
PITTSBURGH VIPERS LIST OF REQUIRED HOCKEY EQUIPMENT

Hockey parents should be advised that buying hockey equipment for their skater is not a one-time expense. As the child grows, the need for proper equipment grows. It is dangerous for a skater to have ill-fitting equipment; equipment that is too large hampers skating, and equipment that is too small may not provide adequate protection.

If you have any questions about whether your child's equipment is adequate, it is very important that you check with your coach or a pro shop to get the answers.

Equipment should be maintained properly after purchase. It will pick up bacteria and therefore should be aired properly after each use. Skate blades should be wiped down before covering. There should be a place in the family's home just for the equipment to be properly maintained after each use, as it will rot if not dried adequately. Most equipment made today is washable and should be washed regularly.

Helmet with Face Mask - USA Hockey has strict rules regulating helmets for amateur hockey players. Your pro shop can assist you in purchasing the proper helmet. If you have an older used helmet, you may have to purchase proper straps for it and ensure it has proper ear protection. All helmets and facemasks must be HECC certified and the certification sticker must be intact and uncovered.

Mouth guard - It is a USA Hockey rule and PAHL rule that all amateur hockey players wear a colored mouth guard.

Neck Guard - It is a USA Hockey rule and PAHL rule that all amateur hockey players wear a neck guard.

Shoulder pads - Should not be so large as to hamper movement, but should provide some protection against bruises resulting from skating into boards, or in later years, checking. Too large of size pads will cause pads to fall away from the shoulders and will not protect the collarbone.

Elbow Pads - Ideally, elbow pads should protect the area between the lower edge of the shoulder pad to the top of the glove. Again, it is important for proper sizing – especially as the skater grows. It is an important piece of equipment in preventing elbow injury or skate cuts along the arm when the skater has fallen.

Gloves - There are many brands of gloves in a variety of price ranges on the market. The glove must fit the skater's hand to have proper movement, but also should have room for growth. Worn, tattered gloves have no place on the ice. The top of the glove should ideally meet the elbow pad. The length of the glove can protect from skate cuts along the arm when the skater has fallen.

Jock and Garter Belt or Jock Shorts with Velcro or Hockey Tape used to hold up socks.

Knee Pads/Shin Guards - To protect shins from pucks and sticks; to fit from knee to ankle.

Hockey Pants - Padded to provide protection, must reach upper to mid-knees. Black is the preferred color. Hockey suspenders may be helpful to keep them up.

Stick (A straight blade is recommended) – If curved, the hockey stick is left or right handed, comes in different lengths and curves of the blade. The length is determined by the following: If in street shoes, the end of the stick should go to the nose; if in skates, the end of the stick should go to the chin. (You may want to allow an additional 3 inches to account for the player's growth.) The stick will hardly ever be perfect; buy it longer and have the pro shop adjust it by cutting off the end. A reputable pro shop will be able to help you size a stick to your skater. Sticks are made of a variety of materials including the traditional wood stick, to aluminum and composite materials. It is possible with some sticks to purchase replacement blades.

Skates - Must fit comfortably, though not so loose as to cause blisters when skating. Skate sizes are NOT the same as shoe sizes – players must try on the skates before purchasing. Athletic socks should be worn for comfort.

Hockey Tape - Adhesive tape of any color is usually used on the blade and handle of the stick for friction. The end of a hollow stick MUST be fully covered. Also, be sure to use a piece of tape to place the player's name on the stick.

Hockey Equipment Bag - Large enough to hold all of the items listed. (For younger players a 30" bag is perfect.)

Skate Guards - Used to cover the blades of the hockey skates. They come in two basic styles: Soakers, which are a terry-type material that helps to absorb moisture. The type with a reinforced sole is best. Plastic blade guards help to protect blades and equipment however they can trap moisture and should not be left on for long periods of time.

IT CANNOT BE STRESSED ENOUGH THAT PROPER EQUIPMENT BE WORN BY EACH SKATER. IT CAN PREVENT SERIOUS INJURIES. IF ILL-FITTING, OR WORN OUT, IT DOES NOT PROVIDE THE PROTECTION IT WAS MEANT TO GIVE.
