmet. Not all masks fit every helmet. The facial protector should fit to allow one finger to be placed snugly between the bottom of the chin and the chin cup of the protector.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

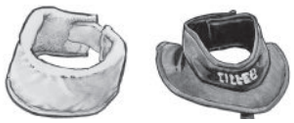
Any facial protector with a break or crack should be replaced immediately. Never cut or alter wire masks as this weakens the structure and voids the CSA certification. Removal of the chin cup not only voids the CSA certification, it may expose the chin area to undue risk or injury.

Although the face mask does prevent dental injuries, it is still recommended that all players who play contact hockey wear an internal mouth guard. Dental injuries still occur despite the use of a facemask and furthermore the proper wearing of a mouth guard could prevent a concussion. The mouth guard should ideally be molded to an athlete's teeth by a dentist.

THROAT PROTECTORS

FITTING

The throat protector should be snug but not uncomfortably tight.



Bib-style protectors are worn beneath the shoulder pads and offer increased protection.

The throat protector should completely cover the throat and, with bib styles, the upper chest area.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

There are two types of throat protectors: bib style or collar style. The bib style provides more protection to the chest area. Both are generally made of ballistic nylon or similar material. Throat protectors are designed to protect the throat are from lacerations and cuts. They are not designed to protect against spinal injuries to the neck region. All throat protectors must bear the Bureau de normalization du Quebec (BNQ) logo. If the neck guard is altered the BNQ certification is void.

HELPFUL HINTS

Keep all Velcro fasteners in good shape and replace if necessary.

JERSEYS & SOCKS

FITTING

A hockey jersey should be large enough to fit over the upper-body equipment and provide the player with a good range of motion.

The length of the sweater should be sufficient to allow it to go over the pants and not ride up when the player is skating. The arms of the sweater should extend to the wrists. Ensure the sweater is not too baggy to avoid it getting caught on bench doors and other objects.

Ensure the neckline of the sweater does not compress the back of the neck. This may result in chafing and/or injury.

Socks hold the shin pads in position. They should extend from the top of the foot to the top of the leg.

Socks are held up with either a hockey garter belt system or Velcro fasteners attached to the jock/jill strap. Socks should not be held up with tape or straps above the knee area. This can cause loss of circulation and discomfort.

HELPFUL HINTS

To air dry equipment, you may wish to consider using a clothes rack which can be stored and set-up easily. Never use a direct heat source to dry equipment. This could lead to a breakdown of the fibres and the padding.

STICKS

FITTING

A properly chosen stick is essential to developing effective puck control and shooting skills.

There are several key points to remember when selecting a stick:

Junior or Senior Sizing: Junior sticks are made with narrower shafts and smaller blades for better control. It is strongly recommended that junior sticks be chosen with a straight blade. Senior-sized sticks are for intermediate and older players who have the ability to comfortably control a larger stick.

Length: As a rule of thumb, in street shoes, the stick should reach between the chin and the mouth of the player with the toe of the stick on the ground. While wearing skates, the butt end of the stick should reach just below the chin.

Blade Lie: This is the angle of the blade in relation to the shaft of the stick and the affects the angle at which the stick rises from the ice. Generally, lies are available from 4 to 8. In a "ready stance," with the stick's blade flat on the ice, there should be no gap between the ice and the bottom edge of the blade. If so, then try a different lie to remove this gap.

HELPFUL HINTS

At practice, try other players' sticks. Experiment with different lengths, lies and flexibilities to determine which stick best suits you.

With graphite sticks, do not interchange the different brands of blades and shafts.

Shaft Material: Wooden shafts provide varying degrees of flexibility. Generally, the less flexible a stick, the greater amount of strength required to effectively use it. Younger players should use sticks with greater flexibility than senior players.

Graphite Sticks: Offer a greater consistency in flex ranges and flex points.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

The butt-end of all sticks must be covered with tape or a commercially made butt-end to prevent injuries. All graphite sticks come with a wooden plug, which must be inserted into the top of the stick and then taped.

FOR THE GOALIE

GOALTENDER STICKS

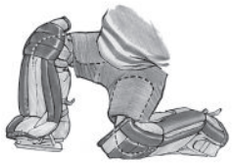
FITTING

Goaltenders should select a stick which allows them to comfortably assume the crouch (ready) position with the blade of the stick flat on the ice. Be aware of different lies (the angle at which the shaft rises from the ice) as well as the length of the paddle.

LEG PADS

FITTING

Always fit goal pads while wearing skates. Kneel down into each pad making sure the kneecap is in the middle of the knee roll.



The large vertical roll should be on the outside of each leg. After doing up all the straps, the pad should extend from the toe of the skate to 4" above the knee.

The leg pads should have padding at the back of the leg which fits under the straps. The top of the pads should extend approximately 3" above the bottom of the pants. Remember, a proper fit is essential for good protective quality and comfort.

CATCHING GLOVE AND BLOCKER

FITTING

For proper protection and fitting, follow the same steps as the previous section under "Gloves." With the catcher and blocker on the hands, lower the hands to the side – the gloves should not fall off. The blocker should be of the proper size to ensure comfort, easy gripping and control of the stick.

PROTECTIVE QUALITY

The catching glove must have a heavily-padded cuff which overlaps the arm pad to offer maximum protection. Routinely test the padding on the catching glove by pressing the fingers into the padding. If the padding is lumpy or spongy, then it has broken and requires replacement. The bottom of the back-pad on the blocker should never be warped, as this exposes the ends of the fingers to possible injury.

UPPER BODY PROTECTION

The upper-body protection padding for a goaltender is designed to protect the collarbone, chest and abdominal areas and down the arms to the wrists. Speak with a qualified representative to assist with fitting this specialized equipment.

FITTING

Ensure that all straps are utilized and fastened properly. Elbow padding must be properly positioned over the elbow. Arm padding should extend down to the wrist. The body pad should tuck into the pants about 2" below the navel.

PROTECTIVE QUALTIY

The arm pads should overlap slightly with the gloves while allowing movement of the wrists and hands.