

Eden Prairie Rookie Camp

Sponsored by Westwood Sports

Thank you for signing up for the Eden Prairie Hockey Association's Rookie Camp! We are excited to be introducing your son/daughter to the great sport of hockey! If there are any questions we can answer for you, please don't hesitate to ask us at the rink, or contact us. Thanks again, and please know we are here to make this a GREAT experience for you son/daughter.

Thanks to **Westwood Sports** in Chanhassen for sponsoring this, making it free to all Eden Prairie residents!

Sincerely,

Matt Britton, Mite Coordinator

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Eric Jones, Rookie Camp Coordinator

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Mike Terwilliger, Rookie Camp On-Ice Instructor

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Misc. Information for Rookie Camp:

The location for ALL Rookie Camp sessions will be at the Eden Prairie Community Center on Rink #2. There will be a check-in table right inside Rink #2 where you can pick up your jersey on the first day.

All Non-Eden Prairie Registrants will be expected to submit payment prior to their child skating the first day.

Make sure to arrive at the rink in plenty of time to have your child ready by the start of their session. We suggest allowing at least 20 minutes to get your child ready. Generally speaking, arriving at the rink 5-10 minutes before hockey starts isn't enough time.

Please make sure your child is properly protected while on the ice.

Required equipment includes:

Cup/Girdle
Skates
Shin pads
Breezers (Hockey Pants)
Elbow Pads
Hockey Socks or Sweatpants
Neck guard
Helmet w/cage or shield
Mouth guard
Hockey Gloves
Stick

Optional Equipment: Shoulder pads

Here is a good format for putting on your child's equipment:

- Athletic shorts w/Velcro (to keep outer hockey socks up)
 - Disregard if your child is wearing sweatpants in lieu of outer-socks
- Cup/Supporter
- Sweats (if applicable)
- Breezers/hockey pants
- Skates, tied
- Shin pads
- Pull socks/sweats over shin pads and tape/Velcro down
 - Try to avoid shin pads on/over jeans
- Shoulder pads
- Elbow Pads
- Jersey
- Neck guard
- Helmet and Mouth guard

Teach your child to have responsibility for their hockey equipment. Encourage your child to carry some of their equipment to and from the rink. If they are old enough, it's appropriate to ask them to put as much of their equipment on as they can. The earlier you can teach them to help with the equipment process, the sooner they'll be doing it on their own!

Try and let your child choose which way they shoot (Left or Right). Generally most kids have a way to hold the stick that's more comfortable. Just because your child throws or writes with their right hand, does not necessarily mean they will shoot right-handed in hockey. There are many players who are right-handed in everything they do, but shoot left-handed in hockey – and vice versa! If you are not sure which way your child will shoot, buy them a stick with a straight (non-curved) blade.

After you cut your child's stick to the proper length (generally speaking, when standing in shoes, your stick should come up to about your nose), tape a small knob onto the end of the stick and tape the stick blade. The knob has two purposes: 1) Makes the stick easier to hold and 2) If your child drops their stick, it's easier to pick up. Check with one of the coaches or commissioners at the check-in if you need help on this.

You don't need to sharpen your child's skates after every time they go skating. Check your child's blades after every 4-6 times on the ice to see if they are sharp enough (hold blade up and gently rub one of your fingernails at an angle over the edge of the blade – if they're not sharp at all, nothing will rub off your fingernail). If you have questions about this see Coach Twig or ask the guys at Westwood in Chanhassen. **NOTE: WALKING ON CEMENT OR METAL IS NOT GOOD FOR SKATES. TEACH YOUR CHILD TO WALK ON THE RUBBER FLOORING.**

Prior to the first Rookie Camp Session, talk to your child about behavior while on the hockey rink. Some basics to cover:

- HAVE FUN!
- Do your best
- When the coach blows the whistle, stop what you are doing – listen
- It's NOT okay to ever hit other kids with a hockey stick. (Inadvertent contact will happen...but "stick swinging" will not be tolerated)
- Pushing and checking kids isn't okay either
- When a coach is talking, keep your body still, look at the coach and listen
- When the Zamboni is on the ice, ABSOLUTELY no kids should be on the ice! We tell them if the Zamboni doors are open, you can't be on the ice.

Encourage your child to do their best and to have fun! Don't be discouraged if your child struggles their first few times on the ice! We certainly don't mind and neither should you. Many great hockey players started out struggling to learn the basics of skating and hockey. Our main goals are to make this a fun experience for your child and to get them to continue to want to play hockey. If you're not helping on the ice, merely get your child on the ice, smile and say "Have Fun!". When they get off the ice – praise, praise, praise! Asking questions, seeking a positive perspective on the practice also is a great way to encourage them:

- What was your favorite thing about Rookie Camp today?
- What was one thing you did to help the group today? (Listen to the coach, nice to other kids, did my best, had fun, etc.)
- What was one thing you learned at Rookie Camp today? (Bend my knees, head up, do your best always, etc.)

Other ways to get your child on their skates are Open Skate at the EP Community Center (Check Lobby or Website for Schedule), Developmental Hockey at the EP Community Center (Check Lobby or Website for Schedule) – and the best place of all – the outdoor pond/neighborhood rink! More than anything, to improve and love the game, kids just need time on their skates. SKATE, SKATE, SKATE!

We rely on on-ice volunteers to help make Rookie Camp run smoothly! If you're able to stand on your skates, smile and encourage kids, and be patient, then please come out on the ice! All you need are your skates, stick, and a helmet. Many times parents look out on the ice and remark, "Ahhhh, looks like there are enough helpers out there, I don't need to help." It's very rare that we ever have too many parent-helpers on the ice. Also – if you're out on the ice, remember to help other kids, not just your own child. If your child is able to skate on their own and you see a child that is struggling, please don't hesitate to help them.

Please don't hesitate to contact Matt, Eric, or Mike if you have any questions. We hope that your child loves Rookie Camp and hope to see them at Rookie Camp Session II – which typically starts in February. You can register at www.ephockey.com after January 1st to enroll your child in Session II. Even if your child has participated in Session I – if you want to participate in Session II, you will need to register for that Session specifically!

Thanks for encouraging your child to try the great sport of hockey!

